

TOGETHER WE CAN
STOP THE BOMB

FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

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"R.A.F." NEWTON, JUNE 1985

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Photo : Mark Salmon

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GREENHAM WOMEN THWART NATO

The nuclear state is powerful and ruthless: individual human beings are tiny, fragile, vulnerable. Confronted by the vast power of the nuclear state, a person can easily feel that there is no point in trying to act against the terrible, real threat of nuclear holocaust created for all of us by the ever-spiralling nuclear arms race.

The women's peace camp at Greenham Common has for four years provided a living, vital symbol of resistance to that insane nuclear arms race. Similarly it has represented a refusal to sit back and passively accept what is happening in our country. The women at Greenham Common have been, and remain, prepared to confront the nuclear state, and all its awesome, inhuman power.

They have refused to be defeated or driven off. Four years on, and there are Cruise missiles at Greenham Common: but they are there as enemy missiles, unwanted by the ordinary people of Britain. And the Greenham Women are still there too - despite the persistent verbal and physical abuse from police, army and courts, and the persistent attempts by the reactionary press to vilify

them, and the Government's determined effort to persecute and prosecute them. And while they remain at Greenham Common, so the spirit of peace and life also remains, right there beside the genocide base.

The Ministry of Defence has consistently denied the Greenham Women's effect and influence: but the Ministry of Defence, like George Orwell's 'Ministry of Truth' is concerned not with truth but with telling us what it wants us to believe. (Perhaps that is why it changed its name from, "The War Office"). On August 25th, 1985, it was confirmed that the US NATO Commander for Europe has publicly acknowledged (in a magazine article) that the Greenham Peace Camp has 'adversely' effected the deployment of Cruise missiles - in particular peaceful resistance has limited the number of Cruise convoys from the base, and also influenced the times at which they enter and leave the base.

If a tiny handful of peaceful women can directly effect the ruthless NATO war-planners, what could we all achieve if we showed their courage and love?

Les Parsons. Forest Fields Peace Group.

SHADOWS OVER NOTTINGHAM

On August 6th, the 40th anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima, the peace movement in Nottingham, including many members of Forest Fields Peace Group, participated in the International Shadow Project. The Project, deliberately peaceful and non-criminal remembered those who, unsuspecting, were close to the centre of the nuclear explosion. Such was the blast heat that they were literally vaporised. Nothing was left but a 'shadow' outline on the street where seconds before there was a human being, flesh and blood like us. In painting shadow outlines of human forms, The Project conveyed the horror of that death in communities across the world, and reminded us all that a similar fate awaits us unless we act to end the terrible threat of nuclear war.

In Nottingham that peaceful, serious protest brought a harsh and punitive police response. 11 people were arrested. They were detained for up to 14 hours in bare cells with no facilities. Most were verbally abused: some were physically abused. A dossier of accounts of their experience in police custody was drawn up and made public. It has provoked a sense of

outrage in Nottingham. Many councillors have spoken up in support of those detained. Nottinghamshire police have been forced to conduct an investigation into the complaints. The new Police Complaints Authority have decided to oversee this investigation, because of its serious nature.

Now, 10 of the 11 arrested are to appear in court on October 2nd. 8 were not summonsed until after the dossier was made public and the police investigation initiated. The police want the court to bind them over to keep the peace. Their "crime", in the police's view? That their involvement in the Shadow Project on August 6th was "a disturbance amounting to a breach of the peace" !

Over the past months FFPG Newsletter has drawn attention to the erosion of civil liberties and the increasingly harsh policing methods being used to deter protest against nuclear weapons in GB. We await with interest and concern the outcome of the court case on October 2nd.

We will report fully on that case, and its implications in our next issue: and present the responses of our local elected representatives to the whole affair.

TREATMENT NOT TRIDENT

A major new campaign of opposition to the Trident nuclear missile system has been launched by more than 3,000 GP's, hospital doctors, and health workers, members of the Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons (MCANW). "Treatment Not Trident" will be the theme of the campaign. In the next six months hundreds of thousands of patients will be given leaflets demanding that Trident be scrapped, and the estimated £11 billion cost be used instead to make necessary improvements in health services by :-

1. Alleviating child poverty
2. Buying kidney machines
3. Improving care for the elderly
4. Setting up a cervical cancer screening service for women.

This will be the first time that a large chunk of the medical profession has taken political action on nuclear weapons. Significantly MCANW includes in its membership three Nobel prize winners, and over 30 Professors of Medicine. Their campaign against Trident has been launched by Sir Douglas Black, former President of the British Medical Association. It is important and courageous that so many members of such a respected profession are prepared to take up such a political stance but in reality they are merely performing their real task, as workers concerned with the health of the community. As the Chair person of MCANW, Dr. Stephen Farrow, has said of the new campaign :-

"Patients will be given a little preventive medicine. Some will not welcome it, but we feel that now is the time to confront them with unwelcome facts."

It is those "unwelcome facts" that make it no surprise to see doctors and other health workers launching the "Treatment Not Trident" campaign. For as the British Government prepares to pour even more of our money into the insane nuclear arms race, we are witnessing the gradual breakdown of our National Health Service. Five doctors, in an open letter summed up the situation recently :-

"Our daily experiences of working in widely differing backgrounds in hospital and community practice tell the same story - inadequate funding ; cuts in facilities ; lengthening waiting lists ; strain on NHS staff trying bravely to meet diminishing increasing burdens with diminishing resources."

That is the reality of Thatcherite Britain. As the NHS cracks under the strain of underfunding, it is no surprise to realise that expenditure on defence has increased in real terms by more than three per cent per annum between 1979/80 and 1984/85. The "Treatment Not Trident" campaign draws attention to the growing imbalance of national priorities between health and defence. Our government's insistence on going ahead with Trident despite so much opposition reveals how little value they place on human life.

Again, the five doctors sum this up :-

"The allocation of government public spending reflects the whole sense of political priorities of our society, which can at present be expressed by noting that we are prepared to spend upwards of £11 billion on the Trident missile system while being unable to find £60 million to prevent unnecessary deaths from renal failure."

Far from contributing to the security of this country the unforgivable waste of money on Trident increases the risk of nuclear attack on Britain, and can play no part in any rational defence plan. Claims that it is a simple replacement for Polaris, for example, are simply not true. Trident is likely to escalate between 8 and 17 times over Polaris the number of targets attackable. It is also much more accurate, and therefore a much greater threat to Russia. Like Polaris, Trident will be assigned to NATO except in cases of extreme national necessity. Its accuracy would enable it to destroy 'hardened' targets, such as Soviet command centres and missile silos, and it will be targeted accordingly in NATO (American) strategic plans.

It will therefore make Britain, and especially Trident's Clyde bases, amongst the most threatening areas of the world in any nuclear war - and thus one of first places to be attacked.

Trident is there for one reason only - to fight nuclear war. In the words of a former Trident missile designer, Robert Aldridge, it is, "The ultimate first strike nuclear weapon".

TREATMENT OR TRIDENT ?

It's our choice.

STOP THE AIR FAIR

What a great feeling
Driving in through the gates
Paying money to enter
Wonder if we'll do that again?
It felt like a film
Not drawing attention to friends
Ignoring them with knowing smiles

Out came the leaflets
Moving fast among the intent crowds
Watching the noisy displays of war machines
Taking gratefully the unofficial programme
Not long after
Having had no antagonism
A few "Oh, it's CND" that's all
Came the hand on the shoulder
"What are you doing?"

The short, grey-haired plain clothes copper
Getting unnecessarily aggressive
Showed us his card and
Was holding our arms
About to lead us away when.....

Along came a MOD plod
Clean shaven, bouncy and smiling
Come on girls, stop giving them out
And be on your way
You could do that outside you know
He followed us for a little while
And a mate took over from him
Once we had an American
Who wore dark shades
And chewed gum
I took a picture of him

Made it to the meeting point
Seeing but not speaking to others
Just bent down to say
I had decided to stay out of trouble

Another hand on my shoulder
Come with me please
I said "This isn't fair"
I'd finished my bit
Had done no more
Not good enough
Do you want the easy way or the hard way?
Easiest to be carried surely
(Sore arms next day)
Through the crowd they dragged four women
In skirts: knickers not aeroplanes on show
"Mind your backs, get out of the way"
They created more interest

Friends followed handing leaflets
To people staring in wonderment
This is supposed to be a free country
And they arrest people
For giving out leaflets?

Some were arrested
Some were released
Total chaos took over
40 were detained
Held for 5 - 9 hours
In various squash courts

Generous this time
Coffee and even biscuits
Must remember to bring tea-bags next time

MOD and protestors agreed
It was a waste of everybody's time
But that's the trouble with having a gaffer
Who makes the rules to suit himself
Still it went very quickly
Met some new people
Renewed old acquaintances
On both "sides" of the game

We'll be back soon
Maybe not looking so smart
But they still know us and will expect us.

BARBARA.

magistrate sacked

A Magistrate has been dismissed from the bench by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, for having the courage to protest and tell the truth about the Government's nuclear war planning.

The magistrate, Kathleen Cripps, took part in a demonstration outside her court in Derbyshire last year, in support of a Greenham Common woman. She carried a banner proclaiming :-
" Say No To Illegal State Policy."

She was dismissed for this and no other reason. A High Court judge has upheld the dismissal, and ruled that she should pay court costs of appeal - £3,000. Kathleen Cripps earns about £4,000 a year. After the ruling she said :-

" I always thought that a magistrate had the rights of a normal individual. I entered the magistracy in 1980 as a representative of ordinary people."

Unfortunately the nuclear state has no concern for the rights of ordinary people. Kathleen Cripps has been sacked not for legal but political reasons, and for telling the truth. The British Government's nuclear war planning breaks both International Law and our own Genocide Act. Let us hope that more magistrates are prepared to tell the truth and act on it.

"THEY'D NEVER USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS"

A myth that must be exposed

Some people have voiced the opinion that although they think having nuclear weapons is wrong, they don't think they'll ever be used. Some people argue this on the basis of their religious beliefs. Others, that since everyone knows the devastating effects of nuclear weapons, no-one will be foolish enough to use them. Others again convince themselves that they will never be used as a means of coping with the frightening reality of nuclear war.

These arguments seldom take account of the fact that the Superpowers are investing huge amounts of money in developing new weapons which are not for use in retaliation, but which are designed to be used first, before the other side uses its weapons. Trident, Cruise, Pershing, Star Wars and the Soviet SS-20s and SS-22s are all part of a "first-strike capability". We can be sure that the huge expense of such weapon systems means that the Superpowers do foresee circumstances when it would be "necessary" to use them. We can be sure that the Superpowers are prepared to kill millions of innocent people.

Further evidence of this comes with recent revelations that ex-U.S. President Richard Nixon "seriously considered" using nuclear weapons four times during his 1969-74 term of office.

The "nuclear option" was on the cards in Vietnam in 1969, a possible Sino-Soviet conflict, the Indo-Pakistan War in 1971 and the 1973 "Yom Kippur" war.

On the last occasion he put U.S. forces on a world-wide nuclear alert. President Sadat of Egypt had requested Soviet leader Brezhnev to send nuclear missiles to be stationed in the Sinai desert, in response to the Israeli deployment of Jericho-1 nuclear missiles in the Negev region.

"We could not allow Israel to go down the tube" or "allow the Soviets to have a predominant position in the region", said Nixon

What is clear from this is that world leaders are prepared to use nuclear weapons. Britain sent a nuclear submarine to the South Atlantic during the Falklands War. The Government has refused to confirm or deny whether it was carrying nuclear missiles but military experts insist that it must have been carrying them on board, that our nuclear submarines are fully operational when at sea. Had Britain ever been in danger of losing the war, we must assume that Mrs Thatcher and the War Cabinet would have seriously considered using its nuclear weapons.

A further lesson from this is that the Superpowers and their allies are prepared to use their nuclear weapons not just when they feel they are under threat themselves. They are prepared to use their nuclear weapons in the conflicts of other nations, as part of their determined efforts to achieve global superiority and deny their enemies access to world resources.

We would all like to think that nuclear weapons will be never be used, but to believe so now is to create an illusion, a fantasy. The reality is that if we are to be assured that nuclear weapons will never be used we must see that they are dismantled and we must oppose the foreign and military policies of all nations who assume the right of interfering, exploiting and dominating the internal affairs of other nations.

The nuclear threat is real and it is now. Pretending that there is no threat is being blind to the facts. The only way to dispose of this threat is for us to open our eyes to the horrendous consequences of nuclear war and for us all to take positive action against those nations which continue to threaten other nations with nuclear weapons.

Nuclear weapons are the threat. Foreign and military policies of the Superpowers and their allies are the cause.

OPPOSE THEM BOTH.

"R.A.F." NEWTON

On June 30th, 1985, peace activists in Nottingham organised a protest at 'RAF' Newton. There was good reason for the protest. The base, 10 miles East of Nottingham, is nominally under British control : but in times of raised international tension or war it would come under American military control.

The protest was a means of drawing public attention to this, and to the planned role of Newton as a 500 bed contingency hospital, one of 40 across Europe, and intended for exclusive wartime use by American casualties. The theme of the protest was "Welfare not Warfare", and attention was drawn to the ugly irony of the plans for Newton, at a time of increased cuts in our own National Health Service, highlighted locally by the imminent closure of Saxondale Hospital, close to 'RAF' Newton.

As so often in the last few years, it has been left to the peace movement to draw attention to this state of affairs. The government and in particular the ministry of defence have persisted in trying to conceal as much as possible from the ordinary people of this country about nuclear war planning, nuclear weapons, American bases in Britain, and the reality behind the fraudulent civil defence planning in existence.

Locally this veil of denial and secrecy was well illustrated during the controversy over the Chilwell base in Nottingham. The peace movement's claims that it was to be taken over by the Americans, and thus become one more part of their military network in Britain were initially denied. They are there now. The denials have ceased, but there is still evasion as to the precise nature of the American involvement at Chilwell. Public concern remains high, and this is not surprising. - in the last few weeks busloads of American servicemen have been seen entering and leaving the Chilwell base. And the peace movement in

Nottingham will continue to focus on this clandestine development of yet another US base in this country.

And so with Newton. Following the strong and successful day of protest in June, base personnel were quick to claim that there were no such plans for a hospital at Newton, and to deny all knowledge of American control in times of international tension or war.

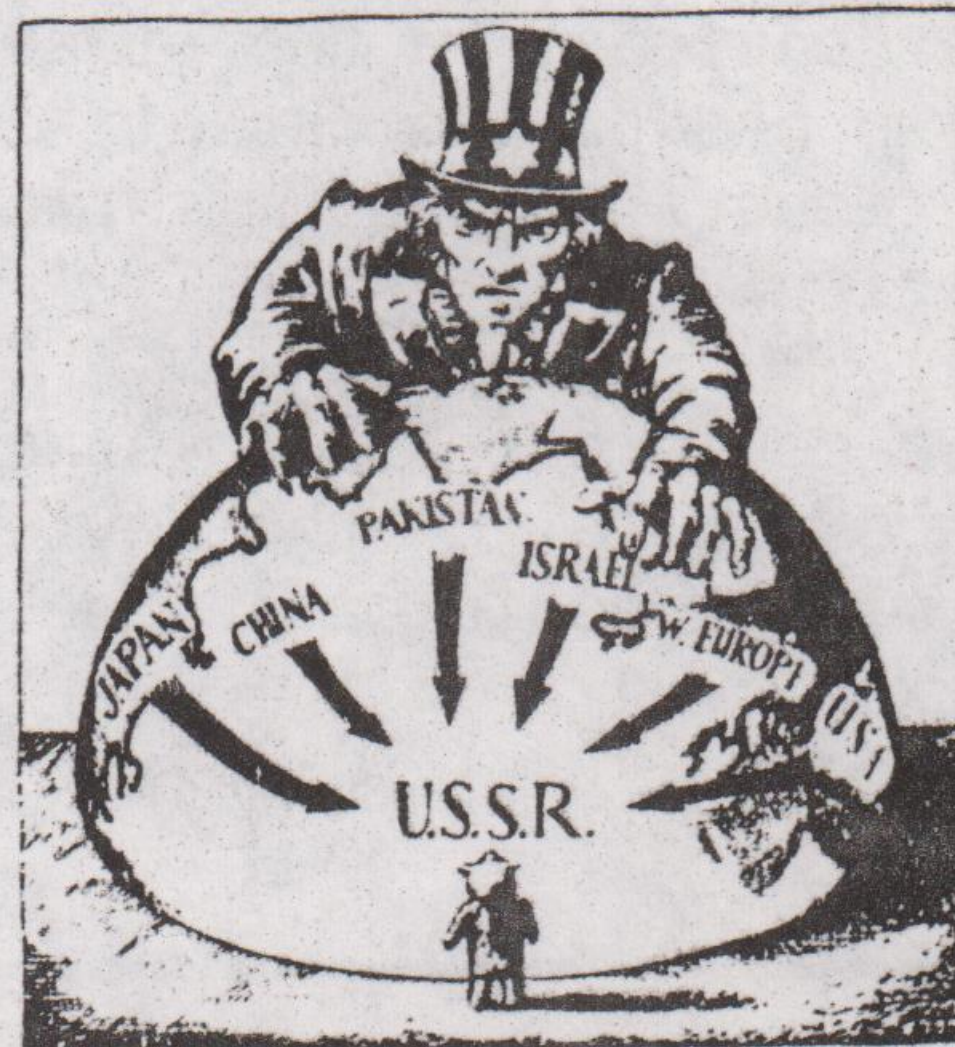
Such denials are not enough: they fail to convince, particularly in the light of the Chilwell experience. Information about Newton, and similar bases, was made public in Duncan Campbell's detailed and frightening book, "War Plan UK." Since publication, and despite much rhetorical condemnation, it's revelations concerning NATO and British war planning have not been officially challenged by the Government. More recently the same journalist has revealed in, "The New Statesman" government contingency plans (drawn up in secret) for war-time control that would involve virtual eradication of parliamentary democracy, and an active role for American servicemen in the controlling of Britain.

The peace movement would be happy if the claims about the role of Newton were not true. If Duncan Campbell's evidence is ill-founded, let that be challenged and exposed, piece by piece. Perhaps our local MP's can take the lead in demanding accurate information from the Ministry of Defence about the precise role of Newton. That has not happened so far. Until it does, 'RAF' Newton will remain a matter for public concern, in a country where the efforts of the peace movement and a few brave journalists have forced our government to regularly increase the number of US bases and military installations they concede exist in this country.



The risks of disarmament are as nothing compared to the risks of doing nothing, to sitting on your hands.

Former US President
Dwight Eisenhower



WHAT DO WE TELL OUR CHILDREN ?

An article in the September edition of "Sanity", the CND monthly magazine, asked the sensitive and often painful question of how we can best support and comfort our children growing up in the knowledge of the threat of nuclear war. The article used as references research work undertaken amongst children in Britain, United States, Soviet Union, Sweden, Canada and Finland. Its conclusion is that we may be causing quite severe psychological damage on our children if we do not try to openly discuss the nuclear threat.

What does it mean for a child to grow up in a society threatened by nuclear war? And how can we help children to cope in this situation? The questions are painful ones for adults to contemplate. We lovingly protect our children from harm and read them stories with a happy ending. Yet by the age of six many children have learned from the media that "the world may blow up". Vivid and disturbing images of nuclear destruction may trouble them from an early age.

This awareness is more widespread amongst children and creates deeper anxiety than many adults realise.

Many parents, when asked questions about nuclear war will try to defuse their children's anxiety by using psychological mechanisms: denial (there's no need to think about it), resignation (if it happens, it happens), or distraction (let's talk about this instead). These may be useful protective functions for some individuals in some situations. Yet the long term effect of such psychological mechanisms may serve only to delay the frightening reality of the nuclear threat and cause severe personal and relationship difficulties between children and their parents.

Children may feel conspired against by having such important information withheld from them. They may feel a sudden paralysing anxiety which causes them to cease to trust those who love them.

Research also shows in any case that children who are carefully told about the nuclear threat are more likely to deal with their anxiety in a positive setting. Young people who are sensitively taught about

nuclear war are much more likely to believe that they can help to prevent it than those who never have it mentioned to them. This seems to be crucial not only in helping some children to cope with their anxiety, but also in trying to prevent them from feeling helpless and fatalistic in the face of the threat.

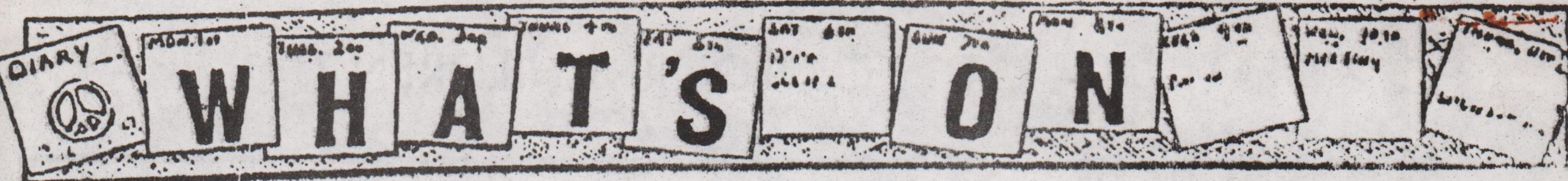
Many parents and teenagers have never discussed nuclear war together. The silence is understandable. Parents may want to avoid creating or increasing anxiety in their children. They may feel that they cannot discuss the issue honestly because they cannot truthfully reassure their children. But to young people this may seem like lack of concern. Simply providing opportunities for discussion at home and at school may give young people the support they need.

There is also a striking need to give young people an appropriate amount of information about nuclear war and also nuclear weapon states. Young people need to know about the international and political processes involved in the arms race and the origins of the cold war. The need to have more knowledge about British, Soviet and United States foreign and defence policies and having opportunities to examine them critically is important to help them understand and to cope with the situation. They also need to understand the tendency of all governments to exaggerate and polarise differences between nation states in order to create a "devil" image of their opponents.

Without such knowledge and understanding young people will likely grow up in a state of confusion about political affairs, exacerbating feelings of helplessness, encouraging feelings of hatred and malice.

We must always be careful to explain to children the complexities of the nuclear threat at a pace and level that they will understand, but also in a way which gives hope and encouragement.

They need to be told that millions of people are working to see that nuclear war will never happen. They need to be told, they need to be encouraged - for their sake and our own.



OCTOBER

- Wednesday 2nd - Several Nottingham peace protestors in court for "breach of the peace" for painting shadows on August 6th.
Nottingham Guildhall, 10am.
- Thursday 10th - Nottingham CND Policy Making meeting. Contact CND for details (581948)
- Monday 14th - Forest Fields Peace Group meeting. 7.30pm at 69 Wiverton Road.
- Thursday 24th - Forest Fields Peace Group meeting. 7.30pm at 69 Wiverton Road with John Waller giving a talk on Nicaragua.
- Saturday 26th - National CND Demo in London. Train tickets available from Nottingham CND. Phone 581948.
HAVE YOU BOUGHT YOUR TICKET YET ?
- Thursday 31st - Colin and Jaz at court for "obstructing a police officer" at RAF Newton in June. All day trial.
Please lend your support. At the Shirehall on High Pavement at 10am.

OCTOBER 26

In October 1983 250,000 people attended a National CND demonstration in London to show their opposition to the insane spending of millions of pounds on weapons of destruction.

In June 1984 200,000 people marched from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square in London to tell Reagan, who was in Britain at the time, to take his cruise missiles with him when he left.

On October 26th this year, a demonstration organised by National CND will bring thousands and thousands of people to London to show their anger and opposition to the participation in the insane arms race by Governments including ours while millions are dying in the Third World because of the basic lack of food, water and medicine.

At a time when arms negotiations are getting nowhere, when Britain plans to spend £11,000 million on the most destructive weapon ever invented, and when the arms race is going into space people are finding themselves unable to simply sit back and say, "What can we do ?".

People from all over this country, from Europe and different parts of the world will be uniting as one to show their opposition to this insanity.

If you feel you cannot allow this madness to go any further then join us.

Nottingham CND have booked two trains to take 700 people to London on that day.

Tickets cost £10 and £6 and are available from NCND, Oureboros, Hiziki and Mushroom.

Please buy your tickets as soon as possible so NCND know how much transport they'll need and because they'll need to pay the balance for the trains a fortnight beforehand.

People are being asked to assemble at 8am at the Midland Station in Nottingham and we will be leaving from platform 6, one train at 8.29am and the other 10 mins later at 8.39am.

For further information please contact Nottingham CND on 581948.

HUMAN RACE OR THE ARMS RACE
IT'S YOUR CHOICE

DISCO

at the Italian Comm. Centre

Vivian Ave. Sherwood Rise

on Saturday 9th November - 8pm

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