

NOTTINGHAM CND BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 1991

RUSSIAN RULE

Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev's sudden ousting and equally quick reinstatement have happened in the same chaotic week. Initially described by the coup leaders as 'resting', Gorbachev turned out to be under house arrest in the Crimea, his place taken by a colourless subordinate. Mass public presence, heavy in numbers and more lugubrious than violent, was followed by a retreat of the rebels, some of whom were reported as being under arrest, or even suicidal. Equally confusing were the divided loyalties of army and secret police, and a final touch of surreal farce was added when Boris Yeltsin requested an international enquiry into Gorbachev's health, to be headed by, of all people, Margaret Thatcher. It could only happen in Russia... Dr David Owen must have been disappointed.

Some westerners were very quick off the mark in calling for a halt in our military cutbacks, their viewpoint surprisingly opposed by Tom King, who spoilt the effect instantly by reaffirming nuclear weapons' central role. Amid all this, the recent crucial development of the Warsaw Pact dissolution went unnoticed.

Jeremy Jago

MEMBERS MEETING SAT SEP 28

A particular issue of concern is expressed by Jack Rotherham's letter in this issue. Similar views have been voiced by very many others locally and nationally. Therefore NCND executive has been asked to hold a members' workshop and discussion/debate on the morning of Saturday September 28th. (The recent Laurie Gibson Saturday workshop in June was very rewarding and worthwhile.) Come at 10.00 to NCND office, 33 Castle Gate, where the workshop will be held in the newly restored meeting room behind the office. All offensive weapons will have to be handed in at the front office for the duration of the meeting. If you want to express a view but can't attend, please write in advance and your points will be discussed.

HIROSHIMA DAY

6 August 1991



7.00 pm and the rain cometh down.

No contingency plans ... what plans can be made when the highlight of the evening is the floating of the cranes/candles on the lake? Floating two cranes in the sink at 33, Castlegate does not have the same impact. Can anyone suggest an alternative for inclement weather?

However by 8.00pm, when members and friends had commenced to assemble at the University Park Lake the weather had improved to a dry, warm but overcast evening.

The ceremony, as usual, was very moving. Unfortunately - for the first time - Barbara Lacey was unable to attend, and a member of the Clarion Choir read two short poems. Bronwen then sang two songs, one of which she had especially composed for the evening - a song for Sadako Sasaki. Bronwen then produced sweet, plaintive, evocative tunes from her pipe. The finale was two songs from the Clarion Choir and as the strains of 'Down by the Riverside' faded away the assembly floated the crane/candles on the darkening lake. We wish to thank the Nottingham Parks Dept. for the use of the University Park. The approach to the lake through the colourful floral display, and the lake itself, make an ideal setting for this annual memorial.

Our thanks also to the Clarion choir, who raised their voices so beautifully in a memorial offering.

It was also good to see the Peace Ceremony at the Peace Park in Hiroshima on BBC Breakfast News on 6th August.

Doreen Gower

Comment.

We have received notice and a letter from Eddie Walsh regarding the Peace Train from Belfast to London.

Whilst we are sympathetic to all Peace efforts, throughout the world, our main concern is that of Nuclear Disarmament. To cover all the events concerning peace throughout the world is much wider than the confines of this Bulletin would allow.

PEACE TRAIN.

The third weekend of July was a stimulating occasion with a Peace Train and the first ever tripartite peace conference. Leaving Belfast on the Thursday morning, the Peace Train travellers, following civic receptions at Dublin and Dun Laoghaire, took the ferry to Holyhead. I went from Nottingham to Holyhead to meet them. As they marched out with banners high, including that of Families Against Intimidation and Terror. I felt honoured to be among them; these people who had come to Britain to seek support for peace. Police with sniffer dogs were not unwelcome as one of the group was threatened with death if he travelled by those who murder without a mandate. The local railway club provided a comfortable respite where we relaxed in the company of the Mayors of Holyhead and Anglesey. I was glad that we had thought of presenting a certificate of welcome to each of our Irish friends.

Two reserved compartments on the 2:30a.m. train were at our disposal and we reached Euston by 7:15. The welcoming reception included Kevin McNamara, Harry Barnes (N.E. Derbys) and the Mayor of Camden.

A group of young Buddhists in blue blazers were ideal stewards. The crowd had now grown to some two hundred. Speeches were made, violence was condemned and peace was praised. The T&G provided two buses to take us to a rally at the House of Commons and the highlight of the week-end was the peace conference held on the Saturday at which peace was demanded and future plans discussed.

Eddie Walsh.

JUNE 200 Club winners:

£25	P.A. Jackson	58
£10	Tamsin Morris	87
£5	Cath Wakeman	105

July 200 Club Winners:

£25	Emma Mitchell	83
£10	Pete Zabulis	48
£5	P.A. Jackson	58

More members of the 200 club would mean more prize money for you and more money for us to campaign.

Please think of this - and then join.

VIC WILLIAMS - a report by David Lane.

Vic Williams is a British soldier who went 'absent without leave' in December 1990 from the 27th Field regiment, then stationed in Germany, in protest against Britain's involvement in the Gulf War. He is due for Court Martial on September 9th.

He spoke to several CND groups and his defence campaign is supported by CND and the Committee for a Just Peace in the Middle East. We need as many names as possible as soon as possible on the petition at present in the office, worded thus:

'We, the undersigned, support the brave stand Vic Williams took and demand that he is treated as a conscientious objector and charges against him for 'desertion and conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline' be dropped.'

NOTES ON THE MYTH OF A CLEAN WAR

Written by PAUL ROGERS *

See also Paul Flynn's article on the back page.

1. The enduring impression given through the media by military briefings was of a war fought with precision-guided weapons (PGMs) against "military real estate", the pin-point accuracy resulting in few casualties. This supposed lack of casualties was a myth also maintained for much of the war by the Iraqi regime to keep up morale.
2. In reality, the war involved the systematic and large-scale use of non-guided bombs and missiles, with an emphasis on area-impact munitions such as cluster bombs designed specifically to kill and maim. According to Major-General Royal N. Moore Jr. of the US Marine Corps, "I'm afraid (analysts) will concentrate on the smart weapons, but without question it was sustainability that won this one". He defined sustainability as the continuous accurate delivery by disciplined pilots of massive amounts of conventional, unguided "green bombs".
3. After the end of the war, civilian casualties were estimated by various agencies and observers at 7-10,000 killed. Saudi military sources initially estimated military deaths at 65-100,000. Later estimates published in the London Observer and Independent and the Boston Christian Science Monitor ranged between 100,000 and 200,000.
4. The war-time destruction of Iraq's economic, social and health infrastructure has led to major epidemics and a massive rise in child mortality, estimated to have caused an additional 55,000 deaths in January-April 1991. These will rise during the hot weather.
5. US forces dropped 88,500 tons of bombs during Desert Storm. Just 6,250 tons were precision-guided and these were 90% accurate. The remaining 81,750 tons (93% of the total) were iron bombs and cluster bombs which were only 25% accurate. The US Navy alone dropped 21,254 bombs during the war; just 1,203 were precision-guided compared with 4,473 cluster bombs.
6. A typical cluster bomb, the BL755, releases 147 bomblets, each of which generates 2,000 high-velocity shrapnel fragments. The entire cannister thus releases nearly 300,000 of these anti-personnel shards and can cover an area of over an acre. Napalm and fuel-air explosives were also used, as was the BLU-82/B slurry bomb. This 7-ton bomb produces blast overpressures of 1,000 psi, exceeded only by nuclear weapons in destructive capability.
7. Much attention was focussed on the extraordinary manoeuvrability and accuracy of the Tomahawk sea-launched cruise missile, able to single out individual buildings. Little or no attention was paid to an advanced new version of the missile (TLAM-D) equipped with 166 fragmentation grenades in place of a single high-explosive charge. This anti-personnel version was also used in Desert Storm and can release its munitions in three loads on three quite different targets.
8. Even more destructive was the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) used for the first time in combat in this war. A single salvo of 12 MLRS missiles delivers nearly 8,000 fragmentation sub-munitions generating many millions of shrapnel fragments over an area of 60 acres at a 20-mile range in under 60 seconds. During the war, 12,500 missiles were fired releasing nearly 8 million sub-munitions.
9. Given these weapons and tactics, casualties of up to a quarter of a million dead during and after the war should cause no surprise. The Gulf War demonstrated the future face of conventional war. The "clean war" is a carefully nurtured myth - it was, in practice, a singularly dirty war.

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LETTER

I regret that after a lot of thought -
I cannot support CND's policy on three
issues:-

- 1) Marjorie Thompson's statement, vide
Sanity in January, that she intends to
'wean people off the concept of unilateralism'. Considering CND's anger, when
Labour took this line at the last
General Election, such a volte face will
lose us credibility: especially since
many of us joined CND because we saw the
validity of that concept.
- 2) The opposition to the Gulf War, led by
CND, has left the organization as a
principally pacifist group instead of an
'umbrella' for differing groups.
- 3) Opposing the Gulf War implies
rejection of the United Nations Charter,
since it was strictly under the resolutions
of that Charter that the Gulf Coalition
acted. The Charter embodies the idea of
collective security which, had it been
in existence at the time - and acted upon -
would have prevented the Nazi invasions
of Czechoslovakia and Poland, and saved
the lives of sixty million who perished
in the 1949/45 war.

I am afraid that there are even a few
members in the Ex Services CND who
cannot see the logical parallel between
the Nazi and the Iraqi invasions.

J.H.Rotherham.

I know that the letter from Jack
Rotherham will raise a great many
issues in Nottingham CND and these
should have a public airing.

Jack stated that opposing the Gulf
War implies rejection of the United
Nations Charter. Was this the situation?
Personally I opposed the Gulf War to
allow the sanctions imposed by the U.N
time to work.

I agree that the League of Nations
lacked 'clout' in the run up to 1939,
and it was to allow time for this new
Charter to work that I objected to the
U.S.A. pushing the U.N. to armed
conflict instead of economic sanctions.
The parallel to 1939 differs because -
a) Nazi Germany had the largest munitions
supplies - Krupps - as a backing, whilst
Iraq was relying on arms from abroad..
b) Nuclear capabilities. The potential
for nuclear destruction in the war zone
was horrendous. Accident, crossed wires:
mistaken orders: minor explosions,
action under pressure or direct hits
could have ended our civilisation, to
say nothing of the effect of 'friendly
fire'. The scenario is too
horrific to dwell upon.

I think that recent events have proven
CND right.

Nuclear weapons are not a deterrent!
Saddam Hussain remains the leader in
Iraq, whose financial assets are now
being unfrozen and whose oil is again
on the market.

What has Desert Storm achieved?

Doreen Gower.

THE ARMS TRADE

The Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) is now leading a letter-writing protest to the Prime Minister. John Major has shown concern at the danger of the International Arms Trade. When he was Foreign Secretary his Department stopped the export of Hawk Aircraft to Iraq. Make John Major listen again. Inundate him with letters urging him to end all Government Arms Sales Exhibitions.

Write to. Rt. Hon. John Major, M.P.
10, Downing Street,
London. S.W.1A 2AA.

You might also like to write a letter to your M.P. concerning the need for an International Arms Sale Register.

The following gives some guidelines -

"The Prime Minister supports the idea of an international UN arms sales register but British arms exports remain shrouded in secrecy. All military equipment need a Government licence before it can be exported but the Government refuses to make public information about licences issued or even to state the criteria it uses to assess applications. This makes democratic debate and scrutiny of Britain's role in the arms trade almost impossible.

Please ask your MP to press that the criteria are disclosed. Ask further that applications for licences be made available for public inspection so that parliamentary debate is possible before a decision on the licence is made.

MP's DO note letters they get.

ARMS FAIR - Birmingham Victory.

The Board of the National Exhibition has responded to the intensive public pressure with a decision not to stage further arms fairs.

This follows the sustained C.N.D./CAAT campaign against the May Defence Components & Equipment Exhibition in Birmingham.

Congratulations to everyone who sent a protest postcard from Nottingham. Individual efforts do count!!

DIARY.

October 5th.	Arms Trade Street Poll.
October 26th.	N.V.A.D. Blockage, Upper Heyford.
November 2nd.	White Poppy Sale. Listergate Stall.
November 7th.	A.G.M. 33, Castle Gate.
November 9th.	White Poppy Sale. Listergate Stall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Welcome to Emma Coulson - our latest new-born member from Forest Fields,

We are delighted to hear of the recovery of Maud Wagg - a long standing and most supportive member.

OBITUARY:

This announcement was too late for our last bulletin.

We send our sincere condolences to the family of Enid Dorer. She had been a staunch supporter of progressive movements and made many friends who will miss her greatly.

LITERATURE REVIEW

by Jeremy Jago

Somewhere around 1981 there was a surge of books and magazines from the peace movement, paralleling today's 'ecological' boom. The difference is that environmental writing reaches a wider public - being thought non-political - even if some people's green commitment comes from a desire to express 'compassion without collectivism'.

Written matter on peace issues may not emerge in the stream it did a decade ago, but recent local bulletins are encouraging in their enthusiasm.

Leicester CND's newsletter is well produced and readable. The latest copy records its members' part in anti-arms-fair protest at the NEC, and mentions a well attended event in Women's Day for Disarmament. 'Christmas Island Remembered' describes test veteran John Hall's fight for justice for himself and other disease victims. Leicester CND, like NCND, rents its own office, but unlike NCND recently suffered a 100% rent hike.

'The Mailing' comes from West Midlands CND in Digbeth, Birmingham. August's copy leads with planned activities against the Portsmouth Arms Fair, urging even those unable to attend to write to the government (the Navy run the fair). On the cover WMCND members are pictured at a recent stall having a laugh with Jasper Carrott. An update appears on the campaign on nuclear material transport, particularly active in the region. The diary reveals an impressive structure of events and meetings. I must quote from the Upper Heyford Blockade notes: 'There will be plenty for people to do who don't want to risk arrest, including a party in the evening...'

'Heddwch' is the very impressive and upbeat newly launched magazine from CND Cymru. The first noticeable thing about this full-size bound mag is that it's bilingual: you can read it half-way in English or turn it over and read the same material in Welsh. Issue 1's lead article asks why the RAF continue with dangerous low-flying - an issue which in Wales transcends politics. CND Cymru's Chair, David Morris, is MEP for Mid & West Wales: he writes about new thinking in Europe following the Warsaw Pact dissolution. 'What Price Public Safety' describes record radioactive pollution of Trawsfynydd Lake by the adjoining power reactors. Robert Davies gives a wide perspective in his account of the United Nations Association, differing from United Nations in being open to all (CND's a corporate member). Heddwch is something new in regional bulletins, and astonishingly only 20p (an article reprint appears in this bulletin).

The last publication in the pile isn't a bulletin but a book, recently presented to NCND Library by David Lane of Concord Books, who supplies it and others from his Newdigate Street premises. CND Scrapbook, by former chairperson Joan Ruddock, is a detailed record of anti-nuclear campaigning from the early 50's to its release date of 1987. The book is dominated by visual material - photos, documents and newspaper cuttings, all of which give an evocative picture of their time - supported by brief, excellent text. Obviously the 1987 cut off seems abrupt - but the modern reader can realise that some better news was in store.

HOLOCAUST

Sold as a clean war, the Gulf War was fought with very dirty bombs, as Paul Flynn, MP for Newport West, reports.

A little known figure is that only 7.4 percent of the bombs dropped by the coalition were precision ones. Many of the other 92 percent were new weapons of mass slaughter never used on such a scale before.

The cluster bombs, 'daisy cutters' and fuel-air explosives should not be classed as conventional weapons as we understand the term. They are massacre weapons which destroy all mammalian life in their path.

On June 17 I again raised the subject in an oral question to the Attorney General. 'How many representations have you received on the legality of weapons used by the coalition forces in the Gulf Conflict?' 'Two,' he answered, 'one from you; one from Tam Dalyell'.

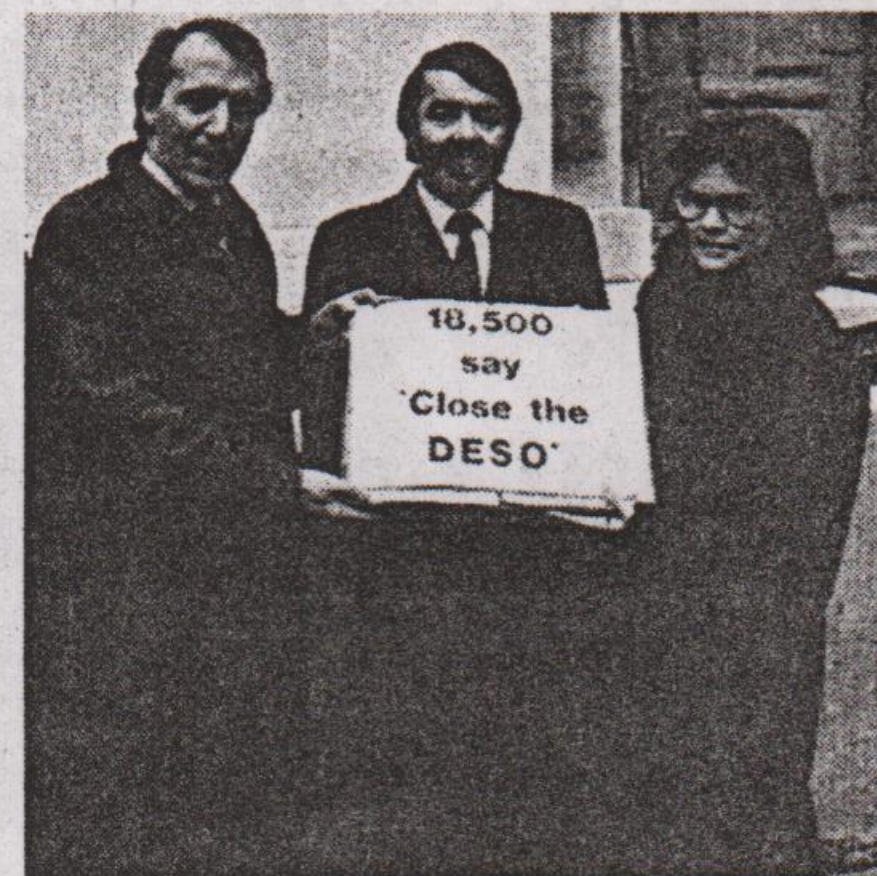
That's a promising start, but parliamentary persistence is ranged against a wilful refusal to recognise the holocaust results of the Gulf War. The most recent estimate is that 100,000 to 200,000 Iraqi were killed and 300,000 to 700,000 injured. Most of them were Shia and Kurdish conscripts.

The most commonly used work-horse bombs were the cluster bomb units (CBU). They contain hundreds, sometimes thousands of bomb live units (BLU) designed to devastate large areas. The CBU 75 covers an area the equivalent of 157 football fields.

A single B-52 bomber can carry forty such cluster bombs containing 8,080 bomblets, theoretically enough to carpet-bomb 27,500 football fields. The 28 B-52s which dropped 470 tons of explosives on Iraqi positions on January 30 could have obliterated 1,600 square miles, an area a fifth the size of Wales.

Not surprisingly, one American general said they will still be finding bodies in forty years time.

Fuel Air Explosives mimic the blast wave of a nuclear bomb on a small scale and suck the oxygen from the atmosphere. The appropriately named MAD FAE (mass air delivery, fuel air explosive) creates a blast pressure zone 1,000 feet long and a hundred times greater than required to be fatal to human beings. Use of FAEs in the Gulf was officially described as 'an experiment'.



Paul Flynn (centre) with Simon Hughes MP and Anne Feltham (CAAT) hands in a petition at the MOD calling for the closure of the Defence Export Services Organisation

The 'favourite' of the Marine Corps' according to a Pentagon spokesperson was the 'Big Blue 82' or Daisy Cutter'. Dropped by parachute and exploding just above the ground, it cuts a swathe of destruction that disintegrates everything over a wide area.

In September last I asked Douglas Hurd whether Saddam Hussein had bought FAEs from the Chilean firm of Industrias Cardoen and whether there was any link with the murder of British journalist Jonathan Moyle. He did not know.

The evidence is that many of the massacre weapons used in vast quantities in the Gulf were then, and are now, on sale in the arms bazaars of the world. The only argument that strikes home with the present government is the prospect that British troops may be on the receiving end of these terror weapons in future conflicts.

I am campaigning for these weapons to be covered by the Inhumane Weapons protocol of 1981. That would give some international control over their manufacture, sale and deployment.

More effective still would be a full recognition of the awful indiscriminate butchery of the Gulf War. That revulsion may deter future conflicts.

Arms procurement minister Alan Clarke mocked a question of mine by sneering 'Some members would like to see us conduct wars using food parcels and loudhailers.'

Sounds like a great idea.

All current literature is available at NCND office

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