

The grassroots and women's peace movements grew strong in resistance to cruise missiles. Now it looks as if an INF agreement will get rid of cruise, so what's next? CND is setting its strategic priorities for the coming year, and the grassroots direct action networks have also to work out where our specific approach and talents can bring about change most effectively (and enjoyably!)

Remember how the early Greenham demand changed from 'Give us a chance to discuss these weapons of mass murder' to 'Get rid of them - and take away the military state as well!'

We might have arrived at Greenham because we couldn't bear the thought of nuclear war, but we stayed because women working together inadvertently opened our eyes to the violence inherent in the nuclear mentality. We realised that cruise was just one link in a chain that starts with racism and imperialism.

Namibian and Aboriginal sacred lands were stolen and ripped open so that the greedy white nations can get at the uranium. The chain goes through broken communities, starving children and the torture and imprisonment of those who question. It binds the poisonous cycle of uranium mining, enrichment, nuclear power, nuclear waste, reprocessing, production of warheads and testing, where animals and people are routinely maimed and killed. A disgusting sham devised by the barbarous greed and stupidity of a tiny minority of the earth's inhabitants, almost exclusively old, male, white and human. So what does it mean for two of this club to make an INF deal to get rid of a few hundred land based missiles?

Not a lot, actually. If Reagan wants the mantle of peace-maker, he has a long way to go. Most of the world's people are far in advance of governments in rejecting nuclear war. The leadership is still looking for exciting new scenarios - up in space, on submarines, air-launched, chemical, even electronic. To them, getting rid of cruise is not a step towards disarmament but the clearing up of an embarrassment to enable them to replace it with better bombs and higher kill ratios.

Greenham women and the European peace movements have proved that ordinary people taking personal responsibility and using creative nonviolence can force a change of direction, albeit small, in the unwilling military. Now we have to make them rethink. So where should we focus our energy next?

I don't think there are any obvious answers. Individually most people in the grassroots peace movement have a dozen other hats, ranging from Nicaraguan Solidarity to Women Against Violence Against Women. Cruise resistance has been increasingly taking on NATO and the US bases, weapon convoys and arms manufacturers. The Aldermaston Campaign grew out of Greenham as did Women Working For a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Network and links with Women Against Pit Closures.

★ THE HOPES

The military state is not just about nuclear systems and bases. It's about male violence, which threatens women and children daily in our homes, jobs and streets. Nonviolent direct action against rapists and pornographers is as much a part of women's resistance as stopping cruise. Militarism is also grounded in racism and exploitation. Opposing apartheid or police brutality against Black people here, is as necessary in working for peace as blockading bases. Anti-sexism and anti-racism need to be integrated with every aspect of our peace campaigning. Thus supporting the 1800 Ilois people, forced from their homes so that British-controlled Diego Garcia in the India Ocean could become another US base, is as important as restoring Greenham and other bases to common land and must be highlighted every time we campaign against US occupation and bases.

The peace movement is a many-splendoured web of linked causes and shared hopes. Greenham's clear focus on cruise did not shut out all the other issues, but rather provided an inspiration and empowerment to enable us to take on much, much more. If cruise is to go, each of us will have to decide how much energy we're going to devote to overseeing the dismantling process and restoration of Greenham to common land (resisting its reallocation as base for nuclear-capable F-111s) and how much energy we want to direct. It's going to be a difficult time, claiming our successes and renewing our determination to carry on struggling in a hundred urgent ways to increase the momentum towards survival, peace and justice.

LINKING : THE CAUSES

SHARING HOPES

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Congratulations to Hayley Coates (age 16) who won our competition to design a front cover for Sign of the Times

CONFERENCE

it was a normal, rather mundane weekend in Manchester... but wait... from out of the students' building, streams of enthusiasm radiated! Excitement rose as 200 people gathered for the Youth CND Christmas conference.

Most people seemed to arrive at the conference around midnight on Friday, on a coach from London, just as I was finally getting to sleep (but looking at the facts, this is probably a misconception of some sort). Anyway, conference proper started with a bit of a bang at around 12 midday, on Saturday 12th December, with the rally. Elena Lieven (Vice-Chair CND), Jacqui Cohen (YCND), Christof Baschang (Christian CND) all gave interesting and informative talks. I found Christof's message from German peace groups particularly inspiring, and I hope it persuaded others to try to improve international links with the peace movement.

The first really big surprise arrived with lunch. The food at conference was good this time, especially the fact that both vegetarians and vegans were catered for and I would like to say thank you for it here (this praise excludes the rather floppy sandwiches).

The rest of Saturday was taken up with the hustings for national committee, workshops - which were generally very useful and certainly good fun! (I will never forget the sights that our street theatre workshop produced) Plus regional meetings, that appeared to clarify the impression that on the whole the regions are a bit depressed. The use of the conference to hold regional meetings was a good use of an opportunity anyway.

Saturday night brought the next big surprise of conference with the appearance of

Father Christmas, at the party in the very impressive 'cellar disco'. I shall certainly never forget his jolly twinkling eyes and his huge cuddly stomach and his great, white beard. Or his kind smile as... hoards of young people eager to gain their rewards of the year of hard campaigning pounced upon him as he walked through the door!

Sunday brought three important events. We tried a new idea out - the discussion on where we went now, what our national campaign should be, between everyone at conference.

Generally this was a good chance to talk with people, debate points and get a feeling of how YCND as a whole group of people feels. But the problem was that there was neither any real direction to the discussion nor total freedom. Obviously there were limits of time. The experiment of this discussion has been useful, as at conference next year we will know how to organise it more successfully. After much heated discussion involving dinner suits, pretty dresses, and the fate of the two young lovers in the 'Is this goodbye?' leaflets, we began to talk of our next 'huge campaign'.

The election results were announced earlier than scheduled to allow for coach and train times. Six from the eight people standing were voted onto national committee. It must be realised how undemocratic the choice of six from eight is and at the next conference, please, if you are committed to YCND and think you could, please stand for election! Anyway, congratulations to all those who were elected.

The conference ended with the moving 'When the wind blows' which seemed to add a sober note of reality after the weekend, which had basically been great fun. Thank you everyone who made it possible.

Election Results

Youth CND conference proved to be our biggest ever. Over 200 activists and newcomers flocked to Manchester, December 12/13. The hustings for national committee were even as exciting as the appearance of Father Christmas. The lucky six were as follows:

Emily Armstrong
Fionna Openshaw
Yuri (pass the ashtray, maan)
Prasad
Clare Shepherd
Lorraine (Rap-queen) Sweeney
Phil (beardless) Woodford

Congratulations to everyone! And commiserations to the valiant two who didn't make it.

This month sees the launch of a new youth movement called Earth Action. Here Earth Action's co-ordinator tells us a bit about it.

Earth Action is a new green organisation for people who are angry about the way we exploit our planet and poison our environment and who want to do something positive about it.

Unfortunately, the words 'green' and 'environmental' tend to conjure up images of ageing hippies smoking lentils and failing to address the issues we face today. I'm sure the peace movement gets its fair share of this too, and of course it isn't true. (Well not completely!) Issues that affect the environment affect each and every one of us, even though sometimes they may seem a bit removed from everyday life.

Earth Action is the youth section of Friends of the Earth which is one of the leading environmental pressure groups in the country. Friends of the Earth (UK) is

Every year part of the globe has been contaminated in one way or another by our activities - be it acid rain in our atmosphere, toxic waste in our rivers or radioactivity in the seas. If ever action was needed to clean up our environment, it's now.

Every year an area of rainforest the size of England, Scotland and Wales put together is needlessly destroyed. The rainforests may be thousands of miles away but their future concerns us all.



part of an international network of groups around the world. We also have 230 local groups around the country and campaign on such issues as tropical rainforests, nuclear power, acid rain, the urban environment, the ozone layer and habitat destruction. Earth Action will complement the work of Friends of the Earth and, while the political lobbying goes on, we will be out on the streets trying to change public opinion! That way we can apply pressure from both ends and achieve the maximum effect.

We are aiming to set up a network of active campaigning groups around the country, concentrating initially on tropical rain-

forest destruction and pollution. We'll be setting up a series of Days of Action on these issues and will produce full back-up material for each one. This will include a run-down of the problem and what you can do about it.

The first Day of Action will be on Rainforests and takes place on April 23rd. It's really important that we make a big impact so if you want to find out more please contact:

Earth Action,
26-28 Underwood Street
London N1 7JQ
Tel 01-490 1555

STOP TRIDENT AT ALDERMASTON

CND is holding a major national event this Easter to oppose the Government's plans to start production of Trident warheads at a huge new complex at Aldermaston, Berkshire.

We are starting at 10am on Good Friday, 1st April, from our usual spot at Hyde Park, where we'll be assembling for the four day march to the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston.

BE THERE IN PERSON...

The march will follow the route of the A4, stopping overnight at Southall, Maidenhead and Reading on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. Accommodation will be provided for all who register by March 16th (forms available from Underwood St) and there will be facilities for women-only as well as mixed accommodation.

You will need to be self-sufficient apart from this, though, that is bringing your own food and bedding.

ENCIRCLE THE BASE

On Easter Monday, everyone will arrive at AWE Aldermaston around 12 noon, shortly afterwards forming a human chain and surrounding the base with noise... bring your own form of noise. Our demand is that from now on the plant is only used to dispose of existing nuclear weapons - then shut down.

THE MILITARY BYE-LAWS

There are military bye-laws in force at Aldermaston which prohibit putting things on the fence - we consider such bye-laws to be an attempt to silence our protest and will be attaching peace symbols like the ones enclosed in this issue of *Sign of the Times* to the fence on behalf of all those CND supporters and sympathisers who can't be with us. As the Atomic Weapons Establishment itself is very dangerous, and anyone breaking in could easily come into contact with radioactive materials, we will not be cutting the fence.

YOUTH CND RALLIES

Youth CND is organising its own youth gate, and we'll be having our own rally alongside the women's and Christian rallies.

Special guests include the Pop Icons, featured in this very mag, and Mighty Mighty of May 30th fame.



So, get in touch with your CND group/area/region to find out about coaches now.

...OR BE THERE IN SPIRIT

For those who can't be at the event for whatever reason, we are inviting you to get

your message across at AWE Aldermaston via the dove, radiation and CND symbols, along with a donation towards the cost of organising the event.

All symbols we receive will be put on the fence at Aldermaston on Easter Monday.

Contact CND for more peace symbols, too, for your friends and relatives.

AWE ALDERMASTON'S TRACK RECORD

- 27.1.59 Leak of radioactivity
 - 16.2.59 One man injured and two killed in an explosion
 - 17.8.88 Explosion wrecked processing plant
 - May '61 Two scientists contaminated with plutonium
 - Late 70s Ground contamination from leaking drums discovered
 - July '79 One man killed in an explosion
 - Feb '78 Workers boycotted one building because of contamination
 - Aug '78 12 workers found to be internally contaminated
 - 1978 Ponchin Inquiry finds 'plutonium in air commonly exceeds limits'. During the Inquiry 70 workers found to have plutonium in their bodies.
 - 1981 A1 building sealed off due to contamination
 - 1981 A GP in Basingstoke discovered six cases of lung cancer in Aldermaston workers contaminated when one of the A1 buildings was re-opened.
- In the late 70s and early 80s a number of other cancer cases came to light and in five of the cases the widows of the workers are suing AWE Aldermaston.

YOUTH PEACE WEEK

For those of you who haven't heard, it was decided at the last National Committee that our next major campaign should take the shape of a youth peace week some time in July. Basically the structure will be as follows:

1. An event on the first Saturday to kick things off, organised by London Region. This is to be bright and original, involving celebrities etc, in order to gain as much publicity as possible.
2. Local groups throughout the week can arrange actions on as large a scale as possible, bring the week to the attention of local people.
3. Something to draw things to a close on the final Saturday will be organised in the regions. Hopefully, simultaneous demos or vigils around the country will generate further publicity.

The main advantage of such a campaign is its flexibility, in allowing everyone to do their own thing within the framework of a wider national campaign. Its emphasis will be the theme of youth and the future, to get the message across loud and clear, (that is, the peace movement is ALIVE with new voices). Because of this, actions do not have to be restricted to a single issue: groups can campaign around broader issues if they feel it will make their event more effective. This will emphasise the diversity of the movement. Although we may internally disagree from time to time, it only makes us stronger in an event such as this!

The final regional event we decided needed a more specific theme. It was thought that the INF treaty would make a good base for this, perhaps taking the form of something similar to CND's 'Now let's scrap the lot' idea. It's an ambitious campaign, as it requires everyone in YCND's energies and enthusiasm to make it work. Please think up brilliant ideas, and put them in motion as soon as possible.

Regional reps should be organising area dayschools in March to plan our event as well as Aldermaston. If your regional rep isn't, then why not give them a friendly boot up the backside! **Remember** - The success of this campaign depends on you! So, activate your region, get your group grooving together with some friends or whatever, but please *do something!* Just imagine how brilliant it would be if every single group and individual across the country joined in! Please pass on your comments, wonderful action ideas and anything else you can think of to Claire McMaster 22-24 Underwood St, London N1 7JG.



★ erasure

IN THE BIN

I played in the park once, in Ealing. It wasn't advertised or anything, we just set up a few deckchairs and played. There were some builders working nearby who found out that we planned to play the next day as well, so they came along and started throwing eggs and things at us. It was good fun really.'



So says the somewhat shy, softly-spoken Andy Bell about his early days. Other prospective pop-stars confronted with such a violent reaction to their music might well simply have abandoned the idea and gone to work at an estate agent's, but not him. Undaunted by this early failure in his bid for stardom, he answered an advert in *Melody Maker* which had been placed by a certain Mr Vince Clarke (late of Depeche Mode, Yazoo and The Assembly) who was looking for a vocalist and writer to form a new group. Andy got the job and so began Erasure. I wonder what those builders think now if they ever catch a glimpse of their one-time egg target on *Top of the Pops*?

It is February, and Erasure are hard at work on their third album, the follow-up to the big-selling *Circus* LP. I am slightly late for our meeting: delays on London's infamous Northern Line. After searching anonymous south London back streets I eventually find them in church. Well, not exactly in church, but in a church now in use as a 24-track recording studio. From the outside it gives no hint of a conversion of any sort other than the Christian kind. 'They still have a service here once a year

or something,' says Vince. 'We're recording on hallowed ground; maybe that's why our records do well!'

After making ourselves comfortable among the paraphernalia of modern recording, I ask Vince and Andy about the album they're in the process of making. Vince: 'I'm not really 100% certain about it at the moment. I think we're taking a few chances this time; some of the songs are a bit different, some aren't really commercial.'

Andy: 'It's not that they're not commercial.'

Vince: 'Well, no... it's... commercial enough.'

Andy: 'I think it's very commercial.'

Vince: 'Extremely commercial. In a way, yes, but... different.'

Andy: 'What do you think of it, then?'

Vince: 'Well, it's less aggressive, isn't it? More adult.'

Andy: 'It's more toned down, more like, say, Sade or Simply Red.'

You mean more mellow maybe?

Vince: 'Yeah, mellow... Which is really terrifying.'

Andy: 'It's not terrifying, it's appealing to a wider audience, isn't it?'

Vince: 'I'm just not sure about it yet. It's getting better, though... Slowly.'

Have you heard Dollar's version of your song 'L'Amour'?

Andy: 'I think it's crap. They must be the tackiest group in the world, I mean, she's really living it, isn't she? I suppose it's quite funny really.'



Do you like being famous? Do you get hassled much when you go out?

Andy: 'Vince doesn't.'

Why?

Andy: 'He doesn't go out!'

Do you get hassled sometimes?

Andy: 'It depends. One night last week I was in this club and two blokes came up really close to me. They were really pissed and they kept saying things like, "You're in that naff band, aren't you?" and stuff like that. I wanted to tell them to piss off, but being a polite person...'

Vince: 'He just breathed back at them!'

Does that kind of thing restrict you from having a good time in public?

Andy: 'Not really, no. Apart from the Press...'



Have you had any false stories printed about you?

Andy: 'All the stories are false... The English gutter press is disgusting. I can remember that when we were in Sweden on tour our record company phoned us up and said that someone from *The Sun* had phoned them to say they were going to print a story saying I had AIDS unless I could prove otherwise. I had already been tested and found negative so I had to go down to *The Sun* and present my certificate, which is pathetic but I had to do it, I suppose.'

The last album, *Circus*, seemed more political than its predecessor, was that intentional?

Andy: 'Not really intentional; we were writing things we felt at the time. It depends what mood we're in, I mean, at the moment I'm feeling very pissed off about the Clause 28 thing.'

Clause 28 of the recent Local Government Bill is designed, the Government say, to stop local councils from 'promoting homosexuality' but many people are concerned that it may result in censorship of the arts - pop records, books, plays, films - and be a first step down a road toward far wider repression. Andy has never made any secret of his sexuality and is obviously very angry about the Bill.

Andy: 'It's all part of the whole anti-gay hysteria, like the AIDS publicity in the press. It's a very depressing time, but at least people are at last becoming aware that their rights are being attacked and it's making them get up and protest like never before. It's exciting to see that power coming from people.'

What about the recent INF nuclear weapons treaty; is that a reason for optimism about the state of the world?

Andy: 'I think it's a joke. It's the Tories saying, "Aren't we nice, getting rid of all these weapons for you?" But at the same time they're looking at ways to install nuclear weapons on ships and submarines to make up for the ones they've lost.'

Vince: 'I really don't think this government's worried about Russian invasion at all - it's all about money, and keeping themselves popular with the public.'

Andy: 'That's exactly what it is.'

Vince: 'It's about making sure that the rich businessmen stay rich so that their system continues. The arms race is a very financially viable business to be part of.'



The studio is humming to itself like some sleeping giant about to be woken by its intruders. There are TV monitors displaying hieroglyphics and digital displays in blood-red and steel-blue. I'm almost afraid to put my tea mug down in case I wipe out two months' work by touching an unseen button. Vince flicks on a monitor and plays back a drum track. 'You won't get anything out of him now,' smiles Andy. 'He's away.'

What's the album going to be called?

Vince turns round. 'We haven't got one yet.'

Andy: 'Yes we have! What about that, you know, what we said last night?'

Vince: 'Oh that! No way!'

That suggestion's in the bin, is it?

Vince: 'In The Bin!' That's a good title! And remember you read it here first!'

I leave Vince and Andy discussing the title of their new commercial or not so very commercial next LP. As I retrace my steps to the tube station I am very curious to hear how it turns out; I mean, Andy Bell as Sade? I don't think the ticket collector knew what I was smiling about. There were still delays on the Northern Line.

ERASURE 'In The Bin'
by Tim Reyna



Q: Name an activity which doesn't involve any duffle coats, is fairly effective and utterly silly?
A: Street theatre!

STREET THEATRE

The problem with street theatre is that its image has been reduced to that of brown rice, lentils and rainbow socks. Street theatre has none of the prestige of a scripted play in which you can give your own interpretation. However, in another way this is its advantage. I, myself, was always a bit wary of the drama clique at school and, although I enjoyed acting, I was not too keen on the script (crumpled) carrying, long overcoats plus long fringe wearers who were always to be seen rushing around shouting 'Darling, I'm late for rehearsals'. Maybe I am the only person who found the child star theatrics nauseating, but if you enjoy acting, and at the same time are looking for an effective way of campaigning which gets away from leaflets and badge stalls, then street theatre could be the answer.

But the question is, the answer to what? In my humble opinion, leaflets and all the tried and trusted methods are all well and good, however, if we are to convince the people of this country that we as 'the youth' hold that nuclear weapons are inherently immoral, then we need to campaign in such a way that we cannot be ignored! One answer would be to burn down some well-loved monument etc - but would this benefit our image as a non-violent movement? I think not! So, the question is how do we put across the whys and wherefores of our campaign, without boring both ourselves and the people we are aiming at? Now read on...

1. **Who?** - well the answer to that is anyone with enough guts to go out in front of thousands of people they know and ruin their street cred for 100 years in under an hour! All you need in actual fact is a relatively good idea and a minimum of one person (i.e. you) to perform it.

2. **Why?** - You are studying the ancient form of kamikaze and want a 'dress rehearsal' (gosh a bad pun as well as brilliant journalism!) before applying.

Part of the answer is in fact that you are fed up with the dowdy image of the person handing out yet more leaflets. Street theatre makes people laugh, and on a Saturday morning with eight tons of shopping that can leave a lasting impression. Plus the fact that someone dressed up as a banana reciting *Protect and Survive* in a sarcastic voice is likely to get talked about at the dinner table! Father: Today I saw some idiot in a banana suit making fun of something called flexible response.

Offspring: How amazingly astute and politically aware us kids are! It gives me a strange desire to rush straight out and pay the surprisingly small sum of £2 to join YCND!

So, as you can see, going out and making a complete banana of yourself does have its advantages!

What? - A banana shaped body and 4.75 metres of yellow tissue paper often helps when the theatrical mood strikes.

The first thing which one should remember about this art form, is you don't need any expensive props - or any props at all! In fact props are a pretty jolly bad idea. (Rushing around all over town searching for the living room rug isn't ever much fun!) Because you are mostly performing to people who consider that they have better things to do than listen to a 6ft banana, it has to be short and not too deep (maan). The secret of a successful double life as a banana is to go straight to the point, wear ridiculous clothes, make a lot of noise by shouting and jumping around and generally being a bit of a prune. (This really isn't that difficult: young Tories do it all the time!)

Anything from a newscast in a silly voice with the odd scream and lots of political comment (making stupid faces and falling down dead comes into the aforementioned category). This basically makes the whole thing sound useless, but as long as you present the serious message we all have in a way that is obvious and forceful, the more you shout 'I'm even more mad than you', the more people will listen. (It reassures them).

Checklist:

- Short
- Colourful
- Loud
- Obvious and immediately clear message
- Topical (INF etc)
- Interesting

NB. It is never wise to (a) humiliate, (b) physically abuse or (c) verbally abuse any revered member of the community.

Where? - In a black plastic bin-liner in your loft is not one of the most rewarding venues you could choose. One more promising alternative is outside any busy shopping mall or any busy street. Market places are good for both fresh vegetables and fruit (notice no mention of bananas!) and street theatre. Obstructing major roads with a performance of world destruction featuring an atomic carrot is likely to end with an audience of a tin mug and a mattress



in the most desirable of venues (a cell at the local nick!)

When? - 3.30 on a stormy night at the top of a closed multi-storey car park can be very artistically rewarding, affording many an exciting interpretation of the old classic '10 megaton turnip meets raunchy Ronald at the negotiating table.' Saturdays at around 2.30pm in the busiest part of town you can find is less adventurous but there is the rather central question of average audience ratings. The other answer is get off your fat blueberries - no only joking, no, but seriously - to take a more serious tone, you can perform where and when you want. Go to another town if you want to remain anonymous or try somewhere a bit less crowded to get the hang of it all.

Howe? - (as Geoffrey often remarks). The answer is simple. If you can get a few friends into a frivolous frame of mind and sit around for about fifteen minutes (one or two cups of tea worth), then before long you have something of no artistic value whatsoever, but you will also be guaranteed an afternoon spent staggering around laughing (that is, enjoying yourself!) while spreading the urgent warning which we all have.

Well, if I can make a total pomegranate of myself in front of all the national YCND members at conference, then there's no excuse for you lot not making a two or three hour excursion into the scintillating world of fruit as well.

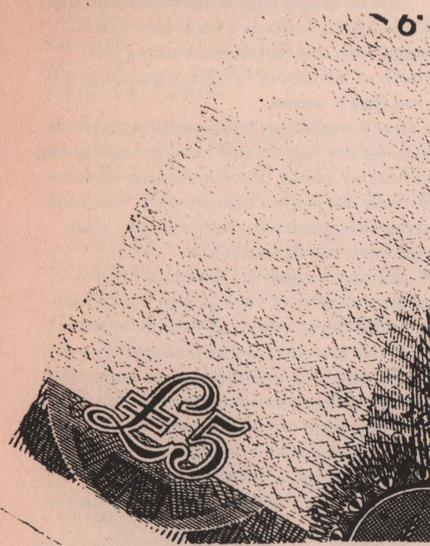
If you went to the workshop on street theatre at YCND conference, then you have just wasted the past ten minutes - if you weren't at that particular gathering of the fruit then you can decide for yourself. Oh well, as the overcoat wearers say, 'that's show-business!'

In peas, **the man they call Broccoli Spears.**

Watch out for future revelations from the man they call Broccoli Spears. Who is he? What is he?? Where does he live??? For the answers to these questions, look for more information in the next *Sign of the Times*...

FUNDRAISING

One of the many problems that confront YCND groups is how to get their hands on some money. In London this is a problem that we are all too familiar with and getting funds together to do something has always been a major problem. Without finance you are prevented from doing anything.



After an office brainstorm, we came up with some fundraising ideas you might like to try!
Benefits Music, poetry, theatre, cabaret, disco.
Sponsored events Walk, swim, dog walk, fast, slim, parachute, jump, cycle, ride, dance, bounce, football match, row, Booze against Cruise.
Others Stalls, street theatre, petitioning, sign a plaster Trident, duck race, balloon race, carol singing, jumble sale.

Because of this, one of the first considerations of a group should be organizing a fundraising event; only then can you tackle more ambitious campaigning projects. We have had both our successes and failures in the fundraising arena, but most of our mistakes have been largely avoidable. To prevent you from stumbling across our mistakes I have decided to pass on some of our better ideas.

As far as local groups are concerned, the conventional 'churchy' events are often the best. Jumble sales do not require an initial outlay and so nearly always prove to be profitable. However they demand a lot of hard work and commitment. Firstly, a hall must be found and if you search hard enough it is possible to find one which you can use either very cheaply or even for free. The jumble must then be collected: this can be done by ads in shop windows or even better by knocking on people's doors. If you choose to do this you can then scour the high-class areas and so 'obtain a better class of jumble'.

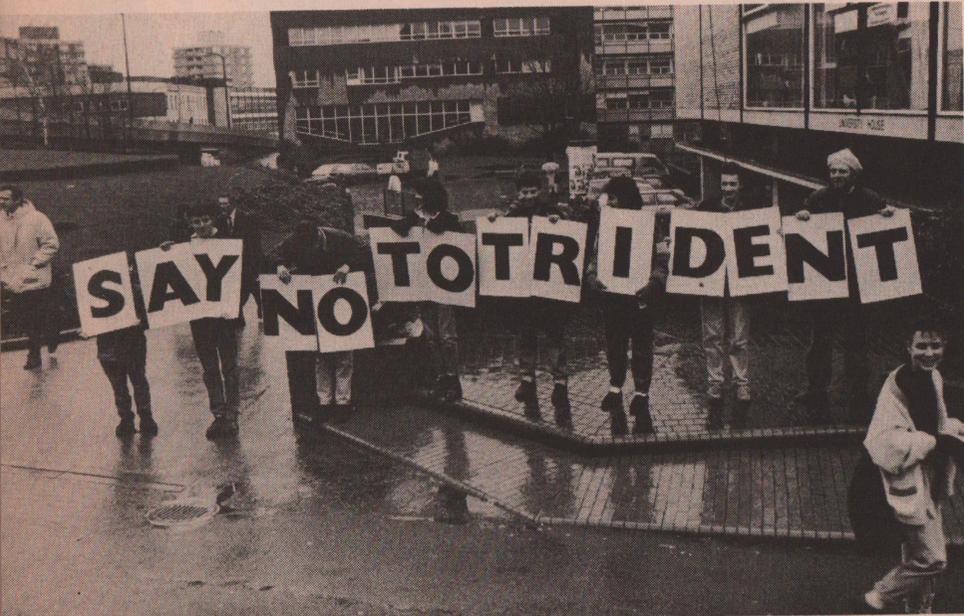
A more novel way of fundraising is to undertake a sponsored silliness: what's particularly appealing about this is the fact that you can combine campaigning and moneygrabbing, for, if your idea is suitably bizarre, you can write a press release and send it to your local journal. Such unusual events might include sponsored street theatre, sponsored hostage taking, sponsored high street die-ins and sponsored busking. A well-used idea is that of a 'bread not bombs' fast, with a portion of the proceeds going to War on Want or some other worthy Third World charity. Your group can take to the streets and leaflet around the issue, encouraging shoppers to contribute the sum of a loaf of bread; few people will refuse if you emphasise the Third World connection.

All the above can be done with the minimum of money, but, if your group already has a tidy sum and is looking to increase it, more ambitious projects can be undertaken. These usually involve providing a service, a party, an evening of cabaret, music, poetry and so on. Many groups have found that a gig works well, for, although the initial expense is quite steep, people are generally prepared to pay a hefty admission fee, such as £2. This is even more true if you issue cheap-rate invitations beforehand saying that reduced entry will be guaranteed on production. Good publicity is essential. Gigs also provide you with a ready-made platform and audience to talk to about your group and its activities. It has been found that student unions and colleges are most sympathetic when it comes to hall and PA hire. Better still, if you live in a nuclear-free zone, you could pressure your council into giving you the town hall cheap.

In the summer you can think up highly imaginative ways of getting people to part with their money. If you have a river, you could try a plastic duck race, charging participants a sum to enter and giving the fastest 10% of the profit. Balloon races tend to attract the kiddies and so does face-painting. It is often a good idea to have a focal point like a stall, with leaflets and merchandise (available on a sale-or-return basis from a shop) with all of the above events happening around it.

On a final note, the most important attribute of a successful fundraiser is a sense of humour and a will to succeed. Don't be deterred by blank receptions or by unexpected rain. Besides, if you make big enough prats of yourselves, someone is bound to take pity on you and give you some money. Best of luck and keep on fighting.

Being a Regional Rep



at the moment, the situation in YCND looks healthy, if we look at the figures. On paper, our local groups have trebled and national members have increased whereas CND's are on the decline. This shows that our campaigning is reaching out to young people, and the importance of Youth CND is that we are the future of the campaign as a whole.

At our national conference in Manchester recently a lot of local activists expressed the feeling of isolation in their campaigning, and that an annual national demonstration in London was not the answer to arouse activity in their areas.

Young people find it hard to mobilise for these events because:

1. They are taking exams, which commits them to studying and takes up a lot of free time.
2. Money is scarce.
2. They are not allowed to travel to demos so far away.

Also, national demos take up a lot of office time and resources. So at conference it was agreed to have 'city' demos which would coincide over a weekend. Local

'Say no to Trident' cards, as seen at YCND conference, used to full effect by Sheffield YCND at the recent Liberal Assembly

groups would theoretically find it easier to build for this kind of event, which would be more relevant and closer to home. The danger with this sort of campaign is that most of the work cannot be initiated from the office, therefore more pressure will be put on the regions to 'come up with the goods'.

Most regions find it hard to operate at the moment for several reasons:

1. Regions are mapped in such a way that they cover an area where travel and contact is difficult. For example Scotland - how can two regional reps coordinate an activity for the whole of Scotland?
2. Regional reps do not keep groups informed of what they are each doing. Most regional reps find it hard to put in the time and energy needed to build communication and activity in their region. This is probably because they are running their local group and keeping it going too - doing too much ends up with a crumbling region and local groups as well as a burnt-out activist.

The solution is to try and 'delegate' work as much as possible. It is necessary to put your trust in others to do what they say; it helps everyone feel as if they have a role to play in the whole process!

National Committee is the decision-making body of Youth CND, but most members may not be aware of its existence. Regional reps are there to put forward the views of their region as far as possible. Some groups have not heard from their regional rep for a long time, or don't know who their regional rep is!

This all might sound bureaucratic, but for youth to work as a structured campaign with the aim of convincing the youth of Britain of CND's arguments it is vital that it works.

In my region we tried various methods to keep the region and local groups going as best we could. Here are some of them:

- Split the region into smaller, workable areas to organise in, for example, east and west, north and south.
 - Set up a telephone tree and inform groups nearby of your group's activities (or send them a copy of your newsletter)
 - Write articles for *Protest* and *Sign of the Times*. These bulletins are supposed to be produced for groups and members, they are made up of information and material written by the groups on what they are doing or what issue they feel is important for the rest of the campaign to be aware of.
 - Hold bi-annual or more frequent regional meetings in different towns around the region - perhaps hold informative workshops etc.
 - Send out a regular newsletter with inserts from every group.
- There are plenty of things which can be done very easily to help groups keep contact with each other.

Youth CND is the future of the campaign and we have the capacity to grow even more than last year if we put our minds to it! Let's make CND's 30th birthday a year where we change people's minds and beliefs towards peace.

When I wrote away to CND Headquarters for details of a YCND group in my area, I had no idea what the consequences would be. On impulse, I asked for details about setting up my own group and promptly forgot all about it. A few days later, I received the news that there was no YCND group in St Austell - indeed not in the whole of Cornwall. Enclosed with the letter was an information pack on setting up a group and a list of local YCND national members. My initial reaction was panic - 'I can't do that!' But then I began to think, 'Why not?' As I could not find an answer to that, I decided to attempt at least to start up a group. The meeting I had with a member of St Austell CND was very helpful - he gave me a lot of useful advice and promised the support of the local group. I then wrote to the people on my list, inviting them to come along to the next CND meeting if they were interested in forming a YCND group. All this time, I was keeping Claire McMaster, the YCND co-ordinator, informed about what I was doing, and receiving encouraging letters in reply.

I obtained permission to display a poster advertising this meeting, in the local library; however, one local college refused to let me put up a poster there and, although my own college granted permission, the poster was torn down around five minutes after it had been pinned up! I had done all I could, now I had to see if anyone would respond. A girl I knew from college turned out to be a YCNDER and was very enthusiastic, assuring me that people would be at the meeting. Sadly none of the others I had written to replied.

The evening of the meeting came, and I waited outside the meeting-room, extremely nervously. Would anyone turn up? Just as I decided that I was all alone in this, three people walked around the corner and into the room. Support! We joined in with the actual CND meeting and a great deal of good advice was given to us on advertising our group, meetings etc. Until we really get going on our own, we will join in with the St Austell meetings - so if anyone is interested, please come along! And if anyone reading this is thinking of setting up a YCND group in their area - go for it! It is easier than you think!

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THE BIRTH OF ST. AUSTELL YCND

MAGAZINE COMMENT - OR - CRUELTY CORNER

NEWS AND VIEWS

Sign of the Times is the magazine of youth CND. *Your* magazine. Next issue will see the launch of a new News and Views page! This is your chance to debate internally on any topic you choose, plus it will contain items of news and interesting things every YCNDER should know, for example, that this year we celebrate 30 years' existence of CND! So, if you've some time to spare, why not get out your pen and start writing. (Any articles and comments would also be very welcome!)

In this new regular column (well, we hope it will be regular) we will be reviewing your own mags, rags or news-sheets which your group produces. We will also give a quick star rating, starting from 'a waste of paper' to 'WOW! Why not go national and set up a share scheme and earn millions!' - but something tells me that to earn this five star award you've got to be bl***y good!

Anyway, enough of this prattle, on with the first review.

Nic Fleming is the person responsible for the Yorkshire & Humberside Newsthingy. He is the artist, designer, typist (?) - well, the whole thing really, and he has certainly managed to keep Yorkshire & Humberside in touch with YCND.

Although I have only seen the first two issues of this newsrag, I can honestly say that things are going from good to better (even more so, now that he has discovered the wonders of Letraset!)

It contains all the usual bits of information, what happened at this demo, who will be at the next demo, this meeting, that meeting - and yet because of the humour which has been included in the articles, you certainly don't lose interest.

Cartoons also add to the humour, and so do the occasional one-liner jokes, but quips like 'What is America's biggest aircraft carrier called?' - answer - *Great Britain!* are becoming slightly old hat.

Its size is quite handy also, small and compact so that you can keep dozens of the things in your pockets, ready to hand out to your pals at school or at college.

The best part of this little venture is the cost, as it doesn't cost anything to buy, although donations are gratefully accepted. (I gather not all newsrags offer this unique service.)

It would be interesting to find out just how many people actually contribute to this newsthingy; I have a sneaky feeling that there aren't too many willing contributors in Yorkshire and Humberside, which is a shame as it's such a big place!

All in all, a very good attempt is being made by Nic to keep things running, and making people aware of what is happening in the area and so I think we will give this mag... oh, I don't know... 3? 4? out of 5... something like that.

Anyway, good luck with any future editions, Nic, and as for the rest of you, if you send me a couple of issues of your rag to: JAYSON WHITELEY, 2/3 SUNSIDE, SHEPLEY ROAD, STOCKSMOOR, HUDDERSFIELD, WEST YORKSHIRE, HD4 6XP we will see what we can do!

It was a cold, wet Friday evening when I finally managed to meet Ben Atkinson. I walked through the quiet streets in this strange little town staring blankly at the crumpled piece of paper which was supposedly a 'detailed' map of how to get to his house.

He was throwing some sort of party at his home and I was invited to join in - to break the ice between the interviewer and interviewee as it were - it was also a chance to see what Ben was actually like under 'normal' circumstances.

The party I won't mention (due to the fact that I don't remember much about it!) and so we decided to meet on the following day in Hebden Bridge, the town where he lives.

Saturday: 12 noon. I was sitting in a pub near where Ben lives, waiting for my second meeting. The door swung open and in walked Ben. He acknowledged my presence with a nod and headed straight for the bar, soon to return with a pint of bitter in each hand.

'Here you go - try that.'

He handed me one of the glasses and I quickly took a gulp, trying not to lose any of the precious liquid. I wiped the froth from my lips and nodded my head, 'not bad' I thought.

Ben sat there smiling, half his bitter already drained. 'I have to apologize for the state of my house, my mum is a bit of a DIY freak - only she starts one job and before it's finished she starts on another one.'

His mother was not present at the 'party', nor, I doubt, was she even aware of it. Ben simply grinned at me.

Ben, 17, is currently the treasurer of Yorkshire and Humberside Youth CND and has recently been voted onto the Youth CND National Committee. Although he now lives in Hebden Bridge (which he claims is the 'hippy centre of the north'), both he and his mother originally lived in Birmingham.

'My parent were divorced about fifteen years ago and my mother was shot once.'

I coughed into my drink. Ben looked at me, his smile had gone.

'When we lived in Birmingham my mother was a Social Worker on a local council estate. One day a young lad decided to shoot her - he miss-

LOST IN THE TOWN OF HIPPIES



ed, but only by a couple of inches.'

It was after that incident that they thought about moving somewhere less exciting.

'My father still lives in Birmingham - he likes to play on the Stock Market - I wonder if he bought any B.P. shares?'

He shrugged his shoulders and took another sip of his rapidly disappearing drink.

'Having said that, though, he is against nuclear weapons, but then again he is pro-Conservative as well - he doesn't realize that if there was a nuclear war there won't be much use for money.'

At that moment a waiter arrived with two bowls of steaming chilli con carne.

'Ah, dinner!'

The conversation stopped abruptly as we thanked the waiter, then Ben quickly took a large mouthful and carefully wiped the sauce from his chin. He let out a heavy sigh.

'Best chilli in town', he smiled.

He leaned back in his chair and watched me as I ate, still smiling.

'It was my mother who suggested that I joined the local YCND group. She had seen an

advert in a shop window and thought that I might want to join. She is also interested in the CND movement and so is her boyfriend. I have had an interest in CND for a few years



now, I even gave talks at my old grammar school in Birmingham - but this did not go down well with my housemaster.'

Ben, not aware of any implication he was letting himself in for, went on to explain that Meg Beresford, the CND general secretary, once stayed in his house. Unfortunately he was told by his school that she would not be allowed to give a talk to the rest of the students on the grounds that the talk would be 'biased'. This upset Ben and since then he has always disliked his housemaster.

The chilli had soon disappeared and I quickly bought the next round of drinks. (I was soon finding a liking for this Yorkshire bitter!) As I returned, Ben had concluded a conversation with a group of people on the next table. I recognised a couple of them from the party the previous night.

'Most of my friends here have the same interests that I do, apart from the occasional odd-ball journalist.'

I decided to ignore the personal dig. Ben simply laughed to himself.

'Unfortunately many of them are leaving college and are drifting away, some looking for jobs, others just simply moving area.'

Although Ben has only been in YCND for the past year, he has not been standing idle in his duties, in fact far from it. Apart from his recent election as a regional representative, Ben has also helped with the distribution of thousands of leaflets in his local area, as well as organising a gig for a local band in his town which raised over a hundred pounds.

In addition to this he has attended many meetings both local and national, his most recent one being the national meeting in London.

'That meeting was just so fantastic!' he said with a grin, I guess that could mean anything.

'We even held a youth camp in August up on the moors just outside Hebden Bridge. The actual turnout was disappointing, although those who did manage to come had arrived from all over the country.'

He laughed to himself once again, another private thought which he decided to keep to himself.

One of Ben's main worries is that of decentralisation, he feels that CND funds are being badly spent, running Head Office.

'More money should be distributed to individual regions. I believe that after the meetings in Birmingham, decentralisation will go ahead.'

He downed yet another mouthful of bitter.

'I know a large number of people who support this idea, but as I say, we will have to wait and see what happens at the next meeting.'

At this, Ben swallowed the last of his drink.

'Hebden Bridge isn't a bad little town', (I noticed he had suddenly changed the subject). 'It doesn't have any bad points but I have to admit, even though it's full of hippies, many of the hippies aren't hippies at all - they're yuppies who think they're hippies! That really annoys me, it's so false.'

He shook his head wisely and disappeared into his own thoughts. Suddenly he added, 'Its other bad point is that it's a bit too close to Halifax.'

Ben explained that Halifax was one of those places where no-one travels alone after 11.30pm - even the dogs carry flick-knives!

'Over the past year, things have become worse. It really has become quite a dangerous place - being assaulted is now a common event. I just hope it doesn't spread to here!'

It was on this note that Ben stood up - he had yet another meeting to attend. As we left the pub and said our good-byes, he turned to me, put on his coat and gave me an odd smile again.

'My life doesn't totally revolve around CND, you know. I do lead a reasonably normal life!'

My mind quickly jumped to the party that I had witnessed. 'Normal?' I thought. 'You've got to be kidding!'

Ben walked away laughing.

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