

## Diary Dates

- Mon 29 March Nottingham CND Public Meeting showing the video Nukes in Space 2. See below for more details.
- Sat 17 April Anti-Sanctions & Anti-Bombing Campaign. 1pm at Speakers Corner, Hyde Park, London. Contact Hugh [redacted] info, and Nottingham CND if interested.
- Tue 20 April CAAT campaigns team meeting with local CAAT supporters to promote Stop the Arms Trade week (12-20 June), at rainbow Centre, Mansfield Road, 7.30pm. If you want to be involved in the meeting or subsequent action contact Gideon or Kevin [redacted]
- Mon 3 May May Day stall in Market Square.
- 11-15 May 1999 Hague Appeal for Peace conference at the Netherlands Conference Centre, the Hague, Netherlands. For more information contact Nottingham CND (or see previous Bulletin); we have at least one member planning to attend.
- Fri 11 June The Trafficking Trident Campaign in Nottingham. Details still to be finalised. Contact Nottingham CND for more information.

### Nottingham CND Public Meeting

a showing of the new video

### Nukes in Space 2

an update on the Cassini Space Mission and the hazards of nuclear fuelled space probes.

It is hoped to welcome a specialist speaker from Leicester CND.

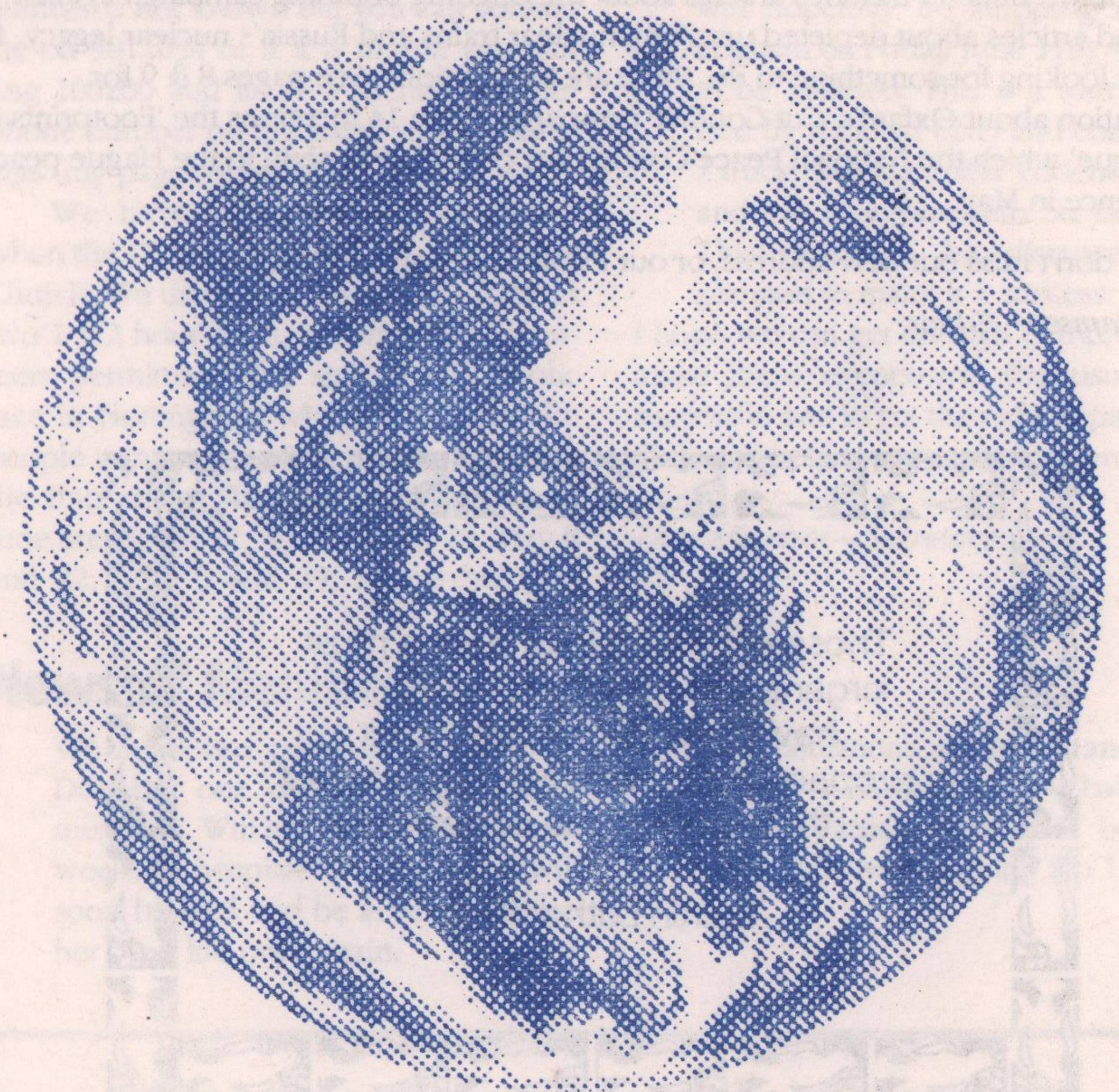
**Monday 29th March, 7.30pm**  
**I.C.C., 61b Mansfield Road, Nottingham.**



# Nottingham CND Bulletin

March 1999

**KEEP SPACE NUCLEAR-FREE**



**FOR A SAFER WORLD**

**VIDEO SHOW:**

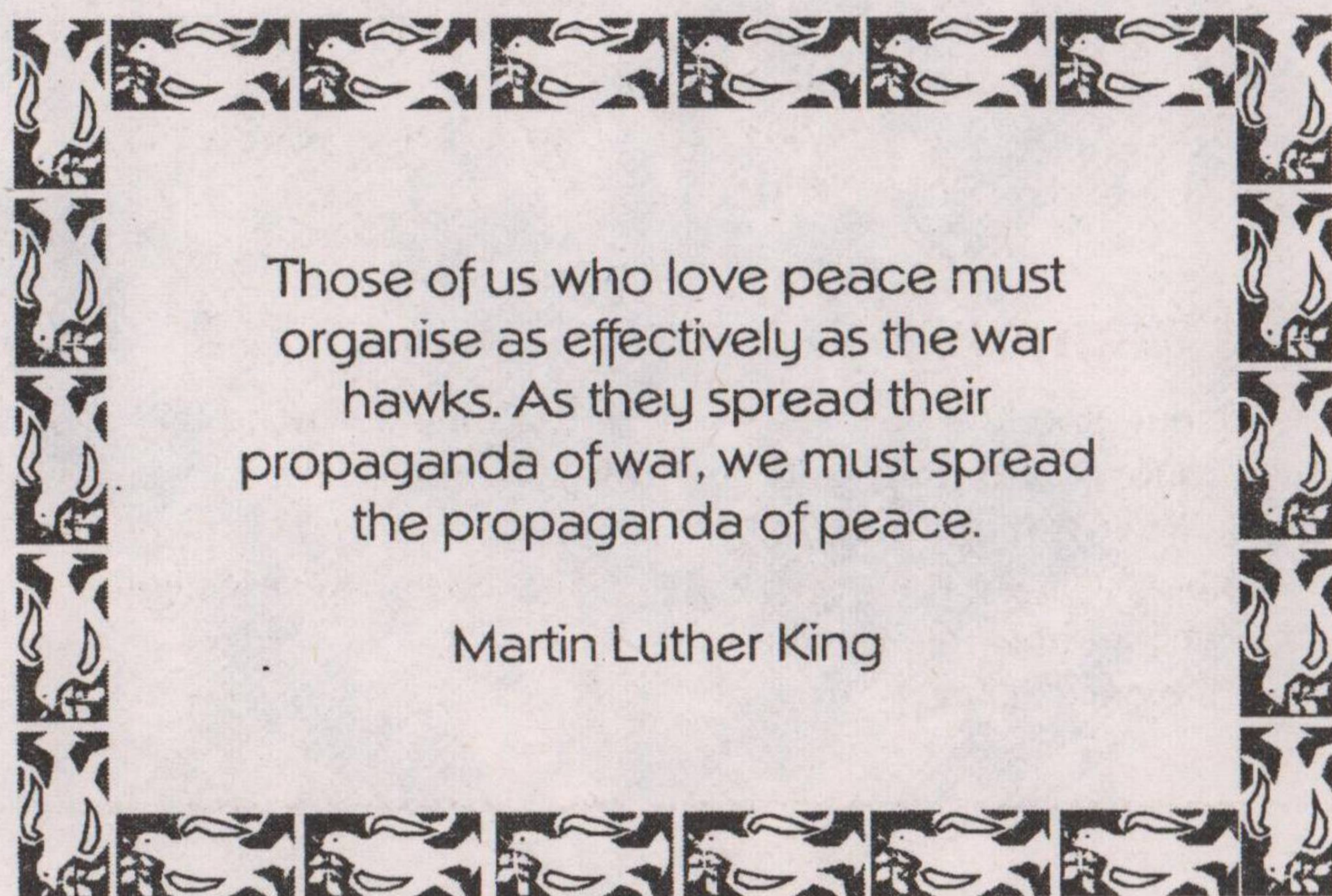
**'NUKES IN SPACE 2'**  
**MONDAY 29 MARCH**  
**7.30 FREE**

Welcome to the March issue of Nottingham CND Bulletin, the first bulletin of 1999. We are now less than 12 months away from the year 2000 which has been selected as a milestone for many campaigns. Two particular campaigns spring to mind, Jubilee 2000 and Abolition 2000 – out of those two, Jubilee 2000 seems to have the greater momentum and is more likely to achieve some of its goals by the year 2000. As always in the past 10 or 15 years, nuclear disarmament isn't seen as a 'sexy' issue. We need to continue our efforts to move it to the top of the agenda.

This month's Bulletin includes articles about the ongoing bombing campaign against Iraq, and articles about depleted uranium, nuclear trains and Russia's nuclear legacy. If you are looking for something to do, there are two options. See pages 8 & 9 for information about Oxfam's 'Cut Conflict' campaign. Page 14 mentions the 'Footprints to the Hague' which the National Peace Council are collecting to send to the Hague peace conference in May.

Finally, don't miss our new address, or our Public Meeting on March 29th.

*Mark Ramsey – Editor*



The Bulletin is produced by Nottingham CND, Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre, Sandfield House, 7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FB. No telephone number at present – call Diane [redacted] The Bulletin is produced using Serif PagePlus 5.0.

The next issue of the Bulletin is due in June 1999. Articles (on PC computer disk if possible please) or other material to be considered for inclusion should be sent to Nottingham CND at the above address by [redacted] May 2nd 1999.

## Nottingham CND is on the move

From the end of March, CND is moving to new premises together with 118 Workshop. The new address is Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre, Sandfield House, 7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FB. At present the new telephone number is not known but you can contact me on 9812034 or if it is urgent you can ring 100200 and leave a name and telephone number on my pager in the mornings (my pager number is 170589).

We have now received the dates when the CND stall can go out at St Peters Church. We usually go out 11am - 2pm, in two 1 1/2 hour shifts, weather and volunteers permitting. The stall is our public face in Nottingham where we can make people aware of nuclear issues as well as the Iraq crisis. The stall dates until mid June are March 27, April 10 and 24, May 8 and 22, June 5 and 19. Please help on

some of these dates if you can.

### Possible special dates for Diary

- Stall at Market Square for May Day - please ring for more details.
- The Trafficking Trident Campaign will hopefully be stopping in Nottingham on Friday June 11th – details to be finalised. This is a tour organised by National CND and consists of a truck carrying a 20ft Trident missile and lots of information etc on CND. This needs to be discussed and planned to make it a success.

I hope we can get enough enthusiasm to make these events and the usual stall successful and to get the right impact. Any ideas and help always greatly appreciated.

*Diane Lunzer – Secretary*

### News of Members

- We send our good wishes to Win Douglas, one of our long-standing members. Win has recently spent two weeks in hospital. We hope she will soon be well and be able to take up her busy life once again.
- Congratulations to Mark and Sally Ramsey who have a new baby son, named Patrick, who was born on Christmas Eve weighing 6lb 11oz.



### Nottingham CND is moving

Our current base, 118 Workshop, is moving to more accessible premises and we are moving with them.

Our new address is

**Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre, Sandfield House, 7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FB**

## The Iraq Crisis

Sadly the bombing has not stopped completely in Iraq and the problem has not gone away.

In December Britain and the USA had a massive bombing campaign against Saddam Hussein expecting him to comply completely with our demands by using force. As usual, Saddam stayed put but Iraqi civilians were killed, property was damaged, and nothing was resolved.

In Nottingham we had a vigil at the start of the bombing campaign and printed the statement and petition put out by National CND. We repeated this on the following Saturday and received good support from Greenpeace, Green Party, SWP and Unison members as well as a good turn out of our own members. The event proved worthwhile and we got a lot of people to sign the petition. A warm thank you to everyone who helped.

However, we do need to follow up these actions as sanctions against Iraq are

still in place and approximately 250 people die each day as a result of them; 4500 children under 5 die every month. The general public are often unaware of this and letter writing is one way of getting the message across as well as getting the facts into the public realm. We have got petitions that can be used if you need them, as well as facts on the effects of sanctions.

During January a meeting convened by Nottingham CND was held to discuss responses to the ongoing situation. The aim was to enable local concerned groups to agree a unified campaigning voice. Views and statements were heard from the Society of Friends, National Peace Council, UNICEF and others. Vigils, local media activities and direct campaigning were discussed and the project continues.

If there is another increase in military action against Iraq, a vigil will be held on the council steps from 4.30pm on that day. Please bring a candle and a placard.

## From the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq...

In August 1998 Denis Halliday, Assistant Secretary General of the UN and chief UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq based in Baghdad, resigned his post – abandoning a three and a half decade career with the UN on a point of principle. He explained that he resigned his post because he could not “be identified with a United Nations that is maintaining a sanctions programme which kills and maims people through chronic malnutrition, and continues this programme knowingly.”

There is no non-Iraqi better qualified to report on the effect of UN sanctions on the Iraqi people than Denis Halliday. Of the oft stated accusation that the Iraqi leadership are causing the suffering of their people he says:

“[US Secretary of State Madaleine] Albright says that she cares more for Iraqi people than Saddam. I don't buy that. Before and during Resolution 986 [the oil-for-food programme] the Iraqi government was supplementing it quite extensively, feeding orphans, widows and other single parents. In addition to 986, they're running an extraordinarily effective programme ... Through some 50,000 different agents to a country of 18 million people. Our observers watch that process from the border to the warehouse. It works, and we have no evidence of any significant leakage of foodstuffs. This system works because the Iraqis make it work. To say they don't care about their own people is just rubbish.”

## Iraq - time to end sanctions

The bombing of Iraq was a political set back for the United States and Britain. It not only failed to prevent Bill Clinton's impeachment, it left the US and Britain isolated amongst the international community and has led to the most serious rift in opinion over Iraq since the Gulf War.

It was clear that the US and Britain were acting unilaterally and outside international law. They didn't go to the UN Security Council for endorsement of military action for the simple reason that it would not have been forthcoming. The other three members – France, China and Russia – all opposed the bombing.

Russia and France are now campaigning for the oil embargo to be lifted. This has led the United States to suggest that the ceiling on oil-for-food sales should be lifted. This is not a real alternative to ending sanctions because the drop in world oil prices means that Iraq already cannot produce the amount of oil it would need to sell to purchase the supplies it needs, and Iraq only received around half of the proceeds for oil sales anyway – around 35% goes to Kuwait in war reparations and about 10% pays the costs of the UN activities in Iraq.

Russia and China have also called for Richard Butler, head of UNSCOM, United Nations Special Commission, to be sacked. France is calling for UNSCOM to be 'restructured'. This follows revelations that it has been used as a tool of US espionage. Saddam Hussein is refusing to allow UNSCOM back into Iraq whilst it contains US and British representatives as part of the inspection team.

The UNSCOM spy scandal came to light on 6th January when the New York Times and Washington Post published stories that US officials had admitted spy-

ing. In Britain, the Sunday Telegraph of 10th January published an article by Scot Ritter, a former UNSCOM inspector. The Sunday Telegraph explains: “His disclosures effectively confirm long-held Iraqi claims that the UN arms inspections were used as a cover for American espionage.” Ritter says: “The most important sites bombed during Operation Desert Fox were derived from data obtained from the work conducted by my team.”

The UN Special Commission's mandate is a spy's charter, including unrestricted freedom of movement without advance notice within Iraq, unimpeded access to any site or facility, and the right to receive, examine and copy information and install equipment for observation.

Reports are now appearing that Richard Butler's contract will not be renewed when it expires in June. The Observer of 24th Jan reports that the British government is bending to international pressure and will support: ‘proposals to replace the current inspection's regime with a one-off “audit” by United Nations inspectors of chemical and biological weapons.’

Meanwhile, the bombing campaign continues in the north and south of the country. During the December campaign more cruise missiles were fired than during the whole of the Gulf War. Since December there have been over 100 incidents in the no-fly zones, with virtually no comment or debate. In early March, US aircraft carried out the biggest attack dropping more than 30 bombs on military targets, increasing the fear that this undeclared war is escalating dangerously.

A campaign against bombing and to end sanctions remains a sad necessity. The peace movement has to stay on the alert. *Taken from Labour CND News Jan 1999*

## Costs of War by Jeremy Jago

Some years before World War One, an eminent economist calculated that future large-scale war was impossible as it would bankrupt the countries involved.

This was being disproved a second time when, in 1942, Oxfam was founded. Today, as 'small' wars rage, 84% of casualties are civilians, nearly half of them children, and nearly all caused by small arms. War may wreck the economies of combatant states, but to the arms suppliers, it is profitable business. And the second biggest arms exporting nation? Why, Britain, of course!

This was the background to a meeting on 4 February, sponsored by Oxfam and called 'Cutting the Horrific Human Cost of War'. The panel was Oxfam director David Bryer, MSF Regional Officer Jim Simms and East Midlands LibDem Vice chair Kevin Mulloy, standing in for Alan Simpson MP who was unable to leave the Commons. Radio Nottingham's Alan Clifford chaired, his urbane touch striking a contrast with the occasionally fevered debate later.

Oxfam is compelled to campaign against war, said David Bryer, as its work is increasingly impeded by conflict, and by the small arms trade. Loopholes allow UK to send weapons anywhere, including embargoed states. Oxfam is campaigning for tighter legislation.

Jim Simms contrasted the reality of modern small arms with their (paradoxically) sanitised film images, an automatic pistol being quite capable of severing limbs. 400,000 people work to make arms, yet workers would prefer diversification. The people, materials, skills are there – political will is needed. Jim wryly recalled how the "Tank" got its name – a WW1 codename: Water tanks for Mesopotamia.

Why not for real, today?

Kevin Mulloy's party sees strong international institutions as a means of conflict resolution. Peaceful settlement is not always attainable. War is undesirable, but what are the effects of an absence of war, he asked, citing the Falklands (audience reaction not uniformly favourable). Arms exports, particularly to repressive regimes, need stricter scrutiny, and a global landmines taskforce is needed. Ultimately, UN should command armed forces, deployed only with Security Council permission.

Questions followed. If war is ever justifiable, it was asked, how are we to treat long term trauma to victims, soldiers and families? David Bryer felt that the use of force is sometimes justifiable, eg UN forces could have reduced the massive deaths in the Rwandan genocide. Long term effects are now better recognised. Real efforts are addressing traumas, but for too few as yet. Truth commissions have a role in areas like Chile and S Africa.

How should the government ensure UK-made weapons are used only for 'legitimate defence and peace-keeping'? Jim Simms deplored the taxpayer underwriting arms contract renegs. We need to raise political will to regulate, worldwide, the uses of exports, and to eradicate backdoor sales. Currently we stand more chance of regulation in selling to, say, Belgian border police than to the Indonesian army, he said, provoking the audience to bitter laughter. Kevin Mulloy saw the current EU code as too weak to prevent backdoor deals. We could set an example with control of global sales from UK, and a small arms register. The biggest problem, as David Bryer saw it, is secrecy.

A voice from the back of the hall

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## Costs of War (continued)

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pronounced itself an unashamed pacifist, aged 12 when the 'war to end wars' ended (the inverted commas were clearly audible). Services are cut while 20 billion pounds p.a. are spent on weapons of destruction. It was our good friend David Lane. Jim Simms stated MSF finds Britain's economy wasted development opportunities by its involvement in arms making as opposed to socially useful industry. David Bryer saw a terrible irony in UK's permanent seat on the Security Council, while we are 2nd biggest arms exporter.

Discussion next underlined the importance of extending the UN Arms register to cover hand weapons and the tracing of arms transfers between countries. How do the export loopholes square with UK's 'Ethical foreign policy'? David Bryer felt foreign policy should be guided by ethical principle and not simply be a series of unlinked decisions. A firm, Isle of Man registered, flew guns via an involved route, avoiding British territory, to Rwanda – and all legally. Jim Simms felt no

ethical dimension could exist without integrated policy for industry.

Steve Battlemuch stressed that most MPs favour closing of arms export loopholes – pressure is needed to ensure parliamentary time.

Rama Gupta recalled low attendance at CND's demo at the recent launch of the nuclear submarine 'Vengeance' – seeing this as complacency after a change of government. India & Pakistan spend millions on nuclear research – yet clean water is in short supply.

The final topic was arms industry diversification, with some striking statistics which were both daunting and indicative of potential reform. It had been a fascinating, brief, mostly civilised hour and a half, during which the phrase 'political will' echoed a concept that surely embodies both government and people. It was sobering to reflect that the keenest applause was for audience comments reflecting disillusionment with all governments and, by extension, any governments. An outlook we can ill afford.

## What you can do:

Support Oxfam's **Cut Conflict** campaign. Currently UK arms dealers can supply weapons to any country by arranging sale and shipment outside the UK – even when that country is subject to an arms embargo. Oxfam is calling for brokering to arms-embargoed countries to be made a crime – as UN Secretary General Kofi Annan says, "Possibly no other single initiative would do more to help combat the illicit flow of arms to Africa".

In the coming months the government will be looking at changes to arms laws – for the first time in 50 years. You can show your concern about the current regulations by writing to Stephen Byers MP, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, No.1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET. Tell him that

- arms brokering to embargoed countries is wrong
- it causes the death of countless civilians and
- as the UN Security Council recommends, it should be made a punishable crime.

To become more involved in the campaign, contact Chris Stalker, Oxfam Campaigns,

## Giving science a bad name

by Jeremy Jago

Some episodes in history seem more remote than their date might suggest, if they demonstrate how much ideas and attitudes have changed.

It is the 1950's. The phrase "Atoms for Peace" is common currency. For some time, experimenters in several countries have exposed plant seeds to radiation to see if mutations lead to useful new plant strains. After all, it is believed that one cause of natural mutations is the impact of cosmic rays from space, something happening since the earth began - so why not speed up the process a bit? The problem is: it's still a long, tedious process. How are any useful results to be traced from the tens of thousands of test plants needed? At Oak Ridge Tennessee, Atomic Research Facility, an answer is suggested which is typically American: as commercial as it is democratic. Why not let the people have a go!

Thus it was that packets labelled "Atom Blasted Seeds" started to be sold: Tomato, Petunia, Marigold, Sweet Corn ... the seeds, not themselves radioactive, had passed through gamma rays from a cobalt 60 source, not intense enough to kill them, but considered sufficient to affect their genes in some way, or as the director of Oak Ridge Atom Industries Inc. put it: "change their chain of heredity". They were soon imported to Britain by Muriel Howorth, a bejewelled lady who lost no time in vigorously promoting the latest thing: Atomic Gardening. An Atomic Gardening Society was founded early in 1960, among its advisory board being L Ron Hubbard...

Muriel Howorth wrote and published "Atomic Gardening for the Layman". Its

title alone conveys a naive earnestness which seems to come from another era. Photos show a plant grown from irradiated peanuts cautiously investigated by her black cat. In the foreword the novelist Beverley Nichols assured the reader "You will not come out in a rash after sowing your petunias, and your marigolds will not blow up the herbaceous border." He and Chemist F.R. Paulsen, the Society's Mutation Consultant, stressed the experimental nature of the whole enterprise, in which amateur growers were fellow pioneers. Green report forms, to be returned to the society, detailed seed variety, weekly progress and remarks on any sign of mutation. Any genuinely new strain as agreed by the society's advisers was to be regrown the next year, aiming ultimately for a so-called "stabilised mutant". Great play was made by the society of ten mutants created by USA, Europe and USSR, which it stated were in commercial use for superior yield, a claim which met with some controversy from specialists.

Atomic Gardening appears not to have fulfilled the hopes of its early supporters. The haphazard knocking-out of genes does not seem to have yielded any more useful result than conventional breeding. There is an obvious connection, though, with present-day genetic engineering of plants - particularly in the expansive claims for solving future famine. In each case food shortage is neatly depoliticised as a problem of biology rather than one of distribution.

Today, the distinction is never made between 'science', ie pure knowledge, and 'technology', ie the application of

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## Giving science a bad name (continued)

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knowledge for a specific end, usually commercial. Early this century, atomic scientist Soddy was already anticipating a purpose for the new knowledge when he innocently yet chillingly declared "Atomic Energy can fructify a desert continent, thaw the frozen poles, and make the whole world one smiling Garden of Eden." Today, industrially funded re-

search into genetic modification of plants is indisputably 'technology', yet is called science, because it is new knowledge, and because it is done at Universities. 'Science' is thus again seen as a threat, the property of those seeking to force grandiose schemes upon an unwilling world. Truthfully, to say Science is a dirty word is to condemn the seeking of knowledge itself.

## British general launches attack on 'violent' Nato

A former British commander of UN forces in Bosnia yesterday accused Nato governments of promoting a "culture of violence" and said their reaction to the Kosovo crisis created a dangerous precedent for future intervention.

The remarks of General Sir Michael Rose, UN commander in Bosnia in 1994-95, were clearly directed at Britain and the US. He referred specifically to US cruise missile attacks against Iraq, Afghanistan and the Sudan last year in retaliation for terrorist bombings of US embassies in Africa.

Firing cruise missiles reflected a "false view that intractable political problems could only be solved by military force", Sir Michael said. "Complex human emergen-

cies demand understanding of the conditions rather than solutions from a barrel of the gun".

He told the Royal United Services Institute that bombing Serbia would not help the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. It would have a negative impact on the Serbs in Bosnia and on Macedonia. Threats of bombing had already led to nationalists being elected in Serbia. The way Nato responded to the Kosovo crisis could be a "dangerous precedent".

Sir Michael welcomed the US agreement to deploy ground troops in Kosovo along with those from Britain and France. They could only go if invited by the Serbs after all sides had signed peace deal.

*Taken from the Guardian, 12 Feb 1999*

## US missile defence £6bn

The US will decide next year whether to install a national missile defence to counter what it sees as the growing threat from increasing missile capabilities of "rogue" nations, but the system is unlikely to be in place until the year 2005.

The budget for missile defence would be nearly trebled to \$10.5bn (£6.3bn) over the next six years.

The US will seek to amend the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty with Russia, if necessary, but the limited capability of the proposed national missile defence system would not in any case be capable of countering Russia's nuclear deterrent.

*Taken from the Financial Times, 21 Jan 1999*

## Nukespotting

### Fresh life for the campaign to stop nuclear trains

A nuclear train dubbed 'a mobile Chernobyl' has spurred a group of frightened residents into organising a 10,000-strong march through the streets of central London later this month. It will be the biggest campaign to ban the transportation of used nuclear fuel that this country has ever seen.

Behind the campaign to rid the UK of nuclear trains - which have already been banned in Germany - is a group of Cricklewood residents. Infuriated by British Nuclear Fuels' plans to park radioactive cargo next to their back gardens, they have launched a sophisticated operation to stop them from doing so.

They only discovered BNFL's decision to stop using the railway sidings at Willesden Junction and use those at Cricklewood instead after a conscientious CND worker read a small article in an obscure nuclear power journal. BNFL had notified the wrong council about the plans but CND soon put up posters screaming 'nuclear trains are coming to Cricklewood'. BNFL thought that no one would care if the trains that met in Willesden Junction every week (before heading north to Sellafield for reprocessing) should instead rendezvous in Cricklewood.

BNFL had dismissed the need for public consultation and went about their standard procedure of informing the relevant authorities. Little did they know that their actions would not just anger locals, but spark a campaign that some believe is the beginning of the end of the transportation of used nuclear fuel.

Linda Hayes, chair of Cricklewood Against Nuclear Trains (CANT), said: "We are going to stop this, whatever the cost." Their first public meeting attracted 200

supporters and commanded lead stories in all the local media. Soon local activists were mobilised with the support of all the major pressure groups, local celebrities, mothers, councillors and MPs.

BNFL's cock-up couldn't have come at a worse time, as the success of the German campaign was making headlines across the country and fears regarding safety issues were leaking into the UK. The nuclear giant only added to its problems when it turned down opportunities to speak at public meetings and refused to hand over details of its plans. Ms Hayes said: "We tried to get answers from BNFL, but they wouldn't give us any information at all."

Angry campaigners then turned to CND, Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace for information. The trains were not safe, they were told flatly. They heard about leukaemia clusters breaking out in villages close to the Sellafield site, of flasks used for storing the cargo in transit 'sweating' radiation six times over their limit, and potentially lethal security scares that meant a terrorist would find it easy to board a 'nuclear' train.

BNFL has admitted that contamination from transportation of spent nuclear fuel flasks running on the railway network has been found to be as high as 25 times over the international safety limit. It did not report this to the regulatory authorities because, it says, "it has no statutory requirement to do so".

Ms Hayes warns BNFL officials: "There is no in-between. Trains are either coming or they are not. We are not stopping until they stop. There are people who, as a last resort, will lie on the tracks." *Taken from The Big Issue, 1-7 Feb 1999*

## Russia's icy nuclear nightmare

Britain has promised aid to clean up the radioactive ruins of Russia's Arctic-based northern fleet, one of the most contaminated parts of the planet. But the £3 million pledged is a drop in the ocean compared to the estimated multi-billion bill to tackle one of the cold war's most frightening environmental legacies, the redundant nuclear submarines and radioactive waste in the fjords of north-west Russia.

In Murmansk, the headquarters of the fleet, a floating dry dock in the ice-flecked Barents Sea contains an inconspicuous-looking vessel - in whose belly lies a mass of damaged, spent nuclear fuel, its containers corroding for 20 years. Most of the money pledged by Britain will fund the operation to extract the spent fuel and store it in special casks.

With the Russian navy struggling to find the money to keep a single missile submarine on patrol, the country is dependent on foreign aid to solve the worsening crisis of its dying, poisoned fleet.

For Europe, the threat of the radioactive fleet on Scandinavia's doorstep is comparable in scale and proximity to Chernobyl. Yet funding for a clean up has been meagre. The European Union's Pads programme, a United States project to pay for the scrapping of Russian submarines, and Norway provide only a few tens of millions of dollars.

Western budget constraints are not the only problem. The Russian navy's efforts to protect its few remaining military secrets - and its pride - is making it hard to attract foreign donors. Sometimes the secrecy merges into a cover up, as when the security services charged an environmental activist and former navy captain, Alexander Nikitin, with espionage.

The British reprocessing company BNFL, which runs Sellafield, is scouting for business in the Murmansk region and is working with Norway on a project to make safe the Russian navy's main spent fuel storage site at Andreyeva Bay. But neither the British nor the Norwegians are allowed to go there.

"It's a problem asking funders to give money for a place they've never seen but have only heard about," said BNFL's business development manager, Richard Benbow.

In its glory days the Soviet navy, dominated by the northern fleet, had more nuclear submarines than the US. The price of Moscow's breakneck expansion of its under-sea force is being paid today. What few nuclear waste-handling facilities were built were put up as an afterthought. When the time came in the 1960s to refuel the first nuclear submarines, the highly radioactive spent fuel was simply dumped in a field. Most of it is still there, corroded by 35 years of storms.

There are about 100 nuclear submarines, either decommissioned or too expensive for the Russians to operate, rusting at their moorings in harbours along the coast around Murmansk. Most still have nuclear fuel on board.

Elsewhere lie thousands of tonnes of radioactive waste, some 20,000 spent fuel assemblies, and old reactors.

The casual attitude towards nuclear safety has improved little in post-Soviet times, and the penury of the Russian government has brought the situation to what one admiral described as an emergency.

Accidents, murders and thefts have undermined faith in the ability of the fleet command to manage its nuclear heritage.

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## Nuking the Neighbours

Far from striving to run down their own weapons of mass destruction, the US and Britain are finding new targets to point them at

Before the Ramadan bombing fades into media oblivion, swamped by important New Labour resignations, it is worth recalling the good news. The United States and its ally Britain did not drop nuclear weapons on Iraq. They only used "conventional" explosives fired from Tornado aircraft or fitted to laser-guided, corner-turning cruise missiles.

What a relief, except that it is still American policy to reserve the right to launch a nuclear bomb at "rogue" states like Iraq, Libya, and North Korea. It is also British and American policy to have another go at Saddam Hussein in the next few months or any time they see fit, now that they have broken the taboo of waging comprehensive war on him without a UN Security Council mandate.

Worse still, Washington and London are hoping to get a blank cheque to pursue these options under a Nato-wide umbrella even though before last month's bombing Nato was not consulted.

In April Nato will be endorsing a new strategic role for itself. Timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of its foundation, as an alliance directed against the Soviet Union, the review threatens not only to take the organisation out of its traditional geographical area of focus in Europe but to give it a global role and an extraordinarily dangerous set of new missions.

In Pentagon jargon, it is called "offensive counter-proliferation". Put into plainer English, it means that if other attempts fail to prevent foreign countries trying to build chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons, Nato may nuke them. Instead of being available only for "war-

fighting" as they were under Nato's cold war doctrine, nuclear weapons could be used in pre-emptive strikes against countries which were not at war. They could even be used against "non-state actors" like terrorist groups or religious fanatics who beg, buy, or steal weapons of mass destruction. If this doctrine were implemented, it would be the world's biggest nut-chasing sledgehammer, and its last.

The doctrine is so pernicious that some of those who helped develop it have had second thoughts. Some months before the Ramadan bombing General Lee Butler, who headed the US Strategic Air Command during the Gulf war, told the National Press Club in Washington that using nuclear weapons on Baghdad would be morally and politically devastating. A former colleague, Ambassador Thomas Graham, who led the US negotiating team at the non-proliferation conference in Geneva four years ago, took up the argument. Now also retired from government service, he has warned Nato in letters to various European prime ministers that threatening to use nuclear weapons to deter chemical or biological warfare preparations or attacks would not only be "inappropriate and disproportionate", it also makes nonsense of American and British efforts to encourage countries not to acquire nuclear weapons.

As long as Britain and the US still invent new uses for nuclear weapons long after their original nuclear enemy the Soviet Union has collapsed, why should other countries abandon the nuclear option for themselves? Four years ago the

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## Russia's icy nuclear nightmare (continued)

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Thousands of tonnes of radioactive water gushed out of leaky storage pools in the 1980s, leaving the surrounding earth contaminated.

An explosion in a submarine missile tube last year caused panic in Murmansk, with pharmacists selling out of iodine, taken during radioactive emergencies to stave off thyroid cancer.

In September, a conscript on one of the navy's best remaining submarines shot dead eight of his comrades and barricaded himself in the torpedo room before committing suicide. In January another conscript disabled an active submarine when he ripped out 24 vital wires in the reactor control room and sold them to another serviceman for £30.

Taken from the Guardian, 4 March 1999

## Nuking the Neighbours (continued)

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five nuclear powers promised to take substantial steps towards total nuclear abolition by the year 2000, yet although they have made some cuts in their arsenals, the US and Britain go on increasing their options for use. In the excited words of the US Defence Special Weapons Agency, the world has evolved "from a weapon-rich environment to a target-rich one".

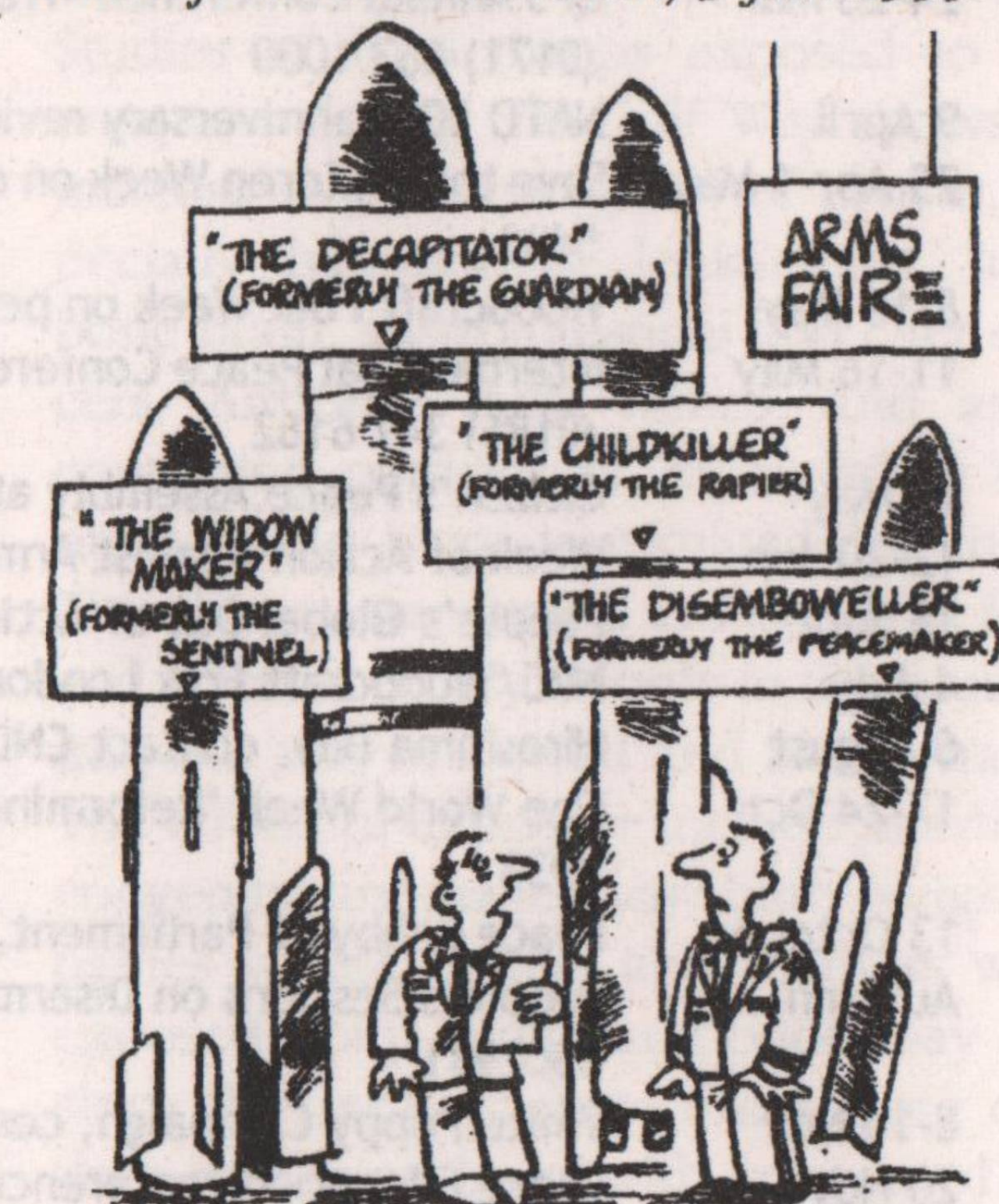
For Nato the issue has become urgent because of an unexpected maggot in the apple. The new German government is challenging a central tenet of the alliance's nuclear theology. It is calling for Nato to issue a declaration that it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons. With the minimum possible public discussion of the row, officials and ministers in Nato governments are trying to silence the Germans. For those who wonder why Britain felt it necessary to join the Americans in last month's bombing of Iraq, perhaps this is the main reason, beyond any personal chemistry between Bill Clinton and Tony Blair.

The American nuclear weapons and targeting systems which the US sells Britain as its "independent" deterrent are needed in Whitehall as the ultimate proof

that Britain still has power in the world and within Nato. Washington wants a nuclear ally. So when the US tested its latest missiles on a real-life enemy, Britain had to be part of the deadly war-games.

Their target was not just Baghdad, but the Nato summit in April. Had Britain not joined Washington in attacking Iraq as a warning of the new targeting options, it would have made it harder to tell the Germans: "Don't mess with our nukes".

Taken from the Guardian, 5 Jan 1999



"I MUST ADMIT THEY'RE A LOT HARDER TO SELL WITH REALISTIC NAMES....."

## Footprints to the Hague

The National Peace Council is aiming to collect tens of thousands of footprints to send to the Hague Appeal for Peace conference in May (see Diary dates) so that those of us not going to the conference can still contribute to the movement for peace.

### To create your personal Bold Step Footprint:

- 1 Trace around your foot on a piece of A4 paper.
- 2 Fill in the toe with a bold step you want the government to take for peace.
- 3 Fill in the heel with a bold step *you* will take for peace.
- 4 Decorate the rest of your foot if you like.
- 5 Sign your footprint and write which town you live in.
- 6 Send you footprint to Nottingham CND by April 10th, or to National Peace Council, 88 Islington St, London N1 8EG by 1st May.

## Bold Steps for Peace

Collecting Bold Step footprints is part of a year-long calendar of events aimed at raising the profile of the peace movement and putting peace issues more firmly onto the political agenda. After the Hague conference, the Bold Steps for Peace campaign will focus on the Hague Agenda which comes out of the conference as a tool for further campaigning in the run-up to the millennium.

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 3 March      | Day of Lobbying for Peace Tax, contact Conscience (0171) 5611061                            |
| 1-7 March    | Landmines Awareness Week, contact UK Working Group on Landmines (0171) 281 6073             |
| 9 March      | NPC Council meeting 'Responding to Crises', contact NPC (0171) 354 5200                     |
| 17 March     | Ash Wednesday Peace Witness, contact Pax Christi (0181) 203 4884                            |
| 24-26 Mar    | QPS Annual Conference 'Transforming Power', contact Quaker Peace & Service (0171) 663 1000  |
| 9 April      | NATO 50th anniversary review, contact Abolition 2000 (0171) 354 9911                        |
| 25 Apr-1 May | Save the Children Week on child soldiers, contact Save the Children (0171) 703 5400         |
| 8-16 May     | Woodcraft Folk Week on peace, contact Woodcraft Folk (0181) 672 6031                        |
| 11-16 May    | International Peace Conference In the Hague, contact Hague Appeal for Peace (0181) 347 6162 |
| 22 May       | Citizen's Peace Assembly at Westminster Central Hall  |
| 12-20 Jun    | Week of Action Against Arms Trade, contact CAAT (0171) 281 0297                             |
| 18 June      | People's Global Day of Action; contact Faslane Peace Camp (01436) 820901                    |
| 4 July       | NPC/Woodcraft Folk London Mystery Walk, contact NPC (0171) 354 5200                         |
| 6 August     | Hiroshima Day, contact CND (0171) 700 2393  |
| 17-24 Oct    | One World Week 'Reforming the Future', contact One World Week (0118) 939 4933               |
| 13 October   | Peace Lobby of Parliament, contact Forum for UN Renewal (0171) 9300272                      |
| Autumn       | People's Sessions on Disarmament, contact United Nations Association (0171) 9302931         |
| 8-14 Nov     | White Poppy Campaign, contact Peace Pledge Union (0171) 424 9444                            |
| 20 Nov       | Peace Education conference 'Towards a Culture of Peace', contact NPC (0171) 354 5200        |
| 16 Dec       | NPC Embassy Walk, contact NPC (0171) 354 5200   |

## Nukewatch Annual Review 1998

Nukewatch is a nation-wide network which monitors nuclear convoys, informs the public, local authorities and media of their movements and campaigns against them. Nottingham CND supports Nukewatch financially, so here are some extracts from its Annual Review 1998.

Nukewatch has had another successful year fulfilling its aims of verifying the movements of British nuclear weapons. In 1998, Nukewatchers monitored and tracked 14 RAF nuclear warhead convoys and 44 Special Nuclear Materials (SNM) convoys. RAF convoys carrying warheads were on the roads on at least 27 days, unloaded ones, 23 times. Each RAF operation takes several days, whereas SNM movements are mostly one-day deliveries between the Atomic Weapons Establishments (AWE) and other nuclear facilities. Dedicated watchers wait along the routes to verify these supposedly secret movements. The press and local authorities are

informed and careful protests often take place.

1998 has been another year for good local press coverage of safety and secrecy issues raised by Nukewatch, especially when convoys have deviated from the most direct routes. When the Strategic Defence Review was published in July, Nukewatch held a Surgery for MPs in the House of Commons. This was not as well attended as the 1997 Exhibition, but gave us an opportunity to discuss problems more fully with the handful of MPs who came. Information packs were sent to MPs who were unable to attend.

## Campaign Against Depleted Uranium

Greater Manchester and District CND is launching a campaign against depleted uranium, CADU. Depleted uranium is a weapon of mass destruction used for the first time in the Gulf War. DU is a low-level radioactive waste employed for its ability to bust through tank armour.

The United States Army Environmental Policy Institute (AEPI), describes some of the health and environmental consequences of the use of DU, which it describes as inherently toxic. It says that if DU enters the body, it has the potential to generate significant medical consequences: short-term effects of high doses can result in death, while long-term effects of low doses have been implicated in cancer.

US and British forces dropped about 630,000 pounds of DU on Iraq in the form of 1 million bullets – with terrible ill effects

on both humans and the environment. Studies of Iraqi troops exposed to DU weapons during the Gulf War shows an increase in different types of cancer, especially lymphomas, leukaemias, lung, bone brain, gastrointestinal and liver cancers. Airborne dust, fumes, and ashes containing particles of highly toxic uranium oxide were transmitted for miles. This dust contaminated thousands of food and water sources not only in the south of Iraq but also in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The effects of exposure include infertility, congenital anomalies, low birth weight of babies whose fathers and mothers were exposed. Iraqi health authorities say that since 1991 at least three times more children are being born with congenital deformities than before. British and US veterans of the Gulf War are now reporting sick and dying children.