

Diary Dates

- Sat 9 Feb **Oxfam fundraiser cabaret for humanitarian aid in Afghanistan**
7.30pm, The Place, 2a Melrose St, Sherwood.
- 11-13 February **The Big Blockade 2002 at Faslane**
Three days of protest & nonviolent direct action at Britain's nuclear weapons base called by Trident Ploughshares, Scottish CND, British CND & Faslane Peace Camp. Phone the Action Line: 0845 458 8361 or e-mail: big_blockade@hotmail.com
- Sun 17 Feb **General Nottingham CND members meeting**
Discussing greater regional coordination, and Stop the War activities. 2.30pm, ICC 61b Mansfield Road, refreshments provided.
- 23 February **Stop the War Coalition Teach-in** at Nottingham Trent University
Details not yet available - ring Ian on [redacted]
- Thu 14 Mar **Nottingham University One World Day fair**
Portland Building, Nottingham University.
- Sat 2 Mar **National Stop the War Demonstration, London** - see below
- Sat 30 Mar **National CND March and Rally, London** - see below

Stall Dates 2002

March 23	April 20	May 25	June 8	July 20
Aug 3	Sept 21	Oct 26	Nov 9	Dec 21

National Stop the War Coalition Demonstration

London, Sat 2 March

Coach from Nottingham leaving Salutation Inn at 8am.

Tickets from Mark on [redacted]

Stop Bush and Blair's War! Stop the US torture of prisoners.

Hands off Somalia and Iraq. Stop the bombing now.

National CND March and Rally

No Star Wars

London, Saturday 30 March

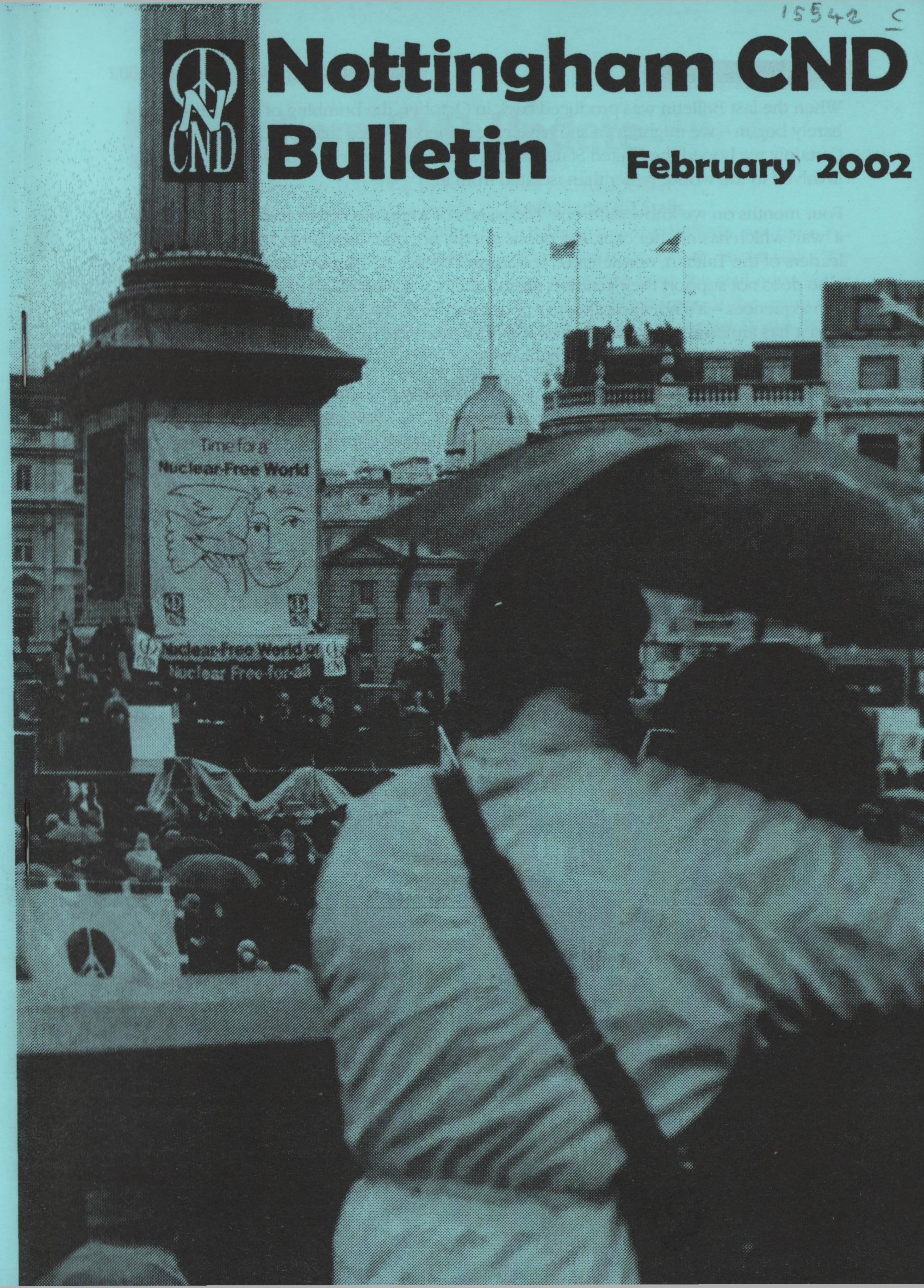
12 noon march from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square, London

Coach from Nottingham leaving Salutation Inn at 8am.



Nottingham CND Bulletin

February 2002



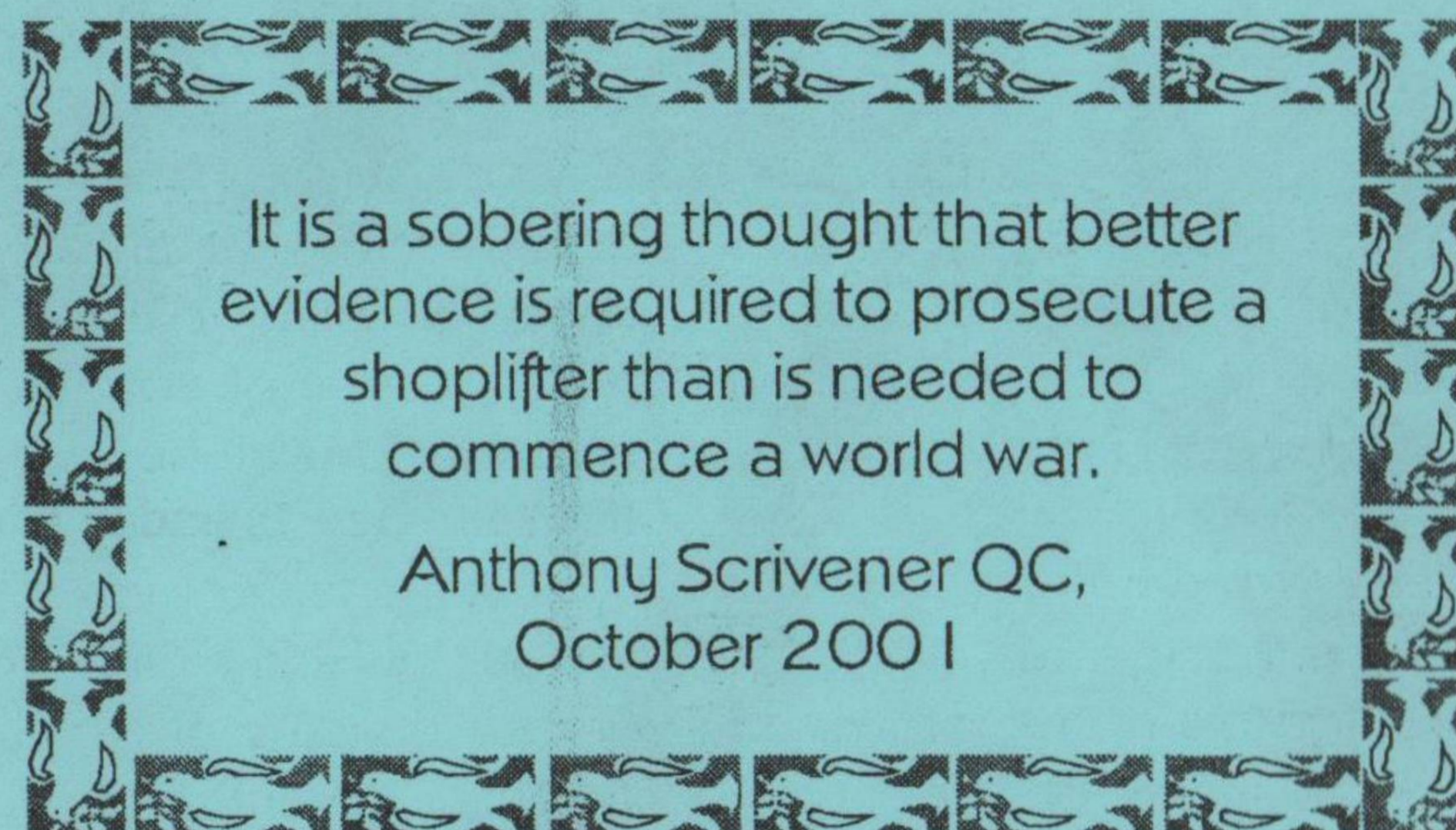
When the last Bulletin was produced back in October, the bombing of Afghanistan had barely begun – we might even still have entertained the idea that it could be avoided. Certainly we hoped the United States would see that its security is best served by being involved in the world, rather than isolated from it.

Four months on we know different. Thousands of Afghan civilians have been killed by a 'war' which has neither captured public enemy no. one Osama bin Laden and the leaders of the Taliban, nor defeated terrorism. The US has bluntly warned that anyone who does not support their action is against them, presumably to suffer the consequences – it's not allowable to oppose terrorism but be critical of US policies. And it has announced its intention to withdraw from the ABM Treaty, an important cog of the nuclear anti-proliferation treaty machine.

CND has been at the forefront of the groups opposing the attack on Afghanistan. Most CND members have backed this stance – some because they are pacifists, others because they recognise that terrorism cannot be defeated by military means. More demonstrations are coming (see back page) and we need to keep up the pressure as the US is *still* bombing Afghanistan, and likely to widen its campaign to other "evil" countries like Iraq and Somalia.

Meanwhile, there is also a Nottingham CND member's meeting on 17 February to discuss our involvement in the local Stop the War campaign, and to look at proposals for a greater regional presence. I hope you can come.

Mark Ramsey – Editor



Nottingham CND Bulletin #2002/1

The Bulletin is produced quarterly by Nottingham CND, using Serif PagePlus 6.0. Any articles or opinions expressed within are not necessarily the policy of Nottingham CND.

The next issue of the Bulletin is due in April/May 2002. Articles (preferably on PC computer disk) or other material to be considered for inclusion should be sent to Nottingham CND at the address below or e-mailed to bulletin@nottinghamcnd.org.uk by April 1st.

Nottingham CND, Nottm Voluntary Action Centre, Sandfield House, 7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FB. Tel: 0115 9348459. enquiries@nottinghamcnd.org.uk www.nottinghamcnd.org.uk

Nottingham CND Update

Belated greetings to you for a peaceful New Year. We go into 2002 with unease as to what will happen next. We ended 2001 with the chance of India and Pakistan (both nuclear states) declaring war over Kashmir, Israel and Palestine still not resolving their differences and Afghanistan forming an interim government with a heavy presence of British and allied troops. Also the plight of the Afghan people is still serious, food and medical aid are still needed. Please note that the Clarion Choir will be holding a benefit concert for Oxfam on February 9th (see the back page for details).

Back home, Tony Blair is still supporting Bush even though Bush gave notice to Russia on December 13th that the USA was withdrawing from the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty set up over 30 years ago, because he said that it hindered him from protecting the USA from future terrorist missile attacks. This means he is definitely going to go ahead with plans for the missile defence programme and the militarisation of space (star wars). We need to be saying to the Labour Government that Menwith Hill and Fylingdales are not for his use. Please note that there is a National CND march and rally in London on March 30th about Star Wars. We are booking coaches for this event so please come and join us and make your presence felt (see the back page for details).

Nottingham Stop the War Coalition

Members of Nottingham CND have been very involved with Stop the War activities in the last few months (see Ian's article) and play a major role in the organisation. Please note that there is a teach-in on February 23rd at Nottingham University and one of the sessions will be on Star Wars and the militarisation of space

with a CND speaker.

Nottingham CND Stalls

Since the last bulletin we have resolved the issue of the street stall. We have agreed to have the stall outside the Council House in front of the south lion (the one nearest Exchange Walk). If we feel uncomfortable at this site we have the opportunity to ask for relocation. In other words, we said we would give it a go. Please note the stall dates at the back – as usual we need volunteers to help staff the stall.

East Midlands region CND

Tom Cuthbert has been putting a lot of work in with National CND to get money for IT support and agreement to form an East Midlands CND. The main reason is so we can coordinate better as a region and also, hopefully, encourage activity in areas where there is none at present. We thought it would be helpful if we had a general discussion on this and also to discuss Stop the War activities. We have, therefore, organised a meeting on Sunday February 17th at 2.30pm at the ICC. The more of you attend, the better the discussion will be.

One World Day Thursday March 14th

It is the time of year again when we have our stall at the One World Day in the Portland Building of Nottingham University. This is an enjoyable occasion as one where we have a chance to raise awareness of nuclear issues such as Star Wars and the disastrous effect it would have on this planet. We need help on the day please (see the back page).

I do hope you can make it to at least one of these events and thank you for your support in 2001.

Diane Lunzer - Secretary

Stop the War Activities

Since we published the last bulletin in October, members of Nottingham CND have continued to play a leading role in the local Stop the War campaign.

On Saturday 3rd November there were about 600 local people, including many from the Muslim community, on the very successful march from the Forest Recreation Ground culminating in a rally in the Market square at which CND members John Peck and Diane Lunzer were speakers. The march was shown on East Midlands television news as well as briefly on a BBC2 Newsnight programme about the anti war movement along with an interview with Diane.

Nottingham CND organised a Remembrance Day silent vigil which was also attended by members of the Nottingham Womens Environmental Network and nuns from The Sisters Can house. The vigil drew a lot of interest from passers by. We took an active part in helping send 6 full coaches from Nottingham to the National Stop the War Coalition march and rally in London on Saturday 18th November. This was an outstanding success with approximately 80,000 taking part and National Chair, Carol Naughton, one of the leading speakers in Trafalgar Square.

The Evening Post, Friday 25th Jan, published the following letter from John Peck on behalf of Nottingham CND:

Nottingham Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament objects to the way prisoners captured in Afghanistan have been treated. In Guantanamo in Cuba, the Red Cross, Amnesty International and journalists have seen & been told of inhumane ways in which they are being kept. Many of the prisoners have been charged with serious crimes, including killings, but 'tit for tat' is not a good basis on which to formulate a human rights strategy. The widest recognised international agreement on these matters is the Geneva Convention. Britain should be pressing for its principles to be applied first and foremost to those with British nationality. Charges made against the prisoners should be tried in a properly established criminal court.

John Peck (Media Officer)

On Saturday December 8th there was a second successful local march and rally again starting from the Forest but, this time, ending in an indoor rally at the Victoria Leisure Centre. This was chaired by John Peck and Anna Cheetham from Leicester CND was one of the speakers.

Nottingham CND also organised a second silent vigil on Sunday 23rd December drawing attention to the issues of peace and justice prior to Christmas. We were joined, this time by supporters of the Revolutionary Association of Women of Afghanistan as well as members of WEN and the nuns. The event was filmed by local TV and Radio Nottingham interviewed several participants.

Throughout this time, the Nottingham Stop the War Campaign had continued to meet on Wednesday evenings, 7.30 to 9.30pm in the ICC, as well as holding regular weekly leafletting and petitioning on Saturday afternoons in Market Square.

There was a short break over Christmas and New Year but both the Wednesday and Saturday activities have now recommenced. Join us if you can or just come and say hello if you are in town between 7pm and 9pm on a Saturday.

Ian Cohen

US Withdraws from ABM Treaty

President George W. Bush's decision to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty dramatically undercuts the international security regime, ignoring ongoing European concerns without technological need.

Brushing aside the ABM is yet another damaging blow to international arms control efforts. In the past month, the Bush administration thwarted progress on strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Yet while the United States clearly welcomes European cooperation with its anti-terrorism actions, it chooses to act unilaterally on global arms control issues. BASIC Director Ian Davis said, "The United States cannot prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction acting alone. Effective arms control requires concerted international cooperation. The decision to withdraw from the 1972 ABM Treaty is the latest move in a baffling and dangerous trend of US unilateralism, which is doing much to undermine the post-September 11 coalition against terrorism."

Preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty, which was created to avert competitive nuclear weapons buildup between Russia and the United States, is still the best way to rein in proliferation that

might arise in other countries. Abandoning the ABM will likely result in China stepping up its own nuclear weapons program and possibly increasing its arsenal in response. Washington's allies are yet to be convinced of Bush's assurances over these fears.

- French President Jacques Chirac asserted in August, "There's no single response to this new threat [missile proliferation]. Political means must not be neglected... [M]issile defense capabilities, at the heart of the debate, whose efficacy and consequences must be assessed, are far from constituting a new panacea."
- U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan in September expressed concern for the future of controlling nuclear weapons, noting that "plans to deploy national missile defenses threaten not only current bilateral and multilateral arms control agreements but also ongoing and future disarmament and non-proliferation efforts."

Scientific experts assert that the United States can continue to test a missile defense system without breaking the ABM Treaty for many years to come.

13 Dec 2001. Press release taken from BASIC web site www.basicint.org

Join Nottingham CND's email list

As more and more people have access to email, it is becoming a valuable way to contact people about Nottingham CND events. Please join our email list so that we can let you know when we have our next demo, vigil or public meeting.

To join, send an email to enquiries@nottinghamcnd.org.uk with the subject "Email List".

"...cannot be independently verified"

Soon after the attacks on September 11th, my local MP wrote:

"...there aren't any causes which justify killing thousands of innocent civilians. Not world happiness. Not Islam. Not Palestine. Not Christianity. No matter how noble the cause, this type of action pollutes it.... Even if a country has policies with which you disagree, mass murder is the response of a madman..."

What he fails to say is why that applies to a terrorist attack, but not to the military attack on Afghanistan (which he supports). How can 'defeating terrorism' be a cause which justifies killing thousands of innocent civilians?

Later he wrote: "...I do know that innocent civilians are killed in any war, but... one has to weigh it up against the prospect of repeated civilian losses [from terrorist attacks] stretching indefinitely into the future."

So, we will sacrifice Afghan civilians to prevent the *possible* death of western civilians in *possible* terrorist attacks (of course, it's also possible to argue that the 'war' could inflame anti-western feeling and make such terrorist attack more, not less, likely). The death of Afghan civilians is 'a price worth paying'. How arrogant, how racist, that is. Do we think that the deaths of those killed in Afghanistan don't matter as much to their friends and relatives as the deaths of those killed in New York do to theirs?

How many deaths are we talking about? From reading most of the mainstream western press you would think that collateral damage has been a rare event - a few killed here, a dozen there. In fact, a study by a professor at the University of New Hampshire has found that over 4000 Afghan civilians have been killed by the

'war' on Afghanistan. He has gathered information from news agencies and major newspapers, as well as first-hand accounts, and sought cross-corroboration wherever possible [source: "A Dossier on Civilian Victims of United States' Aerial Bombing of Afghanistan: A Comprehensive Accounting", Professor M W Herold, Dec 2001]. It seems that American forces, as well as their civilians, have lives of greater value than Afghan civilians - the reliance on air power, including the willingness to bomb military targets in urban areas, inevitably resulting in heavy civilian casualties, reveals a policy where Afghan civilian casualties are substituted for American military casualties.

Four thousand deaths. That is more than the number of people who died in the attack on the World Trade Center (now revised downwards to under 3300).

Why haven't we been told? Why are most people unaware how many children, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives have been killed by the 'war' which they support? There have only been isolated reports of such deaths in our media, making them seem rare events and giving the impression that there are few civilian deaths. Even these reports are often qualified with the by-line that they "cannot be independently verified". It seems that the only real casualties noted are those connected to a western enterprise or organization (eg people working for the Red Cross), or those "independently verified" by a *western* individual or organization.

The western media, apparently cowed and obedient to its political masters, must share blame for the continuation of this 'war'. When the America pub-

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"...cannot be independently verified"

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lic saw the results of the Vietnam war - GIs killed and atrocities committed in America's name - shock and indignation fueled a national movement to end the war. This

time, self-censorship has ensured that it is only the military's story which is heard.

Mark Ramsey

Professor Herold's paper can be found online at www.zmag.org/herold.htm

Words of the Pentagon: "We cannot confirm the report...civilian casualties are inevitable...we don't know if they were our weapons...it was an accident...incorrect coordinates had been entered...they are deliberately putting civilians in our bombing targets...the village was a legitimate military target...it just didn't happen...we regret any loss of civilian life."

Words of an Afghan civilian: "We pulled the baby out, the others were buried in the rubble. Children were decapitated. There were bodies with no legs. We could do nothing. We just fled."

Words of an Afghan refugee: "Now I can show my face whereas under the Taliban I wouldn't dare walk around like this or I would be beaten. But what is the use of that if every night you go to bed with empty stomachs? We thought after the Taliban that life would be better, but now I don't even know if we'll survive."

Write to Tony Blair about the ABM Treaty

Please write to the Prime Minister about the announcement by President Bush on 13 December of the intention of the US to withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty in order to proceed with plans to develop and deploy ballistic missile defences. Ask him to advise President Bush to think again about this decision.

There are some points below which you could use, or you may have ideas of your own. Send your letter to The Prime Minister, 10 Downing Street, London, London SW1A 2AA.

- The deployment of ballistic missile defences is not an effective countering of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.
- The move signals that the US is willing to act unilaterally and outside the jurisdiction of international law. The UK should not be condoning this.
- Withdrawal from the ABM Treaty will allow the US to conduct tests of space weapons because much of the Missile Defence technology can also be used for the weaponisation of Space. This may provoke an arms race in Outer Space.
- We agree that the ABM Treaty is a relic of the Cold War and supports the policy of Mutual Assured Destruction. However, it is tied in with the framework of international disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. It should therefore be preserved until more comprehensive disarmament measures have been agreed.
- Meanwhile the UK and the US should take the lead on long-promised negotiations for the abolition of nuclear weapons. They undertook to do this in the Final Document of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2000 when they pledged themselves to "An unequivocal undertaking ... to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament". They should also engage in serious negotiations for the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Failing to support such treaties, in particular the Biological Weapons Treaty, creates its own dangers.

Justice redefined as success

by George Monbiot, 15 Nov 2001

The armchair warriors have proved no more merciful in victory than the Northern Alliance. Yesterday's Sun gave two pages to an editorial entitled "Shame of the traitors: wrong, wrong, wrong ... the fools who said Allies faced disaster". Christopher Hitchens raised the moral and intellectual tone of the debate in the Guardian yesterday with this lofty sentiment: "Well, ha ha ha and yah, boo". Such magnanimity suggests that it is not Afghanistan which we have bombed into the stone age, but ourselves.

But almost everyone now agrees that this is the end of history, all over again. The sceptics have been routed as swiftly as the Taliban. George Bush and Tony Blair, with the help of their daisy cutters and cluster bombs, have ushered in a new, new world order, the long awaited golden age of democracy. But have the warriors of the west, both actual and virtual, really won? And if so, what precisely is the prize?

It would be rather easier to measure the success of the west's war aims if those aims had not shifted with every presidential announcement. But a few key questions may help us to determine how much the B-52s have achieved. The first and most obvious is: will the advance of the Northern Alliance lead to the overthrow of the barbarous Taliban? The answer is, almost certainly, yes - although they may persist as a guerrilla force. The question this then raises is, will it improve the lives of the Afghan people? Almost everyone appears to believe that it will. But we would be foolish to forget that just five years ago both Afghans and western diplomats welcomed the Taliban's capture of Kabul, as it relieved the inhabitants of the murderous dominion of the men who

now run the Northern Alliance. Yesterday the Telegraph claimed that the Northern Alliance's "fearful violence" towards Arab and Pakistani soldiers "is a shocking reminder of the fact that Bin Laden's zealots have been a hated army of occupation". Well, perhaps. But it is also a shocking reminder of the fact that the Northern Alliance can be just as brutal as the hated regime it has displaced.

The Northern Alliance's willingness to cooperate with western plans for Afghanistan is also questionable. Four days ago, we were told that its soldiers had been persuaded not to advance on Kabul, and this was judged a victory for the west. Now they have taken Kabul, and this too is hailed as a victory for the west. That the military action has not gone according to plan, in other words, is presented as a vindication of the plan.

Given that the Northern Alliance has so far shown little interest in doing as the west requests, why should we assume that it would be prepared to abandon its military gains for a "broad-based" political settlement? Countless comparisons to the outcome in Serbia have been made, as if this somehow offers proof that armed intervention leads inexorably to democracy. But Serbia, unlike Afghanistan, already possessed a mature democracy movement. Where is the Afghan equivalent? Where are the moderate leaders with whom the west wants to replace the Taliban? Who among all the named credible candidates does not have blood on his hands? And will the fiercely independent Afghans accept the writ of the UN? Or, given that both Russia and the west have strategic and energy interests in central

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Justice redefined as success

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Asia, will it come to be seen in the same light as the Soviet occupation?

Will the advance of the Northern Alliance save people who are at risk of famine in Afghanistan? It will almost certainly save some of them. Much more aid is now entering the areas which have come under Northern Alliance control, though, like the retreating Taliban, the Alliance fighters have been looting supplies and commandeering UN vehicles. But for thousands the help is likely to have arrived too late. The interruption of supplies during the eight weeks in which they should have been stockpiled for the winter means that many of those living in the valleys made inaccessible by snow will die before they can be reached.

Will it lead to the capture or killing of Osama bin Laden? Possibly. Will it free the world from terrorism? No. Will it deliver regional or global security? Probably not. The Northern Alliance's gains represented a bounty for Russia and a blow for Pakistan, whose government is now facing a far graver test in victory than it would have faced in defeat. Even in Britain, a new poll by the Today programme shows 80% of Muslims opposed to the west's war.

But, as well as asking what this war has done to Asia, we must also ask what it has done to us. And here, it seems to me, the bugles sounding victory for civilised values are also sounding a retreat.

The first and most obvious loss is our repudiation of the very basis of civilisation: human rights. The new terrorism bills in America and Britain have required the suspension of both the US constitution and the UK's human rights act - it seems that in trying to shut the terrorists out, we have merely imprisoned ourselves.

One of the last smart bombs de-

ployed in Kabul destroyed the offices of al-Jazeera, the only truly independent major television station in the Arab world. Al-Jazeera has consistently provided a voice for Muslims opposed to US military intervention in Afghanistan, as well as airing Bin Laden's inflammatory videos. A few weeks ago Colin Powell sought to persuade the emir of Qatar to close it down, without success. Its destruction suggests that free speech and dissent have now joined terrorism as the business of "evil-doers".

The second loss to the west is the triumph of war-war over jaw-jaw. The partial victory in Afghanistan appears to have convinced both governments and commentators that we can blast our way to world peace. No serious attempt was made, before the bombing began, to differentiate between just and unjust war. Justice in war, as almost every philosopher since Thomas Aquinas onwards agrees, requires that the peaceful alternatives should first have been exhausted. There is plenty to suggest that the initial aim - to capture Bin Laden - could have been achieved without war. The Taliban twice offered to hand him over on receipt of evidence pointing to his guilt: a much lower barrier to extradition than western governments would have raised. We appear to have made no attempt to discover whether or not they could have been taken at their word. Now justice appears to have been redefined as success, and war as the only route to peace.

This new triumphalism is sliding effortlessly into a new imperialism. It conflates armed and ethical success, munitions and morality. If this is a victory for civilisation, I would hate to see what defeat looks like.

Taken from *The Guardian*, 15 Nov 2001

The real story behind America's war

by John Pilger, 17 December 2001. Taken from www.johnpilger.com

Since 11 September, the "war on terrorism" has provided a pretext for the rich countries, led by the United States, to further their dominance over world affairs. By spreading "fear and respect", as a Washington Post reporter put it, America intends to see off challenges to its uncertain ability to control and manage the "global economy", the euphemism for the progressive seizure of markets and resources by the G8 rich nations. This, not the hunt for a man in a cave in Afghanistan, is the aim behind US Vice-President Dick Cheney's threats to "40 to 50 countries". It has little to do with terrorism and much to do with maintaining the divisions that underpin "globalisation".

Today international trade is worth more than £11.5bn a day. Just 0.4% of this is shared with the poorest countries. American and G8 capital controls 70 per cent of world markets, and because of the rules demanding the end of tariff barriers and subsidies in poor countries while ignoring protectionism in the west, the poor countries lose £1.3bn a day in trade.

By any measure, this is a war of the rich against the poor. Look at the casualty figures. The toll, says the World Resources Institute, is more than 13 million children every year, or 12 million under the age of five, according to United Nations estimates. "If 100 million have been killed in the formal wars of the 20th century", wrote Michael McKinley, "why are they to be privileged in comprehension over the annual [death] toll of children from structured adjustment programmes since 1982?"

McKinley's paper, "Triage: a survey of the new inequality as combat zone" was presented to a conference in Chicago this

year and deserves wider reading. It vividly describes the acceleration of western economic power in the Clinton years, which, since 11 September, has passed a threshold of danger for millions of people.

Last month's World Trade Organisation meeting in Doha in the Gulf state of Qatar, was disastrous for the majority of humanity. The rich nations demanded and got a new "round" of "trade liberalisation", which is the power to intervene in the economies of poor countries, to demand privatisation and the destruction of public services. Only they are permitted to protect their home industries and agriculture; only they have the right to subsidise exports of meat, grain and sugar, then to dump them in poor countries at artificially low prices, thereby destroying the livelihoods of millions.

Even before the WTO met, the American trade representative Robert Zoelliek invoked the "war on terrorism" to warn the developing world that no serious opposition to the American trade agenda would be tolerated. He said: "The United States is committed to global leadership of openness and understands that the staying power of our new coalition...[against terrorism]...depends on economic growth..." The code is that "economic growth" (rich elite, poor majority) equals anti-terrorism.

Mark Curtis, Christian Aid's head of policy, who attended Doha, has described "an emerging pattern of threats and intimidation of poor countries" that amounted to "economic gunboat diplomacy". He said: "It was utterly outrageous. Wealthy countries exploited their power to spin the agenda of big business. The

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issue of multinational corporations as a cause of poverty was not even on the agenda; it was like a conference on malaria that does not discuss the mosquito."

Delegates from poor countries complained of being threatened with the removal of their few precious trade preferences. A senior US official telephoned the Ugandan government to ask that its ambassador to the WTO, Nathan Irumba, be withdrawn. Irumba chairs the WTO's committee on trade and development and has been critical of the "liberalisation" agenda. Dr Richard Bernal, a Jamaican delegate at Doha, said his government had come under similar pressure. "We feel that this [WTO] meeting has no connection with the war on terrorism," he said, "[yet] we are made to feel that we are holding up the rescue of the global economy if we don't agree to a new round [of liberalisation measures]." India's minister for commerce and industry said angrily, "The whole process is a mere formality and we are being coerced against our will...the WTO is not a world government and should not attempt to appropriate to itself what legitimately falls in the domain of national governments and parliaments."

What the conference showed was that the WTO has become a world government, run by the rich (principally Washington). It has 142 members, but only 21 governments in reality draft policy, most of which is written by the "quad": the US, Europe, Canada and Japan.

At Doha, the British played a part similar to Tony Blair's promotion of the "war on terrorism". The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Patricia Hewitt, has already said that "since 11 September, the case is very overwhelming for more trade liberalisation". In Doha, the British dele-

gation demonstrated, according to Christian Aid, "the gulf between its rhetoric about making trade work for the poor" and its real intentions.

This "rhetoric" is the speciality of Clare Short, the International Development Secretary. She is worthy of special mention for the important supporting role she has played in the fraudulent war on terrorism. To some, she is still the rough diamond who speaks her mind in the headlines. In trying to justify her support for the lawless bombing of civilians in Yugoslavia, she likened its opponents to Nazi appeasers. She has since abused relief agency workers in Pakistan, who called for a pause in the current bombing as "emotional" and questioned their integrity. She has said that relief is "getting through" when, in fact, little of it is being distributed to where it is most needed.

Around 700 tonnes are being trucked into Afghanistan every day, less than half that which the UN says is needed. Six million people remain at risk. Nothing is reaching those areas near Jalalabad, where Americans are bombing villages, killing hundreds of civilians according to anti-Taliban commanders who are beginning to plead with Washington to stop. On these killings the outspoken Short is silent.

The militarism that is there for all but the intellectually and morally impaired to see is the natural extension of the rapacious economic policies that have divided humanity as never before. As Thomas Friedman wrote, "the hidden hand" of the market is US military force.

It is time we recognised that the real terrorism is poverty, which kills thousands of people every day, and the source of their suffering, and that of innocent people in dusty villages, is directly related.

Strident about Trident

Since September 11, one would have thought Britain would be doing its best to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Not so, it seems. *Richard Norton-Taylor.*

Nuclear weapons are regarded by the US, Britain and indeed all Nato countries as the ultimate deterrent, the ultimate guarantee of their security. Trite it may be to say so, but the vast array of nuclear weapons at the disposal of the US did not deter terrorists from attacking New York and Washington on September 11. It is difficult to contemplate any weapons, let alone nuclear ones, eradicating the elusive enemy in what the Bush and Blair administrations describe as the "war" against terrorism.

However, both Washington and London are warning that they will not hesitate to take military action against terrorist groups and states harbouring them. The bombing of Afghanistan, Geoff Hoon, the defence secretary, told the Commons last week, was a "clear message" to others. In a speech on Wednesday he raised the prospect of coercive search-and-destroy raids carried out by small groups of highly mobile airborne troops.

But hawks in Washington, including Hoon's American counterpart, Donald Rumsfeld, do not rule out more drastic military action as they talk up the threat of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorist groups and "rogue" states, notably Iraq.

They want to develop "mini-nukes", for use against underground bunkers or even mobile missile launchers. Nuclear warheads, they suggest, would be the most reliable ingredient of its missile defence project. The British government, meanwhile, maintains the position laid down in the 1998 strategic defence review that the Trident missile system (Britain's only nuclear weapon) could have a

"sub-strategic" role. What targets these might include, and in what circumstances - to counter threats of chemical and biological warfare, for example - has never been explained, part no doubt of the US and British posture of "deliberate ambiguity".

A report published on 6th December by the British American Security Information Council (BASIC) says that it is time the government explained its nuclear weapons policy. Its report, *Secrecy and Dependence: the UK Trident System in the 21st century*, considers American moves to update its Trident system. It also covers Washington's proposal to make deep cuts in the number of its nuclear warheads in bilateral negotiations with Russia but outside any international treaty framework; the failure of the Bush administration to take steps to counter the very proliferation it is complaining about; and the lack of any proper debate here about nuclear weapons. The Ministry of Defence has abandoned its annual defence estimates and publishes less and less relevant information about nuclear weapons policy and expenditure.

BASIC points out that Labour has made some cautious changes to Britain's Trident posture, reducing from 60 to 48 the number of warheads per submarine and reducing the number of Trident II missiles from 65 to 58. But the biggest change in the Labour party's thinking has been the abandoning of a "no first use" policy, quietly dropped after the 1997 general election.

Britain relies on the US for the testing and servicing of its Trident system and the

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targeting of its missiles. Visits of scientists and technicians at the Aldermaston atomic weapons establishment to their American counterparts have increased significantly in recent years, from just over a hundred 10 years ago, to 235 in 1998-99, according to the latest available figures.

The US is working on plans to enhance the Trident missile, extend its service life and improve the effectiveness of the warhead. It is also converting two of its Trident submarines to non-nuclear use. Is Britain planning to do the same? We don't know.

Bush has told President Putin that the US was prepared to cut the number of American nuclear warheads from about 6,000 to less than 2,000, a reduction Putin is only too keen to replicate given the state of Russia's nuclear stockpile and economy. BASIC argues that this presents Britain with an ideal opportunity to propose an international nuclear disarmament conference. The 1998 strategic defence review stated that Britain's nuclear arsenal was the "minimum necessary to provide for our security... and very much smaller than those of the major nuclear powers".

It added: "Considerable further reductions in the latter would be needed before further British reductions could become feasible." This condition seems to be on its way to being fulfilled.

Has the Blair government got the stomach to pursue Labour's traditional emphasis on multilateral arms control

agreements when a unilateralist Bush administration is hostile to binding international treaties, whether on missile defence, nuclear warheads, a nuclear test ban or biological weapons?

Though it seems unlikely that Britain, or even the US, would now use nuclear weapons, the prospect of the unthinkable happening in the not-so-distant-future is more likely the more weapons of mass destruction proliferate. The targets could include any state possessing those weapons, not only terrorist groups or those states harbouring them. It may be unlikely that a dictator who was willing to strike another country that possessed weapons of mass destruction would feel entirely sure that that country would not respond with the power at its disposal. Yet the talk in Washington, and in London, now is all about launching pre-emptive strikes, not of deterrence or retaliatory strikes.

In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, Britain's global responsibility to contribute to efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their delivery systems - so urgent an issue, according to Whitehall - has never been more pressing, BASIC argues. Britain could use its special relationship with the US (so often trumpeted by Blair) to impress on the Bush administration the need for international engagement on these issues. If the government fails to do so, then parliament could always demand it.

Taken from The Guardian 7 Dec 2001

Nottingham CND members meeting

Sunday 17 Feb, 2.30pm, at the ICC 61b Mansfield Road

Discussing greater regional coordination, and Stop the War activities. Refreshments provided.

Pile No. 1 – a monument revisited

by Jeremy Jago

January 14th, 2002, Windscale Pile No 1, Sellafield, Cumbria. It is reported that the programme to dismantle the reactor core has been suspended.

If there's one determining feature of the nuclear programme, it's surely the fact of its complexity. The difficulty of its being explained by news media only made a futuristic miracle the more impressive. (It also added to the difficulties of later opposition campaigns.) The need for 'broad-brush' explanations in briefings to politicians and civil servants led to a lack of accountability. The need for high-class engineering amid inherent danger gave a flattering, heroic self-image to a technological culture characterised elsewhere by Kennedy - "We do these things ... because they are difficult." It was the most extreme example of 'industrial science' – working on the frontiers of new knowledge, but with immediate practical application, accordingly attracting a generation of graduates.

Underneath all this, decisions were often influenced by plain, no-nonsense pragmatism. Translated into British, the word is expediency.

The division between civilian and military nuclear developments has always been fuzzy. Uranium, refined from natural minerals, fuels reactors to produce energy, and creates a by-product – plutonium. Plutonium is the basis for nuclear weapons – so establishing the possibility, put bluntly, of building bombs from the waste of civilian power stations. This physical link is more than a suspicion – it's known to have existed – but it is possible to overestimate its scale, and in any case it isn't at the root of the case against. But it's worth noting the words of Sir Christopher

Hinton, a pioneer of the UK nuclear programme, who said nuclear power stations "...cannot stand on their own, and are competitive only when there is a market for their by-product plutonium. This market can and will be found."

The belief was that 'fast-breeder' reactors would be developed, using plutonium to make energy plus further fuel supplies. But hopes it could be made to pay never materialised, nor did a feared shortage of raw uranium.

But nuclear electricity wasn't the immediate issue after the war, when the UK military nuclear programme began. The US had stopped cooperating in atomic research. The British military felt it needed plutonium. It couldn't wait for somebody else's cast-offs, so it set about making its own, as simply and quickly as it could. Thus were born Windscale reactors 1 & 2, using uranium rods surrounded by bricks of graphite and cooled by air. When sufficient refined uranium is placed close together, it will 'go critical' – in other words, when nuclei (the cores of atoms) split, emerging particles will hit and break other nuclei, giving a self-sustaining output of heat. If the reaction built up too far, the uranium would explode. But it is moderated – that is, allowed only to reach a steady level. This is where the graphite comes in – it soaks up the vital emitted particles, so by moving the uranium between the graphite, the whole process can be started, moderated or stopped at will. The uranium slowly

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Pile No. 1 – a monument revisited

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turns to plutonium. In a power station the aim is heat, so before too much of the by-product slows this down, the rods are replaced by fresh ones. In a military reactor, though, heat is the by-product – in Windscale 1 & 2 it went up the chimney, and a rich crop of plutonium was allowed to grow before swapping rods. This production line carried on for about six years, until with the indirect involvement of a strange atomic effect, it ended disastrously.

The effect was named after Eugene Wigner, the Hungarian physicist who with two colleagues had urged Einstein to write to President Roosevelt in 1939, urging atom bomb research to begin, in the (then) very real fear that Hitler was also on the case. His discovery, the 'Wigner effect' happens as graphite absorbs nuclear particles – stored energy makes it swell slightly. After a while this effect was identified, too, at Windscale and a special routine put into operation. The graphite was from time to time purged of its stored 'Wigner energy' – by briefly raising the activity level, the energy was safely released as heat. But one day in 1957, unseen defects in Reactor 1's heat monitors made it look as if the Wigner energy had not escaped, so the routine was repeated. The heat rose alarmingly and the reactor was quickly shut down, yet all attempts to cool it failed. Unknown to anyone, it was on fire.

Eventually, alarms indicated radioactive discharges from the chimney, but test gear jammed, leaving operators not knowing exactly what was happening. Accounts describe how the Deputy Manager opened a vent plug, and looking in directly, saw the reactor contents nearly white hot. Graphite, the stuff used for

crucibles to hold molten metal, was actually burning. Come morning, arriving staff were quietly sent home. The site was cleared and water hoses put into the reactor openings. Water makes over a thousand times its volume in steam, which reacts chemically with white-hot elements. But the feared explosion didn't happen and after huge volumes of water had been pumped in, the reactor cooled. It was the worst reactor accident pre-Chernobyl. Scientist Sir John Cockcroft stated it had released more radioactivity in all than a Hiroshima type bomb. Soon milk from an area of 500 square miles was banned from sale, due to high levels of radioactive iodine, a British newsreel memorably (if unscientifically) declaring "so down the drain it goes – with atoms, you can't be too careful."

So Pile no 1 remains, sealed from the air for decades, while clean-up plans are debated, the costs to be borne by the Ministry of Defence. Recently, underwater robots retrieved fragments. But water on molten uranium is known to change parts of it to a form liable to catch fire in open air. Flooding risks spreading contamination, so it was planned to fill the chamber instead with a non-inflammable gas – but robots might still fall through the fragile pile, perhaps setting it off again.

When and if a safe solution is accomplished, it will be perhaps the only truly heroic part of the whole affair, otherwise marked by military, political and technological madness and expediency. Through confusion with technology (the use of knowledge), science (the search for knowledge) has tragically become a dirty word. An ugly legacy for an age badly in need of rational truth.