

NOTTINGHAM CND

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MAY THIS YEAR

BRING PEACE



Photograph by Jeremy Jago. The boxes contain half the Declarations of Conscience (about 2 million) presented at the World Court in The Hague and now in the keeping of the Bradford Peace Museum.



The Conference was held at the University of London Union, with about 240 delegates, and opened with the news from Faslane that the third Trident had arrived, one hour early, at its berth in the Loch that morning (Nov. 23rd)

Janet Bloomfield gave a gracious retirement speech and was presented with a crystal bowl by Bruce Kent in his thank you acknowledgement of Janet's work during the last five years, when public interest in nuclear weapons was almost nonexistent.

The Annual and Treasurers reports were presented and accepted unanimously.

There were then two constitutional amendments:

- 1) That C.N.D. become a limited company - carried overwhelmingly.
- 2) To reduce the number of Council members elected at the Conference be limited to 14 instead of the present 20. - defeated overwhelmingly.

There were three guest speakers:

- 1) Babishla from Australia, who expressed the feeling of isolation that was felt 'down under' that whilst Europe & U.S.A. were thinking of solutions they were dying from nuclear threats.
- 2) Isabelle from Polynesian Belau, which had signed a 'Compact of Free Association' with the U.S. in exchange for a perpetual option to use Belau's land, water and air for military and nuclear purposes. Isabella told us that there had been referendum after referendum until the U.S. obtained the vote they wanted.

Jeremy Corbyn had tabled an Early Day motion in the House of Commons the previous day urging the U.S. not to take up this option.

- 3) Andrea Needham from the 'Hammers not Hawks' campaign. Andrea told us that when she went into court with the other three women, they and their solicitor had fully expected them to face a seven year prison sentence, but - as you know - a NOT GUILTY verdict was returned. When they left the court as free persons their hammers were handed back to them.

The mustings for the contested officers, this lasting until lunch.

The afternoon sessions began with the installation of Dave Knight as the new Chair of C.N.D. Janet presented the ingoing Chair with a cascade of 1000 paper cranes in rainbow colours with the wish that Dave would be the last Chairman of C.N.D. with the abolition of nuclear weapons in the very near future.

The workshop which I attended was the 'Nuclear threat to the Third World! This became a question and answer session and due to extremely poor ventilation in the room most present were overcome by drowsiness. Little was added to present information.

The second session on Peace Camps, N.V.D.A. and the result of the World Court Project. With opened windows this was a much more rewarding session. From Menwith Peace Camp we had Helen, ex Yellow Gate at Greemham and we got more information about the listening devices at Menwith - very enlightening. Helen is now aiming to bring a prosecution against the U.S.A. for invasion of privacy and stealing our words and our ideas. We await the result of this with great interest.

The second part of this session linked Non Violent Direct Action with the result of the World Court Action. Due to the exceptions in the WCP verdict there remains risk in NVDA. George Farebrother stated that his opinion was 'if you have steadfast belief that action is necessary go ahead and do it - and do it fully'. To go ahead, knowing the consequences, showed your belief and would carry weight for you in court. This was borne out by two members who had been told by the police, when fined, that they had not done enough damage to prove conviction instead of wilful damage.

Sunday morning began with the result of the Vice Chairs voting:

The three appointed are: Carol Naughton, John Nott and Eirlys Rhiannon.

and then the voting for Council - the results to be announced in the January issue of Campaign.

The debates for and against the six resolutions followed. A copy of the resolutions is in the office. The first was to include all weapons of mass destruction into our mandate.

All resolutions passed with clear majorities.

Just before lunch we had a speaker from Faslane Peace Camp giving a resume of the action at Faslane. A collection was taken for her to take back to the Camp and this collection realized £480.

During the lunch hour there was time for examine the Hiroshima display of facts and photos. This is an excellent display, unsuitable for outdoors, and we shall try to get it brought to a Nottingham Library later. It is at present booked for six months ahead.

The afternoon session was for the voting on priorities and the standard of debate was very high. and the results will be in January Campaign. A list of these priorities is in the office.

The Conference finished with a speech of encouragement from the Chairman.

N.B. the result of the voting for Council was able to be given at conference, The Council has a good balance of enthusiasm and experience and will I think prove effective in action.

Doreen Gower.

On November 5th, Sandown hosted the annual COPEX arms fair. This 'event' was described in a Channel Four 'Dispatches' programme as 'a good place for starting deals in weapons that can be used for torture'. The attending countries included Indonesia, China, Iran, Columbia, Israel, Mexico, Singapore and Saudi Arabia, all of whom have been involved in human rights abuses. The uninvited guests included around 500 CAAT activists, including members of the newly formed Nottingham University environmental group 'Action for Earth'. There was a non-violent sit-down in one of the entrances with speakers, including Angie Zelter (one of the four women recently cleared of criminal damage to a British Aerospace Hawk jet, destined for Indonesia, on the grounds that they were preventing a crime being committed). There were also occasional sit-downs in the other entrance, keeping the police on their toes! The day was a huge success, totally non-violent, with only five arrests. Protesters included people from all walks of life, from the very young to the very old. The demonstration has expanded hugely from last year, when only about eighty protesters attended, and we look forward to an even bigger turn out next year, and the eventual end of the torture trade.

A month later, a week of demonstrations outside the Dept. of Trade and Industry (the Dept. of Terminal Indifference) in London, was held by CAAT, to show opposition to the British Aerospace being permitted to sell Hawk jets to the Indonesian government despite the genocide it is practising in East Timor. Around 100 campaigners attended each day and there was leafletting and petitioning each day, along with some form of direct action for those who wished to do it. Members of 'Action for Earth' joined the demonstration on Thursday. The Houses of Parliament were given a fair share of attention throughout the week also, with protesters raising their points in Question Time for three days running, and with eight protesters 'dying' in pools of (fake) blood on the steps outside (needless to say the 'bodies' were promptly arrested!!) The week was another success to CAAT and the trade cannot fail to realize the strength of opposition.

Diana (Action for Earth)

Diana is a very valuable contact at the University, who Anne and Marguerite met whilst at Faslane, and Anne invited to keep in touch with us.

Report from C.N.D. National Conference, 23/24th 1986.

LETTER FROM?

Intrepid peace campaigner David Lane, interviewed by Jeremy Jago

David's known to all of us as an indefatigable campaigner, petitioner, leafleteer, bookseller, and recently, pilgrim ... I managed to persuade him to sit down for a few minutes the other day to tell us what he's been up to lately.

He attended the London Conference of CND, which is reported upon elsewhere in this issue. Even more important than the debates themselves, he feels, is the meeting of fellow campaigners: "This, to my way of thinking, always has been the most important part of the conference. We saw our friends from Reading, Menwith, Iona, Cardiff, to find out what they were thinking and doing. I don't think the demo is a thing of the past, but we must concentrate more and more on things like the Pilgrimage and World Court Project.

"One of the biggest revelations of the conference was something we perhaps all know about - but nevertheless shattering when it came out under the 'Thirty Year Rule' - that there had been accidents at Greenham Common and other British Nuclear stations. Since that time the MoD had to pay #6 million compensation due to the fact that some Aldermaston houses are radioactive, which we were told until recently was impossible.

He stayed at the Friends' International Centre, Tavistock Square, and recalls the statue there of Ghandi, inscribed 'A memorial to conscientious objectors to military service. To all who have established and are maintaining the right to refuse to kill. Their foresight and courage gives us hope.

David went on to describe the launch of 'Abolition 2000', involving several long-established peace organisations, its objective to abolish all nuclear weapons in the next 3 years. A distinctly tall and order, you might say - I certainly would - but as David remarks, the idea that seasoned, down to earth people consider this a possibility is really exciting.

When I spoke to David I had watched a videotape he lent me about the Atomic Mirror Pilgrimage. This was a journey of 'reflection, action and reconciliation' by a small group of people, David among them, across mainland Britain, visiting nuclear and sacred sites. Inspired by a journey last year from Los Alamos to Japan, the trip took place this last spring.

Janet Bloomfield of CND and US activist Pamela Mandell initiated the pilgrimage, which took in Reading, Bath, Cardiff, Bristol, St Davids, Bradford, Menwith, Faslane, Iona amongst other places. A demonstration was attended at Sellafield on Chernobyl day, one of many nationwide pointing out the enduring dangers of Chernobyl and the hazards of other installations in the former USSR and elsewhere.

"I met on the pilgrimage Rob Green, nephew of Hilda Murrell. He was a naval officer who resigned. He was upset about nuclear power, and saw eventually nuclear weapons were just the other side of the power programme and both had to be opposed. He was with us for most of the time.

Rob Green makes memorable contributions to the video, a professional production by an Irish team. With beautiful photography and music, it records, at an unhurried 50 minutes, the pilgrimage more intimately than would a production for broadcast TV. Proceeds from showings will fund Chernobyl Children's Lifeline and Abolition 2000. Perhaps its only drawback for the uncommitted audience is the length, but this is the result of reflecting the diverse nature of the pilgrimage itself, being a coming-together of many people of differing outlook, ranging from the humanitarian, politicised by experience, to those for whom the earth is the source of spiritual inspiration. David's quotation in the programme is apt:

So many Gods, so many creeds
so many paths that wind and wind
while just the art of being kind
is all the sad world needs