

TOGETHER WE CAN
STOP THE BOMB

FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

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Photo by Mark Salmon

Airstrip One: March to Chilwell. 15th April 1984

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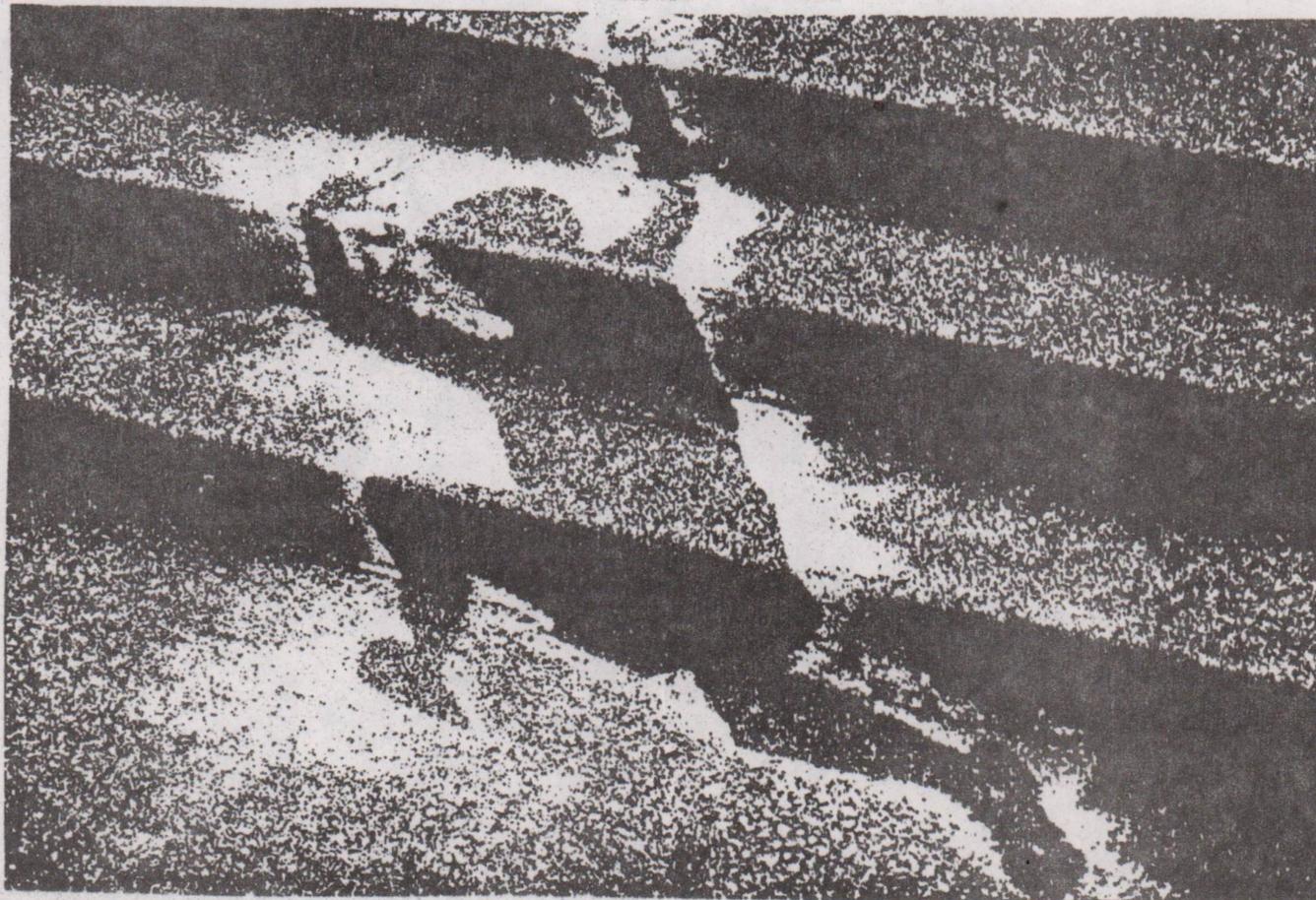
SHADOWS OVER THE CITY

The Nottingham peace movement, including members of Forest Fields Peace Group, participated in the International Shadow Project on August 6th 1985.

It's intention was to provide a vivid reminder of the horrific destruction caused by the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima exactly 40 years before, and through that also to remind us all of the terrible threat of destruction we live under, in a world with vast numbers of nuclear weapons, tens and hundreds of times more destructive than the bomb which flattened Hiroshima in seconds. The heat close to the centre of that explosion was of such intensity that those caught in it were literally vaporised - nothing was left of them but a dark shadow outline. The white silhouette outlines painted in Nottingham and in many other cities throughout Britain and other countries were there to depict this horror.

In Nottingham, as elsewhere, care was taken to cause no permanent damage through the project - only streets were "shadowed" and a non-permanent paint mix was used.

The hope of all those involved is that the Project, and the many other activities organised in recognition of the 40th anniversaries of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, will cause people to think again about the threat of nuclear weapons, and to realise that we cannot tolerate living in a world where any of us could be vaporised, turned into a shadow, at the press of a button. For that is the truth the politicians try to hide from us, when they insist that all they want is peace, and that nuclear weapons are only there as deterrents.



BRAVE DEFENDER - TRAINING TO DEFEND THE DEAD

From September 2nd - 13th Mr Heseltine, Minister for Defence, will be singing the praises of the 65,000 troops taking part in the Home Defence exercise, "Brave Defender".

During the exercise, regular troops and reservists will pretend to defend vital installations (ports and airfields etc) against a supposed conventional attack from Soviet saboteurs called "Spetsnatz".

The exercise represents a remarkable turnaround in what the Government and the Home Office believe is the greatest threat to Britain. In 1977 it thought that nuclear war was the most probable threat if war broke out between East and West. But now it claims that a conventional attack is most likely and that escalation to nuclear war would not necessarily happen. Exercise Brave Defender is based on that claim.

However, just like all the Civil Defence exercises, Brave Defender is a sophisticated con-trick designed to lull the people of Britain into a false feeling of security. It is designed to deceive people into thinking that if we are ready for war, then war is less likely. Moreover it is designed to deceive people into thinking that there is no link between conventional war and nuclear war.

The truth is that if Britain was attacked it would not just be our conventional targets that would be hit, but also our nuclear installations. Facilities providing the military chain of command in Britain are the same for both conventional and nuclear weapons. There would be no selective attack on conventional weapons. Our nuclear bases, power stations and submarines would all be priority targets in any attack and if this did happen, enormous pressure would be brought to bear on nuclear weapons controllers to "use them or lose 'em". Conventional warfare is now inextricably linked to nuclear warfare.

If any nation decided to attack Britain they would automatically attack our nuclear weapons systems, as they are

our fiercest weapons. The Government has repeatedly refused to adopt a policy of "no first use" of nuclear weapons, and therefore we must assume that it would use its nuclear weapons rather than see them destroyed.

If this were to happen not only would Britain be guilty of killing millions of innocent men, women and children, but in retaliation millions of British people would be killed and poisoned as a result.

For the sake of what?

Preparing for conventional war can no longer be distinguished from preparing for nuclear war. There are no winners in a nuclear war. Almost everything will be destroyed and civilisation as we know it will be no more.

Is this defence? Does this protect us? If our system of defence is such that when we use it we destroy over half our own population, who are we defending? Our system of defence will inevitably kill our own people as well as millions of others. Yet our Government is prepared to carry out this system of defence. It is prepared to kill over half the British people.

The only solution to avoid this disaster is for countries to dismantle their nuclear weapons and avoid war. As long as we possess nuclear weapons other nations will aim their nuclear weapons at us. As long as we possess nuclear weapons we live under the constant threat of nuclear war - a war with no winners, only victims. A war that defends nothing but destroys everything.

Exercise "Brave Defender" is not just a military exercise to prepare for a conventional attack by an enemy. It is an exercise which would inevitably lead to full-scale war and nuclear war/nuclear suicide. It is an exercise which further demonstrates the Government's reliance on and readiness to use nuclear weapons and that it is increasingly determined to test and rehearse its nuclear capability. In doing so it increases its commitment to use nuclear weapons, and makes nuclear war more likely.

We must make sure this never happens.

NON - VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

The peace movement is now strong and established in Britain, and growing all the time. Through marches and demonstrations, public meetings, leaflets, posters and the hard work of many individuals it is gradually re-educating people and creating an awareness that there are alternatives to weapons of mass destruction, and that our present policies can lead only to a nuclear holocaust, and must be reversed.

Part of that movement now expresses itself through Non-Violent Direct Action (NVDA), yet it remains doubtful that this form of activity is fully understood, and indeed it is likely to provoke criticism, or even outright condemnation. In many cases, it is perhaps the lack of understanding that provokes such reactions.

Such activity is termed 'non-violent' because those involved are peacefully rejecting violent confrontation - rejecting action designed to physically injure or intimidate people, including those opposing the activity, for example the police force or the military. It is termed 'direct action' because it is based upon the assumption that it is not enough simply to campaign for nuclear disarmament and a peaceful world. Rather those involved see the threat posed by nuclear weapons and the policies of nuclear states such as Britain to be so great that individuals are justified in acting directly to oppose and resist those policies. Therefore, those involved in NVDA are prepared to defy peacefully the laws of the land where they see those laws acting to prevent or nullify their direct resistance to nuclear weapons and the nuclear arms race, to the bases deploying such weapons, the roads used to transport them, the security fences used to protect them and so on.

Such direct protest is not new. Large scale modern examples of such peaceful resistance can be found in Gandhi's India, or in the methods used by Martin Luther King and his supporters in pursuit of civil rights for black Americans in the 60's. In both instances people believed that what they opposed was so wrong that they could no longer sit back and wait or pray for change, but instead were compelled to act in pursuit of their aims and objectives. In many cases they were prepared to defy laws because they recognised those laws were being used to protect the injustices they sought to end. They were not ashamed of their actions, and were prepared to suffer the punishments they provoked.

Many peace protestors now feel compelled to take similar direct action because they see a world containing nuclear weapons capable of destroying civilisation many times over, of causing a Hiroshima in every city of Britain. Despite all the promises of peace and disarmament, there has been no disarmament, only more weapons of increasingly destructive potential. They have concluded that it is no longer right, practically or morally, to sit back and hope things will change. Some direct action was evident in the peace movement in the late 50's and early 60's. It's resurgence, as that of the peace movement generally, perhaps dates from 1979, when the decision to deploy U.S. Cruise missiles in Britain was taken. For many that was the last straw, and since then Cruise missiles have come to Greeham Common and are intended for Molesworth, the British Government intends to produce and deploy the Trident missile system and the nuclear arms race extends into space with the U.S. Star Wars plan.

NVDA can include many activities - entering nuclear bases, occupying buildings connected to the nuclear state, blockading relevant roads or buildings, damaging fences or machinery connected to those bases and so on. Obviously it can involve 'breaking laws' - being charged with criminal damage, obstruction, behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace and so on. Where such laws do not exist, the government has acted to create them - hence the 1892 Military Lands Act was used to make entering the Molesworth and Greeham Common bases a criminal offence, where before it was not. Many protestors have already been fined or imprisoned for such activities - in Nottingham numerous protestors have been sent to prison for non-payment of fines arising from non-violent direct action.

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The government, the police & the courts insist that those engaged in such protest are law-breakers and must be treated accordingly. Those involved believe their actions are justified and made necessary by the extremity of the threat of nuclear weapons. They believe that the government's condemnation is based upon total hypocrisy - that, in deploying weapons of mass destruction and being openly prepared to use them, of escalating the nuclear arms race (through Cruise and Trident), and in blocking any real moves towards nuclear disarmament, the government acts in defiance of International Law, and in defiance of any sane or moral standards of behaviour. The same government that insists on respect for law and order continues to pursue policies that could lead to genocide.

*So as far as non-violent direct action is concerned, the crucial question becomes not whether or not it is right to break the law, but rather, "can it be right to passively accept policies that lead us towards a nuclear holocaust?"

"Each person involved in the peace movement finds an answer to that question. My own answer is "No", and that is why I engage in NVDA, and will continue to do so. I know that it means that I, like others, am defined as a 'law-breaker', but if I look through the perimeter fence at Molesworth, protected from me so that it can be turned into a U.S. Cruise missile base, capable of killing millions of people, I cannot believe I am breaking the law when I ignore that fence, or defy those guarding it. On the contrary, if I did not oppose that directly, I would not be able to look into my children's eyes.

Those of us involved in NVDA believe that we can change things, we can reverse the policies that have led us to the very edge of the nuclear precipice, but only if we act now, in defence of our lives, and of our children's lives. The real criminals are those who create and maintain that terrible threat. Laws should exist to protect us. When they exist only to protect the means to our destruction they should be ignored and defied.

The National Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has organised a demonstration to take place on Saturday 26th October in London. The theme for the day will be "Human Race or the Arms Race".

The demonstration will assemble at the south end of Hyde Park and march out along its west side to the Russian Embassy.

Following Bayswater Road along the north side of Hyde Park, the march will turn down Park Lane and towards Grosvenor Square passing the American Embassy and returning to Hyde Park for a short final rally.

There have been ideas for activities but no firm decisions have been made as yet. Watch this space for further details.

Nottingham CND have organised transport down to London and tickets are available from Mushroom, Ouroboros, Hiziki and Nottingham CND costing 10 waged or 6 unwaged.

We'll have our own caterers on the trains. Departure times aren't available yet.

Please buy your tickets early.

TOGETHER WE CAN STOP THE BOMB



GREENHAM COMMON PERSPECTIVES

"When the bomb drops most of you will die instantly. We will be ordered to shoot the ones who don't and put the bodies in black plastic bags, and throw them in ditches. Then we'll die ourselves"

British soldier to Greenham women,
quoted in West Midlands CND newsletter.

"It was a powerful embrace of the love and joy that those 40,000 women have in life and in creative, positive living. It was to symbolise our belief that we can live our lives without the tactics of terror. The air base is a very sinister place.... Our protest was open and honest by comparison."

Louise from "Outwards from Greenham like a Web".

"Greenham Women's Peace Camps have been a beacon of light in the dark times to millions over the world. Don't let that light go out."

Greenham Women Jane T. from Bradford-on-Avon Peace Action, letter in Sanity, May 1985.

"Men accuse women of being emotional about the nuclear menace. I came here because of the little girl who took nine hours dying in her mother's arms in Nagasaki, her skin hanging off, saying "Mama, I'm cold", and because of the napalmed girl running down the road in Vietnam. I need no other reasons, and those seem to me quite logical".

Grandmother at Greenham quoted by Jill Tweedie in the Guardian.

"I came here because I want to show my anger and my love: my anger at those politicians and military planners who assume the right to destroy this planet in their pursuit of more power; my love for life, my love for nature which the politicians prefer to ignore."

Kate, mother of three children, at Greenham Common, May 1983.

BALLOONS FOR BASES: LET THE BASES GO

Many of you would have read about U.S. bases in this country like Alconbury, Molesworth and Greenham Common. To some of you, they're meaningless names. But what of places like RAF Newton and Chilwell Army Depot? Both of them are in our county of Nottinghamshire.

Recently, RAF Newton was the subject of a demonstration after it was discovered that there would be a hospital there for the use of American personnel in war-time and at the same time one and a half miles away, Saxondale Hospital was being closed down because of cuts in the NHS.

The Army Depot at Chilwell was the site of the largest direct action protest in Nottingham last year to demonstrate the fierce opposition to the decision to lease part of the depot to the United States Air Force.

There are now 135 U.S. bases in Britain. Chilwell is the first of 64 new sites to be acquired by the USAF.

In protest against this, a group of Nottingham women including some from the Forest Fields Peace Group held a demonstration at USAF Chilwell on Thursday August 1st.

The theme of the protest was

"Balloons for Bases: Let the Bases Go"

135 pink balloons were displayed, each representing one of the 135 USAF bases in Britain. The balloon bases were blowing in the wind outside USAF Chilwell as a reminder to the rush-hour traffic, the media and the protestors of the combined nuclear threat embodied in these bases. The balloons were released, symbolising the freeing of Britain from the American warmongering threat.

Two women from FFPG got into the base and as trespass is not yet a criminal offence at Chilwell, they were not arrested or charged.

British sovereignty is completely undermined by the presence of U.S. troops, missiles and bases in this country. That is why the peace movement calls for

U.S TROOPS OUT OF CHILWELL
U.S TROOPS OUT OF BRITAIN.

"YES.....BUT WE NEED NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO PROTECT US !"

How many times have you heard that ? Perhaps you have said it, because, ever since the 1945 Labour Government decided, secretly, to make nuclear weapons, we have been conditioned by every government, Labour and Conservative, to believe that nuclear weapons are essential to the defence of Britain.

It is not true, and it never has been. A crude, cruel trick has been played on the ordinary people of this country. And it has made Britain a dangerous country to live in, permanently threatened by a nuclear war that would destroy us all, while those who play the trick hide in their bunkers and survive.

Britain became a nuclear power after the Second World War not to increase our security, but to contribute to the Cold War, as a stage in the formation of an American-dominated alliance (NATO). Far from creating a peaceful world, this Cold War has allowed the two Superpowers, the USA & USSR, to dominate and exploit the rest of the world, and to tightly control other such as Britain, through the two alliances they command :- the Warsaw Pact & NATO.

In this Britain was allowed to maintain the illusion that it was still a great world power, our military leadership was assured of continuing power and influence, and the arms manufacturers of this country (as America) were guaranteed vast profits. And when they were eventually told what was happening, the British people were conditioned into passive acceptance because the alternative was supposed to be instant invasion by red hordes from Russia.

Look what has happened -

1. Britain has become a militarised American battlefield, with 143 US bases, many with stockpiled nuclear weapons. That American take-over has reached new heights with the installation of US-controlled Cruise missiles at Greenham Common (with more planned for Molesworth).
2. This has made us a frontline target in any nuclear confrontation. Every one of the 143 US bases and every nuclear weapon has increased the threat to the USSR. In the event of a conflict between the superpowers, Britain could only be turned into a nuclear wasteland.
3. We remain an active member of NATO, an American - controlled alliance that, under the pretence of defence, exploits large parts of the world and actively promotes the continued escalation of a nuclear arms race that threatens the whole planet.
4. We continue to work not towards disarmament, but further escalation of the nuclear arms race. Even now our government prepares to spend at least £11 billion on the Trident missile system, a fast first strike nuclear weapon far more powerful and destructive than the Polaris system it is supposed to replace, with an explosive power equal to up to 20,000 HIROSHIMAS (Polaris carries the equivalent of 2,000)

Instead of protecting us, nuclear weapons have brought us to the edge of nuclear war - a nuclear war our pathetic civil defence programme can offer us no protection from. Instead of peace, the NATO and Warsaw Pact alliances have provoked many wars since 1945 (and over 21 million deaths). Instead of disarmament, our policies have contributed to an insane nuclear arms race that continues to escalate - as the American Star Wars plan illustrates. And of course, such policies can only encourage other nations to join in - by the year 2000, Pakistan, Argentina, Brazil, Taiwan, Iraq, Iran, Libya, South Korea, Nigeria and Chile may all have the Bomb. What price peace then? And, as this happens, we pour our wealth and resources into weapons of mass destruction and our country gets poorer - with mass unemployment, inadequate housing and a crumbling welfare state.

This is what nuclear weapons have given Britain. If we did not have them we could develop a sensible, non-aggressive non-nuclear defence, as many other countries have done. Our security would in any case be greatly enhanced - without nuclear weapons, without the 143 US bases, and outside of NATO, we would cease to be a threat to world peace, and a primary target in any nuclear conflict. We would be free to counter the nuclear arms race, and to support other countries determined to no longer be controlled by the two superpowers, USA & USSR, or to be a part of their aggression. We would be free to develop a new role for Britain, as a civilised nation working towards peace and disarmament - how can we survive if no country is prepared to do that, and reject the politics of mass destruction?

And in our own country we could begin to use our wealth and resources not to build and buy weapons of mass destruction, but to rebuild our crumbling economy and provide the schools, hospitals and houses we need to create a country fit for our children to grow up in, rather than one where their lives are permanently threatened by instant nuclear annihilation.

Our Government has chosen a policy for you : but which one will you choose ?

TARMAC PROFITS FROM GENOCIDE BASES

In June this year the Tarmac Construction Corporation in Nottingham was picketed to highlight their involvement in the nuclear arms race.

Their profits from genocide reach back to the building of the silos at USAF Greenham Common which will house 96 Cruise missiles, enough destructive power to kill over 300 million men, women and children.

At Aldermaston, Tarmac are building a "Trident complex" costing £11.5 million. This complex will be used to process plutonium for the Trident nuclear missile system, the most destructive weapon ever invented.

Even now at USAF Molesworth, the roads to carry cruise missile launcher vehicles are being laid by Tarmac and at the same time they are competing for the contract to construct the silos there to house another 64 cruise missiles.

Tarmac have defended their involvement in the arms race by saying;

"Politics is not the concern of construction workers, politics should be left to the politicians"

An interesting statement considering the Tarmac Corporation donated over £20,000 to Conservative party funds last year.

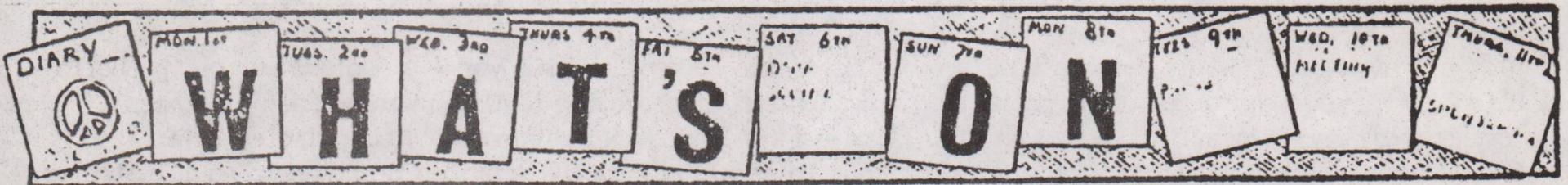
Politics should not just be the concern of construction workers, but the concern of everybody. Decisions made in London affect our everyday lives. We should be concerned.

Companies have refused to handle contracts directly linked with the arms race.

Tarmac should do the same. But until such time as it does, groups like the Forest Fields Peace Group will continue to highlight its involvement.

The Nottingham Peace Action Network has organised a demonstration in Nottingham to protest at Tarmac's participation. The fence at the construction site in the Old Market Square will be decorated with ribbons, balloons, banners, etc. And at the same time leaflets will be given out to the public explaining Tarmac's involvement in the nuclear arms race and how it profits from bases of genocide.

The demonstration will start at 11am on Saturday 7th September. For more information contact Peace Action Network on 581948.



September

- Monday 2nd - Peace Action Network meeting. 7.30pm. NCND office (581948)
- Saturday 7th - Tarmac demonstration. 11am, Old Market Square. Contact PAN (581948)
- Monday 9th - Forest Fields Peace Group meeting. 7.30pm 69 Wiverton Road.
- Thursday 19th - Jaz and Colin at court for obstructing a police officer at RAF Newton. Shirehall, High Pavement. 2.30pm
- Saturday 21st - Nottingham Peace Conference at Victoria Leisure Centre. Contact Nottingham CND 581948
- Thursday 26th - Forest Fields Peace Group meeting with Dave giving a talk on "Russia and the Independent Peace Movement". 7.30pm 69 Wiverton Road.

OCTOBER 26TH : NATIONAL CND DEMONSTRATION IN LONDON. TICKETS TO LONDON FROM NOTTINGHAM CND
£10 waged £6 unwaged.

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