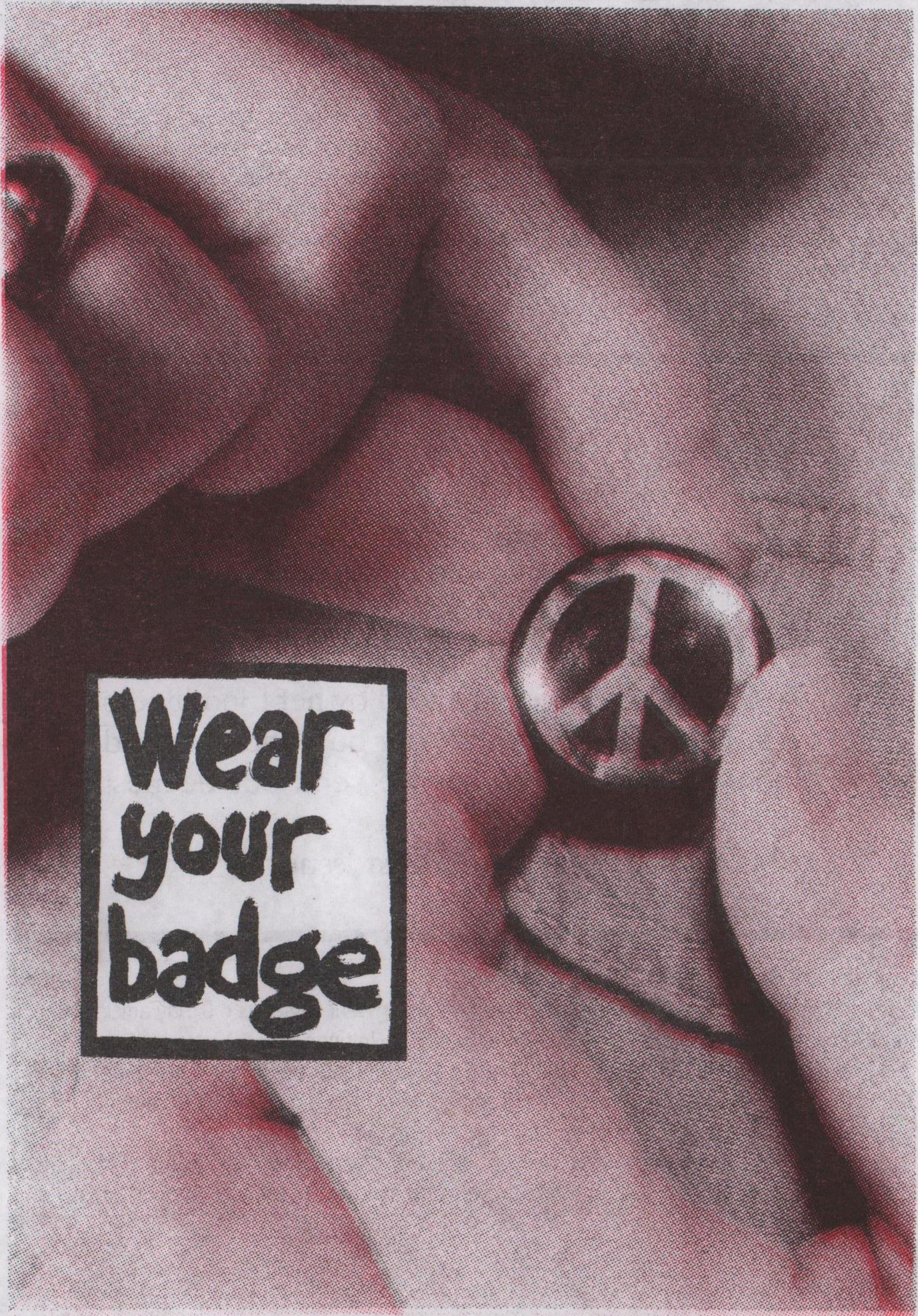




Nottingham CND

Bulletin

February 2001



Welcome to the first Bulletin of the third millennium, and the beginning of the UN International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. Apologies that, like a year ago, no Bulletin was produced for December.

A number of items of interest have been in the news since the last Bulletin. In the US, a republican has 'won' the presidential election; the incoming Defense Secretary says that defending America with a missile shield is a 'moral imperative', though he doesn't seem to attach the same moral imperative to upholding treaties (ie the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty) which America is party to. Depleted Uranium has hit the headlines – the UK government is finally going to follow most other governments by carrying out health checks on some service people, yet is continuing to insist that DU is safe whilst admitting the existence of MoD guidelines on precautions to take when handling it. They don't seem to be showing much concern for civilian populations left to live where DU has been used though. And two Trident Ploughshares activists have been found not guilty of conspiracy – as they admitted conspiracy the jury must have accepted their defence that they were acting to try to prevent a greater crime.

Mark Ramsey – Editor

PEGGY WESTAWAY

We are very sad to report the death of Peggy Westaway, late in February, after long illness. One of our longest-serving and most active members, Peggy worked for many years in Radcliffe-on-Trent Peace Group and in NCND's successive office premises, whose atmosphere was enhanced by her friendliness and wit. Peggy is survived by her husband Ivan and her three children, to whom we send our deepest condolences.

A tribute will appear in our next issue.

Nottingham CND Bulletin #2001/1

The Bulletin is produced quarterly by Nottingham CND, using Serif PagePlus 6.0. Any articles or opinions expressed within are not necessarily the policy of Nottingham CND.

The next issue of the Bulletin is due in April/May 2001. Articles (preferably on PC computer disk) or other material to be considered for inclusion should be sent to Nottingham CND at the address below or e-mailed to bulletin@nottinghamcnd.org.uk by April 1st.

Nottingham CND, Nottm Voluntary Action Centre, Sandfield House, 7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FB. Tel: 0115 9348459. enquiries@nottinghamcnd.org.uk www.nottinghamcnd.org.uk

Nottingham CND Update

Firstly I would like to wish you a very belated Happy New Year. I hope it will be a peaceful one, but with the election of George W Bush in the USA and Sharon in Israel it seems remote. To all the members and friends of Nottingham CND thank you for all your support and goodwill in 2000 and please can I rely on the same next year. We need the message of Peace and Nuclear Disarmament to get across to the people of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire as well as to the government. As always, we seem to have a steep hill ahead but we are being noticed and we do get positive responses. Every time people see our stall it shows there is an active opposition to Nuclear Weapons and the proposed National Missile Defense system. The latter is relying heavily on the agreement of Tony Blair for the go ahead to use Fylingdales as a U.S. Base, so please, if you can, write to Tony Blair and the local press. Every bit of publicity does count; this was shown positively on television when an 'Everyman' programme was devoted to Sylvia Boyes, a Quaker, a grand-

mother, and an active member of Trident Ploughshares and CND. The programme was very heartening as it showed ordinary people were prepared to go to prison because of their active opposition to Trident. It portrayed our position very favourably and was factual. It personally made me feel very proud to be part of CND and Trident Ploughshares and that we were sometimes listened to. Hopefully before long commonsense will prevail instead of the unthinkable.

Since the last Bulletin we have held our AGM (see page 5), and supported both the One World Fair and the Morning Star Bazaar which were held on the same day. It was wonderful to get so many helpers. The day went well although the One World Fair venue could have been better.

To make the Bulletin interesting and informative we need letters and support from your. Please send any articles and letters to 'Nottingham CND Bulletin' at the address opposite.

Diane Lunzer - Secretary

Future Activities

Thursday March 15th - University One World Day

As last year we have a stall at the One World Day in the Portland Building at Nottingham University. Here we have the opportunity to encourage interest and increase awareness of the issue of Trident nuclear missiles and the National Missile Defense system. This is particularly important as national CND has now got a Student CND section and it would be a progressive step to have a local branch established in Nottingham. Help is needed - even an hour of your time would be most welcome.

Saturday March 24th - CND Benefit Night with Clarion Choir and Friends

Please make every attempt to attend. We want to make this a success. Any help or advice welcome. A big thank you to Clarion Choir who have given us this opportunity.

Stall Dates for 2001 (weather permitting)

Saturdays 31 March, 21 April, 19 May, 30 June, 21 July, 4 August, 22 September, 27 October, 3 November, and Thursday 6 December.

Please make a note of these dates. As usual any volunteers most welcome. Don't be shy - ring Diane on 0115 9812034 or at the Voluntary Action Centre on 0115 9348459.

Justice ... Just in Case

There is no scientific evidence to associate the use of depleted uranium shells with adverse health effects – thus are quoted government and the military on both sides of the Atlantic.

Uranium-238 ... innocent until proven guilty.

Following concern over unknown health effects of genetically modified food ingredients, and unknown ecological effects of their cultivation, some educational authorities have adopted strictly non-GM sources. The school meals policy is described as an application of the 'Precautionary Principle'.

GM material ... guilty until proven innocent.

The 'Precautionary Principle' is a common phrase in connection with public policy. Interestingly, it appears to have no definition in law or elsewhere. We can surely agree, though, on what it means in practice: taking a course of action, erring on the side of safety, which allows for any future knowledge of the nature of risk. In many instances, it turns out that the level of risk was low: but the outcome is a safe one. One could say that caution is justified before we know all the facts. Literally: pre-caution. The results of taking the opposite approach are shown by the case of asbestos. Here the health dangers were known 'anecdotally' for a long time, but practical precautions were taken in earnest only after respected scientific proof - the delay leading to hundreds of painful, premature deaths, and, incidentally, the monetary ruin of smaller numbers of insurance underwriters on personal unlimited liability.

The two instances at the start of this piece seem to present two polar opposites: justice ('innocent until ...') on the one hand, and precautionary principle on the other – apparently the opposite of justice! A mischievous comparison, of course – because justice applies to people, and precautionary principle to things used by people. But in practice, whether one

principle or the other is invoked in a given situation isn't so clear-cut - it often seems a matter of expediency - legal or financial. The interminable official denials of risk linked to beef ('no scientifically proven risk') a decade ago would class as the wrong application of the 'justice' principle by a government and industry terrified that consumers would apply the precautionary principle.

Merely taking precautions is also sometimes avoided for fear of establishing liability later on. During the production of an intra-uterine contraceptive of the 1970's a technologist suggested improving hygiene by sealing the inner end of its tubular cord by welding instead of just knotting. Additional cost: negligible. The change was prohibited for fear that it constituted an admission that previous production was not perfect: the product was later withdrawn after serious health effects and acrimonious court action.

The latest disclosures regarding depleted uranium armour-piercing shells, as used in the Gulf War, concern analysis of dust and remains. Chemical elements are present which are not found in natural uranium ore, but are identical to those formed during the irradiation of nuclear fuel – the only other possible source of

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Nottingham CND AGM

The Nottingham CND AGM, which took place in November, was fairly well attended but I am sorry it was cold and some people felt it went on too long. We will try to rectify that next time. The people who agreed to take on specific responsibilities are:

Diane Lunzer - Secretary

John Hort - Treasurer

Margaret Tuck - Membership Secretary

Mark Ramsey - Bulletin editor and web site designer

Jeremy Jago, Maureen Maitland and Marguerite Oldham - committee members

New Nottingham CND website

Nottingham CND has leapt into the 21st Century with a new web site. You can see it now at <http://www.nottinghamcnd.org.uk>. It is not very detailed at the moment, but we plan to put more information in over time and it can show people searching on various 'Nottingham' websites that Nottingham CND is alive and well.

The site also has links to sites for other CND and peace organisations – here are some you may be interested in:

British CND

<http://www.cnduk.org>

Scottish CND

<http://ds.dial.pipex.com/cndscot/index.htm>

Yorkshire CND

<http://www.gn.apc.org/cndyorks>

West Midlands CND

<http://members.aol.com/WMCNDH/Home.htm>

Abolition 2000

<http://www.gn.apc.org/abolition2000uk>

World Court Project

<http://www.gn.apc.org/wcp>

Trident Ploughshares 2000

<http://www.gn.apc.org/tp2000>

Campaign Against Arms Trade

<http://www.caat.demon.co.uk>

Fellowship of Reconciliation, England

<http://www.gn.apc.org/fore>

GreenNet

<http://www.gn.apc.org>

Justice ... Just in Case

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depleted uranium. If fuel reprocessing were a source – and it has been officially denied – it would mean Gulf veterans and civilians had been exposed to elements including plutonium, cancer-causing yet undetectable once lodged inside the body. Official reassurances may seem to owe more to disclaiming liability than to calming fears.

Defenders of the status quo will argue that the Precautionary principle is an unsustainable strategy used alone; that it amounts to 'guilt by accusation'; that policy in the real world requires a balance

between precaution, risk, benefit and penalty. So it does: but real justice in public policy requires that the benefits of risk-taking accrue to the same people who take the risks. This is hardly ever true in practice.

So next time you hear an official statement relating to risk, that something is being done, or not done, and why ... analyse how 'justice' or 'precaution' are being applied to people, things and money. But at all costs, avoid the lazy, sitting back option – cynicism.

Jeremy Jago

Big Blockade at Faslane

Politicians and church ministers were among 379 people arrested during a protest at the home of Britain's Trident nuclear submarine fleet.

Labour MP George Galloway, Socialist MSP Tommy Sheridan and Green Party MEP Caroline Lucas were arrested during the demonstration at Faslane. Fifteen churchmen were also arrested as demonstrators launched the biggest anti-nuclear protest seen in Scotland since the early 1960s. A spokesman for Strathclyde Police said it arrested 195 women and 178 men, mainly on breach of the peace charges, while military police arrested a further six people.

The latest demonstration, which was designed to close the base for the day, began at 0700 GMT and was organised by anti-nuclear weapons group Trident Ploughshares and Scottish CND. A number of protesters formed a human chain at the north gate entrance to the base at Helensburgh and they were cheered on by crowds on either side of the main gate who waved banners of support.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Right Reverend Andrew McLellan, joined the action and took part in an ecumenical service at the protest site. Mr McLellan said: "I am here to demonstrate the Church of Scotland's long-standing opposition to nuclear weapons in general and Trident in particular. I am very impressed with the atmosphere and both the police and the protesters have been both cordial and courteous. I am not going to be arrested but some of my best friends have been."

Taken from the BBC's news web site <http://news.bbc.co.uk>, 13 Feb 2001

There was major disruption inside the base. We have heard that canteens were shut all day and that many of the 6,500 or so people who work in the base (roughly 3,500 naval personnel and 3,000 civilian workers) did not get in to work that day. Most of the workers who managed to get into the base arrived before the blockade started at 7am. The Navy have been quoted as saying that only 200 people were ferried into the base by boat. They used three jetties in Helensburgh and Greenock to ferry workers.

At about 10am base traffic trying to get into the north gate was sent away and told to come back at midday. Some of this traffic was sent to the fuel depot next to the base to wait and the Manchester Earth-First affinity group blockaded that entrance as well. There is no access into the base from the fuel depot so we are confident that traffic going into the fuel depot was not getting into the base.

The blockade finished at the north gate at midday and at the south gate a couple of hours later. At the south gate the blockade started very early at roughly 1.30am when a group from Faslane Peace Camp managed to get a twenty foot high tripod in place despite a large police presence. 18 people were arrested when the police started to remove the tripod but the south gate access road had not been opened by the time the sit-down blockade had started.

After the blockade had finished six people from the Belgian 'Titanic Trident' group managed to break into the base and walk down the main road inside the base, passing sailors and base personnel, before getting to the entrance of the Trident jetties where they were arrested.

Report from Scottish CND web site

NMD Campaigns

Two campaigns against the US National Missile Defense (NMD) system.

Firstly, Yorkshire CND has initiated a postcard campaign throughout the United Kingdom urging George W. Bush to back away from Star Wars. The cards are based on those produced in the US by The Global Network. One side of the card has a photo of a Star Wars protest at Fylingdales. Use the card enclosed with this bulletin or cut out the card illustration on the back pages.

This will flood the White House with messages from all over the world, and help to focus attention on the issue in our own country as the cards are distributed.

Secondly, Friends of the Earth, Sydney, are asking us all to take part in a Global Campaign aimed at bringing a halt to NMD. Here in the UK we can contact the British Prime Minister asking him to use all the diplomatic influence at his disposal to persuade the Bush administration not to proceed with NMD, and to refuse to cooperate with it in any way.

Points you can make [the first four points were made by General Sir Hugh Beech on the Today programme, 11.1.01]:

- the technology is not proven - two out of three tests last year failed;
- deployment of National Missile Defence will break the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty between the US and Russia, and fuel a new arms race as Russia and China, particularly, feel the need to build arsenals sufficient to overcome NMD;
- it is enormously expensive;
- relations with North Korea are improving, partly thanks to the commendable efforts of the UK;
- NMD is no defence against terrorism, a far more likely form of attack on the US;
- rather than taking the lead in persuading Europe of the value of NMD, as William Hague suggests, the UK is in a unique position (because of the crucial role in NMD of the North Yorkshire sites, Fylingdales and Menwith Hill) to take a European lead in persuading the US against NMD;
- the vital role of Fylingdales and Menwith makes the UK a prime target;
- NMD contravenes the Outer Space Treaty; US firms are already discussing commercial exploitation of the planets, moon etc, and the US has said it would like to control space; the slogan of United States Space Command is "Masters of Space";
- NMD has been opposed by every major international grouping represented in the UN General Assembly and by the Parliamentary all party Foreign Affairs Select Committee;
- NMD will make further progress toward the total and unequivocal elimination of nuclear weapons, an objective to which the US and the UK are both committed, much more difficult if not impossible.

Write to the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, 10, Downing Street, London, SW1A 2AA., or fax him on 020 7925 0918 or email him at webmaster@pmo.gov.uk

Headlines on Depleted Uranium

It has been a strange experience recently to hear facts which we have known for a long time presented as fresh and exciting new items. Depleted uranium was used in the Balkans; shells of DU are fired on practice ranges in Cumbria, South West Scotland and Lulworth in Dorset; DU makes you ill, sometimes to the point of death; high levels of radiation and remnants of DU shells have been found in Kosova; the British Government agrees to test its forces, but only to "reassure the public".

Test veterans were very angry at the announcement because:

- No detail was given about what tests will be carried out. They fear tests will be only for cancer, not for the presence of DU.
- Gulf veterans are not included.
- The tests will be voluntary, making it impossible to gather data which could be subjected to proper scientific scrutiny.

The demand for testing was supported by Bruce George, the chairman of the Commons Defence Committee. He accused the MoD of "foot-dragging" over the testing of Gulf War victims.

The story first broke when Italy asked NATO to investigate claims that six of its soldiers who died after serving in the Balkans were killed by exposure to DU. The Defence Minister said that NATO had told Italy only last month that DU had also been used in Bosnia.

A recent UN enquiry in Kosova found radiation at eight of the eleven sites sampled. Levels were high in the middle of villages, where children were playing and cows grazed in contaminated areas. People had collected bits of ammunition as souvenirs. One Yugoslav newspaper

claimed that the effects were worse than Chernobyl.

In Iraq, Dr. Chris Busby found levels of irradiated particles on battlefields to be 20 times greater than the levels found in Baghdad. In Belgium, France and Canada, Balkan veterans have already been screened. Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland are to set up testing programmes.

The European Union has ordered its own enquiry into the effects of DU and possible links to cancer deaths. European Commission President, Romano Prodi, said he wanted "the truth to be ascertained, not only concerning the soldiers but also for ... the population". The Health Ministry in the Muslim-Croat half of Bosnia said the number of cancer cases had risen from 152 per 100,000 in 1999 to 230.

Advice on the potential dangers of DU was not circulated to troops, though a Pentagon scientist claims he warned Britain and the US of them in 1991. An MOD document of 1991 states that full protective clothing should be worn when close to DU shells and that human remains exposed to DU should be hosed down before disposal. The scientist had helped to bury contaminated vehicles after the Gulf War. At least ten of the team had died and the only one out of fifty not to fall ill had worn protective clothing. 'The Observer' (7 Jan) reported that it had "established that UN civilian workers in Kosova had been explicitly warned about potential health risks".

In spite of the agreement to carry out limited testing, the UK and US continue to insist that there is no danger.

Taken from West Midlands CND Mailing January 2001.

It's a friend's duty to speak up

Tell Bush that he is making a disastrous error with NMD

by Eugene J Carroll Jr

With the installation of a new US president in the White House, the time for an early test of the "special UK-US relationship" is at hand, on an issue of great importance to the security and well being of British citizens. The issue is the strong commitment of George Bush to the early deployment of a "robust national missile defense (NMD) system".

The dangerous illogic of this commitment is evident in his simultaneous call for deep reductions in the numbers of US and Russian strategic nuclear weapons. Calling for both early deployment of an NMD system and deep reductions in nuclear weapons suggests that he is unaware that both Russia and China have repeatedly warned that any NMD system which violates the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty will stimulate an increase in nuclear weapons – not reductions. Unfortunately, it is not hard to believe that he is oblivious to this danger because he has no experience, knowledge or previous interest in international security matters.

Because Mr Bush has surrounded himself with security advisers who are second-time-around cold war hawks from the first President Bush's team, it appears unlikely that he will hear any cautionary words from them. What is desperately needed is knowledgeable, objective and forceful advice from America's closest allies who will suffer the consequences of an unwise decision in Washington. It is all too easy for the hawks to dismiss threats by Russia and China but it will be much harder to ignore reasoned objections from America's closest friends and indispensable security partners.

Today the US and Russia remain locked in a cold war confrontation with nearly 5,000 nuclear warheads on hair-trigger alert, ready to launch in less than 15 minutes. What little stability exists rests on a fragile framework of arms control agreements which gradually have cut the numbers in half from the peak of almost 25,000 strategic weapons in 1989. Talks already under way could reduce that total to as low as 3,000 if the Russian proposal for 1,500 for each side is accepted. This will not happen – cannot happen – if the foundation of all nuclear arms control agreements, the 1972 ABM treaty, is abrogated by the US. All constructive efforts to reduce weapons will end. Instability will return, not only between the US and Russia but in China, India and Pakistan.

Furthermore, Russia is sending signals that such instability will force it to place more reliance for security on its vast arsenal of tactical, short range nuclear systems. These pose no threat to Americans at home, only to Russia's neighbours in Europe and Asia.

Fortunately, Britain has a strong reason to speak up, plus leverage to apply in Washington where the need for foresight and common sense has never been greater. The two levers are Fylingdales, the RAF radar station in Yorkshire, and the future role of Nato in European security. In a display of superpower hubris, current US planning for the NMD system assumes London's assent to effect a major upgrade of missile tracking facilities at Fylingdales. Such an upgrade would make the UK a willing abettor in America's abrogation of

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Trident Disarmers Not Guilty!

Thursday 18th January: note and remember the date. At Manchester Crown Court a British jury found two Trident Ploughshares activists not guilty on a charge of conspiracy to commit criminal damage. No ifs and buts or maybes: just innocent and justified.

Sylvia Boyes, a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, attempted in November 1999 to disarm the Trident submarine Vengeance when it was undergoing pre-operational testing in Barrow docks.

They intended to damage Vengeance so that it could not be commissioned into service. However, they were caught by security guards in an adjacent dock. The two Trident Ploughshares pledgers were dressed in wet-suits and were carrying hammers, wire cutters, screwdrivers and an axe. They also had a booklet with them detailing how to disable a nuclear submarine safely. Their closely argued defence was that the Government was in breach of International Law by continuing to use Trident as a deterrent. They argued that politicians could not be trusted with Britain's nuclear arsenal. Therefore civilians had to act to stop disaster. After six days in court and five hours deliberation the jury was unable to reach a unanimous verdict. They were then asked by Judge Rhys Davies to try for a majority verdict which they very quickly did.

From the witness stand Sylvia explained what had motivated her when she had gone into the secure dockyard at Barrow to do what she could to disarm the submarine. She gave an account of her many years of campaigning, including being a signatory to the plea to the International Court of Justice for a review of the

legality of nuclear weapons, which led to its landmark Advisory Opinion in 1996.

River said that there had been nothing merely symbolic about his attempt to disarm the submarine. His action had been based on his belief that Trident breached international humanitarian law. He produced a map showing the devastation and slaughter that would be caused by a strike by a single Trident warhead on the city of Manchester and recalled his own terror as a child at the real possibility of nuclear annihilation.

Rebecca Johnson, director of the Acronym Institute and a nuclear disarmament adviser to government officials worldwide, explained that she had campaigned at Greenham Common along with Sylvia. Rebecca said that she has since been told by US Air Force personnel that the women's direct action there was an important reason for the withdrawal of Cruise missiles from British soil. Direct action is not about seeking publicity: it actually produces results.

Professor Paul Rogers of the Department of Peace Studies at Bradford University said there was evidence that Trident had been specifically deployed as a threat in recent conflicts. Even in its so-called "sub-strategic" role the destructive power of one warhead would cause massive "collateral" damage. The distinction between strategic and sub-strategic role would be lost on a targeted nuclear weapon state, which would in any case retaliate with nuclear weapons.

Judge Rhys Davies told jurors that the two protesters could be seen as "thoroughly decent and idealistic people" doing what they thought was right. But however genuine the activists' beliefs,

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Trident Disarmers Not Guilty!

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ideals formed no defence against a criminal damage charge.

Rachel Wenham, who is herself waiting retrial after disarming the same submarine in February 1999, said: "At long last we have got justice from the English courts. The verdict shows that when ordinary British people are given the chance to decide on Trident and the rights of activists to intervene they are willing to be led by their conscience." A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson added: "This is a great encouragement to us all and will convince yet more people that they too can have a part to play in getting rid of

Trident. ... the disarming work goes on!"

This is a great moral and political victory in our campaign against nuclear weapons. However, it does not make Trident 'officially' illegal. From the narrow legal point of view the judge's comments carry weight; but the jury got it right as far as the real meaning of justice is concerned. What we can claim is that the jury was convinced that reasonable people have well-grounded beliefs, based on fact, to assert that Trident is illegal; and that they have the right to do something about it if the government refuses to.

Taken from World Court Project January 2001 Newsletter

It's a friend's duty to speak up

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the ABM treaty, as well as create a major nuclear target on British soil. There is also the near certainty that in domestic political terms Fylingdales will become the new Greenham Common. Even Republicans will remember the role that location played in the removal of nuclear-tipped ground launched Cruise missiles from Europe and ultimately in their destruction under the Intermediate-range Nuclear Force (INF) treaty of 1987.

Even more important, British support is essential to US efforts to maintain the primacy of the Nato alliance in European security arrangements. Without such support, the pendulum will inevitably swing to the EU and thus mute America's dominant voice in Brussels. This may happen anyway, but Washington will be loath to speed the process by alienating London with demands for support of an NMD system which will weaken all efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation globally.

While no formal objection has yet

emerged in Ottawa, former minister of foreign affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, has called a conference of interested parties in Vancouver on February 16 to formulate a strategy for Canadians to oppose NMD deployment. This could add weight to a growing chorus of allied opposition to an NMD system.

There is an American saying that friends don't let friends drive drunk. The time is right to use the special UK-US relationship as the basis for telling a new American president, with a tenuous grasp on security issues, that the US seems intoxicated with its role as the only superpower. Mr Bush must be cautioned to reassess.

Rear Admiral Eugene J Carroll Jr was on General Alexander Haig's staff in Europe from 1977 to 1979 and director of US military operations for US forces in Europe and the Middle East. He is now vice president of the Center for Defense Information in Washington DC.

Taken from The Guardian 7 Feb 2001

Trident: Britain's weapon of mass destruction

Scottish CND have produced a detailed report about Trident and the effect its use would have. The text below represents the summary of the report. Nottingham CND has a copy of the full report, and it is available from Scottish CND in printed form (price £2) and on the web at <http://ds.dial.pipex.com/cndscot/wmd/index.htm>

Nuclear weapons are not a myth or an abstraction. There are real warheads on a British Trident submarine on patrol and there are detailed plans specifying the latitude and longitude of points on the globe against which these weapons are ready to be used. The Navy keeps three Trident submarines armed, with 14 missiles and 48 nuclear warheads on each. There are 50% more warheads deployed on British submarines today than there were in 1990.

The Labour Government's retention of Trident is inconsistent with the way in which thinking on nuclear weapons has moved – with many former advocates of the bomb arguing that there is an urgent need to abolish these weapons. Some observers say the risk of nuclear war is greater now than it was several years ago. Today more countries have the bomb. Russian nuclear forces are kept on a hair-trigger alert because they are vulnerable to an attack from US Trident missiles.

In the 1950s and 1960s Britain had plans to attack a large number of cities in the Soviet Union using V bombers or Polaris missiles. These plans were later adjusted so an attack would concentrate on targets around Moscow. Today the scale of Britain's nuclear capability and the way it is deployed suggest that it remains oriented principally against Russia.

An attack using the warheads on one submarine against likely targets in the Moscow area would result in over 3 million deaths. This type of attack would

involve some weapons detonating inside Moscow and others at command posts close to the city. The combined effects of blast, heat and radiation would mean that there would be very few survivors within 1.6 kms of each explosion and large numbers of fatalities 4 kms away. Because the warheads would be detonated close to the ground, there would also be massive nuclear fallout over urban areas. Thousands of people would die over a 4 to 12 week period from this fallout.

Other potential targets are Russian Northern Fleet submarine bases. In Britain there are towns and villages close to every key submarine facility. The same is true of the Russian bases near Murmansk. Trident warheads exploding above these bases would cause devastation over a wide area and in each case would result in thousands of civilian casualties in urban areas.

Trident has an additional "sub-strategic" role. For this a reserve submarine will have some missiles carrying one warhead each. Even if it had a reduced yield, a single one of these warheads would still cause devastation over an area of 30 square kilometres.

In addition to having independent target plans, British nuclear weapons are also incorporated into NATO nuclear planning, which is dependent on US targeting information. The use of all the Trident warheads deployed on three British submarines either in a NATO or an independent attack could result in around

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Missile shield 'would cost UK billions'

British participation in the planned US missile defence shield - dubbed "son of star wars" - would be extremely expensive, Sir Charles Guthrie, the chief of defence staff, warned yesterday. He said the proposed US national missile defence system was regarded in Washington as a "moral issue", a matter of defending the American people against so called "rogue nations".

Sir Charles is known to be concerned that the system threatens Nato solidarity and in particular the traditional concept that all allies must share equal risks. "What I think we have to do is talk to the Americans, the rest of Europe has to talk to America, and make quite sure that the balance of destruction in the world is not made worse by this - I don't see why it should be."

On the BBC's programme, Breakfast with Frost, Sir Charles said it might be possible for America's allies to enjoy the protection of the anti-missile "umbrella". But he added: "It's going to be an extremely expensive system for us to buy into, and if we did buy into it, what would we give up?"

The British American Security Information Council (Basic) yesterday warned that Britain's participation in the project would cost the country billions of pounds.

According to official US plans, a potential first-phase, ground-launched, anti-missile system could involve a land-based battery of 20 missile launchers. The purchase and operating costs of just one battery with all radars, satellites and ancillary technology has been estimated at £17.8bn by the US defence department.

The cost to Britain of just acquiring and running a missile battery would be much less. However, it is likely that the UK would be charged for integrating its missile battery into the US target-tracking network. Any US or joint land-based system would also use Fylingdales, the radar station in Yorkshire, and possibly existing US bases in Britain, such as Fairford in Gloucestershire. A sea-based system would probably involve buying new ships.

"The price tag would likely be in the order of billions of pounds," said Dan Plesch, Basic's director.

Robin Cook, the foreign secretary, said last week that if a US missile defence system meant the US feeling more secure and "more able to assert itself in international areas of concern to us", the government would regard it as "a net gain in security".

Taken from The Guardian 12 Feb 2001

Trident: Britain's weapon of mass destruction

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9 million deaths.

In 1996 the International Court of Justice made it clear that nuclear weapons are not exempt from the rules of war. The basis of humanitarian law is that parties to any conflict should seek to distinguish between civilians and the military. In each of the examples considered it is clear that

the use of Trident would result in a massive number of casualties across a wide area. It would not be possible to accurately predict which places would be affected by fallout. The inherent inability to distinguish between civilian and military objects means that the threat or use of Trident would be illegal.

Campaign against cluster bombs

Many cluster munitions contain anti-personnel mines. And many more are agreed by specialists – as well as the MoD themselves – to act exactly like anti-personnel mines when they fail to explode. What is more alarming is that these weapons are proliferating fast. That is why Landmine Action has called for a global moratorium on the manufacture and use of the weapons while a thorough international review is carried out on their use, impact and legality.

British-made cluster bombs contain 147 smaller bomblets or sub-munitions which are scattered across a wide area when the bomb is released. Many bomblets often fail to explode and remain live and dangerous until they are cleared. The unexploded bomblets effectively turn into landmines, ready to detonate on contact, causing death and injury to civilians, even many years after the war has ended. Many are brightly coloured and the size of a drinks can, and are therefore particularly attractive to children.

After the fighting has finished, cluster bombs continue to threaten civilians. The unexploded bomblets prevent people from returning to their homes and working on the land, holding back reconstruction and economic recovery.

Statistics on cluster bombs from Kosovo, the Gulf War, US military trials, the Vietnam War and the UK government's

own figures from the Falklands conflict, indicate that 9-30% of the bomblets fail to explode on impact. Unexploded bomblets are estimated to have killed or injured more than 200 people in Kosovo since the bombing ended.

Reliance on cluster munitions seems set to grow, particularly with the proliferation of missile or artillery delivered systems, which can saturate wide areas with huge numbers of bomblets in minutes. Some cluster weapons scatter anti-personnel mines from distances of up to 300 kilometres.

But not all cluster bombs are included in the legislation to ban landmines as they are not 'designed' to be detonated by a person. Landmine Action has called for new international law to make governments, the military and manufacturers fully accountable and responsible for the use of all cluster bombs. This would include responsibility for:

- full clearance of unexploded bomblets and the marking of affected land as soon as the fighting has ended
- compensation to civilians and communities who suffer death, injury or economic disadvantage as a result of the explosion or presence of unexploded cluster bombs.

Taken from Landmine Action 'Campaign' Winter 2000.

Please write a short letter to your MP at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Ask them

- to raise concern about the humanitarian problems caused by cluster bombs with the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office, urging Ministers to act.
- to support new international law obliging users of cluster bombs to clear unexploded bomblets.
- to support a freeze on the use, manufacture, sale and export of cluster bombs until new international law restricting the use of these weapons is introduced.

Trident Ploughshares latest

Trident Disarmers NOT GUILTY

See article on page 10.

Jubilee Ploughshares

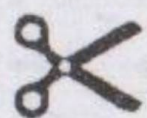
5 Jan 2001. Trident Ploughshares 2000 Pledgers Fr. Martin Newell and Susan van der Hijden appeared in court. They have been charged with burglary, and two counts of criminal damage totalling £32,000 (4 trucks and 2 buildings). These charges arise out of the Jubilee 2000 disarmament of a nuclear convoy vehicle at RAF Wittering on November 3rd. 2000.

Aldermaston Women Trash Trident Trial

20 Sep 2000. The jury at the Manchester Crown Court trial of peace activists Rosie James and Rachel Wenham returned a not guilty verdict on one of the charges and could not reach agreement on the other. They were charged with disarming the

Trident submarine 'HMS Vengeance' at Barrow in Febuary 1999. The women have been found Not Guilty on the charge of criminal damage relating to the spray painting of peace slogans on the Trident submarine HMS vengeance in Barrow last year. In the light of the fact that the women have never denied that they carried out the spray painting it would follow that the jury has decided that the women's defence was valid. The jury was not able to reach a verdict on the first charge relating to the damage to testing equipment on the conning tower. The retrial is due to take place from 3rd April 2001.

Trident Ploughshares is a campaign to disarm the UK Trident nuclear weapons system in a non-violent, open, peaceful and fully accountable manner. More details from www.gn.apc.org/tp2000



Dear President Bush

I, as a resident of _____
urge you to cancel National
Missile Defense as it poses a
major threat to word peace.

Signed
Name
Address

Produced by Yorkshire CND
www.gn.apc.org/cndyorks

President George Bush
The White House
Washington
USA

Diary Dates

- 24 March Benefit Concert featuring Clarion Choir and friends – see below.
- 14 April Anti Star Wars gathering at Downing Street, London, 12pm. Includes street theatre. A declaration will be handed in by National CND Chair Dave Knight.
- 16 April Nightmare on Your Doorstep - March and Demonstration at Fylingdales. If we can stop the USA using Fylingdales for their National Missile Defense programme, we can stop Star Wars. Meet at Ellerbeck, 8 miles south of Whitby on the A169 in North Yorkshire at 10am. More details from 01287 660067, email neilbye@hotmail.com; contact Nottingham CND on 0115 9348459 if you are interested in going so that we can share transport.

**Come to the Benefit Concert, Saturday 24 March,
at The Place, 2a Melrose St, Sherwood.
Organised by Nottm CND and Clarion Choir in aid of
Nuclear Disarmament Campaigns.**

Cut out this postcard and send it to President Bush – see page 7.



Yorkshire protests against National Missile Defense on Fylingdales Moor