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PROHIBITED PLACE
PHOTOGRAPHING AND
SKETCHING FORBIDDEN



Burghfield Peace Camp

BURGHFIELD



**ROF
BURGHFIELD**



A NUCLEAR WEAPONS FACTORY

As seen by the Burghfield Peace Camp

LH 3750



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Royal Ordnance Factory

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Your reference

Our reference

FU/175/012C

Date

MARCH '83

ROF Burghfield lives.

Despite efforts by anti-nuclear campaigners to rid Britain of nuclear weapons, there is a factory busy producing warheads in the middle of Berkshire. Despite efforts by the "Establishment", some people know that it exists. But not many. Even now, many in the peace movement, and the vast majority of this country's population are not aware that nuclear weapons are manufactured here in the Home Counties.

In fact, the Royal Ordnance Factory at Burghfield shares Berkshire with U.S.A.F. Greenham Common, focus for the Cruise issue, and the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston, focus for the early CND. There are also places such as Welford and Bramley, major U.S. supply dumps. Not far away is the Aldershot-Sandhurst area, hub of the British Army. Oxfordshire contains Harwell, a key centre for the civil nuclear industry, and several British and U.S. Air Force bases. High Wycombe, in nearby Buckinghamshire, is now notorious for various RAF and U.S. Command Centres. Bracknell contains the RAF Staff College and an important weather centre. The local Telephone Directory contains over 70 numbers for military establishments, and this does NOT include Greenham, Welford, Bramley, Aldershot, Sandhurst, or High Wycombe.

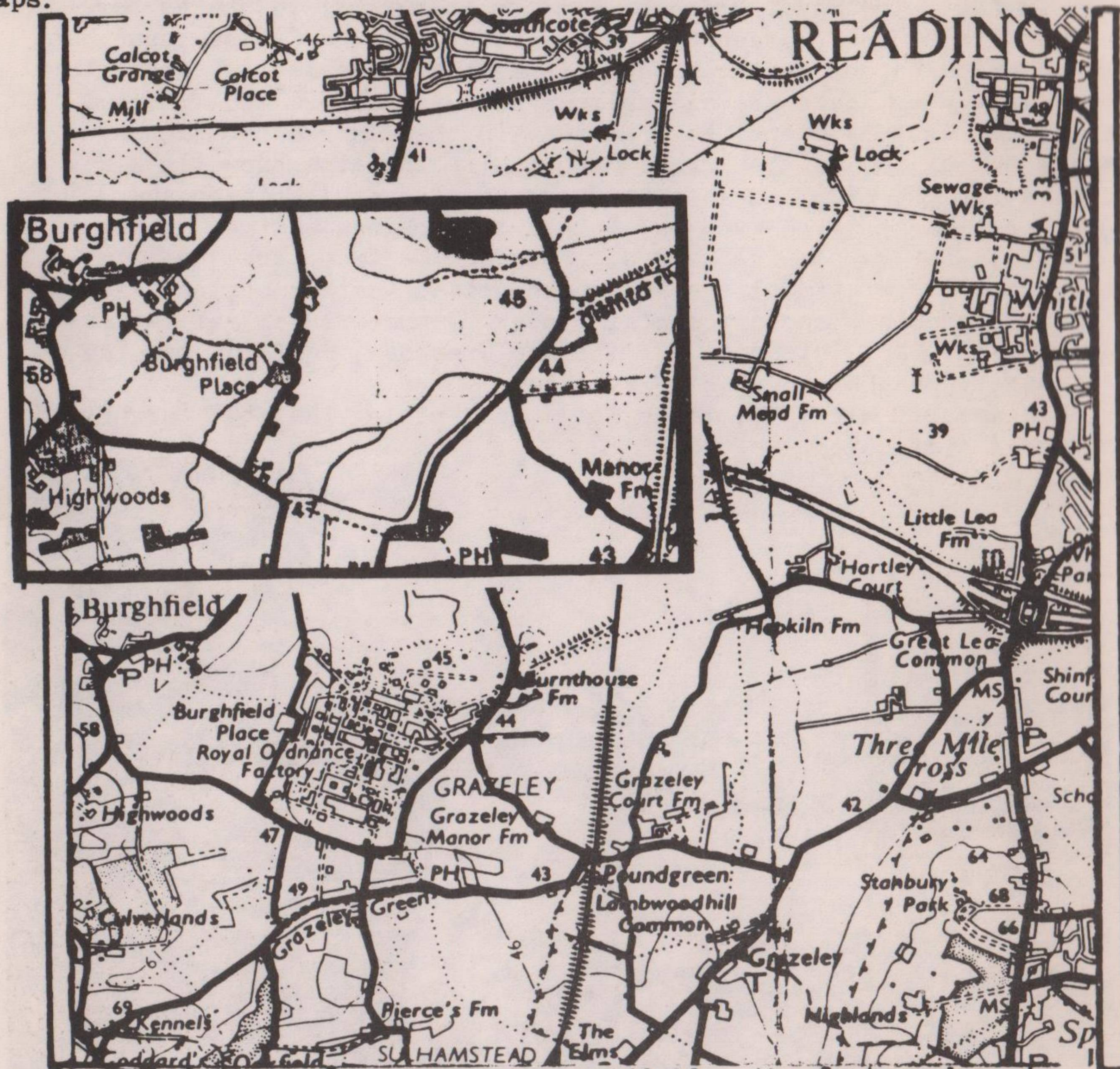
In amongst all this, it is not so surprising that ROF Burghfield has been overlooked.



It lies among farms and woods 4 miles South West of the centre of Reading. The M4 motorway passes within 1200 yards - at night the factory's lights are clearly visible, halfway between Junctions 11 and 12. A few hundred yards in the other direction is Burghfield Village, with two pubs and a delightful church, lying on the edge of the flat land of the Kennet valley. Beyond Burghfield Village are the larger communities of Burghfield Common and Mortimer. The whole area is dotted with farms and pleasant country houses.

To the North the Kennet, several recreational lakes and numerous gravel workings provide a barrier to the spreading conurbation of Reading. It is 12 miles to Basingstoke in the South, and 12 miles to Newbury in the West. Five miles separate ROF Burghfield from the other major employer in the area between these towns: AWRE Aldermaston.

One way in which the Authorities have tried to make ROF Burghfield inconspicuous to the British public, is by removing it from maps.



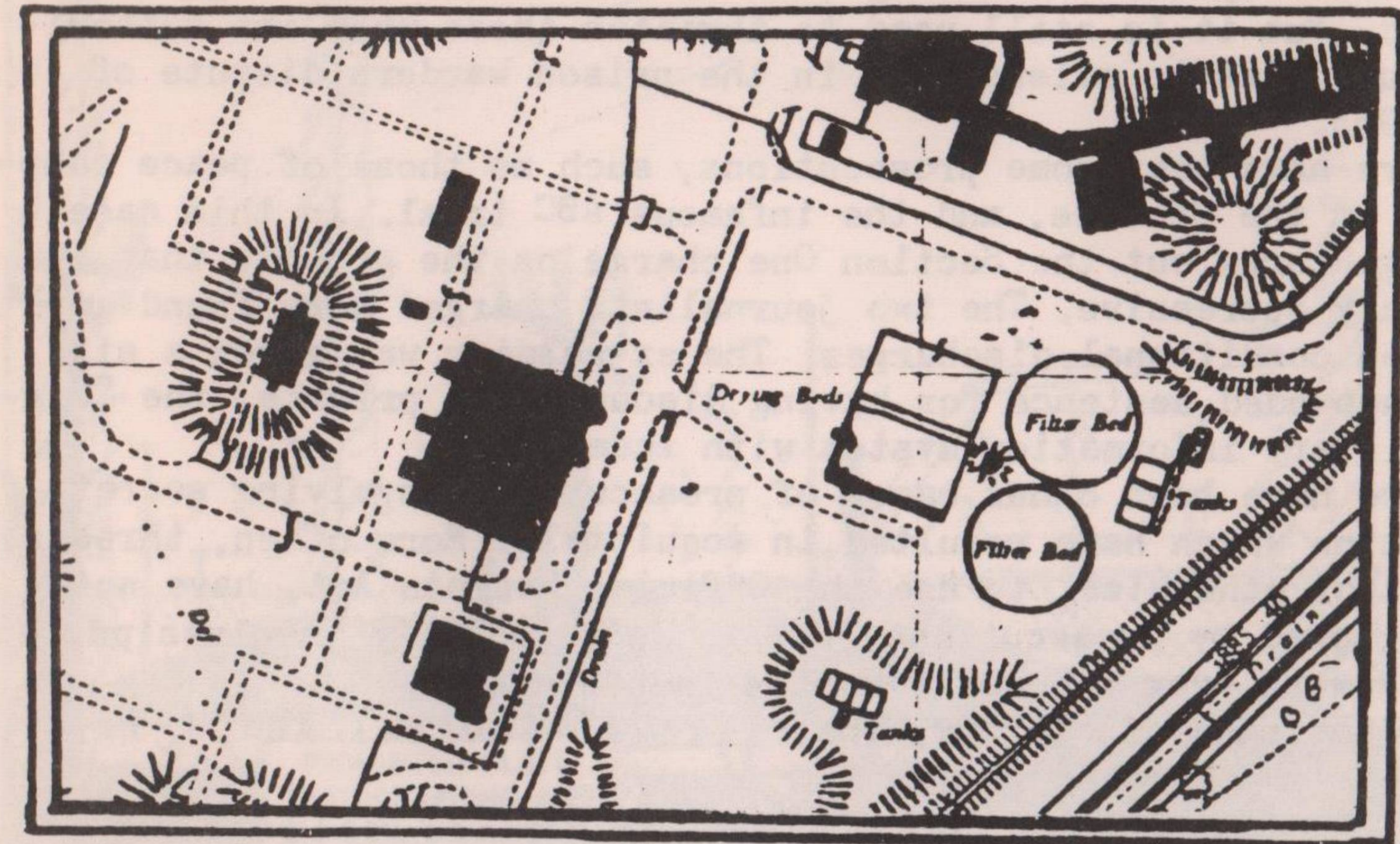
On most Ordnance Survey maps now available, the factory is not shown: the 1:50 000 scale series shows only open fields and two streams.

In 1976, the Ministry of Defence told the Ordnance Survey that the factory's security classification had been changed, and it has accordingly been omitted from their maps since then. A spokesman for the MoD said,

"It might have been helpful to international terrorists who might have wanted to break in."*

* The Guardian, 20th February, 1982

Despite this, large scale maps actually showing details of the layout of the establishment are still available, quite legally. The peace camp acquired several copies, one of which was returned by the MoD police at the factory after they had confiscated it from somebody allegedly photographing the factory. "International terrorists" with the resources to mount an attack on ROF Burghfield would certainly be able to get hold of the information they require: the true motivation can only have been to hide, as much as possible, the existence of ROF Burghfield from the public.



The maps available, together with aerial photographs, again taken with the full knowledge of the Authorities, show that the site covers about 280 acres, surrounded by a narrow strip of MoD land.

There are three major complexes; half-a-dozen explosives storage bunkers on the Northern side of the site; three "igloos", two of them very large and visibly concrete-capped by the East Gate; more than 30 large buildings; a new office block; filter beds; 4 fuel storage tanks; and numerous high earth banks around buildings.

Along the Western side runs a MoD-owned road, The Mearings, with a farm, about 25 homes, and a Sports and Social Club.

Official Secrets Act

In case anyone should think of publishing, or even discussing information such as that in the preceding and following sections, or anything else connected with the surreptitious militarisation of this country, the Authorities have the Official Secrets Act.

Two Attorneys-General have assured Parliament that Section One would only be used against spies. The common belief is that it serves solely to protect this country's defences from the agents of foreign powers.

In fact, the wording of the Act includes virtually everything connected with a MoD installation, or indeed any information at all relating to government which is deemed by the Government to be prejudicial to the safety of the state. Even unimportant temporary clerks in the most innocent Civil Service departments are expected to sign an extract of the Act in a meaningless ritual intended to impress that they should not divulge anything to anyone.

Fortunately for "democracy", it is a law more often ignored than observed. But it is still used to threaten those whom the Authorities would like to silence, as in the prison warders dispute of March 1983.

There have been some prosecutions, such as those of peace campaigners in the Sixties, and the infamous ABC trial. In this case, the judge threw out the Section One charge on the grounds that it was unduly oppressive. The two journalists charged were found guilty and given conditional discharges. The ex-soldier was given a six month suspended sentence for having discussed, in private, the "Sig-int" military information system with them.

There have been other cases of prosecutions involving secret information which have resulted in acquittals. More often, threats, explicit or otherwise, to use the Official Secrets Act, have not been followed by prosecutions, for to do so usually involves public embarrassment over the government's ineptitude.

For the sake of clarity, the Official Secrets Act, 1911, Section Two, reads:

"(1) If any person having in his possession or control any sketch, plan, model, article, note, document, or information which relates to or is used in a prohibited place or anything in such a place; or which has been made or obtained in contravention of this Act, or which has been entrusted in confidence to him by any person holding office under His Majesty or which he has obtained owing to his position as a person who holds or who has held a contract made on behalf of His Majesty, or as a person who is or has been employed under a person who holds or who has held such an office or contract,--

(a) communicates the sketch, plan, model, article, note, document, or information to any person, other than a person to whom he is authorised to communicate it, or a person to whom it is in the interest of the State his duty to communicate it, or

(b) retains the sketch, plan, model, article, note, or document in his possession or control when he has no right to retain it or when it is contrary to his duty to retain it: that person is guilty of a misdemeanour.

(2) If any person receives any sketch, plan, model, article, note, document or information, knowing or having reasonable ground to believe at the time when he receives it, that the sketch, plan, model, article, note, document,

or information is communicated to him in contravention of this Act, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanour unless he proves that the communication to him of the sketch, plan, model, article, note, document or information was contrary to his desire.

(3) A person found guilty of a misdemeanour under this section shall be liable to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years, or to a fine, or to both imprisonment and a fine."

It is intended to intimidate, but is not always effective.

THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT: PHOTOGRAPHING ROF BURGHFIELD.

Two excerpts from the peace camp diary describe two of the three occasions when campers were arrested for taking photographs or sketching, as forbidden by the numerous signs on the perimeter fence;

"May 18th, 1982.

12.15pm. Fenella and Caroline went to look for the footpath and take photographs of the assembly building. MoD van with 2 officers stopped us and asked us what we were doing, saying that it was illegal to take photographs. We disputed that and carried on walking - they followed and once stopped us to ask us to wait while their "hierarchy" decided whether or not to arrest us. We carried on, but then decided to go back and take some more. Having used up the film in C's camera we started walking back again and eventually they made up their minds to arrest us. We sat down on the verge and they very gently picked us up and put us in the van-. Took us through back entrance of the Mearings to office just inside Main Gate. Two WPC's searched us and took names and addresses - we refused to give any more information. "The Chief" came and said it was against the Official Secrets Act: discussion about DC. Sgt Bygraves (local, Thames Valley police) came in and called us mischief-makers etc, took C's camera (F's was empty), took the film out, returned the camera and let us go."

(The diary continues, "Eppo, Betty, and Lopyy were asleep - why weren't they worrying?....")

The following day, an MoD police inspector came out of the factory to where we were having a meeting, and gave Caroline a number of prints. Others, he said, were spoilt.

Fenella's camera was empty when they were arrested as the film had been left in a hedge, until they could safely return and collect it. This was done, and the film taken to a commercial developer in Reading. When someone went to collect it the following day, it was only to be told that it had gone missing.

"June 8th, 1982.

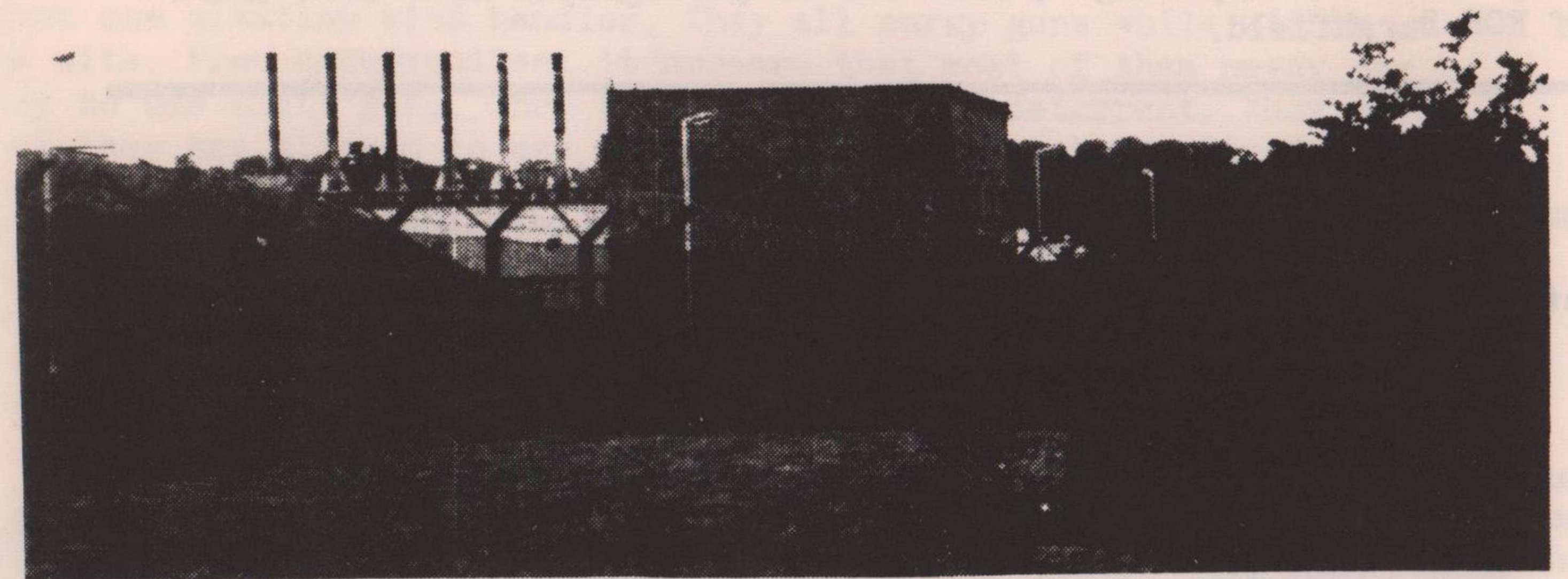
Betty got a rested afternoon and arrested this afternoon. Alas, an artist's work is never done - my supreme achievement, though small and rather grubby is gone - forever - I'll just have to do another one....

THE STORY - Wrote "Peace news" article for ½ hour, smoked a fag or three on public highway opposite assembly building. Then started sketching. 5-10 minutes later, MoD van came out of gates, stopped. Asked to see notebook and sketch book; was shown. Looked at sketch - did not seem duly over-awed by its brilliance. This policeman - one of the ones who appreciate Marion's cakes - was very friendly. They took the sketch, made to drive off, then returned. Female MoD got out, asked for a few details: ie. name and address - I said I was Betty, she said, "Betty who?" I said, "What?" She asked again, gave up for a while and asked my address instead. I said, "Burghfield Peace Camp." Not impressed. I tried my height - still not impressed. She went back to the van and had a conference. The cake-eating policeman came back and smiled at me. I asked him if he could arrest me; he said all he wanted was my name and address. I said I'd rather he arrested me first; he seemed puzzled. He filled me in on the Official Secrets Act; we chatted about the publicity to MoD and Burghfield Peace Camp of being charged - neither of us thought it very likely....

He asked my name again - I started writing to a former lover. He called his boss. His boss arrived. I recognised him from Greenham eviction - so we chatted about Greenham for a while. He asked for my name - I'd nearly finished my letter - it had some good smutty bits. He said he would have to arrest me - I said, "at last..." He asked me to step into the van - I did so. I said, "Have I been arrested now?" He said, "No - you're just being cautioned" and can I have your name. I said no. I said seeing as I wasn't being arrested, I'd leave. I got up. He said I'd been arrested. He told me my rights and radioed Boss 3 at Pangbourne. We went to the police office.

Two policewomen and I went into a room. One of them searched me - very UNthoroughly - not even looked in my shoes. I emptied EVERYTHING from my bag. We listed it all - took some time.... I ate some extra strong winkies*, they listed the number in the packet - so I ate some more - they had to relist the number,

*winkies are sweets.



a few times. They came to my placard - and wrote "I placard!". I told them it helps to learn things if you write them down - so they wrote down "NO POLARIS NO TRIDENT". I ate another winkie. They did not ask for my name and address - which is a shame 'cos I'd been arrested and was quite willing to give it.

Their boss and Max* and a plain-clothes man with a nice smile arrived. We feasted on the last of the winkies. They asked for my name and address - I gave it.

I put some leaflets on the desk with a note, "Please take one", and we left. Max seemed to think I must be bored. I said, on the contrary, I was feeling quite bored... The workers were coming out of work (where else?). I placarded them. They seemed amused. Max didn't - he stuck my placard in his boot. We left. Went to camp and he didn't stop for a cup of tea; he said he had no knowledge of where the signs had gone from the main gate.

MORAL - Never push your granny while she's shaving.

Oh yes - my sketch is going to the Attorney General, who then passes it on to the Director of Public Prosecutions. I wonder if I will get a patron?"

While leaving leaflets on the police office desk, Betty also "accidentally" left a write-up for "Peace News", describing the photographing sessions: the last Sunday in May we had held a "photo-picnic", About 40 people took part, including several with cameras. One of us was warned that anybody taking photographs of the factory would be arrested. Nobody was. On later occasions, the police would

*Max was the camp's pet name for Sgt. Bygraves.

sometimes warn us not to point cameras towards the factory. Sometimes they deliberately ignored cameras.

There have still been no prosecutions. And despite our initial ineptitude at "espionage", hundreds of photographs have been taken of ROF Burghfield.

Because of the general air of secrecy, it is not easy to find out much about ROF Burghfield, but some things have been made public.

When the peace camp was set up, some press reports included a statement by the factory's Secretary that the factory was for the "production and assembly of atomic warheads for the services."*

Some sources go further: the final assembly of all Britain's nuclear warheads takes place in the large concrete "igloos". All have certificates that they will work (although what sort of reprimand the maker of a faulty bomb would get, afterwards, is anybody's guess.): several buildings are for testing components, such as trigger mechanisms.

Nuclear weapons contain a variety of radioactive materials, much of which has a limited half-life. As very precise amounts are necessary if the warhead is to have any reliability, some components have a very limited "shelf-life". This means that Britain's nuclear weapons must be continually re-furbished if they are to remain capable of being used. Some of this work is done at ROF Burghfield.

The Ministry of Defence has a policy of neither confirming nor denying the presence of particular nuclear weapons at a particular place, but it is clear that ROF Burghfield is where Chevaline warheads are produced. It is the obvious place for any work done in Britain on Trident, and it is probably no coincidence that construction of new buildings is under way.

(There are other places involved in the production of nuclear weapons in Britain: notably AWRE, which works in close conjunction with ROF Burghfield; and ROF Cardiff.)

Whatever the details of Burghfield's involvement in the nuclear weapons industry, there is no doubt that it is a developing establishment. Although it was originally established before the Second World War, and has been involved in the nuclear weapons business since 1954, there is still an ongoing building programme.

Some attention was drawn to this last Summer when the "New Statesman" ran an article on a £250 million plan to build new plant at AWRE Aldermaston. The "Reading Evening Post" also covered the story, including a reference to ROF Burghfield. The peace camp contacted the newspaper, and wrote the following letter to the factory's Director:

"Burghfield Peace Camp, 7th July, 1982.

Dear sir,

As you must be aware, a spokesman at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Burghfield,

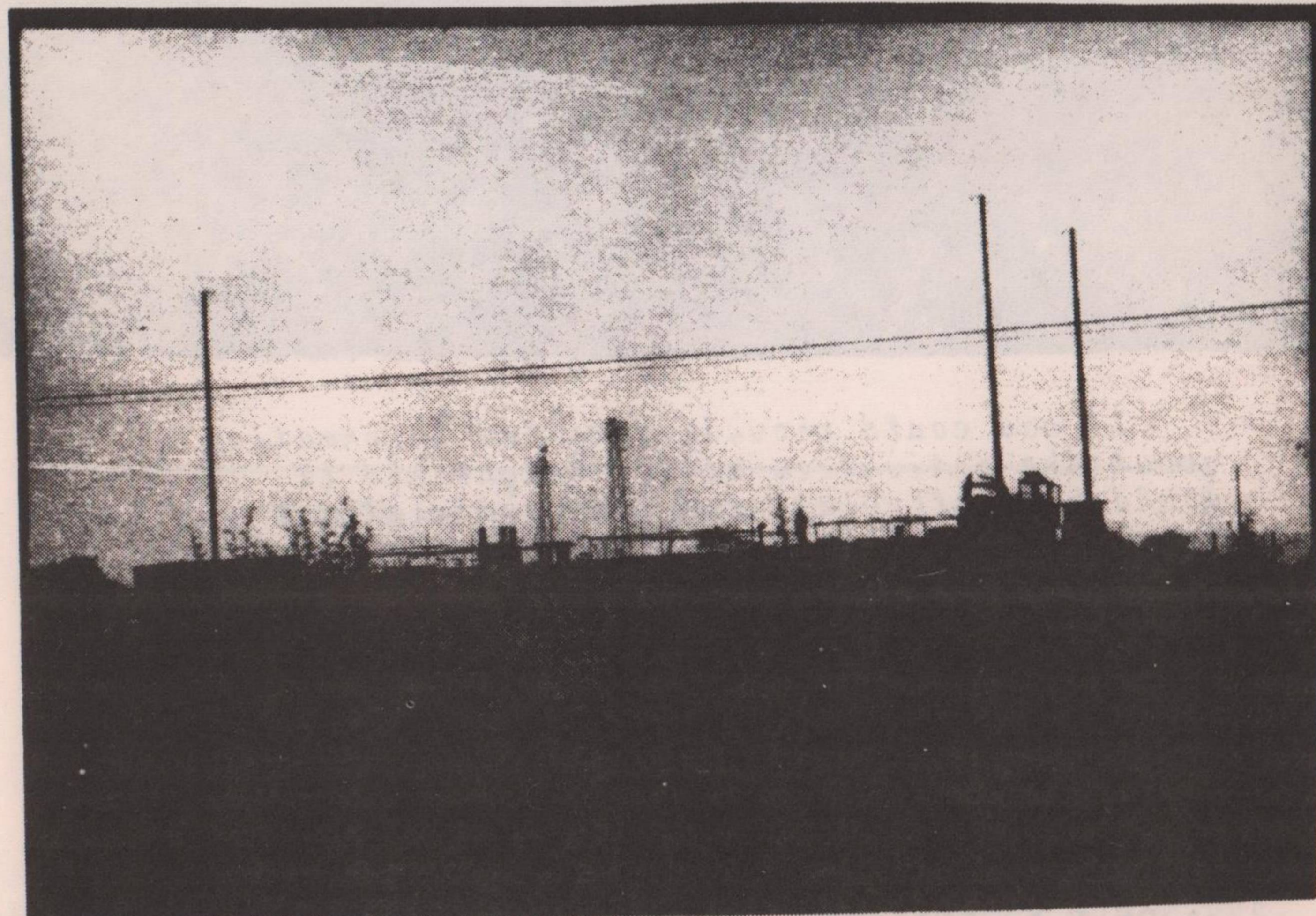
*Berkshire Mercury, 28th April, 1982.

claimed last week (Evening Post, 3rd July) that "no building work was currently going on there." The peace camp and a number of other local people are somewhat baffled by this statement, and wonder why a large number of vehicles have been seen entering and leaving the facility over the past few months, carrying cement, gravel, and steel, and removing earth and rubble. We have also seen heavy plant machinery entering "The Mearings" and have heard and seen work in progress at the south-eastern and northern areas of the establishment.

We are sure it is not your purpose to mislead the British public, and would therefore be very grateful if you could provide us and the press with an explanation for this apparent discrepancy. This especially in view of the concern engendered by the recently disclosed Aldermaston expansion plans.

We are also interested in information about radioactive emissions, accidents involving radioactive material and the precise role of the factory in the production of Britain's nuclear weapons:

1. We believe that the radioactive emiss-

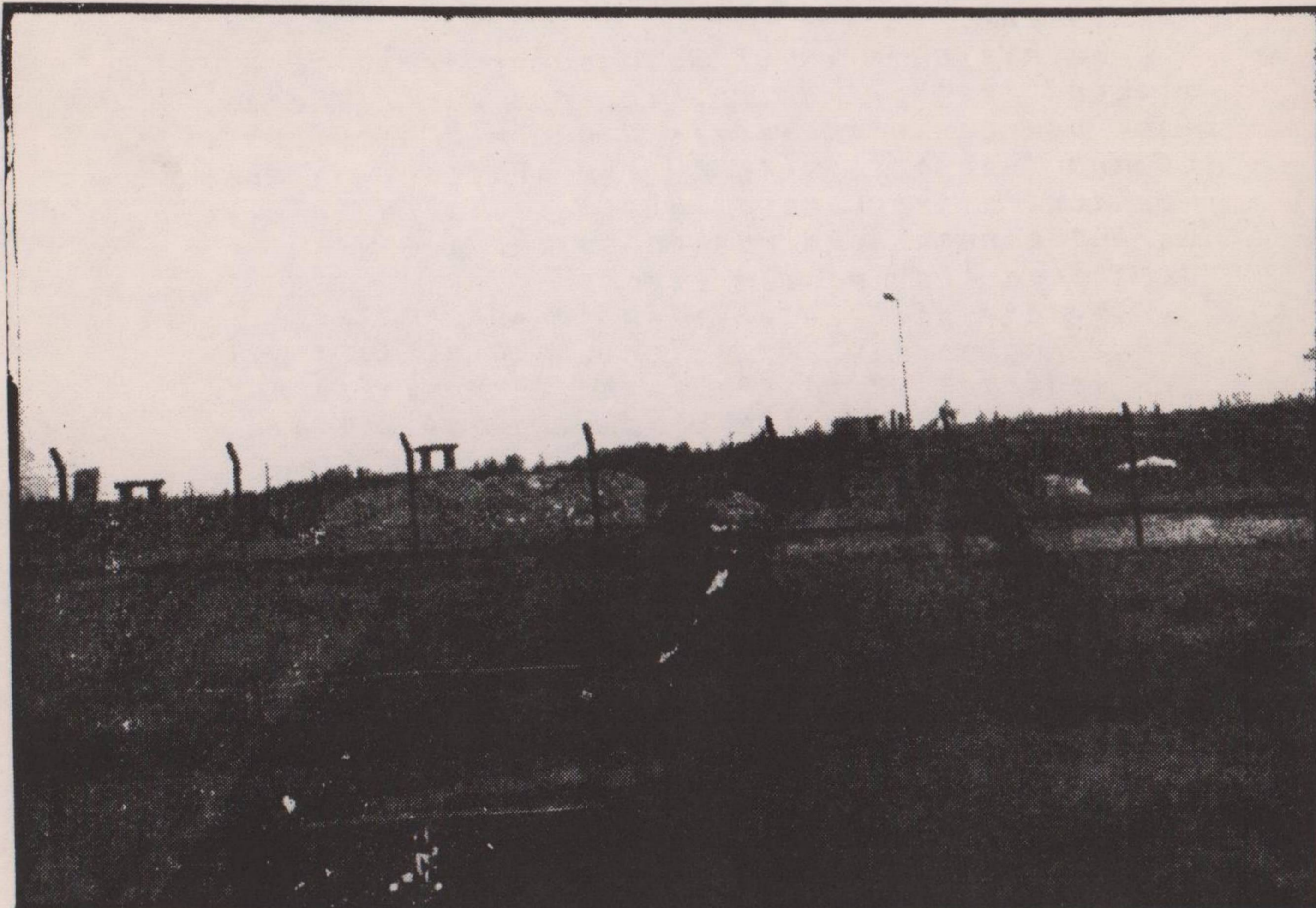


This and the picture on the following page were taken from the Northern side of the factory during July, 1982.

ions from Burghfield into the Kennet total less than half the limit allowed by international regulations, or proportionately five times as much as AWRE. No information is available about other pollutants e.g. radioactive dust and other atmospheric discharges.

2. There have been no reported accidents involving radioactive substances or otherwise. Is this because there have been no accidents?

3. We believe that nuclear weapons are assembled and trigger mechanisms tested within the establishment- What are its other activities?



If you could provide detailed information about the activities at ROF Burghfield it would help alleviate the fear and mistrust caused by the lack of publicly available material.

I enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope, and look forward to a speedy reply."

A reply was received two weeks later:

"Royal Ordnance Factory, 19th July, 1982.

Dear Ms,

Further to our acknowledgement of 14 July 1982, I am now able to reply to the questions raised in your letter of 7 July.

I was the spokesman for the Factory who made the statement quoted in your letter. It was made in reply to specific questions from the Evening Post about the effect on ROF Burghfield of the new complex at AWRE. Our building work is not connected with, nor derived from, building programmes at AWRE. We are modifying some buildings in which conventional explosives are stored in order to meet the requirements of new Ministry of Defence Explosives Storage and Transport Committee Regulations. Additionally, we are constructing a new process building to replace several older buildings which have been in use since the Factory was built in 1941. These buildings activities are of the type which one would expect to be routinely undertaken in any large factory and are not occasioned by any particular current or future task.

Regarding your other three questions:

1. Liquid and airborne discharges from the Factory are made under a Waste Discharge Agreement with the Department of the Environment. The Factory's effluent handling arrangements and records of discharges are subject to inspection by the Radio-Chemical Inspectorate of the Department of the Environment. The quantities discharged are published each year by that Department in their 'Annual Survey of Radioactive Discharges in Great Britain'. The figures for AWRE are also given in that publication. The statement in your letter is incorrect in every respect, as you will see if you consult the regulations and the above publication.

2. We have never had an accident involving radioactive substances.

3. The function of the factory is the production and assembly of atomic weapons for the services.

I regret that we cannot provide any additional information about the activities within the Factory, but I can assure you that they are all conducted within both the letter and the spirit of national and international safety regulations. Indeed, the health and safety both of our employees and of the general public takes first precedence in our work here.

Our safety record is, we believe, unsurpassed by any other industrial engineering factory. Most of our 'accidents', which are all recorded and documented by the resident nursing staff in the surgery, are trivial and might easily occur in the home. For example, there have been only two accidents resulting in loss of working

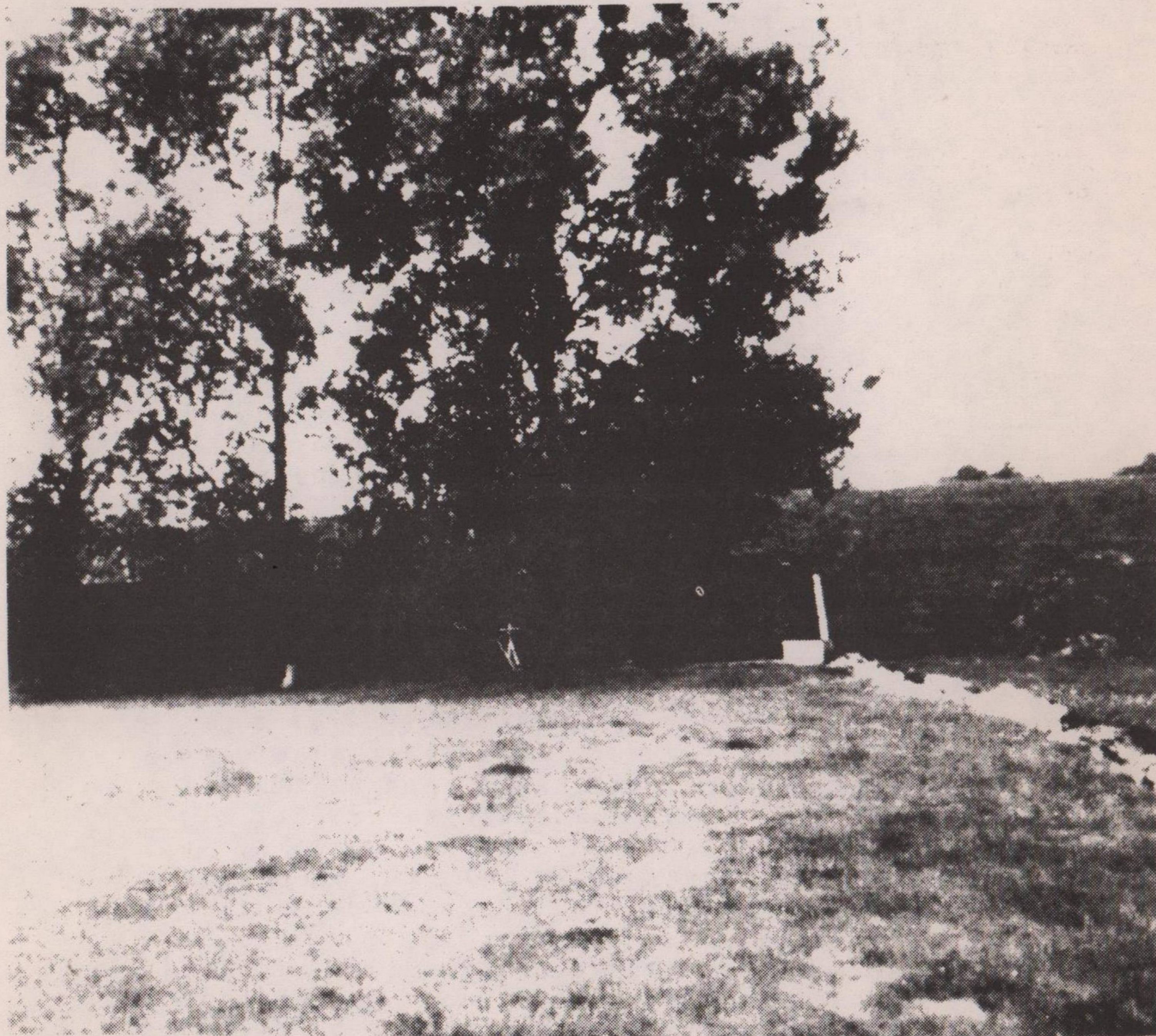
hours in the last three months and these have both been sprains incurred during the lunch-break. The reason for the attendance of the Reading Fire Brigade earlier in the month was an incident at a welder's bench in the Engineering Maintenance Workshop - not unusual in the engineering industry.

I hope I have gone some way to alleviate the 'fear and mistrust' to which you refer in your letter."

Before this reply had arrived, the "Evening Post" had carried a further report. The spokesman for the MoD asserted that a storage building for conventional explosives was being modified. He went further, saying,

"There is always work going on here and we shift things about within the place. It is what we could call good house keeping."*

There was no mention of any new "process building".



*Reading Evening Post, 15th July, 1982.

There was also no mention of the work being done at the South East corner of the factory. Here an old low building, previously out of bounds, was cleaned out by men with wellington boots, white all-over suits, and sealed head coverings. After refurbishment, it is now a range for the MoD police to practice their shooting on.

(See picture on previous page.)

(More about waste discharges later. Regarding the other items in the Secretary's letter, we were surprised to learn of the Reading Fire Brigade's attendance, as we had not noticed them. We were even more surprised at the stated reason, for the factory has its own special fire-fighting force, complete with at least one red engine which scoots around the site from time to time, reg no. PBL 389L).

Factory Traffic

In order to garner more information, the peace camp conducted a traffic survey from 5.30am on Monday, 12th July '82, until 6.30pm on Friday, 16th. The three entrances were covered almost continually, despite weather and terrible boredom.

We enlarged our list of companies dealing with ROF Burghfield, got a fair amount of detail of a military convoy entering the factory, and have plenty of material for assessing the number of employees and their shifts.

On the first day we took many car numbers, but largely discontinued this after we realised that it was causing a lot of resentment and providing us with a mass of detail that we probably would never be able to usefully process.

For the Tuesday, the camp diary records the following:

"Back Gate,

2.50 First unusual happening. MoD opened gate walked out to road, looked left and right, gave no response to my half-hearted greeting, walked back inside gate and stood against it, clicking wire nervously. 2 MoD (one called Donna) arrive on foot.

3.45 Gate opens. Thames Valley police motorcyclist arrives. 3 MoDs come out. Radio on and following extracts heard:

"...ROF convoy..."

"convoy waiting to be picked up at Junction 11"

"motorcyclist gone past three times now"

"it's due 3.00 and I'm on overtime now."

"OK it's just gone past - you can come and get it now."

"Is the gate open. Can we get straight in?"

3.47 TVP motorcyclist leaves, turning right.

- 3.55 3 TWP outriders,
 1 MoD white van, 2 MoD occupants
 2 green MoD vans, 8 occupants in each:
 46 AC 98, 47 AC 00
 3 armoured lorries, padlocked.
 1 green van, 3 passengers and driver:
 47 RN 20
 1 green landrover, 3 occupants: GAN 31V
 (number possibly transposed
 with previous vehicle no.)
 1 green fire tender
 1 Motorbike: 21 KA 62
 1 coach, 4 occupants: 47 RN 10
 all occupants wore green berets and blue shirts
 3.56 Gate closed."

Similar convoys have been seen numerous times on the M4, both East and West of the Reading area. Locals report that such convoys frequently use the small country roads between Junction 11 and the East Gate of the factory.

One such was seen on 7th October 1982, travelling at 40 to 50 mph on the motorway. Two motorcycles were with it, travelling ahead to clear junctions when it left the motorway.

- landrover blue, 65 RN 11, 2 or 3 occupants
 transit "Custom" green, 50 AC 36, 3 aeriels
 "Mammoth Major" lorry, green, 30 AJ 84
 ditto 30 AJ 85
 Fire engine, green, full-sized, 31 AG 48
 transit "Custom" green, 50 AC 32
 landrover green
 Bus green, 47 AC 92.

This convoy took a route from Junction 12, along the Bath Road through Calcot into Reading, and then out again on the Burghfield Rd.

This is a route also used quite frequently by a very different sort of convoy. Typically, they consist of a very ordinary looking grey box truck, with small radioactivity symbols on the back and sides. In front and behind are turquoise Range Rovers, bristling with six aeriels each and containing police. The whole thing is preceded by a civilian police traffic car, and followed by a minibus or landrover. This last vehicle has no passengers and is presumably present as a precaution against "contingencies".

Previous reports had suggested that 550 people may work at ROF Burghfield. In fact, on Monday morning 750 people entered between 6am and 9am. Another 90 entered before noon, but many of them were making deliveries. Most vehicles use the Reading Road entrance to the Mearings, especially deliveries and first time visitors. The James Lane entrance is used by no more than 40 or so before 9am, and then hardly at all. This does include the occasional chauffeur-driven car, however: on 12th July, a red saloon, SRD 647S, and on 14th, JJB 928N.

The East Gate is opened for employees for two hours in the morning, and again in the evening. Otherwise it is seldom used. About 270 employees use it during the week.

As well as direct employees, a number of contractors work at the factory, and numerous companies provide services and materials. See the appendix for the list.

Radioactive Discharges

One problem with any industrial concern is the incidental production of unwanted products, and their subsequent disposal. It is inevitable that some should escape. At ROF Burghfield the pollution problems clearly include atmospheric and liquid radioactive discharges.

The Department of the Environment produces an Annual Survey of Radioactive Discharges in Great Britain. It includes reference to MoD sites. Unfortunately, it starts,

"In general the information on the detailed data on the size and composition of the radioactive wastes arising from the defence nuclear programme is classified for reasons of national security."

It does however contain a few hints:

"152. The liquid effluents from the Royal Ordnance Factory at Burghfield are disposed of into a stream leading to the rivers Kennet and Thames."

Reassurance is given by Section 154:

"The MoD liquid waste discharges for 1979 remain well within the limits laid down in the various agreements and do not lead to significant environmental effects."

But in case anyone would like to check these agreements,

"...it is not our policy to supply to members of the public copies of the discharge agreements made between DOE and MoD."*

There are some figures available. In the same Annual Survey report, Table 40 gives the following information:

"ROF Burghfield into the Thames	
Agreed Annual Level (Ci), 1979 -	300x10 ⁻⁶ alpha
Actual Level	- 78.5x10 ⁻⁶ (26% agreed level)
Agreed Annual Level (Ci)	200x10 ⁻⁶ beta
Actual Level	- 130.5x10 ⁻⁶ (65% agreed level)

*letter, 30th September, 1982, from D. Knowles, Romney House, DOE. All other quotations from DOE Annual Survey, 1979.

The "Evening Post" has published some figures on discharges into local waterways. In '79/'80, AWRE discharged a daily average of 52 cubic metres of water. ROF had a daily average of 140 cubic metres, going into Burghfield Brook. Compared to the figures for Didcot power station or some of the local fish farms, this is just a drop in the ocean.

But the problem is that it contains low-level radioactivity. According to the Authorities, the small amount makes it safe. This is highly contentious. It may reduce the statistical chances of cancer, but even a handful of cases is a high price to pay.

The nature of radioactivity and the harmful effects it has, is such that it is very hard to establish a direct link between any particular damage, of which cancer is just one possibility, and one particular cause. It can take decades for radioactivity-caused damage to be detected. Where that radioactivity is being dispersed into the River Thames, it is even harder to determine what harm it may be doing.

Atmospheric discharges of very fine particles are even harder to deal with. The levels are monitored by small gauze screens. Once an accidental release has occurred, however, there is not a lot that can be done about it. Again, the Authorities reassure the public that levels are too low to cause any harm. There is no independent verification of this claim.

The nuclear weapons industry in Berkshire has had problems with radioactive pollution. Workers from Aldermaston have died of cancer. The problems there reached a stage where several buildings had to be closed down. Sir Edward Pochin was commissioned to hold an inquiry in 1973: his report contained many disturbing findings. County Councillor Trevor Brown used to be a Safety Officer at AWRE, until forced to resign for making public criticisms of the low safety standards.

There is little indication of similar problems at ROF Burghfield but a lot suggests that if things were as bad there, we would be the last to find out.

Security

Whichever issue one is exploring, one comes up against the same secrecy.

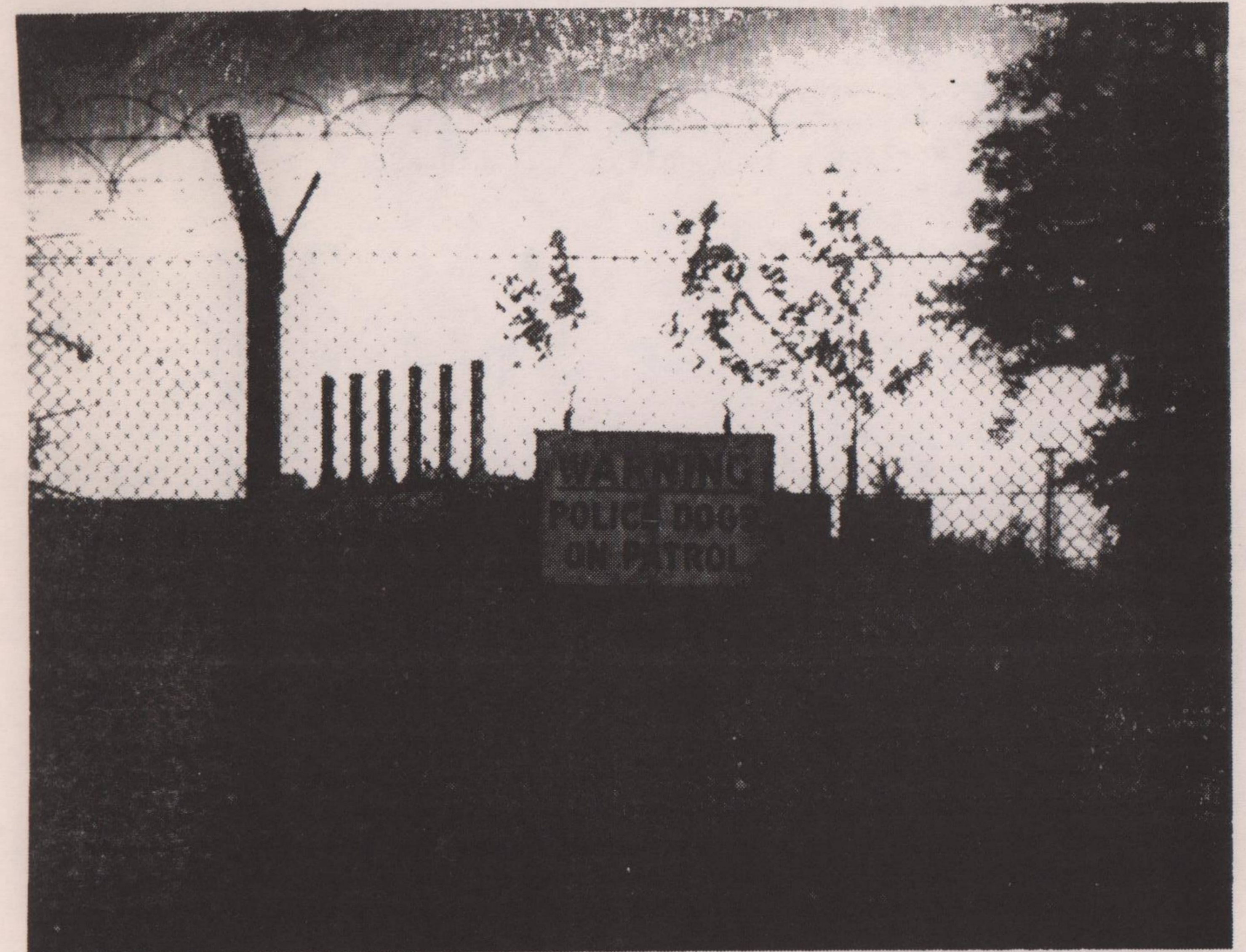
The factory itself is inconspicuous, but should anyone approach it, they will find that it is also well-guarded.

It has an establishment of 80 MoD police: four shifts of 20 each. They are dressed very much like civilian police, but have very different responsibilities. They spend their lives guarding an inert

*Evening Post, 4th June, 1981

collection of fences and buildings, getting very bored by all reports.

As well as controlling access through the gates, they patrol the perimeter fence, in vans, on bicycles, or on foot. Each shift has at least one alsatian with handler. They all carry guns while within the site. From conversation, it appears that most of them never expect to use their guns. They think of them as a deterrent. They say that they are allowed to use the guns if they were being fired upon, if they thought people approaching the factory were armed, or if property was being destroyed and there was no other way of stopping the damage. If the situation permitted, they ought to radio back for guidance before shooting. We know of no incidents when these instructions were put to the test. Then again, corpses don't talk, do they?



A FEW GOOD REASONS NOT TO IGNORE ROF BURGHFIELD....

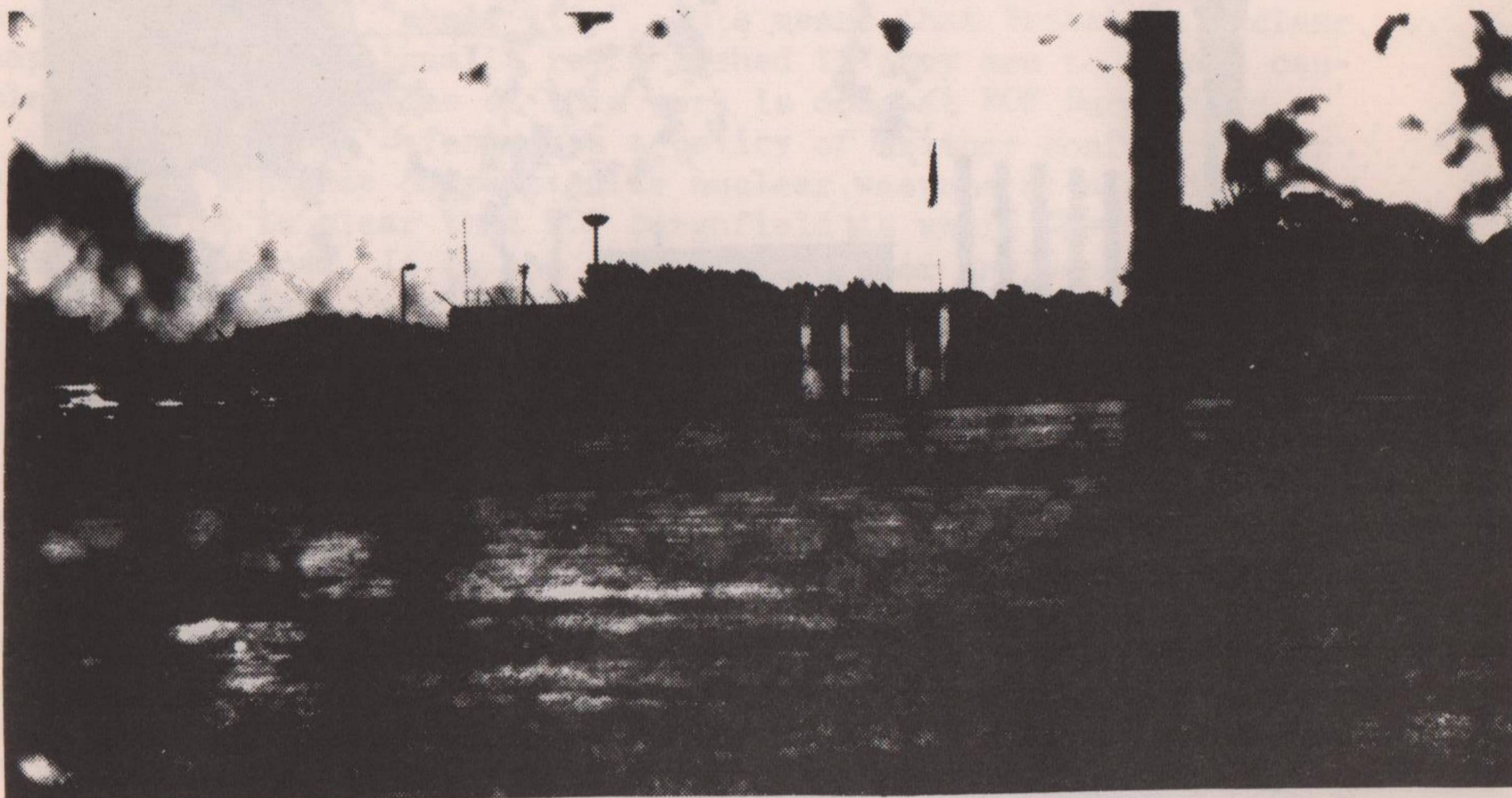
In the event of Britain going to war with any foreign power capable of attacking the British mainland, Berkshire is not the place

to be. Whether the war has "gone nuclear" or not, ROF Burghfield is a prime target for "conventional" bombing and missile attacks.

At any one time, a fair proportion of the United Kingdom's nuclear warheads are stored at ROF Burghfield, undergoing maintenance. To be able to "neutralise" even only 10% of the British nuclear "deterrent" at one blow would be a very tempting proposition. If the attack were to cause the warheads themselves to explode, the destructiveness rained upon the whole area would be multiplied many times over. Even if they were not detonated effectively, vast amounts of radioactive material could be scattered all around.

As well as devastating nearby population centres, this would catch many of the personnel employed at the factory. Not only would further production of warheads at Burghfield be impossible, but it would be very difficult to start it at any other site, for the trained and experienced workforce would have perished.

Any attack on Burghfield would also contribute to the devastation of the whole prime strategic area - AWRE Aldermaston, USAF Greenham, Bramley, Welford, the M3 and M4, the main rail links to the West, "Silicon Valley", where much of the UK's advanced electronic industry and workforce is located. All this adds up to an irresistible target area.



Even if war itself should not break out, there is always the possibility of accidents, or of terrorist activity leading to similar problems.

The claim by the Secretary of ROF Burghfield that,

"We have never had an accident involving radioactive substances."

would be reassuring, if it were not known that the government has policy of denying any accidents involving nuclear weapons, whatever the true facts may be.

In a brochure extolling the virtues of Cruise missiles, the Ministry of Defence included a section entitled,

"Are Nuclear Weapons Safe? What happens if there is an accident?" which goes on to say,

"Nuclear weapons have been stored in this country for many years. There has never been any accident or radiation leakage."

In 1976, the U.S. Department of Defence stated that there had been 97 nuclear weapons accidents up till then: an average of one every three months. After learning this, British government claims to perfection don't sound so plausible. Their whole emphasis is on reassuring the public by hiding unpleasant truths from them, rather than preventing the possibility of disastrous accidents in the first place.

Terrorist activity is another possibility which must be taken into account, though how to do so is a major difficulty. An important feature of terrorist attacks is that they are virtually impossible to predict. The way to deal with a disgruntled group who see armed force as the means of furthering their demands, is to isolate them from all that supports them. This cannot be done until after they have made themselves known by their activities. AFTER they have acquired nuclear material might be a little too late for many of us. It is an uncomfortable fact of life that places such as ROF Burghfield cannot be totally protected against attack by a determined group with the appropriate expertise and resources. If a government is allowed to persist in disregarding or attacking its opponents, the time may eventually come when they will turn around and attack the whole of society.

(Throughout this paragraph, I have for convenience used the word "terrorist" to refer to those who covertly attack government and society with violence. This is not intended to mean that those who order or participate in the wanton destruction of whole families, societies and cultures are not terrorists of an even more dangerous kind.)

Possibly the most worrying feature of ROF Burghfield in this respect are the convoys. The movement of nuclear warheads by road is an essential part of the operation of the factory. There used to be a rail-line entering the factory, but it has long since been lifted. (As railways go through towns, rather than around them, it is possibly just as well that warheads are not transported by train.) But although motorways may by-pass most towns, there is still enormous potential for mishap. No amount of legislation prevents road accidents.

In September 1981, the M4 was closed for seven hours while firemen dealt with a fire in the brake drum of a 20-ton lorry loaded with Sidewinder aircraft missiles. Numerous convoys use the M4.

In July 1982, the MP for Swindon demanded a top-level inquiry after a document was found in a street in South Glamorgan. It detailed vehicle registration numbers, drivers' names and times for munitions convoys from Barry docks to USAF Welford.

Also in July 1982, a convoy halted on Burghfield Common, between ROF and AWRE. One of the lorries had broken down and had to be "hastily repaired". One of the worrying features of this incident was the civilian police's response to the news:

*"A Thames Valley police spokesman said they were not involved and would not expect to be informed of the incident."**

*Evening Post, 22nd July, 1982.

We have no idea how many incidents go unreported.

We do know that vehicles carrying radioactive materials pass through heavily populated areas on the outskirts of Reading. One day, if there is an "incident" in the middle of a housing estate, the whole world may get to hear about it. Only then it may be too late for a lot of people.

In any case it is already too late for some people: the nuclear weapons industry is claiming victims. Employees at AWRE have died of cancer, and that this is the result of their work has been accepted by the Authorities. Many more cases of cancer occur every year, and these the Ministry of Defence deny responsibility for. They can do this as long as scientists researching cancer and radioactivity are trapped by the Establishment's need to cover up any unpalatable facts. Time and again, scientists have been frustrated in their studies. Those who wish to have access to the Universities and Journals cannot afford to anger those who control and fund those institutions.

There are chinks of light: just recently there is news of the Authorities bowing to public pressure and agreeing to medical studies of the effects on servicemen of bomb-testing in the Fifties. Some of these men were subjected to high levels of radioactivity.

The problem at Burghfield is more one of low-level radioactivity: it is so much harder to establish direct links between low-level radioactivity and damage to human beings. But there is a long history of the Authorities obstructing measures which could endanger the nuclear industry's interests, and of obscuring those facts that they cannot refute, that any trust put in the safeguards they offer the public, is a mis-placed trust.

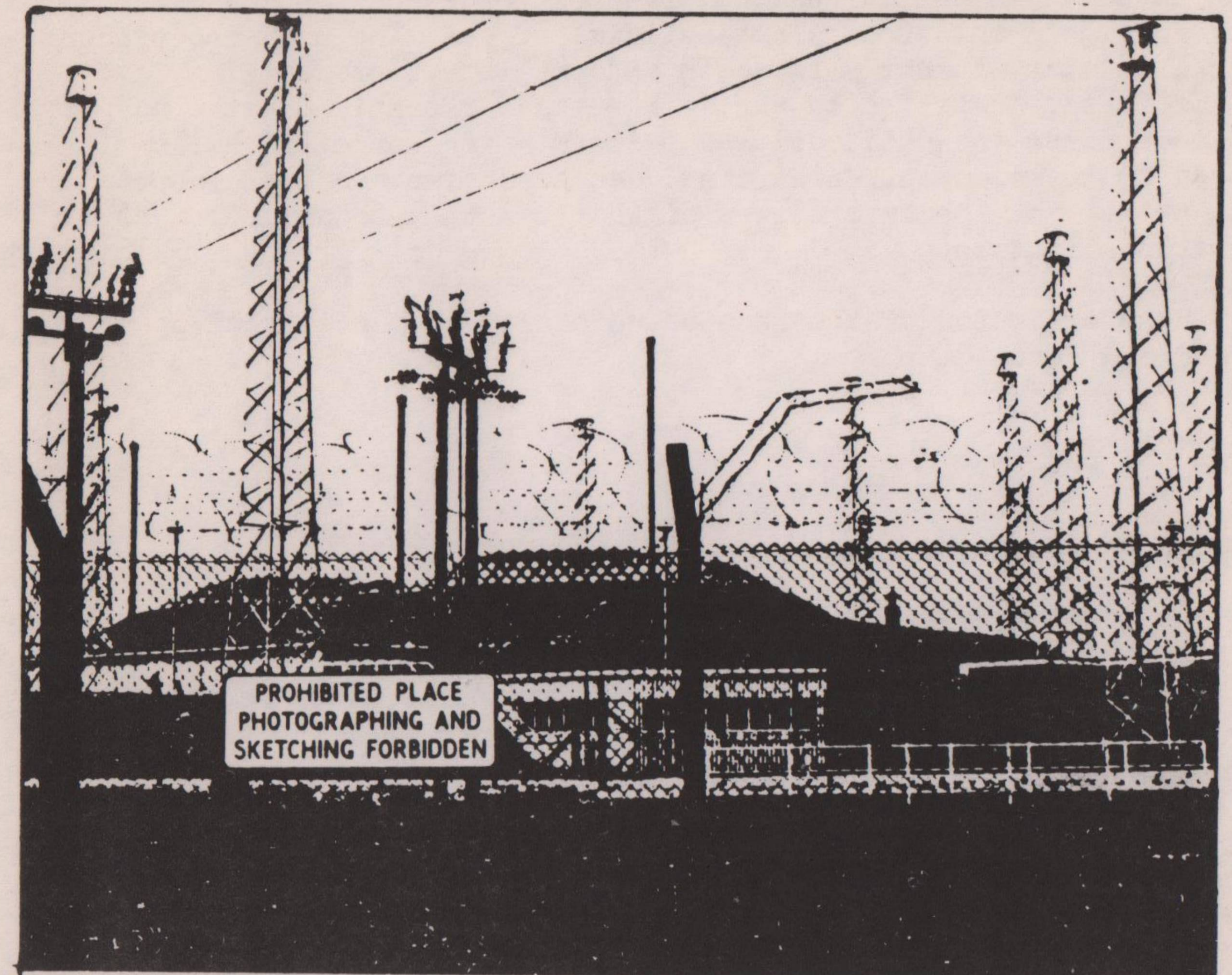
There are other, less tangible dangers posed by ROF Burghfield. The dangers of a breach of security are so great that civil liberties are becoming a luxury which the military establishment would rather we did not afford.

Mail is intercepted, and phones tapped. Car numbers taken, people watched. All justified on grounds of protecting the national security. Many people find this acceptable, if it is done to the criminals you read about in the papers, hear about on the TV. All done to protect us from anti-social, dangerous lunatics and extremists. Only it is used not to protect the people of this country, so much as the political interests of government. Those who only wish to find out what it is that the government is doing, supposedly on our behalf, are subjected to this treatment. You don't need to commit any crime in this country to have a policeman watching you. You just need to act in an independent manner. Not conforming to all the unwritten rules of our society marks people out as a potential threat to the Authorities. This is especially the case in the areas around "sensitive" places.

Complete strangers will know your name, and an assortment of facts about your past. Because they wear uniform, that is supposed to be all right.

Many people around Burghfield respond to the secrecy attached to their work by avoiding any talk, or even thought, about the subject. At a time of high unemployment, especially, nobody wants to risk losing their job. It is much safer and easier just to avoid the whole issue. It is not easy to get employees to talk about their jobs, so we cannot say what sort of job satisfaction they might get.

R.O.F. Burghfield. 4 Miles From Reading. This is where
Britain's nuclear warheads are assembled.



BURGHFIELD PEACE CAMP

WEEKDAYS: Placarding workers (meet at camp 7a.m. & 4p.m.)

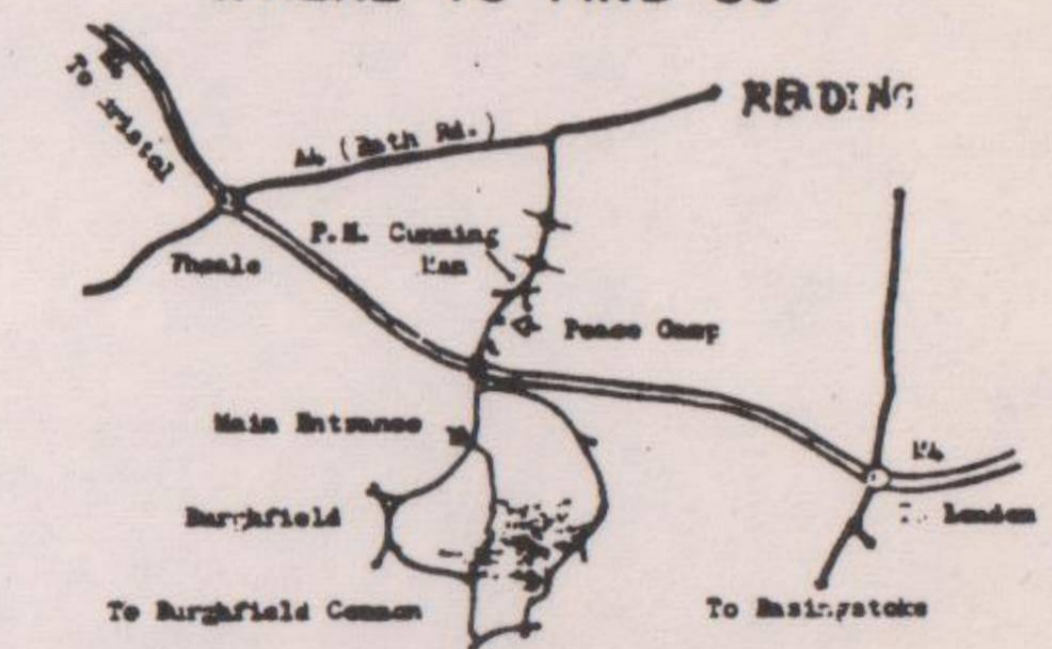
SUNDAYS: Walk & picnic with Photo's

(Main entrance-2.30p.m.)

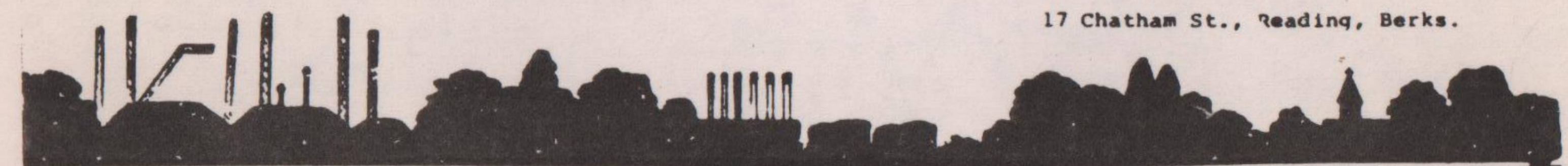
WELCOME ANYTIME

VIOLENCE IS NEITHER
NECESSARY NOR RIGHT.
NUCLEAR WAR
IS NOT INEVITABLE.
IT MUST BE RESISTED.

WHERE TO FIND US



Mail: Box 17, Acorn Books,
17 Chatham St., Reading, Berks.



Viewing the situation nationally, ROF Burghfield represents a vast misuse of precious resources. The whole economy is distorted by "defence" spending.

The military industry is largely funded by public expenditure, at the cost of suffocating the economy with high taxation. It is capital-intensive, so provides fewer jobs for the money it absorbs. Similar sums invested in public health, transport or education would result in many more jobs and produce a beneficial effect. The only end-product of the military industry is death and the threat of death.

It is all justified by war. We have seen recently how the advent of war undermines the attitudes and beliefs which our civilisation is supposed to be based on. In wartime, declared aims are less important than satisfying the imperatives of what can only be described as a barbaric situation.

These are a few of the reasons which led to the setting-up of the Burghfield Peace Camp.

BURGHFIELD PEACE CAMP

The peace camp was established on 24th April, 1982. People from all over the country, including several from Berkshire, who had met at Greenham over the preceding few months, provided the core.

For the first month, a presence was maintained continually at the entrance to the Mearings. Workers were placarded in the mornings, local houses were leafleted, contacts with peace and CND groups in the region were developed, and the campers enjoyed an intense education in the issues and practices involved in the idea of peace.

By the end of the summer, other places and activities had distracted most of the campers, so the camp closed in September.

The main event since then has been a sponsored fast over Christmas, at the East Gate of the factory. Over £1,000 was raised for War on Want. Posters and postcards have been produced, and numerous other events participated in.

Burghfield Peace Camp-aign,
Box 17, Acorn Bookshop,
17 Chatham Street,
READING,
Berks.

THANKS TO ALL, TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION, WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED
IN ANY WAY.

Cliff

Any information about ROF Burghfield is still very welcome, and may be included in further editions of this booklet.

APPENDIX

We believe the following companies deal with ROF Burghfield. Most of them were seen between April and August, 1982.

AIR PRODUCTS (liquid nitrogen)
ALAN HADLEY LTD (bricks and cement)
D. ALDRIDGE & SONS, SOUTHAMPTON
ALWARDS BROS., TAYNHAM, KENT
A.R.C. PREMIX, THEALE
ASTRAMARK AIR FREIGHT, NEWBURY
B.D.H. MW SCIENTIFIC LTD, POOLE
B.I.C.C. PCL, BASINGSTOKE
B.O.C. (liquid argon)
BARLOW HANDLING LIFT TRUCKS, WHITE WALTHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MAIDENHEAD
A.G. BARTHOLEMW (sand) BENHAM HILL, THATCHAM
BAYNES, READING
BERKSHIRE FENCING COMPANY
T.Y. BISSETT, WOOLHAMPTON } F. BEWSTOCK, PONTYPOOL
BIFFA WASTE SERVICES
BRANTS
BRITISH TELECOM
BRYNTON
BUCK & HICKMAN TOOLS DISTRIBUTION
CAMPELL-GREY PLANT HIRE, WEST LONDON
CAPLIN SCAFFOLDING
CASE & SON FISH MERCHANTS
W.E. CHIVERS & SONS, 108 LONDON ST, READING
CLEANSING SERVICES GROUP, NEWBURY
CLIMAX PARTS
CUNNING & HOLBROOK LTD
*D.B. INDUSTRIAL FASTENERS LTD, MILFORD RD, READING
D.C.L. YEAST (UNECOL FOODS)
DELIVERY SERVICES LTD
F. DIXON TRANSPORT, CROYLON
DREWS IRONMONGERS, CAVERS HAM RD, READING
DYNOROD
EBENEZER MEARS & SON, BYFLEET
H.N. EDWARDS & PARTNER LTD, BUILDERS, BASINGSTOKE
ESSO (FUEL OIL)
ESTCOURTS, DEVIZES } PART OF THE CHIVERS GROUP
ESTCOURTS PLANT ENGINEERING }
EVODE ROOFING
EXPRESS CATERING FOODS
FEBREY TRANSPORT
FISONS SCIENTIFIC
FLU-LINE CHIMNEY LINING SYSTEMS
G.K.N. (scaffolding and weed)
GRAHAM FORD (building contractors)
GROVE & PHILLIPS

W.W.HALL, ELGAR RD, READING
HARE & PARTNERS
W.J.HATT(WATER INSTALLATIONS)
F.A.HAWKINS TRANSPORT, EATON BRAY
A.P.HENRICKS TRANSPORT
*INFAST, THATCHAM
INTERCOUNTY EXPRESS
JAMES WHITE & SONS ENGINEERING LTD, COMMERCIAL RD, READING
JOHN STACEY LTD
KASVIN LAUNDRY SERVICES, WINDSOR
KELSAL
KEYPLANT
KITSONS INSULATION PRODUCTS
KODAK, MAYLANDS AVE., HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
*LEWIS ELECTRICAL MOTORS, BELL ST, MAIDENHEAD
LOVELL PLANT HIRE, HALIFAX RD, CRESSEX INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, HIGH WYCOMBE
LYTOG LIGHTWEIGHT AGGREGATES
M.B.S., THAMES BANK
F.MAHER CIVIL ENGINEERING
MALONE ROOFING, NEWBURY
MAN EQUIPMENT LTD,(protective clothing and equipment) GODALMING
MANOR BUILDING & PLUMBING SUPPLIES, DARWIN CLOSE, READING
NATIONAL CARRIERS LTD
NESTLES LTD
NEWY & EYRE (ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTORS) LTD
PALMERS SCAFFOLDING, BRACKNELL
PARKERS, ANDOVER
PARKER PLYWOOD, SANDFORD
PEARCES FARM
PILLAR ENGINEERING SUPPLIES
PORTSMOUTH AVIATION, THE AIRPORT, PORTSMOUTH
POST OFFICE
PRAKE BROS.CATERERS
PRESTONS OF POTTO, DISTRIBUTORS, ST NEOTS,CAMBS
*PSIMAT (high pressure water cleaning)
RADCLIFFE, GUILDFORD
READING SCREEDING
REIGATE WAREHOUSES
ROADLINE
ROCON PLANT HIRE, BASINGSTOKE
ROWE GROUP
SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY BOARD
SECURE SCAFFOLDING, HENLEY
SECURICOR PARCELS
SECURITY EXPRESS
SELWOOD ENGINEERING
SHERWOODS CLEANING CONTRACTORS, WOKINGHAM
SONNING HAULAGE, READING
SOVEREIGN
SPRINGWOOD ENGINEERING
STERLING CABLE CO., BATH RD, PADWORTH
STONEFORD
SUNBLEST
*SURREY FASTENERS LTD, FERNBANK RD,ASCOT
T.W.FLOORING, 6 HOWARD ST, READING
TANKS & DRUMS LTD
*TAYLOR & GOODMAN LTD(electrical motor repairs & sales)CRADDOCK RD, READING
TURNER GOW LTD,HAULAGE CONTRACTORS
TYLESLEY INTERNATIONAL HAULIERS
U.B.M. BUILDING MATERIALS
WAKEFOLD ENGINEERING, BASINGSTOKE
WALLINGTONS, TWYFORD
WHITE ARROW MAIL ORDER EXPRESS DELIVERIES
D.S. WILCOCK,NEWBURY
WILKINSON TRANSPORT, MILTON TRADING ESTATE, ABINGDON
WILLIAM KIRK LTD
WITHER & STAFF
YOUNG & WILDSMITH