

EVENTS and INTERESTING DATES 1985

JANUARY

1 Anniversary: Dancing on the silos. Greenham 1983

FEBRUARY

6 ♀♀ win the vote. 1918

28 CND Founded 1958

MARCH

1 Nuclear Free Pacific day
Anniversary Bikini Atoll Test 1954
7 ♀♀ Day Eve Labour Party ♀'s Section Event
8 International ♀♀'s Day Women's Festival Events

14 Pacific ♀♀ Tour Mixed Event - ICC Mansfield Rd
7.30pm - wheelchair accessible - CND

15 Pacific ♀♀ Tour ♀♀ only event: Food Slides Video
Talk, bring food: All Saints Community Centre Radford.

16 National Cruise Conference - Manchester Town Hall.

17 Pre-register: CND, 61 Bloom St Manchester M1 3LY.

30 Women's Festival Workshops at WEA on
31 Shakespeare St...

APRIL

- Easter: World Health Day
National CND Demo at Mds-worth
13 Facing our Fears Workshop 10am-4pm please
book through Sylvia at Nottingham 608719

MAY

1 May day
3 Avebury to Salisbury Plain ♀♀ only march
4
5 ♀♀ reclaim Salisbury Plain. Coordinated with CND♀.
24 International ♀♀ Day for Disarmament.

JUNE

1 International Children's Day
5 World Environment Day
21 Summer Solstice

For more info on the events listed above,
contact Women for Peace! (see page 7)

JULY

Peace Festival in Nottingham
19 Anniversary First ♀♀ Rights Conference. Seneca Falls 1848

AUGUST

6 Hiroshima Day
9 Nagasaki Day

SEPTEMBER

5 Greenham Common ♀♀ Peacecamp 1982
17 UN International Day of Peace
23 Autumn Equinox

OCTOBER

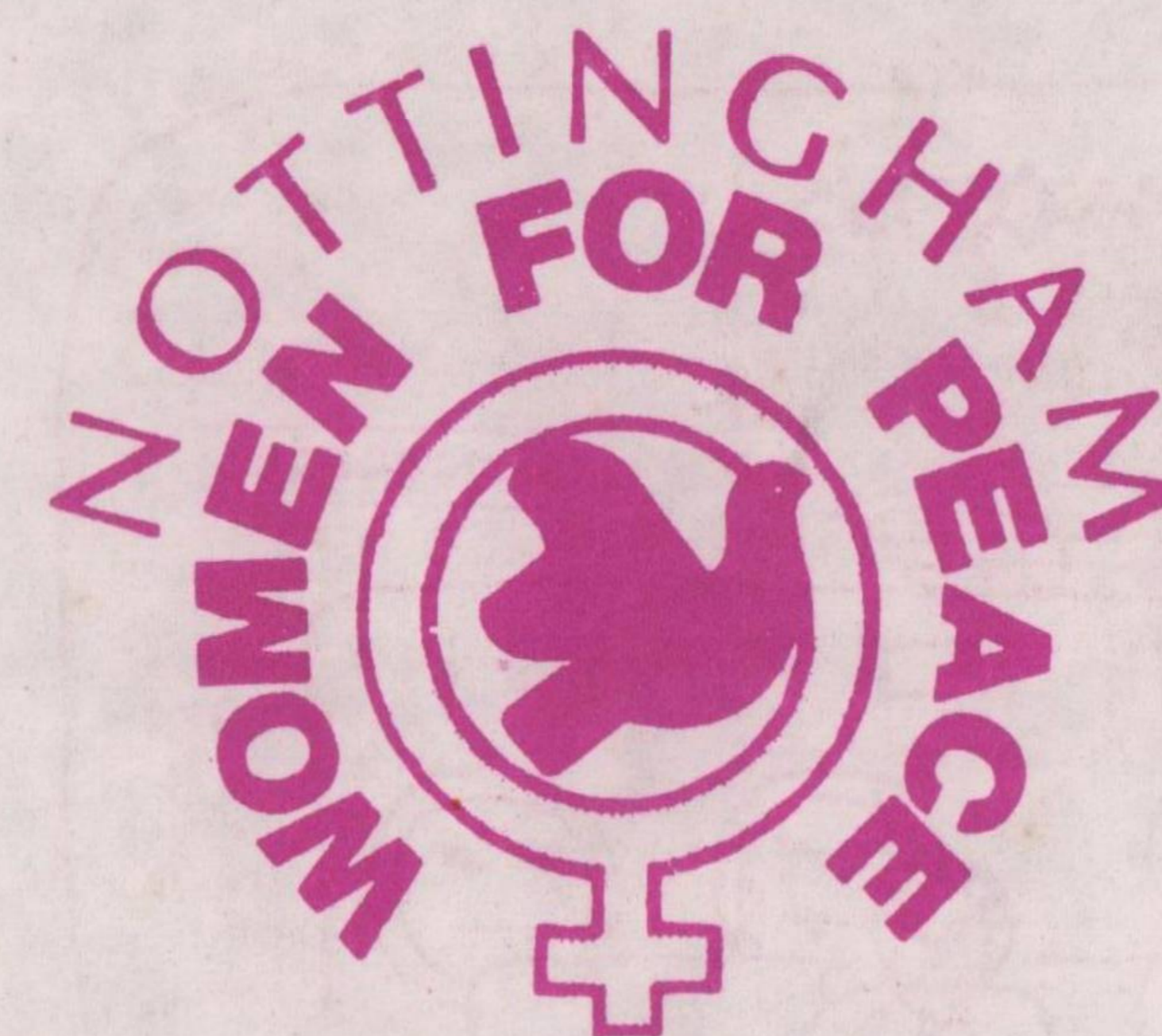
CND National Demo
7 UN Children's Day
16 World Food Day
20-27 One World Week
31 Halloween

NOVEMBER

11 Remembrance Day
12 Anniversary: Death of Karen Silkwood 1974

DECEMBER

1 Prisoners for Peace Day
10 Human Rights Day
12 Embrace the base anniversary: Greenham 1982
16 World's Children's Week
21 Winter Solstice



newsletter

DONATION 10p

MARCH 1985



Pacific Women Tour UK

The Pacific region is the most radioactive and nuclearised zone in the world. Nuclear war, seen by western peace movements as a frightening possibility, has been a reality for the people of the Pacific for forty years. There have been over 240 nuclear explosions there since 1945 and nuclearisation is increasing at an alarming rate. The Pacific is crucial to US global military strategy at every level and contains US bases and weapons systems of every kind. It is here that strategic minerals are mined, nuclear technology developed, weapons tested and deployed. The continued military and economic colonisation of the Pacific has enabled the development of first-strike capabilities and space warfare technology, as well as the siting of the network of intelligence bases which control weapons systems worldwide.

Virtually no information reaches us in the West about what is happening in the Pacific or of the appalling consequences suffered by the millions of indigenous peoples. Whole communities are displaced from their home islands and forced into economic and political dependence on military powers. These people are suffering the whole range of effects of radiation-related illnesses. The risk of birth deformity is so high that women fear pregnancy and childbirth. Some children are born unrecognisable as human because of genetic mutation, and many of those who survive birth die later of radiation-induced cancers.

The indigenous peoples of the Pacific are resisting strongly, demanding not only financial compensation but self-determination, human and land rights and economic independence, which can only come through a nuclear-free, independent and non-aligned Pacific. Women in Britain are working to establish a support network for the Pacific struggles and in addition to spreading information, have been raising money to invite two Pacific Islander women over here to tell their own story. These women -- Chailang Rosapalachios and Titewhai Haiawira -- will be touring Britain in March (coinciding with the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Week) to raise awareness of the concerns of the Pacific people and gain international support for their struggle for human rights. They will be in Nottingham on March 14 and 15, and two events have been arranged:

- Thursday March 14 A mixed event at the International Community Centre on Mansfield Road at 7.30 pm.
- Friday March 15 Women-only event at All Saints Church Hall Radford, starting at 7 pm.



NUCLEAR FREE/INDEPENDENT PACIFIC

Women's Peace Weekend

A National Women's Peace Conference took place in Nottingham over the weekend of November 3 - 4 1984. About 120 women came from all over Britain. There were lots of interesting workshops - too many to choose from - on children, sexuality, party politics, drama, voice, decision-making, classism, racism, spirituality, Nicaragua, Miners' Women's Support, Pacific struggles and more!

There was a general feeling of everyone being very actively involved in sharing experiences and our knowledge, challenging each others' ideas,

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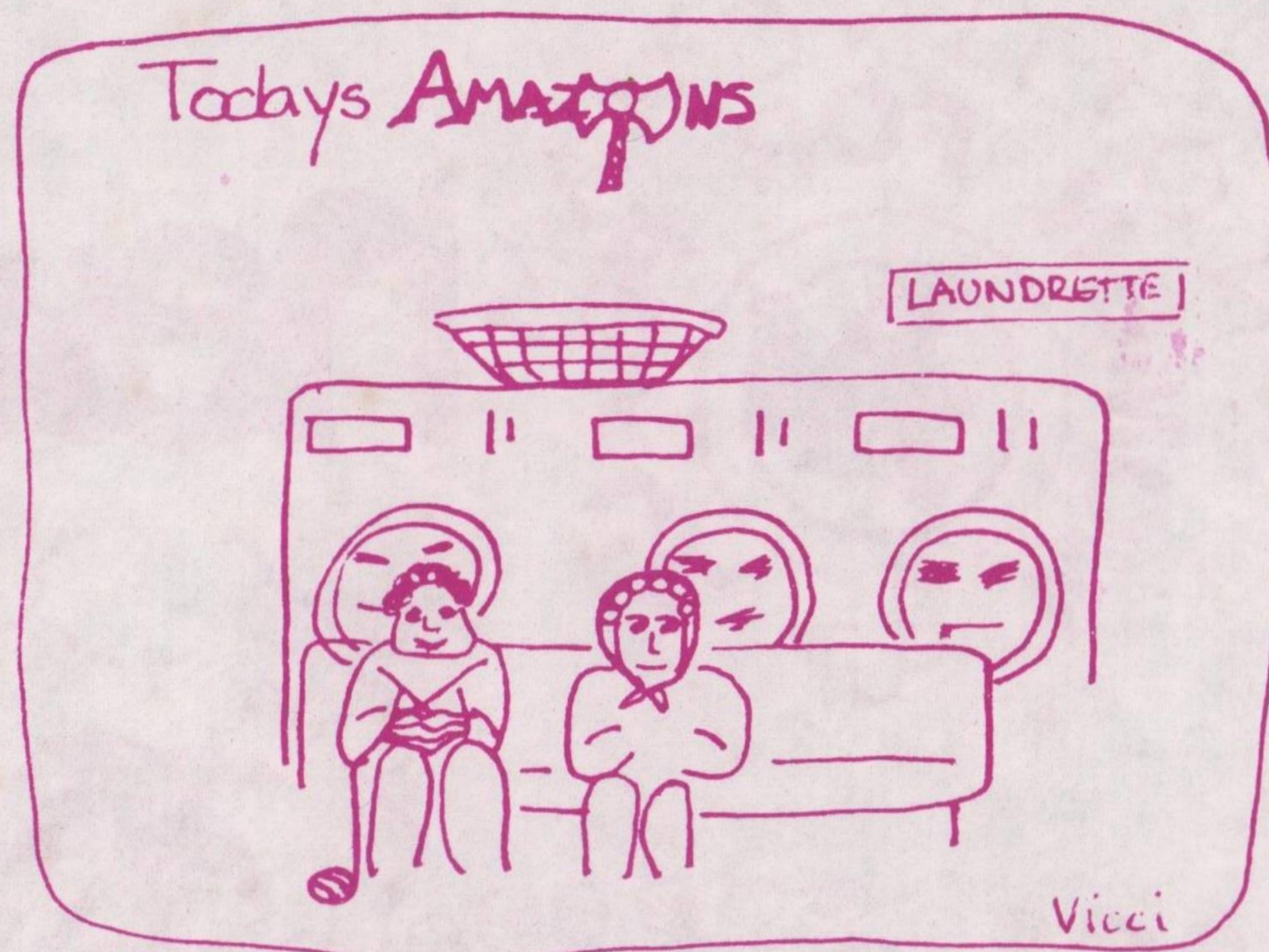
learning and listening. Too often at conferences I've felt that the workshops were a few people talking and the rest of us passive observers - here - partly because of the relatively small size of the workshops, that didn't happen as much. On the whole everyone joined in - had something to say and felt they could say it.

To speak briefly about a few of the workshops. The children's one covered a lot of ground. We talked about talking to our children about nuclear war, our experiences and the problems we'd found. We also talked about the difficulties of bringing up our children in a different life-style with different values and being proud of what we are giving to them - not being afraid of them missing out from not having a conventional upbringing.

In the decision-making workshop we discussed the different kinds of groups we were in - large/small - open/closed and how each group came to decisions. This was for me a very interesting exchange of information to know not only what other groups there are but to know how they work in practice and to compare them (groan - why is our group so bad at making decisions?!) with ours.

Apart from the workshops there were two bookstalls - one from Chile and a general one selling women's books, and the videos.

We had three video machines set up throughout the weekend (including during the social) for women to watch any out of fifteen videos, eg Carry Greenham Home, Reclaim Chilwell, the Nicaragua tape, etc. These went well as they offered a positive choice



of activity - a less demanding but interesting and sociable alternative to the workshops and were generally felt to have been a good idea.

For the children we had a creche, organised by male friends of the group, which went well.

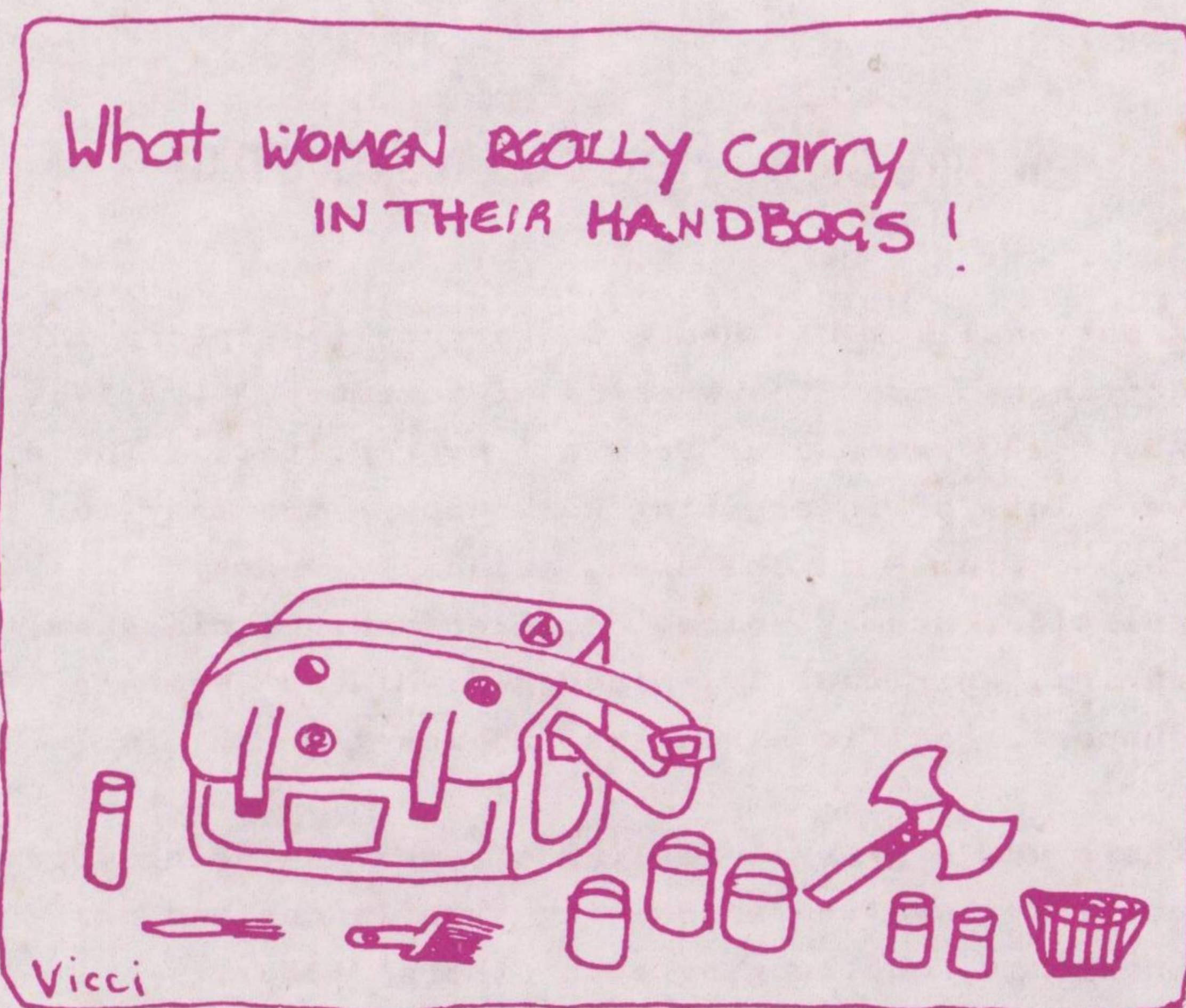
Towards the end of Saturday we all gathered together in the large hall to listen to three speakers - women from a local Women's Support group for the miners, from Nicaragua, and from the Pacific. It was good after a day of intense talking about what was happening to us locally to listen to women talking about women struggling in different ways internationally. After a tiring day it was good also to relax, listen and learn.

All over the world women are struggling for power over our lives. To take control over our land, our bodies, our resources. And through these struggles - as the Women's Support group talked of particularly, we affirm ourselves, we gain courage to be, to live. We realise through doing it that we can change the world. (As Nottingham Women for Peace realised through doing it that we could organise a national conference!)

Then there was the social - despite the complicated system of buying drinks (we didn't have a licence so they had to be "won" in a raffle - a prize every time!) - the social went very well. A lively disco was followed by our own local women's bands - Nasty Habits and the Fabulous Dirt Sisters doing their usual great and inspiring music and songs - as in the Army Song -

"It's gonna need some imagination.
It's gonna take some determination.
How many ways can you find to say NO!"

We finished on Sunday with a brief plenary - mainly an information exchange - with an evaluation of how



it went - lots of goods and some not so goods. We ended up singing together the song - Daughters of Amazon.

repeat { "We are the daughters of Amazon
And it's for freedom we're fighting
repeat { A heavy load, a heavy load,
And it will take some real strength."

As a whole the weekend was enjoyable and energising. The atmosphere in general was very friendly. It was good to share our experiences of what we are doing and to feel that the same struggle is being taken up in different ways by women all over the world.

Another conference is probably being organised in May in Malvern. A fuller report on the Nottingham conference will be out by the beginning of March. SAE and two stamps to Maggie, 6 Colville Street, Nottingham.

* Alconbury Base Invasion *

On December 12, I went to USAF Alconbury with two women from Peterborough, Pat and Carol. I have spent a great deal of time at Greenham, but Alconbury was entirely different, no soldiers guarding the fence, the base is guarded entirely by the USAF (Americans.)

We got in very easily, without causing any criminal damage, and we wandered about for two hours. By accident we eventually ended up by the high security area, where all the super-spy planes are kept.

We were spotted, so we hid in a machine-gun bunker, and we were immediately surrounded. Someone shouted "come out with your hands up." We didn't move at first, then we heard safety catches being taken off guns so we stood up. All around were US soldiers, some crouching beside buildings, some lying down pointing machine guns at us. More shouting: "keep your hands where we can see them", "move over there", "spread out". It was unreal, like being in a bad war film. We were held for 15 minutes until an MOD policeman arrived, (the only one on the base) then we were taken to the Law Enforcement building and held for an hour. Then we were thrown out without being charged.

Once outside we re-set up the Alconbury peace camp. Just as we settled down to sleep, a police car drew up. We were told to move or we would be arrested for obstruction when the MOD man arrived and had a brief chat with the civilian police. They immediately came back and told Carol they didn't think she was over 16 years old so they were taking her to a place of safety, ie Huntingdon Police Station, until they found out where she'd run away from, or her real age. This was silly, Carol is the same age as me. I burst out laughing so he put me under a place of safety order too, but not Pat, who looked older.

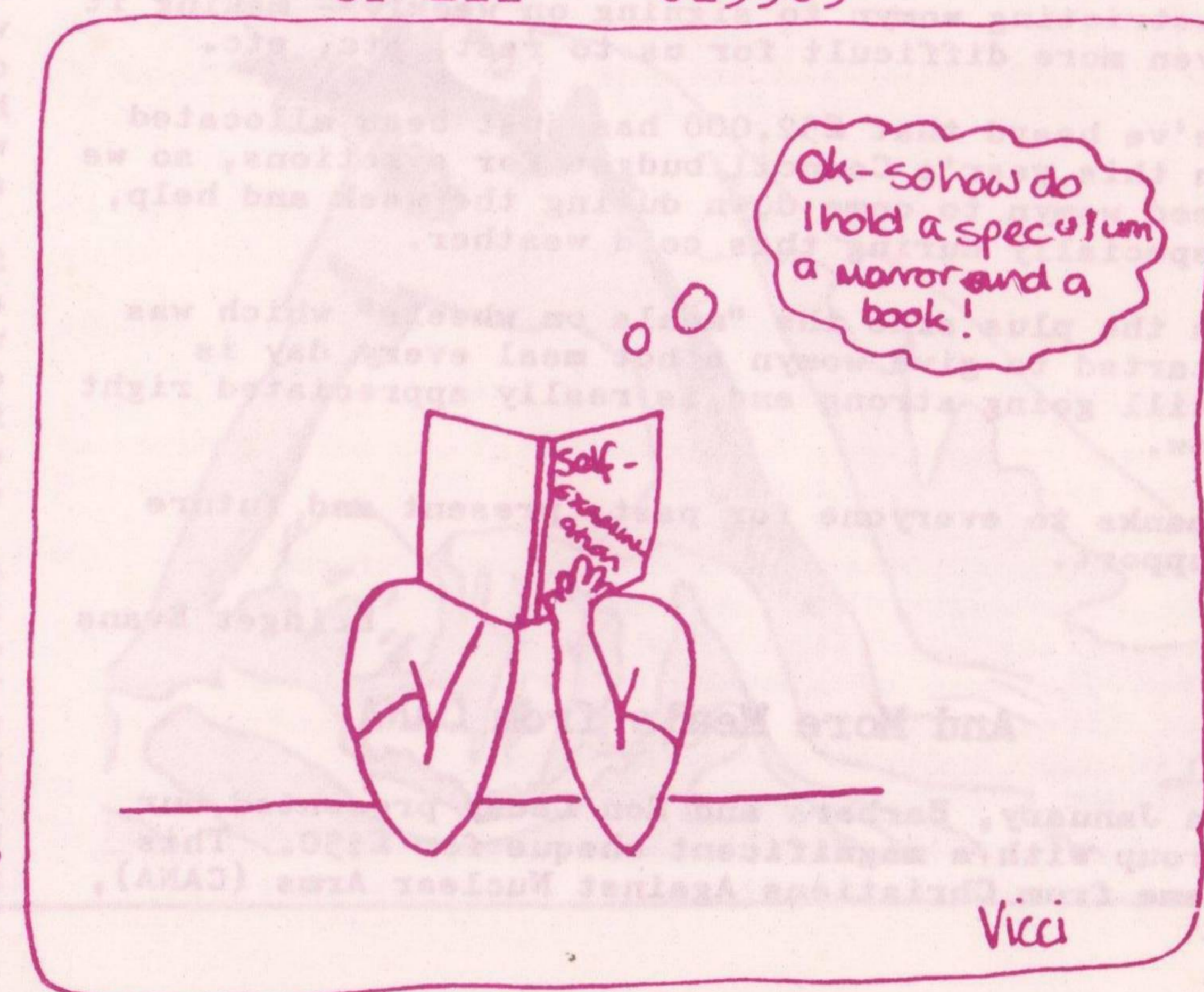
We were taken to Huntingdon Police Station, where we were subject to a lot of verbal abuse from the police on duty, and then locked up in freezing cells for three hours, while Pat had to wait outside and put up with more abuse. When we were released, a new shift had started, so we tried to make a complaint about the treatment we'd received, but we got thrown out of the police station.

When we got back to Peterborough we contacted the local media but they didn't want to know. Soldiers holding unarmed women at gun-point and police harassment of peace protesters just isn't news. These experiences have not put me off protesting, in fact they have made me more determined not to be intimidated into silence ever again.

Notts Women's Festival 1985

The Nottingham Women's Festival will be happening throughout the month of March. There will be lots of different sorts of events going on. A bus containing information on women's issues will be parked on Market Square at the beginning of March and will be travelling to other parts of the county during the festival. On 8 March there will be a celebration of International Women's Day at the International Community Centre on Mansfield Road at 5.00 pm. There will be speakers, food and videos. Then later on the "Moonlighters" women's band will be playing also at the International Community Centre. Trent Polytechnic Women's group are also organising speakers and videos to be shown at both the city site and Clifton site, from 12.30 am to 2.30 pm.

There will be a lot more going on, such as workshops, films, sports, bands, exhibitions etc. So if you want to know more, details will be out from about 26 February in libraries, community centres, shops etc. If you want to get involved in the organisation of next year's women's festival contact Stella 415762 or Liz 625363



Update on Greenham

Sitting here, eating macaroni, an hour before a newsletter meeting. Our thoughts turn towards our dear sisters sat on that desolate slope 100 miles away, at Greenham Common. Remember? Women are still at Greenham (except us four on a brief, well-deserved rest.)

Recent publicity has centered around Molesworth - which is great. Womyn from Greenham have been to support the camp there, both before and after the eviction and will continue to do so, as much as we can.

But can we just remind people that while Greenham womyn are out of the news, the opportunity to further harass us is being grabbed with both hands by the "authorities".

No mention in the press was made of the womyn who cut through the second silo fence recently. Or the fact that their evictions have been stepped up



to one a day - including Saturdays and Sundays (good morning, Newbury District Council here - wakey, wakey.) Or that the DHSS in Newbury is now restricting womyn to signing on weekly - making it even more difficult for us to rest, etc, etc.

We've heard that £52,000 has just been allocated in this year's Council budget for evictions, so we need womyn to come down during the week and help, especially during this cold weather.

On the plus side the "meals on wheels" which was started to give womyn a hot meal every day is still going strong and is really appreciated right now.

Thanks to everyone for past, present and future support.

Bridget Evans

And More Meals from CANA

In January, Barbara and Ron Lacey presented our group with a magnificent cheque for £150. This came from Christians Against Nuclear Arms (CANA),

Cruise is out! Feelings and Actions

When Cruise first arrived in November 1983, and again after the first convoys went out, Nottingham Women for Peace were vocal and active in opposition. In recent months we have been quieter (virtually silent) which has worried many members of the group. Have we been defeated by the sheer inexorability of events? Are we lazy/preoccupied with other things? If we do still care about Cruise, what is preventing us from getting our act together to express and make public our own distress and anger?

At a recent Women for Peace meeting we grasped the nettle (very tentatively!) and asked ourselves and each other how we felt about Cruise actions, past, present and to come. The subsequent discussion, although by no means exhaustive, seemed worth recording.

The Greenham veterans helped us look at the huge gap in experience between being at camp and seeing/hearing/feeling the effects of the convoys going in and out, and being in Nottingham engrossed in families, friends and work, keeping the reality of Cruise at a distance. Chris said, "No-one who'd ever seen it come and go would ever feel the same again." We believed her.

There seemed a general recognition of the difficulty of holding on to anger, fear, terror, etc, whilst trying to "carry on" ordinary life. The tendency is to cut off or deny in order to keep going and yet this consumes energy in a wasteful way and still leaves women feeling guilty. It also frustrates active women who feel anger and resentment over what looks like apathy and low key reaction from others.

In terms of organising actions we came to recognise that in trying to plan events which can include women from both ends of the "activity spectrum" we have concentrated on trying to make the action acceptable (ie respectable/law-abiding/safe) to the quiet majority. As a consequence (or indeed as a prerequisite) we have diluted the passion which was the reason for the action, and so limited the effectiveness of the protest. Clearly we must look for ways of enabling and empowering would-be active women - not tying their hands!

and was a donation for the peace camps -- whichever we felt was in the most immediate need.

We were delighted to receive the money and also very much appreciated being able to use our own discretion for its dispersal. A small proportion has been earmarked for the visit of the Pacific women, but the bulk has gone to a marvellous scheme called Greenham Meals on Wheels.

Since the evictions at the camp became so vicious and so frequent, women have been left without the wherewithall (cooking pots, firewood, water, etc.) on many occasions to cook a meal. Volunteers from Newbury and district worked out a system of cooking and delivering a hot vegetarian meal to every camper who needed it EVERY DAY!

All reports are very positive indeed. The food is good, the need is clear, and the appreciation of practical support is very strong. Very many thanks to CANA -- we hope that they feel their money has gone to a good cause. If anyone else has any spare cash or could organise a fund raising event, Greenham Meals on Wheels (who can be contacted through Nottingham Women for Peace) need every penny!

A relatively simple and practical proposition would be to agree to go ahead separately on two different fronts at any one time. Encourage the women who feel that leafleting, talking, doing stalls etc is "possible" and appropriate for them. Actions of this sort are usually accessible to even the least confident activists, and can be organised in advance so as to involve women with many commitments and little "free" time.

The women at the other end of the spectrum who are at the stage of finding time, energy, passion, etc to contribute to a more dynamic, high profile response to Cruise would therefore be left free to organise effectively according to their own lights and give solid and public expression to their feelings of grief and outrage.

It does seem crucial to plan actions for every time Cruise comes out. There are no outings less significant than others. Each practice run gives the military and the government that bit more confidence in handling the machines themselves and the opposition. If anything the urgency is growing, not diminishing and we must prevent Whitehall from winning the propaganda war. If it looks (because we do not protest) as though we in the peace movements are "getting used" to Cruise and its comings and goings there will be good reason for the government to hope that the rest of the country have accepted its arrival, the convoys and the prospect of future use, and view it all with equanimity.

The women at camp at Greenham have always been a very potent symbol and source of inspiration for our group. We have peace campers with us now in Nottingham. If we listen, can they convey to us (in words, picture, drama, song) the fearful experience of living cheek by jowl with Cruise? If we can let ourselves dare to feel the outrage ourselves we are well on the way to knowing how to communicate this to everyone we meet. Opposition to Cruise will ring out loud and clear..

Sylvia Collin
15.2.85

Convoy Returning - Blue Gate

A whistle shrieks from the freezing dark
desperate fumbings for boots
and a mouth gone dry with dread.

Thro' the tent flap

I see

the grim faced hundreds all around;
breaking, destroying, pushing all before them.

(Are they so well trained they really do not see?)

And then I am out there

in the cold, ice night
behind the rigid, impenetrable line,
I stand and helplessly watch.

A blur of vehicles, robot men
how many?

What sort of a question is that?

How do you count

a convoy of death

numb, shaking -- I didn't think to count.

Now the fog closes down the night

a small huddle of women by the fire --
some weep softly; some juggle, one is fire eating
a lone voice keening thro' the trees,
we have looked into hell.

Yet tomorrow, after the bailiffs

we will pick up the pieces

and oppose them again.

bat

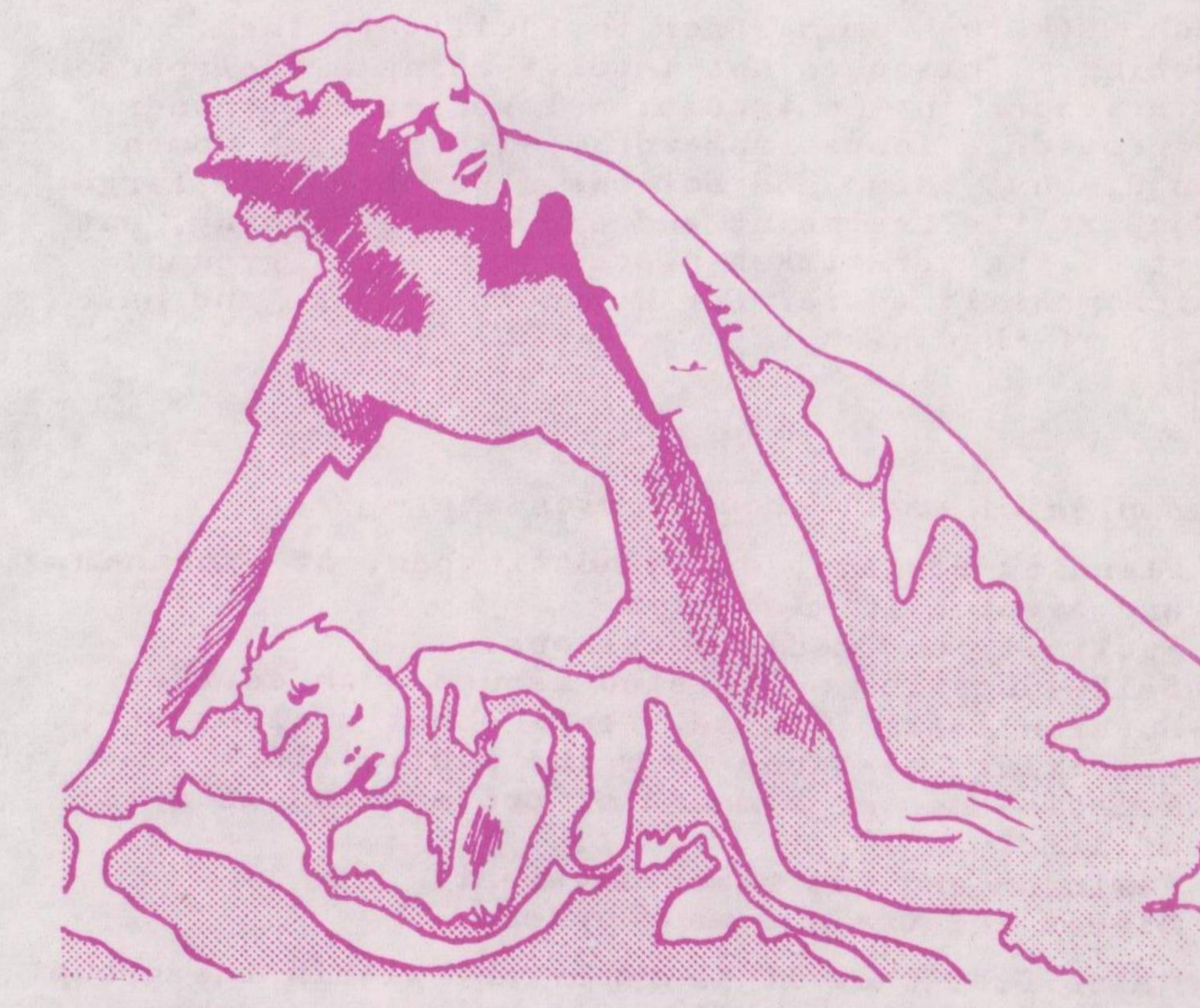
Facing Our Fears - April Workshop

April 13 10am to 4pm All Saints Community Centre, Radford. Registration in advance required

A workshop on this theme took place at the National Women's Peace Conference in Nottingham last November and following its success we have asked the woman who ran it -- Joan Smith -- to come back and do a oneday workshop for us. This is an excerpt from a leaflet on it to give you an idea of what the workshop will be about.

"Unblocking repressed fears and feelings releases energy, clears the mind. Repression is physically expensive; it drains the body, dulls the mind and muffles emotional responses.

When repressed material is brought to the surface and released, energy is released as well; life comes into clearer focus. When the repressed material that we unblock is distress for our world, we experience a new kind of power. That is because the distress expresses concerns that extend beyond our separate individual needs and wants. It is a testimony to our interconnectedness. By recognising and voicing our capacity to suffer within our world we dawn to wider dimensions of being. In those dimensions there is pain still, but a lot more. There is wonder, even joy, as we come home to our mutual belonging -- and there is a new kind of power."



New Affinity Group



Women for Peace

Beginnings

It began when a group called Women Opposed to Nuclear Technology (WONT) held a large public meeting during February 1983 at the Midland Group for all women interested in the issue of disarmament. A video about nuclear war produced by Dr Helen Caldicott was shown to a group of 80 women. We broke up into small groups to discuss our reactions and to decide upon the need for a permanent group in Nottingham. From this about thirty women decided to meet weekly. New women continue to join the group. Some of us attend weekly, others occasionally and many support us in actions and by various other means. Greenham has been and is a continual source of inspiration to us all.

Aims

Our main aim is to gather increasing support from other women in order to strengthen the peace movement and to influence public opinion.

Meetings

Each week two women offer to facilitate the meeting. This does not involve being a chairperson or a leader in the traditional sense, but rather to provide a loose framework, within which women can discuss ideas and actions. We meet as a large group at the beginning and end of the evening, but most of the work takes place with small groups, which make it easier for women to join in and have a say if they wish.

Examples of small group topics are:-

- Planning actions, eg in Nottingham, at Greenham and eventually globally!
- Publicity and media workshops.
- Self-education on related issues such as the Russian issue, Cruise, fears about nuclear war, answering questions from the public etc.
- Non-violence as a means of protest and as a way of life.
- Feminism and the peace movement.
- Street theatre and many others.

We also feel that it is important within the group to spend some time getting to know one another.

Why Women Only

- 1 Most women find it easier to be open and honest about their feelings and beliefs within a women's group which also encourages the development and sharing of knowledge. In mixed groups, men very often take over, which prevents women gaining confidence and new skills. Also, we work as a women only group because in a mixed group some women are influenced by what men expect of them and feel they need men's approval of their behaviour. Therefore, this can restrict their openness. As there are no men in our group, outsiders cannot assume that they are our leaders or our experts!
- 2 We feel that because of traditional patterns of upbringing, men are more likely to respond aggressively when confronted with authority, eg the Police or the Army. This is partly because they feel that they have to protect women in a mixed group and perhaps because they need to prove their power and strength. We are committed to non-violence and feel this is more easily achieved in an all women group. We are creating new and imaginative ways of protesting peacefully about the issues which concern our very existence on this planet. We have kept the issues alive and in the news internationally over a long period of time.
- 3 "In the past men have left home to go to war. Now women are leaving home for peace."



Actions in 1984

- Greenham: one day trip in September; women from the group spend time there and Greenham women visit us.
- Chilwell: New Year occupation/squat; reclaim Chilwell in July; one day peace camp there in September and various direct actions.
- Springfields: picketing and leafleting of workers.
- Alconbury: women participated in a blockade.
- February 29: actions throughout the day including leafleting at Chilwell, stall in city centre, slowing down traffic on Mansfield Road.
- May 24: actions throughout the day including leafleting at Chilwell, social in the evening.
- Cruise: leafleting, wearing black when second lot of cruise arrived, leafleting and peace camp etc, whenever cruise came out.
- Hiroshima: silent vigil, die-in, keening in city centre.
- Walk: Women for Life on Earth march Greenham to Menwith came through Nottingham.

Educational Events:

- Nuclear Pacific evening -- slides and talk.
- Workshops on facilitation
- Discussions on male violence and war, sexuality, where the group is going and group dynamics.

Peace Festival:

Organised a women only marquee, info stall, exhibition, music, singing and dancing.

Media:

- Participated in Jimmy Young tv programme
- Various interviews on local radio
- Two media workshops

Outreach:

- Numerous talks including at Ollerton Comprehensive school, Basford Hall Nursery nurses, Nott'm Univ, Miners Wives Support Group, Labour Party.
- Stalls in St Petersgate, Arnold and St Anns
- Exhibition in library and other places.

Organised National weekend conference -- see report in newsletter.

Money/Propaganda:

Stall at Arnold market and at Goose Fair
Sold radio programme tapes, postcards, stickers, T-shirts, books and pamphlets.

Support for women arrested:

Approx 14 women have been arrested, 16 women had court cases, and 6 women went to prison, hundreds of pounds were raised to pay fines..

The Women for Peace banner was lost and found, friends made, good times were had, and you can come and be part of this too!

WOMEN FOR PEACE MEETS WEEKLY ON TUESDAYS AT 7.45pm
IN ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH HALL, CHESTNUT GROVE off Mapperly Road, Nottingham.

For further information ring
Susie 473145
Pennie 411686

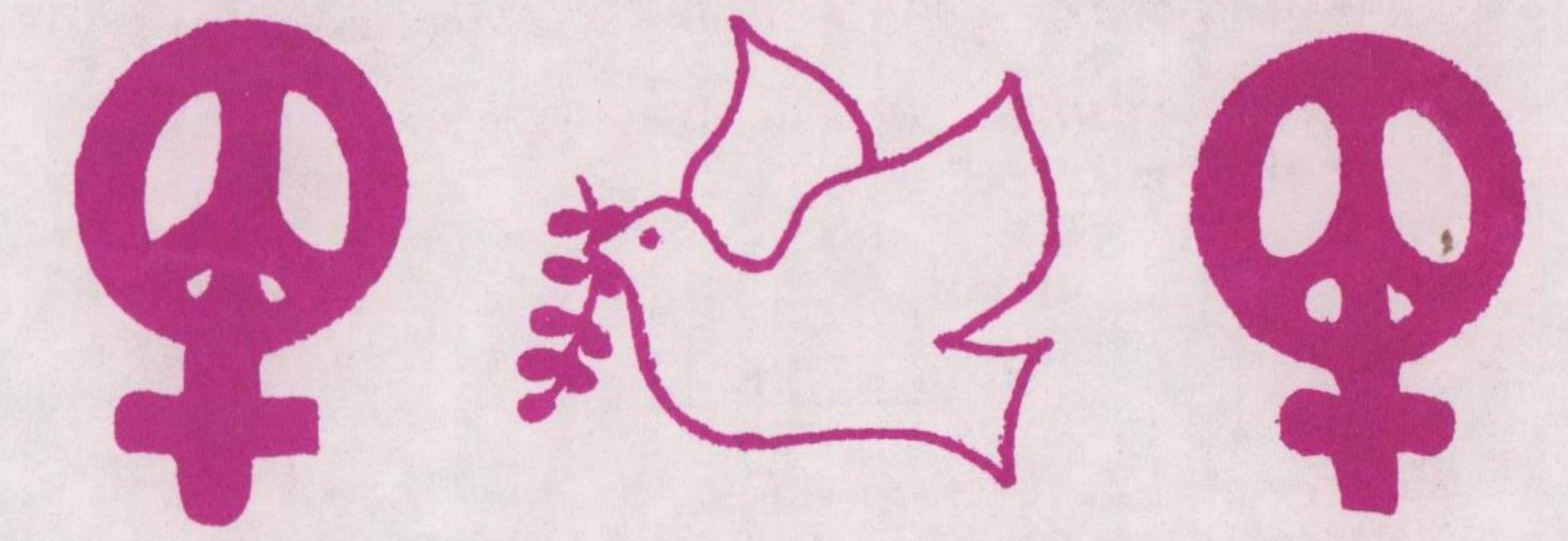


This is a new group which has been formed out of fragments of previous action groups from within and around Women for Peace and friends who have been interested and joined in. We are still trying to work out plans and aims for the group but at the moment I think we share a purpose of wanting to develop a group committed to both feminism and non-violence that takes action and can learn from mistakes and become more effective as it develops (rather than groups forming at the last minute for a specific action and then dissolving afterwards.)

At the moment there are thirteen of us and we are doing non-violence training, planning our first action and trying to get to know each other better.

The sort of actions we are doing to begin with are stunt-type "street events" aimed at attracting attention to our beliefs and questioning people's attitudes. We haven't gone into much detail in our planning. If you want to know more about us please ask and also we shall discuss it at Women for Peace meetings when there is something more specific to say. At present the group is closed to new members.

Contact Rachel at Tuesday meetings.



Nottingham Women for Peace Newsletter

We decided to produce a newsletter about Nottingham Women for Peace because we felt that there are many women who would like to keep in touch with what the group is doing and what actions are being planned.

Some women are interested in the work of the group but are unable to come to meetings, other women have taken part in actions, and want to be kept informed of future ones. We hope it will also serve as an introduction to the concerns of the group for women who have not heard of us before.

We are producing this as a pilot issue -- if it goes well it will come out regularly.

Anyone who has any comments, letters, jokes, drawings, articles or information that they would like to contribute to a future newsletter, please send them to Pat, 6 All Saints Terrace, Nottingham NG7 4DQ.

The newsletter has been cobbled together (edited) by the newsletter 'small group'. Anyone who wants to join us is very welcome.

Hope you enjoy it!

Maggie, Sylvia, Pat, Elaine, Penny, Vivien, Anne, Annette, Sue, Susie.