

15529 C

NOTTINGHAM CND

Box 33, 118 MANSFIELD RD. NOTTINGHAM, NG1 3HL Tel: 9588586

Summer

1996



Our representatives at the Faslane Demonstration.

Issued by Nottingham C.N.D.

Edited by D. Gower.

Printed by C.N.D. members at 118, Workshop.



TRASH TRIDENT DEMONSTRATION.

Faslane - June 14th - 16th 1996.

Anne Mitchell and I were subsidized to representing Nottingham C.N.D. at this demonstration. We had been led to expect surprise when we saw the substantial nature of the Peace Camp --- and we were! The camp has been there for 14 years - a highly visible point of conscience on the A814 from Glasgow to Garelochhead.

There are now only 4 permanent residents and the camp consists of their gaily painted caravans; a large kitchen with running water, double sink, two full size cookers and plenty of worktop and storage space. There is a flush toilet and basin with running water; a large well-equipped office; wind generator; small concert stage with a large log fire, which constantly burned dead-tree and drift wood, except during concerts.

The temporary part of the camp is on the other side of the busy A814, in a large bluebell wood lying between the road and the loch shore. You can't actually see the base from the camp, you have to walk a short way along the shore. OH! the hideous incongruity of this expensive, ugly harbinger of mass-destruction in the tranquil beauty of loch, meadows and mountain.

Early on Saturday morning the cry went up "SUBMARINE" and we saw lots of life-jacket clad people running through the trees and setting out over the loch in canoes and small boats. We missed some of the action as we were bogged down in the intricacies of getting breakfast outside our tent.

It was difficult to see how many tents were in the woods, but there were a fair number, with a substantial group from You h C.N.D. Many more people arrived by coach and bus during the morning.

There were several hundred persons on the march, with a large number of banners - some from as far away as Exeter, and a contingent from France. It would appear that whilst the numbers present were a little disappointing a lot of groups had sent a few members to 'fly their flag'. The march was down a very pleasant tree-lined minor road leading to the North Gate, appropriately decorated, to hear the speakers - giving the message we all know so well.

A blockade of the South Gate by a group of NVDA people resulted in 20 persons being charged with Breach of the Peace. They were all released from custody by 1:00a.m. next day. The day finished with a party at the camp - with a hot meal, lots of discussion and a well-stocked book stall. The party on the loch-side became a little too energetic for our taste.

We thank Nottingham C.N.D. for enabling us to attend and I wish to thank Anne for being such a delightful companion.

Marguerite Oldham.

Best Wishes:

We send our sincerest good wishes for the happiness of Mr & Mrs. John Petchell. You know Mrs. Petchell as Jane Goldsmith - a long-standing and constantly active member.

Congratulations:

To Tom Barber on the relaxed and pleasant way in which he presents 'The Garden Party' quite the most informative and appealing gardening programme on T.V. Garden Party is on Friday evenings on Channel 4.

Pressure is mounting for the release of Mordechai Vanunu, sentenced to 18 years imprisonment for telling the truth about Israel's nuclear arsenal.

After nine years in solitary confinement there is new impetus in the campaign to free him.

PRESSURE GROWS OVER ISRAELI NUCLEAR HOSTAGE VANUNU.

An Amnesty International delegation to Israel in February called for his immediate and unconditional release when they met with government officials.

Their calls reflect moves by Amnesty branches as far afield as Australia to take up his cause.

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres commented last December that peace with Syria could lead to Israeli nuclear

disarmament - the first official confirmation of their nuclear weapons arsenal - has also helped. "Israel no longer has any moral or political justification for keeping Mordechai Vanunu locked away in an isolation prison cell", was the verdict of the San Francisco Chronicle.

"I have sacrificed my freedom and risked my life in order to expose the dangers of nuclear weapons which threatens this whole region."

Mordechai Vanunu

Peres' statement also prompted Israeli minister Shulamit Aloni to call for his release: "It is intolerable that a democratic country like Israel kidnapped Vanunu to try him, irrespective of the harm he caused." He was lured to Italy in 1986 by a female Israeli agent, where he was then kidnapped and taken back to Israel before being tried and sentenced in secret for treason in 1988.

Yet despite Peres' comments, Vanunu failed to have his sentence overturned when he appeared before the Supreme Court in December. Forced to wear a mask because of police paranoia that he would talk to the media, Vanunu's request to be freed and returned to Italy was refused by the court.

In 1986 Vanunu provided the Sunday Times with photographs indicating that Israel had secretly stockpiled nuclear weapons in the Negev Desert - weapons assembled with South African government assistance.

Vanunu was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize

in 1987, 1988, 1989, 1993 and 1995 and is also Honorary President of the National Union of Students.

- You can write to Mordechai Vanunu at Ashkelon Prison, Adkelon, Israel. Also contact the

*Campaign to Free Vanunu and for a Nuclear Free Middle East,
89 Borough High Street,
London SE1 1NL:
0171 3789324*

Dounreay waste 'unstable'

AN investigation into the storage of nuclear waste at Dounreay reprocessing plant was called for by opposition MPs after a report published yesterday stated there were serious problems keeping the waste stable.

The report by the UK Atomic Energy Authority disclosed that the Caithness dump, bored 65 metres into bedrock, was deemed unsatisfactory by Government advisers and that a chemical explosion took place in 1977 causing contamination.

Workers at the plant were given air-guns to shoot at plastic bags containing wastes, which bubbled to the surface of the water-filled storage shaft.

By Roger Highfield
Science Editor

Publication of the details is part of a recent pledge of greater openness by John Baxter, director of the Dounreay establishment.

It also discloses that in 1968, after uranium and plutonium wastes had been dumped from a laboratory in the shaft, Dounreay's management committee became concerned about the possibility it "might breach safety requirements."

Concern was such that one ton of powdered borated glass was put down the shaft to absorb neutrons in the waste, as a precaution.

John McFall, Labour's Scottish environment spokesman, said: "This is

absolutely unbelievable. To carry on dumping nuclear waste, even after they knew about the risk of explosion, is unforgivable."

Jim Wallace, the Scottish Liberal Democrat's environment spokesman, said he would be seeking an urgent meeting with managers at the site. "It sounds as if the past operators of Dounreay had a very cavalier attitude."

Margaret Ewing, of the Scottish National Party, said: "It is extremely worrying that this secret has been hidden for nearly 30 years." The SNP would raise the issue in Parliament next week, she said.

The document's release coincides with visit to Dounreay this week by officials of two Government watchdog organisations.

Notice in the Ladies Section of the Hadleigh Bowling Club:

"Will ladies please rinse teapots and stand upside down on the draining board.....Hot bottoms must not be placed on table tops"

THE COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY.

Diplomats at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva have failed to reach an agreement on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. However, in an attempt to salvage something from the two and a half years of negotiations, the deadline of June 28th has been postponed for a month. Delegates will return to Geneva at the end of July to seek agreement.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was to have been a way to prevent proliferation to new nuclear powers, and as a control to stop the five admitted nuclear powers from testing their weapons.

A complete ban on nuclear testing was first proposed by Prime Minister Nehru of India four decades ago. Ironically it is India who is now the strongest opponent of the treaty.

India has made it clear that it will not sign the treaty because it does not include a commitment to the global elimination of nuclear weapons by a set date. It also argues that it is illegitimate for some countries to rely on nuclear weapons for their security whilst denying the right to others.

Since the signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty last year, the nuclear five have shown no sign of any serious commitment to achieving the abolition of all nuclear weapons. They are ready to accept a treaty which may reduce 'horizontal proliferation', but at the same time they now believe that through computers and other techniques they can maintain and improve their arsenal without the need of testing.

Britain, China, Russia and Pakistan say the treaty should not become effective until India has signed. America would like to see a treaty agreed and endorsed at the United Nations General Assembly this year, whatever it looks like. This would allow President Clinton to claim a diplomatic success in the weeks before the U.S.A. Election.

So many issues are unresolved but this opportunity for agreement should not be forfeited as it may not re-occur for many years.

Peggy Westaway.

India's nuclear dilemma deepens

HAVING retained its nuclear option by rejecting the CTBT, India must now decide whether or not to conduct more tests and build weapons of mass destruction, writes Rahul Bedi in New Delhi.

Security officials in Delhi said opting out of the CTBT had accentuated India's dilemma, as it was sandwiched between China, one of the world's five nuclear weapon states, and nuclear-capable Pakistan. India mistakenly believed that merely by stating it was keeping its nuclear options open was deterrent

enough, but to make this real, it had to execute a series of big and small tests, a course that no Indian government was likely to pursue.

Senior military officers, however, said it was meaningless for India to stress it had kept its nuclear option and do little else. "There is a need to examine how best to translate this capability into an effective deterrence to safeguard our national security," said one officer.

He said that even though Beijing had supplied Pakistan with 5,000

ring magnets for gas centrifuges used for enriching uranium and nuclear-capable M11 missiles, India had no adequate deterrent in place. He said the military had been regularly highlighting the nuclear threat India faced.

Meanwhile, public opinion in Pakistan and India favours both countries becoming overtly nuclear. In countrywide surveys earlier this year, about 75 per cent of Pakistanis favoured stockpiling nuclear weapons while 62 per cent in India wanted the same.

Britain blamed for

By Christopher Lockwood
Diplomatic Editor

test ban failure

BRITAIN was last night being blamed for the failure of more than 30 months of negotiation aimed at securing a global ban on nuclear testing. The issue has caused a sharp disagreement between London and Washington.

A month-long final session of the Conference on Disarmament closed in Geneva last night with no agreement on a treaty which, off and on, has been in the making for 40 years, and being negotiated in its present form for almost three.

Though the UN had set yesterday as a deadline for conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), one final attempt to secure agreement will be made on July 29, if the 38 countries participating can accept a draft text proposed by the chairman, Jaap Ramaker. But that looks doubtful, since the text is close to earlier, rejected versions.

Britain is faced with a painful dilemma. Either it must take responsibility for wrecking a treaty that would make the world a safer place, or it must swallow its pride and admit defeat by India.

Britain's position is that any test-

ban treaty that fails to commit the three "threshold" nuclear states — India, Pakistan and Israel — not to explode a nuclear device is not worth having. So it has proposed a the treaty that could come into effect only if ratified by the three threshold states, as well as the five declared nuclear powers: the US, Russia, Britain, France and China.

Israel is prepared to sign the

CTBT, and Pakistan would be happy to sign it if India did. But India has refused, saying the treaty needs to contain a binding agreement for the five nuclear powers to eliminate their nuclear stockpiles within an agreed time-frame.

Otherwise, the Indians say, they

will be permanently relegated to second-class status in a nuclear world.

However, none of the five is prepared to accept this, and the row over India now leaves Britain badly isolated from America and France, its main allies in defence matters.

Sources say the argument has led to sharp words between the British envoy to the talks, Sir Michael

Weston, and the Indian ambassador, Arudati Ghose.

Although both America and France earlier sided with Britain in insisting that India's signature to the treaty was necessary, both have dropped that condition, fearing to endanger the treaty as a whole.

They believe that the treaty would still be of value even if India did not sign it, because it would create an elaborate system of monitoring and would turn existing policy not to conduct nuclear tests into permanent treaty commitments.

The French representative gave warning of the consequences of failure. "The nuclear arms race could start again. New states will want to become nuclear powers."

Even if a CTBT is agreed, it could take years to be enforced. The 1992 chemical weapons treaty is still not in force because it needs ratification by 65 of the UN's 181 members, but has only 54 signatures.

Labour's shadow foreign affairs spokesman, Tony Lloyd, said: "This is a great opportunity, squandered by the British Government's intransigence."

Blast closes top Indian missile plant

INDIA'S major missile research centre was closed yesterday after a huge explosion and fire injured at least 16 people.

The blast, which razed a building within the centre, could be heard six miles away. It cracked the walls on houses 500 yards beyond the perimeter and sent splintered boulders flying hundreds of feet.

An official at the Defence Research and Development Laboratory said no staff had been hurt; but the Press Trust of India said at least 16 people had been injured in the blast and subsequent fire.

"I thought it was an earthquake," said Mohammad Shafee, who lives nearby. "We were fortunate, as the moment we left the house a boulder fell on to our roof."

Hundreds of residents fled in panic as the blaze, which began as a grass fire but quickly spread to a chemical gas processing unit, lit the sky. Firemen worked through the night to control the fire.

The centre is the heart of India's missile programme, where scientists have developed medium-range and long-range missiles.

India, which denies it has nuclear weapons but conducted an underground test in 1974, says it needs missiles to counter the nuclear threats from Pakistan and China. — AP

GREENPEACE:

Whilst holidaying on Shetland I was able to visit the Greenpeace ship 'Arctic Sunrise' which was bunkering in Lerwick Harbour. The crew were having an Open Day and distributing information about their work.

The ship is geared for work monitoring the sea and sea-beds round the oil-rigs for pollution. The ship ain't no cruise ship and with the high winds and the cold would take a great deal of commitment to roam the North Sea.

Apart from dumping the oil rigs when they have finished the 'productive' life span the economic factor should be considered. The rigs are of the best quality steel and could be reprocessed to make thousands of cars; 'fridges; washing machines etc., but dumped they will be - to join nuclear submarines lying on the sea bed.

Later the Arctic Sunrise joined the Sirius guarding the sand-eel beds from exploitation. Together the ships prevented 13 trawlers from dredging away the essential food for other marine creatures.

Doreen Gower.

Fleet dumped in Rosyth until 2012

SCOTLAND is to be the rubbish dump for Britain's redundant nuclear submarine fleet for the next 16 years, the Government revealed last night.

The submarines, which once carried the world's most powerful nuclear weapons, are to remain at the Rosyth naval base on the Forth at least until the year 2012.

The decision provoked an immediate wave of anger from MPs and Fife residents who fear that low-level radiation is already seeping from the boats and damaging people's health.

Last night, Dunfermline West Labour MP, Rachael Squire, demanded an immediate meeting with Defence Secretary Michael Portillo and insisted the decision must

by **DAVID CAMERON**

be reversed. "How dare they take away all the work from Rosyth and leave us with nothing but the rubbish," she said.

Mrs Squire was supported by Liberal Democrat defence spokesman and Fife North East MP, Menzies Campbell QC, who described the decision as an outrage.

"I am extremely disappointed. There is no doubt that there is considerable anxiety in local communities about the apparent willingness to stack these submarines up one after the other.

"The fact that this is to be the case for at least another 16 years can only add to their fears."

And John Home-Robertson, Labour Scottish defence spokesman, said: "What does not inspire public confidence is that the long-term decisions and long-term expenditure keep getting kicked further and further forward."

Three out of the four former Polaris submarines are now

berthed at the Fife base. They are Revenge, Resolution and Renown.

For several years, three Hunterkiller submarines have also lain redundant at Rosyth. They are Dreadnought, Swiftshore and Churchill.

All high-grade nuclear rods have been removed from the submarines but it is also believed the vessels still contain low levels of radiation.

The Government provoked a storm last year when it decided to move all the refitting work which had been carried out by the highly-skilled Rosyth workforce to the naval yard at Devonport.

The decision cost thousands of jobs and turned the

area into an unemployment blackspot.

Mr Portillo told the Commons defence select committee that the Nirex deep repository, likely to be at Sellafield in Cumbria, would not be available to dump the radioactive parts of the boats until 2012. Originally the Government had said the stockpiling of redundant subs would be only short-term.

Mr Portillo insisted the safest way to maintain the submarines until the repository was ready was to keep them "intact and afloat" at bases at Rosyth and at Devonport where there are four more.

"The current situation will

continue to 2012 as I believe that is the best and safest option," he said.

The other option would be to cut up the hulls which, he said, raised safety questions.

Another advantage of waiting to dispose of the hulls was that the intermediate nuclear waste deteriorated, significantly reducing safety risks.

However, last night there was dismay and anger among people living in and around Rosyth. Barmaid Maureen Williams, 49, works in a pub near the base and fears for the health of the townfolk.

She said: "This place is rife with leukemia and no one knows where it's coming from. But I firmly believe it's the base that's caused it and

this decision is not only terrible but disgusting too."

Taxi firm owner James Buchan, 35, has lived in the town for nearly 30 years and has two very young children. He said: "If I did not have my own business here, I would have taken my family and moved far, far away."

The Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament last night reacted with anger to the Government decision.

Scottish administrator John Ainslie said the Government had probably always had the long-term picture in mind.

He said: "Initially the stockpiling idea was only a short-term but that appears not to be the case now."

Scotland Daily Express

Taiwan's MPs block nuclear plant plan

HUNDREDS of anti-nuclear activists celebrated outside Taiwan's parliament in Taipei yesterday as MPs voted against building more nuclear power plants on the island.

MPs from the main opposition Democratic Progressive Party joined the Right-wing New Party to vote for all nuclear power plans be scrapped and the nuclear budget to be withdrawn.

The vote was 76-42 in favour of blocking the construction of a £4.3 billion plant, Taiwan's fourth, near the north-eastern village of Kung Liao.

The protesters let off fireworks in celebration after years of fighting the project but, if the cabinet re-submits the plan within 10 days and obtains approval from more than two-thirds of MPs, then the project will go ahead.

A spokesman for the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) said: "We will not lose." Many of the party's MPs were absent for yesterday's vote. — AFP

WORLD COURT PROJECT

The WCP has been informed that the announcement on whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons violates international law has been further postponed.

The verdict from The Hague is expected July 8th or 9th.

This will be after printing this issue.

An accident waiting to happen?

from CND Cymru

THE WALES Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, CND Cymru, is concerned about deteriorating safety standards associated with rail privatisation and the effects this could have on the transport of spent nuclear fuel.

The Railtrack share flotation marks a further stage in a process that has seen a considerable reduction in spending on safety and maintenance of both track and rolling stock.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has recently criticised Railtrack's safety standards, whilst cuts in the Health and Safety Commission jeopardise its ability to monitor rail transport effectively — and this includes nuclear trains.

Meanwhile, Wisconsin General, the American company which has recently taken over British Rail's freight business and which will be responsible for running nuclear trains, has one of the worst safety records in the US.

CND Cymru general secretary Jill Stallard said: "Railtrack has been served with 18 improvement notices by the HSE in little over a year.

"There have been three reportable nuclear 'incidents' since Railtrack began operating in 1994 — one of these involved a full-scale alert at Rugby in July 1995.

"At the same time, maintenance of rolling stock has been run down during rail privatisation as recent derailments, such as that at Stafford on a line used by nuclear trains, show.

"Moreover, Wisconsin Central has a poor track record. In these circumstances, the transport of spent nuclear fuel is an accident waiting to happen."

CND Cymru is also disturbed that Wisconsin Central is proposing to remove the guards' vans from the nuclear trains. In an accident, both the driver and the guard may be hurt and unable to raise the alarm.

- The mines have gone, and now where are the railways going?

Haunted by the Bomb

ALEXANDER Langsdorf, who has died aged 83, was one of the Manhattan Project scientists who built the atom bomb and then pleaded with the White House not to drop it on Japan. President Truman refused and Langsdorf was haunted by the subsequent devastation for the rest of his life.

Langsdorf was among that group of scientists, led by Charles Franck and Leo Szilard, who wanted Hiroshima and Nagasaki spared. Instead they urged a demonstration of the Bomb's terrifying destructive power. This, they believed, would induce a rapid Japanese capitulation.

Although Langsdorf worked mainly at Chicago he was involved in final weapons design, convinced that the purpose of the programme was to beat the Germans to nuclear weapons. When, in the spring of 1945, it became evident that the feared Nazi nuclear programme did not exist, Langsdorf was horrified by the military decision to switch targets and use the weapons on Japan.

Throughout his life he remained convinced that the costs of shortening the war had been unnecessarily and sickeningly high. His family recall that in the 1970s, when in Japan for a year as a visiting professor at Tohoku University, Langsdorf broke down with grief when, with his wife, his travels took him to the Hiroshima memorial.

However, his deep concern about the horror and international problems posed by nuclear weapons was given public expression much earlier. Shortly after the end of the second world war, with other Chicago scientists, he helped to create the famous Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, a publication of great international impact whose masthead clock — warning the world of nuclear holocaust — stood at a minute to midnight during the darkest phases of the cold war.

Bombarding uranium targets in a small cyclotron which he built with colleagues at the University of Washington, in St Louis, in the late 1930s, Langsdorf was among the first physicists to produce milligram quantities of the radioactive element 93 (neptunium) which decays into element 94 — plutonium. Although extremely small, Langsdorf's samples were nevertheless large enough to confirm, as had been spelled out 30 years earlier in Frederick Soddy's laws of radiochemistry, that neptunium-

239 decays by electron emission into plutonium-239. The finding at the University of California at Berkeley that, like uranium-235, the plutonium-239 isotope is highly fissionable, drew Langsdorf into the Manhattan Project.

His work with the cyclotron was started well before the warning by Frisch and Peierls that nuclear weapons were a practical proposition. Similar academic and exploratory research was being carried out in Britain, Germany and the Soviet Union. But only Langsdorf's results produced samples large enough for a preliminary investigation of the fissionable properties of plutonium-239.

It was inevitable that he would be drawn into the huge nuclear weapons programme during the war. After operating the Washington cyclotron as a plutonium-refining device and, from Washington, assisting in the design of the first controlled atomic chain-reaction piles at Chicago University, he joined Fermi at Chicago where he remained until his retirement in 1977.

DURING the war his work on nuclear cross-sections aided the great Eugene Wigner in the design of the large weapons-grade plutonium-producing reactors, built rapidly on the Hanford site, Washington, and later in the design of weapons. But like Wigner and Szilard, Langsdorf was one of the first scientists to realise that understanding and controlling a nuclear chain reaction is a simple matter when compared with understanding and controlling the psychology of nuclear weapons and nuclear power.

Langsdorf, who took his doctorate in the 1930s at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before going to Washington and Chicago, was among the first staff scientists at Chicago University's National Argonne Laboratory. Set up just after the war, this became one of the foremost research centres in the world, working openly on nuclear and fusion research and, for three decades, investigating civil nuclear safety.

Langsdorf, who leaves a wife and two children, is remembered by his colleagues as a razor-sharp physicist, a man dedicated to world peace, and a great gardener.

Anthony Tucker

Alexander Langsdorf, physicist, born May 30, 1912; died May 2, 1996

HIROSHIMA DAY

Tuesday August 6th

THE ARBORETUM

Bandstand Area

7'00 7'30p.m. to 9'00p.m.

We are holding the Memorial Service of the bombing of Hiroshima, with choral & pipe music with poetry. To replace the Bell-tolling, by a member of All Saints Church, do you know any person who could play an instrumental solo as an additional item?

HELP! HELP! HELP!

Telephone numbers: When we were trying to establish a 'telephone tree' we found that some of the telephone numbers that we have for members were incorrect. If you have changed your telephone number within the last few years would you please let us know your new number so that we can amend our records.

Scrap Book: As you know we have been keeping a scrap book of information, on nuclear issues, from newspaper cuttings. This information from 1982 is all cross-indexed and available in the office. Those were the days when we had a large membership who kept us up to date with cuttings, but now alas our membership is reduced and we think money is better spent on other things than buying papers which probably will not contain information. If you come across nuclear information whilst reading your daily papers will you please send us cuttings so that we can keep this scrap book going?

Stall: We have a new stall, new banner and new stock but very, very few volunteers to staff it. The stall is at present our only public face. Just a stint of 1 1/2 hours each six months would ensure that we were able to continue with this effort. If you give any time on Saturday please contact Anne Mitchell on 9137317 or leave a message on the office answerphone.