

NEWSLETTER
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FOREST FIELDS
PEACE
GROUP



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" HERE WE GO ! "

F.F.P.G. RECLAIMS U S A F MOLESWORTH

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FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

Forty years ago this year the first atomic bombs were exploded over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Ever since then the nuclear weapons stockpiles of the world have been growing at a phenomenal rate. There is now enough explosive power to destroy the life of the World at least ten times over.

In recent years the acceleration of the arms race has brought the risk of a nuclear war frighteningly close. This acceleration can be seen in Britain in the deployment of Cruise missiles and the purchase of the Trident programme.

At the same time, however, more and more people throughout Europe and the World are recognising the insanity of the war preparations and are fighting to turn the tide for **PEACE**. Lasting peace can only be achieved through the active involvement, at grassroots level, of people from all walks of life combining to oppose the Arms Race.

Forest Fields Peace Group is one of many groups of such people committed to raising awareness of the issues in their local area. We are open to everybody in the Forest Fields and Hyson Green areas who is concerned about the Earth we share. We welcome all new members to come to our meetings, which are held at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday and fourth Thursday of each month, at Forest Fields Neighbourhood Centre, 69 Wiverton Road. For further information about FFPG please phone Paddy or Cathy on 788655.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions in the form of letters or articles about the peace movement, arms race or relevant issues are most welcome. Membership of FFPG is only £1 yearly and you receive this newsletter (or one like it) every time it comes out -generally monthly.

If you would like to make a contribution or join or make a donation or just find out more about FFPG, please contact us at the Neighbourhood Centre, 69 Wiverton Road, or Phone Paddy or Cathy on 788655.

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DID YOU KNOW...
For every cent that the pound falls against the dollar, the cost of the Trident missile programme increases by another £26 million or almost 50p for every man woman and child in this country. This is in addition to the estimated £12 billion pounds to which the Government has already committed itself.

The campaign to defend Molesworth against Cruise missiles is well under way, and gathers power and momentum daily. As part of the national CND campaign to disrupt and resist the turning of an 800 acre disused airfield into a second Greenham Common, The East Midlands contribution began with a demonstration on Wednesday February 20th.

Three coachloads of people went from Nottingham, and over 300 people attended the protest, on a day that offered passionate confirmation of the peace movement's intention to succeed at Molesworth, In the knowledge that the majority of British people clearly do not want a second cruise missile base in this country.

In so many ways - through hourly protest of noise and chanting and music, through decoration of the fence, through highly successful non violent direct action, most of all through a determined day-long physical presence - that intention, and the passionate belief behind it, was revealed- to those constructing the fence around the base, and those guarding it, to the television and radio and newspaper reporters covering the event, to the Government convinced that force and genocide rhetoric will allow them to realise their objectives, and, most important of all, to the ordinary men, women and children of this country who, growing in awareness of the terrible threat to life created by nuclear weapons, are treated with scorn by a government determined to ignore the weight of public opinion opposed to the presence of American Cruise missiles in Britain. The campaign at Molesworth is a CND campaign :but it is also much much more - it is the peoples' campaign, a voice of protest refusing to be silenced, refusing to allow another part of Britain to be desecrated, to be turned into a base prepared and ready to destroy millions of people.

Non violent direct action carried that protest beyond the barbed wire and the razor wire, and into the heart of the base. Forest Fields Peace Group contributed to this action, and were wholly successful in carrying out a plan to pierce the fence erected in such a blaze of publicity. The fact that 40 or so people entered the base (a fact unreported by the BBC, whose brief, distorted coverage of the protest informed the nation that demonstrators had attempted to get into Molesworth) reflected the organised determination of the protest. But it also signaled, once again, and powerfully, that active participation in the struggle for peace, can lead to success. Mr Heseltine's police-and-military mob had, unsurprisingly, perhaps inevitably, opted for brute force at Molesworth, in an operation described, by the 'Daily Express' as 'The Battle of Molesworth'. And there, for all participating on February 20th were the results to see- a bleak, mud and green expanse of land, ringed by a fence composed of barbed and razor wire coils, inside of which workers toiled to construct a larger permanent fence. Keep out, keep out it coldly cried. Echoed by the wary guards: police? army? MOD police? Titles matter less and less- the manner and mode of control is increasingly military. On a day when Margaret Thatcher proudly announced to US Congress her support for Reagan's insane star wars plan, and the MOD finally acknowledged that the US National Guard was training in Britain, with the British army, Molesworth illustrated nakedly, chillingly, the process of militarisation occurring in this country.

But crude, brute force is a steel ring round emptiness. Attacking life, it is lifeless, anti-life. It can fold, crumble, if people want it to, and believe in their living, peace-loving strength. The brute force was saying keep out, go away. Those there opposing that could laugh at themselves: a jumbly collection of guardian readers sporting odd fashions, balaclavas, face paints, improvised leg protectors and welders gauntlets: But could succeed- the guards and threatening fence could not stop that, just as the police-military personnel had no answers to those inside, beyond patronage, or insult, or the shaky effort to maintain indifference.

The campaign to defend Molesworth against Cruise missiles is well under way. It is our land to reclaim. It is our right to reclaim it. Let us do that and succeed. I gazed at many guards on February 20th. I saw many things, including contempt and hatred: but I never saw belief. They were there by force: but nothing else: and they knew it.

LES PARSONS. BA. FFPG.

PUBLIC MEETING.

About 100 people trekked through the snow on February 8th to attend a public debate between Michael Knowles (MP) and Pete Strauss (FFPG), at The Italian Community Centre. The theme of the debate was, "Defence and Disarmament - Nuclear weapons...keeping the peace or a threat to peace?", and it was ably chaired by Robin Aldridge (headteacher of Claremont Primary School). I'm sure you'll be in no doubt which of the two views about nuclear weapons was put forward by the FFPG speaker.

PETE STRAUSS opened by pointing out that he and Michael had common aims; they both wanted peace, and a good defence system for Britain. There the similarities seemed to end as Pete went on to argue that nuclear weapons were in fact a threat to peace, and by their very presence in Britain endangered rather than defended us. His arguments were not just based on ideological beliefs; he backed up each point with facts and figures. Pete went through the reasons which are usually put forward for not disarming, and shattered each one in turn.

MICHAEL KNOWLES made his position clear from the start when he told us that at two previous debates on nuclear issues he had said to the audience, "If you belong to CND, don't vote for me." His argument was based on the theory that the choice was not between being red or dead, but, between peace in freedom, or slavery.

Michael certainly considered that the Soviet Union was a direct threat to Britain. He spent a large part of his address telling us about previous Soviet wrongs. He then went on to remind us that we can't stop the world and get off. Presumably this means that we shouldn't live in the past; which was what Michael seemed to be doing by concentrating so much on past world events.

I was suprised to hear Michael admit that there could be a fatal accident with a nuclear weapon. The analogy that an accident could just as easily occur in a hospital was hardly a relevant comparison and only increased my fears, not allayed them. People

who want us to have nuclear weapons are usually convinced that they are safe, they don't admit that the world could be blown up by accident.

Michael put forward a moral argument, "The real problem is that we have technological ability but moral dwarfism". I mentally expanded on this. If we are moral dwarves, what is to morally prevent us from using nuclear weapons? Would moral giants embark on nuclear disarmament? I couldn't imagine that Michael would be opposed to us being moral giants, so I could only conclude that he, like me, considers that nuclear weapons are immoral.

A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

followed, and once again I found Pete's arguments convincing and Michael's irrational. Michael had talked about multilateral agreements, but then admitted freely that the Trident programme (which the PM says is not negotiable) was one of escalation not replacement. He said that he would himself be prepared to press the nuclear button; this hardly supported the deterrence theory that the very existence of nuclear weapons will prevent them ever having to be used. He admitted that Britain's Civil Defence plans were grossly inadequate and that "Protect and Survive" was a laughable document. This suggested to me that Michael thinks that we need to defend ourselves from a nuclear attack; either he's convinced that there will be a nuclear accident, or, he doesn't really believe in his deterrence theory.

I was very pleased that Michael had agreed to take part in a public debate; I believe in local democracy. However, I found his arguments totally unconvincing. It was clear that I was in a majority. Can we hope that our MP will represent our views next time there is a parliamentary debate on a nuclear issue? I certainly hope so; it wouldn't do for an MP to misrepresent the views of his constituency.

Helen Cooper

Recently I spent five days in Lincoln Jail as a result of refusing to pay a £45 fine, imposed after a demonstration at USAF Alconbury.

Going to jail for reasons of conscience is, I imagine, easier than not having any choice about it. It was good to know that people were supporting me while I was inside.

Without actually being a prisoner, I think it is hard to understand quite what imprisonment is like, indeed it was only towards the end of my short stay that I began to settle into the long monotonous routine.

Just about every minute in jail is wasted. Apart from the books I took in there was nothing constructive to do. Eat, sleep, walk round and round the exercise yard, slop out - imagine twenty years!

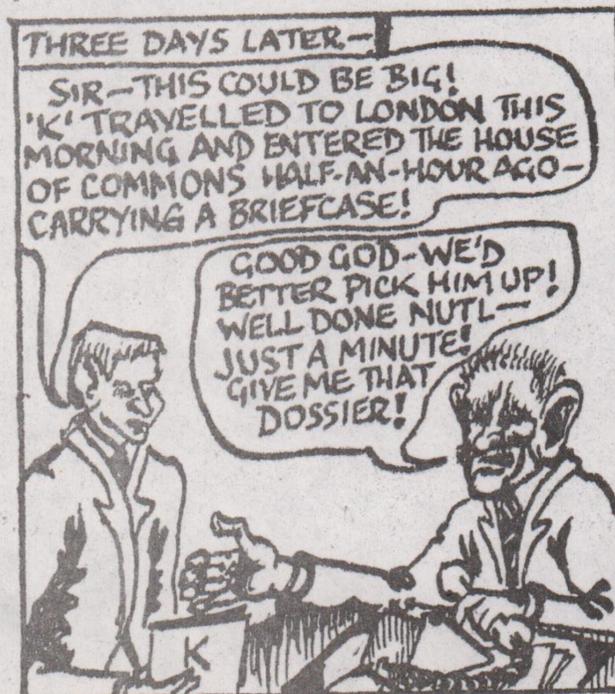
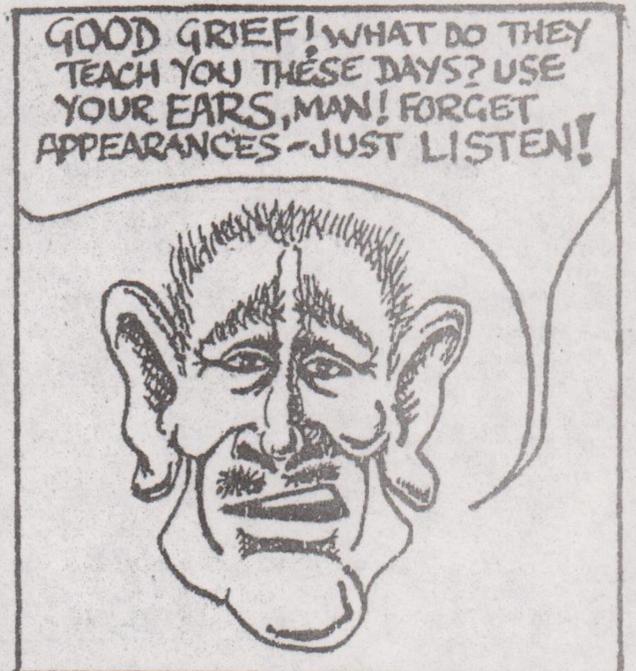
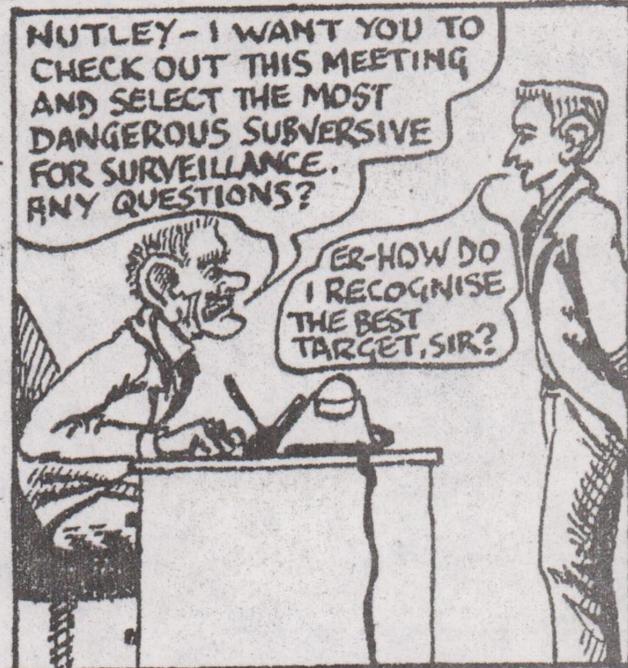
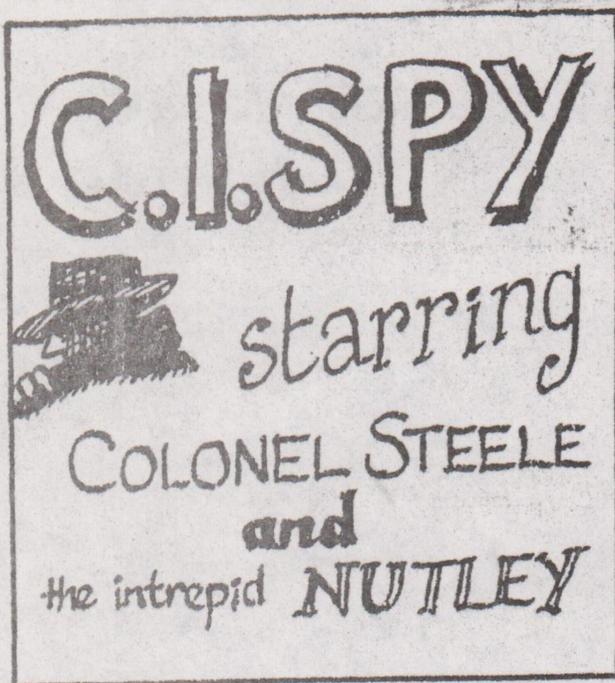
I was not given any work but for those who get it, its sewing mail bags or making nets for £1 or £2 a week. (Despite the low 'wages' prison workshops still managed to lose £12 million last year).

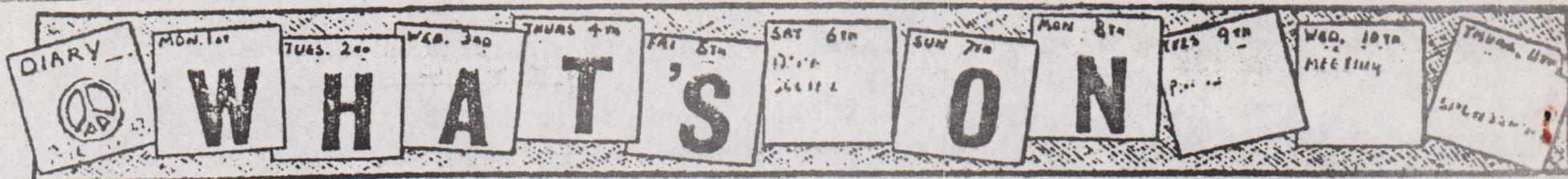
On Sunday there was an insipid church service from the Chaplain (who carried a set of keys), and in the afternoon the weekly film. I imagine the film is the one chance prisoners have of 'escaping' from their sentence - showing Clint Eastwood's 'Sudden Impact' which glorifies the use of firearms and killing is, I think stupid.

From inside the jail with its bars and wire you can clearly see another method in which the state can oppress and control the population. There is an almost silent violence with every cell door, where men and women are denied their liberty.

I do not imagine that we will ever be able to do away with prisons but at the very least I think we should try to understand what they are really doing and what they are being used for.

Dave Dickinson. Feb. 85.





- FEB Thur 28 FFPG Meeting about the Aims & Objectives of the Peace Group. FFNC. 7.30
- MAR Fri 1 Jaz in Court for non-payment of Alconbury fine. 9.15am.
- Sat 2 Regional NVDA Conference in Chesterfield. (See Barbara for details)
- Sun 3 NCND Members Meeting with speaker on Nuclear Free Zones - What do they mean? Friends' Meeting House, Clarendon St. 7.30pm.
- Mon 4 PAN Meeting. NCND office. 7.30pm.
- Wed 6 Forest Fields Affinity Group Meeting. FFNC. 8.00pm.
- Thur 7 NCND Co-ordinating Meeting. NCND Office. 7.30pm.
- Fri 8 International Womens' Day. Events at International Community Centre. Contact Laragh 626721. (Womens' festival is throughout March. Look out for details of activities)
- Sun 10 Nottm Molesworth Defence Campaign Meeting. NCND Office. 7.30pm.
- Wed 13 MOLESWORTH - Details from NCND Office.
FFPG Meeting. FFNC. 7.30pm.
- Thur 14 Pacific Women. Women from Pacific Islands talking at NCND Meeting. ICC. 7.30pm.
- Fri 15 Pacific Women at women only social. All Saints Community Centre, Raleigh Street. 7.00pm.
- W/e 16-17 Conference on Cruise in Manchester. Contact Dave D. or Pete S. Royal Ordnance Corps Intex Exercise. Activities to be decided.
- Sun 17 Molesworth? - Contact NCND Office.
Nottm Molesworth Defence Campaign Meeting. NCND Office. 7.30pm.
- Mon 18 PAN Meeting. NCND Office 7.30pm.
- Sun 24 Nottm Molesworth Defence Campaign Meeting. NCND Office. 7.30pm.
- Thur 28 FFPG Meeting. FFNC. 7.30pm.
- Sat 30 Mass Cycle-In at Chilwell. At Chilwell Olympia. 11.00am.
- APR Mon 1 PAN Meeting. NCND Office. 7.30pm.
Easter Demonstrations at Molesworth.
- Wed 3 Commence of March from Chilwell to Molesworth. Arrive at Molesworth on Easter Sunday 7th April.
- Mon 8 Mass Demonstration - 'Ringing the Base' - Details of coaches from NCND Office.

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