

It's About Times

Abalone Alliance Newspaper

April-May 1984



Massive radiation accident in Mexico

In what may be the worst radiation accident in North American history, at least 200 people in Juarez, Mexico and elsewhere have been exposed to high doses of radiation after a cancer treatment machine containing radioactive cobalt-60 was stolen and melted down as scrap. The crisis is not over, as some of the spilled material is not yet accounted for. It is likely that many people are still being irradiated unknowingly.

The contamination was discovered accidentally on January 16, when a truck delivering steel reinforcing rods at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico took a wrong turn. The truck happened to pass over a radiation sensor, setting off an alarm.

It turned out that the radioactive rods were made from scrap steel at a foundry in Chihuahua, Mexico. The scrap, in turn, was traced back to a busy junkyard in Juarez, which was found to be heavily contaminated with cobalt-60.

Investigation revealed that the stolen cancer treatment machine had been brought to the junkyard on a pickup truck, and that workers, unaware of the device's purpose or hazards, had cut it open. About 6000 pinhead-sized metal pellets — the cobalt-60 "source" — spilled out and have since been scattered in many directions. It is presumed that this happened around December 6, 1983, since the junkyard's paperwork for that day is radioactive.

Four workers who disassembled the machine received radiation doses of 300 to 450 rem, a level normally fatal to about half the people exposed to it. Two received enormous doses to their hands

Four workers in a Mexican junkyard received a lethal radiation dose and countless others have been heavily exposed.

and feet, on the order of 10,000 rem, and have developed wounds and blisters. (Nuclear plant workers are allowed to receive a maximum of 5 rem a year, and there are indications that this "safe" level of exposure leads to considerably increased cancer rates later in life.)

From the junkyard, the contaminated scrap was sent to two Mexican steel foundries. The radioactive reinforcing rods sent to Los Alamos were part of a 4000 ton batch made in a Chihuahua foundry. About 3500 tons of the rods remained in Mexico, and much is probably still unaccounted for.

About 25 tons of the steel were traced to a building supply company in Mexicali, which sold it for use at 350 construction sites in the area. Radiation levels at 80 of those sites are considered unsafe by public health officials, and they are recommending that all 350 buildings be torn down. If this experience is typical, many thousands of buildings may turn out to be affected.

The remaining 500 tons of the batch were shipped to the US, and ended up in places including the foundations of two houses in New Mexico, which had to be replaced. The steel has also been used in Arizona homes and has turned up at supply companies in

Texas and California. One Albuquerque company, Smith Pipe and Steel, found out in late January that it had unknowingly sold 60 tons of the contaminated rods to construction companies and secondary suppliers. "This has been a real nightmare," said manager Michael Smith. "We don't usually carry around geiger counters in our business." The rods are so hot, reading as high as 700 milliroentgens per hour, that construction workers may have received considerable radiation exposures from handling them for even a few hours or days.

The contaminated scrap from the junkyard was also used by a Juarez foundry, Falcon de Juarez, to make restaurant table bases. The table bases were shipped to another Falcon plant in the United States, and from there to over 1000 customers in 49 states.

The fact that the table bases were radioactive was also discovered by accident. On January 31, a random highway check by Illinois state police for hazardous materials detected radiation from a truck carrying the parts. Another truckload was found in Tennessee. Don

Etchison, director of the Illinois Nuclear Safety Department, commented, "It's good the [troopers] discovered this shipment on the road, because it's highly unlikely the radioactivity would have been detected otherwise."

The table supports were not as badly contaminated as the reinforcing bars, but were still radioactive enough to give restaurant patrons the equivalent of a chest X-ray with their breakfasts. Restaurant employees could have received a dangerous dose over a few shifts.

A Falcon official said on February 1 that all the parts shipped to the US had been recalled, and it appears that few of the parts actually made it to restaurants. Two weeks later, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission revealed that 46 California customers, mostly restaurant wholesalers, had purchased the contaminated bases and that they had been found in Alameda, Orange, and Los Angeles counties. The NRC now believes that all of the radioactive steel shipped to the US has been rounded up.

The "table bases" story is about all that has been reported on the entire accident by most of the American press. But if the situation in the US is at least officially under control, the most severe consequences continue to unfold in Mexico.

The workers at both of the Mexican foundries which processed the

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Czech peace movement blossoms

The recent emergence of a large disarmament movement in Czechoslovakia has made the European Nuclear Disarmament dream of a popular cross-bloc movement a reality. Thousands of previously passive Czechs have shaken off years of post-1968 invasion demoralization and have begun to demonstrate for peace.

Moscow announced on October 24 of last year that it was deploying "additional tactical-operational missile complexes" in East Germany and Czechoslovakia to counter the newest NATO deployments. It was this decision — the so-called "counter-deployments" — that has effectively catalyzed the new wave of protest.

"Prior to the deployment announcement," explains Zdena Tomin, former Charter 77 spokesperson now working in London with European Nuclear Disarmament (END), "the nuclear threat was not taken seriously. Czechs now realize that with deployment they have become not only potential murderers, but potential targets as well."

Immediately following the announcement, Charter 77 activists were hauled into police custody and pointedly warned of mandatory ten-year prison

sentences for public opposition to the new missiles. (Influential figures within Charter 77 have expressed support for the goals of the Western peace movement and energetically promoted a political dialogue with Western peace activists.) But opposition to the deployment has spread far beyond the limited circles of committed human rights activists.

Two weeks after the deployment decision was publicly announced, the national synod of the Protestant Church, following the example of its East German counterpart, adopted a declaration opposing nuclear weapons in general and the new missiles — East and West — in particular. Protests among secondary and trade-school students in Brno, Moravia, have involved hundreds. Columnist Jarmila Houfova, writing in the official party daily *Rude Pravo* early in November, acknowledged receiving stacks of letters questioning the wisdom of the decision.

Party activists circulating official petitions in support of the counter-deployments have been chased from the factories, and workers have begun circulating counter-petitions of their own. Workers at Prague's enormous CKD

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plant, the city's largest industrial enterprise, have signed a text calling for the creation of nuclear-free zones.

A petition from the Victorious February Engineering Works in Hradec Kralove vigorously protested not only the new deployments but demanded "the immediate dismantling of all similarly equipped rockets that have been deployed on the territory of our state for some time." The petition also demanded reductions in the arms budget and the rescinding of announced future price increases.

Yet another petition circulating in Prague has gathered over two thousand signatures — primarily among industrial workers but also including well-known Charter 77 activists and religious figures — and continues to gather support. "Following the decision to deploy nuclear weapons in Czechoslovakia,"

reads the petition, "we perceive the urgent threat that the arms race poses to our country, to the whole world and to all humanity. If we speak really sincerely about peace, then we cannot be indifferent to any new procurement of arms. We therefore protest against nuclear weapons anywhere in the world. We also protest against their deployment in Czechoslovakia."

The emergence of an autonomous peace movement in Czechoslovakia is hardly surprising. Czechs have been bombarded with peace propaganda over the past several years. Western peace campaigns have received generous, if one-sided, coverage in the Czech media. And Prague hosted a "World Congress for Peace and Life Against Nuclear War" last June — a congress from which Charter 77 human rights activists were excluded and which resolutely refused to discuss the military policy of the Warsaw Pact.

At the same time, plenty of combustible social discontent is waiting to be ignited. Concurrent with the official peace hoopla, Czechs have experienced rapid economic decline, accelerated ecological devastation in what was already one of Europe's most polluted countries, and the relentless philistinism of an official cultural apparatus which long ago stripped the nation's bookstores and libraries of any contemporary literature worth reading.

Early warning signals of popular anti-government peace sentiment first became manifest at the Congress for Peace and Life last summer, when a group of two to three hundred young people broke away from the official parade chanting, "We want peace and freedom" and "Disarm the soldiers!" Young people have responded to police assaults on rock concert audiences with similar political chants.

The emergence of autonomous peace campaigns in Czechoslovakia and East Germany (see *IAT* February-March 1984) has exploded yet another Cold War myth — namely, that there exists no public opinion in Eastern Europe. The massive peace campaigns in the West have clearly evoked a sympathetic echo in the East, where independent politics is reviving through the increasingly international movement for peace and disarmament. The most potentially potent Cold War genie of all is now out of the bottle: the existence of an independent peace movement in the East raises the prospect of joint East/West campaigns opposing not only the latest missiles but the Cold War in its entirety.

— A. Winton Jackson

Bound for gory

Tracking the DOE's H-Bomb express

For most Americans, a train whistle in the night brings on nostalgia for a romantic and adventurous past. But a growing number of people are spending nights huddled near the tracks not in hopes of hopping a freight train, but of stopping one.

The train they are waiting for is special — and sinister — for its gleaming white boxcars carry not furniture or vegetables, but nuclear warheads. On almost any evening, anywhere in the country, a few hundred H-bombs may be going for a ride in a train a dozen boxcars long. Department of Energy security agents ride along in specially-constructed, tanklike "turret" cars, equipped with powerful lights and machine guns.

The warheads the train carries may be on their way from the Pantex plant in Texas, where all US nuclear weapons are assembled, to submarines at the Bangor base in Washington state or to ICBMs in North Dakota. Or they may be obsolete warheads, headed back to Pantex for refurbishing. For twenty years, the comings and goings of this deadliest of cargoes have been little noticed.

But some disarmament activists are trying to change all that. Ground Zero, a pacifist Christian community located at the edge of the Trident submarine base in Bangor, is perhaps the most active of a growing national network of largely religiously-based groups focussing on the "white trains." Through means ranging from prayer vigils to leafletting to blocking the tracks, they aim to educate people along the rail routes about the purpose of the trains and the magnitude of the potential destruction they carry.

The "white trains" campaign, although less than two years old, has resulted in dozens of actions involving up to several hundred people. Through weeks of observation, development of an extensive phone-tree network, and the cooperation of sympathetic railroad employees, the activists have been able to predict the routes of particular trains and to turn out sizeable groups of protestors on a few hours notice, often in the middle of the night. During the travels of one train through the mountain West, 200 people came to the tracks in Sandpoint, Idaho, and vigils were held in 35 other towns along the route.

Early this year, activists tracked a "white train" from its origin at Pantex to its presumed destination at the Bangor Trident base. Protests and vigils were held in eight cities along the route, and 51 people were arrested.

When the train reached Portland on



February 24, more than 150 people were there to greet it. Many, including one man in a wheelchair, were on the tracks. As the train slowed to a crawl, two dozen city and Union Pacific police began hustling the demonstrators off the tracks. Many just picked themselves up and moved further down the line to new positions. After a half hour of this, the weary officers gave up, ordered the train to stop, and called for reinforcements.

For nearly two hours, both sides waited and debated nuclear arms policy in a driving rainstorm. The police apparently had trouble finding the county jail bus, but eventually another two dozen officers arrived and 35 protestors were arrested. Despite dire warnings of federal charges, the protestors were actually charged only with trespassing and were soon released. Many are considering a courtroom defense based on international law and the Nuremberg Principles.

The Department of Energy is hardly thrilled at all the attention that its special trains are getting. It is sponsoring a proposal to make it a felony to share "unclassified restricted nuclear information," which would include observations of "white train" routes. Less confrontationally, it has on several occasions rerouted trains away from towns where it knew protestors were waiting.

The nuclear trains are known to travel through California, on the way to destinations such as the Concord Naval Weapons Station as well as out-of-state bases. People for a Nuclear Free Future in Nevada County believes that a train carrying warheads to the Washington Trident base may soon pass through the

northern Sierra, along old Western Pacific tracks. The train would travel through the towns of Blairsden, Quincy, Westwood, and Beiber. A response network is forming in the area, and can be contacted at 265-8173.

— Bob Van Scoy

Thanks to Andy Robinson for information on the Portland action. Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action publishes a newsletter of that name; donations are welcome. Contact: 16159 Clear Creek Road, NW, Poulsbo, WA 98370.

It's About Times

Abalone Alliance Newspaper

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Sandinistas under siege

US intensifies war against Nicaragua

Jane Horvath, a former Abalone Alliance staffer, sent us this report from Nicaragua on March 10.

You wouldn't know it from the American press accounts, but the view from Managua is clear: the US is at war with Nicaragua, and by all accounts, the fighting is escalating.

For the embattled Sandinista government, the attacks are coming from all directions. There is serious and continued fighting along the border between northern Nicaraguan and Honduras, frequent skirmishes with *contras* along the southern border with Costa Rica, and apparently heavy fighting in the central parts of the country. Two major ports have been mined, one international merchant ship has been damaged, and the rest of the nation's commercial shipping industry is in immediate peril.

Most Nicaraguans we've encountered say the country's economic situation has worsened considerably in the last six months as the war has continued to escalate. However, in just the last six weeks, the situation has escalated to the point where the Nicaraguan economy is facing a serious crisis.

The first week in February brought aerial bombing attacks in the northern Department of Chinandega. The attacks — by Honduran pilots flying American-made planes — were witnessed by a crew of North Americans, who had come to Nicaragua to assist with the cotton harvest.

I joined a subsequent North American brigade, which also was slated to join the cotton pickers in the fields surrounding Chinandega, but the bombings caused the Nicaraguan government to change its plans, and we were sent to a state farm about 28 kilometers from Chinandega.

When we arrived there, we learned of another Honduran bombing raid — on a Nicaraguan communications center hidden in the mountains surrounding the farm. In their efforts to destroy the outpost, the Hondurans had ventured deep into Nicaragua.

On March 5, the *contras* announced they had mined the Port of Corinto; two days later, a Panamanian merchant ship was blown up, presumably after striking a mine. The same day, a Nicaraguan truck carrying propane gas from Honduras exploded in the town of Somoto, about 25 miles inside the border — apparently as the result of Honduran sabotage.

I heard reports of heavy fighting in the Port of Corinto, where oil storage tanks apparently were attacked.

Word has also reached Managua of heavy fighting in Rama, an inland city on the east coast. Rama is along a main highway leading to the eastern port of Bluefields. The roads around Rama are now closed due to the fighting; although the government has released no official news of the battle, wounded soldiers,

apparently from Rama, are arriving in Managua and filling up a hospital here.

I've also heard unconfirmed reports that two launches, armed with mortars and machine guns, attacked the small beach town of Montelimar March 6. Montelimar, located only 45 kilometers south of Managua, contains a military training school where some 2,000 Nicaraguan recruits are stationed.

Official news from the various fronts remains scarce. It appears that the Sandinista government has decided not to release much of the military news, perhaps in an effort to avoid creating panic. However, most people in Managua seem to be able to piece together what is happening from scattered news accounts and word-of-mouth filtering into the city. The picture that is created from these reports is frightening.

Apparently, the regional war that the US has struggled so hard to create may finally come to pass.

It is with a sick sense of foreboding that I have watched the situation here progress. Around Managua, a military mobilization is obvious; there are continuous calls for military volunteers, and truckloads of armed soldiers are dispatched constantly for various parts of

the country. Shortages of basic items such as meat, soap, and paper products have become severe.

The war, combined with the economic boycott, is taking its toll. In a sense, the Nicaraguan people are standing between the devil and the deep blue sea. On one hand, precious human and economic resources are being diverted from agriculture and material production into the military struggle against the CIA, the Hondurans and the *contras*; at the same time, the *contras* have had noticeable success in their efforts to disrupt the harvest of coffee and cotton — Nicaragua's two main export crops and a crucial source of foreign exchange.

Further, the economic embargo makes it impossible to obtain spare parts for US-made agricultural and industrial equipment; as a result, a sizeable chunk of Nicaragua's productive capacity stands idle.

It is generally assumed in the United States that the well-publicized *contra* presence indicates substantial popular opposition to the Sandinista government. The American media tend to portray the Nicaraguan conflict as essentially a civil war.

However, although there are clearly

vocal opponents of the current regime, most of them generally support the revolution and oppose US intervention. The backbone of the *contra* force is formed by Somocistas and ex-members of Somoza's national guard.

Another fact almost unknown in the US is that many of the *contra* fighters are young boys who have been kidnapped at gunpoint from their homes in rural areas. The *contras* have gained the services of poverty-stricken peasants who have enlisted upon a CIA promise that they will be paid as much as \$5,000. As campesino wages are very minimal, this can be a very persuasive sum. There are also reports that some *contras* have broken rank of late after the CIA failed to make good its financial promises.

As the battles continue to rage in Nicaragua, the people here continually express a common sentiment: that North Americans who understand the true situation can force the US government to reverse its role in the region, and allow the Sandinista government an opportunity to return the country to peace and economic stability.

— Jane Horvath



Oil tanks at Port Corinto following an attack by contra forces which set them on fire.

photo by Andrew Ritchie



US and Honduran troops storm the beach at Puerto Castillo, Honduras, as part of a joint military operation known as Big Pine II. This landing, on November 21st 1983, started

the exercise aimed at pressuring the Nicaraguan government. These exercises are continuing; the latest, "Granadero I," began on April 1st.

photo by Scott Doggett

Peace activists jailed

More repression in East Germany

Western attention has recently focused on East Berlin's increasingly beleaguered peace activists, reflecting both the strength of the movement in the GDR's capital city and its visibility. (See *It's About Times*, February-March 1984). However, opposition in smaller provincial cities has gone all but unnoticed.

In the city of Weimar, for example, anti-militarist sentiment among young people is so strong that about half of the secondary school's "Abitur" candidates have either signed up for alternative military service as conscientious objectors or have refused the near-mandatory officer training course. (Military service is obligatory for all draft-age youth and there is strong pressure to sign up for the officer course.)

On January 25, four young peace activists — Wolfram Hasch, Volker Otto, Jan-George Fischer, and Alexander Kobylinski — were arrested and imprisoned.

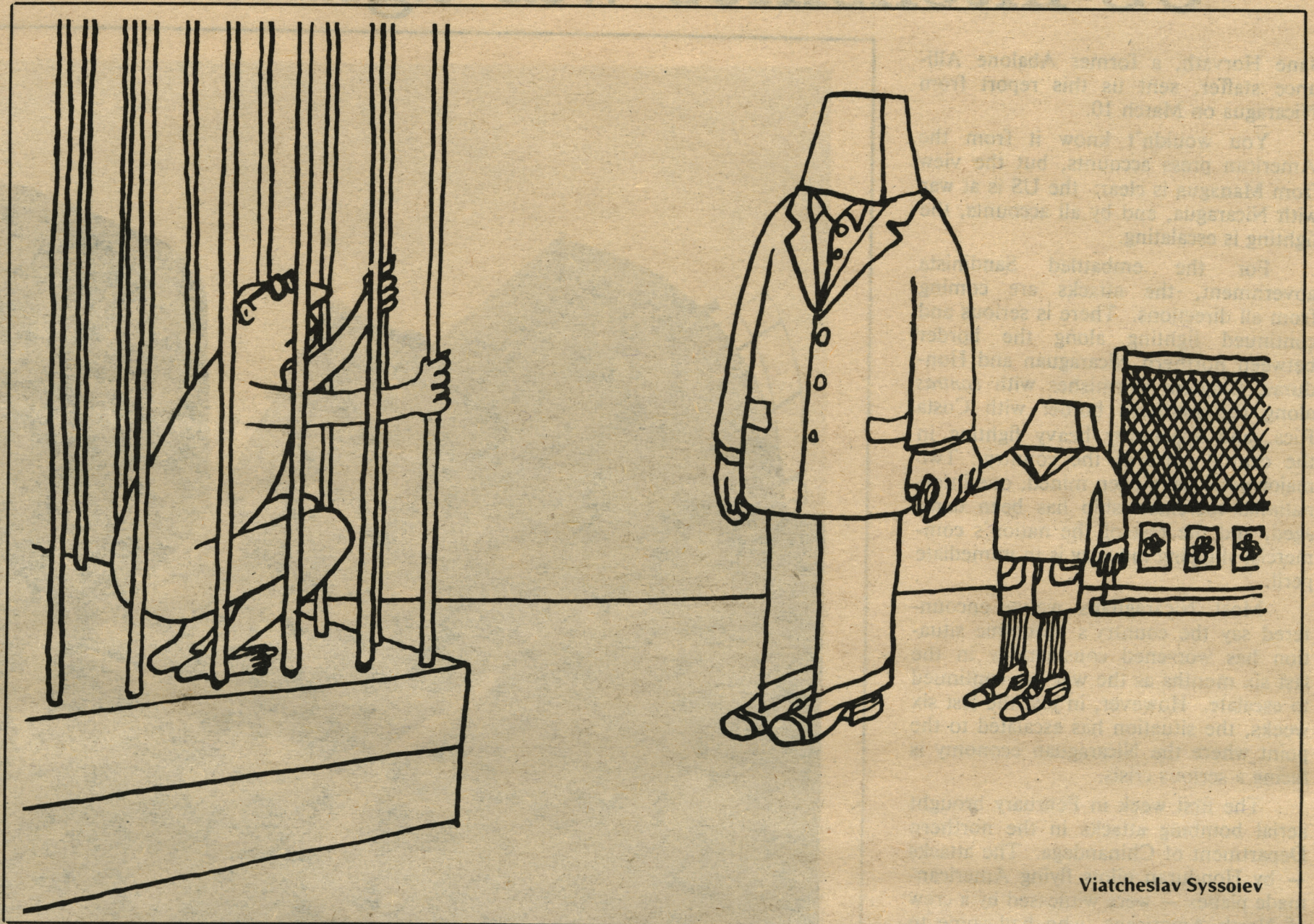
The following statement from an activist in Weimar provides some background to the arrests.

— Ed. note

All of those arrested knew each other, either through school or through the Evangelical Church's Monday Circle, where between 30 to 70 people gather each week to discuss peace and environmental issues. The arrested activists were among those who had helped to prepare evenings of meditation, theater, and discussions of issues like weapons systems and rearmament, non-violence and pacifism, environmental destruction and nuclear power.

Not content with meetings alone, they had also tried to take their message outside the confines of the church. They wanted to demonstrate their ideas in practice and set to work on various environmental problems such as cleaning up streams, improving children's playgrounds, and planting trees. Even these small actions were hindered or forbidden by the authorities. The GDR bureaucracy deeply mistrusts personal initiatives in any form and, as a rule, defeats them by putting insurmountable bureaucratic barriers in their way.

A couple of the arrested had already been noticed at school for their "appetite for debate" and their refusal to take part in the officer training course. As a result, they had been refused admission to higher education because of their "political immaturity." Others



Viatcheslav Syssoiev

were felt to be provocative simply because of their slightly "punk-like" appearance.

In April of 1983, these young people had helped organize a meditation

activists distributed leaflets in the city center with a Brecht quotation warning of the growing danger of nuclear war.

Another thorn in the sensitive flesh of the authorities was a well-established

The appearance of peace slogans on the walls of Weimar was a welcome excuse for the authorities to smash all autonomous peace activities.

with the title "Live in peace, not perish in peace." The event, which took place at St. Jacob's Church, drew about 500 participants. Another meditation, "Destroying the enemy image" was planned for World Peace Day, September 1, but was called off at the last moment by church authorities. In response, the

commune at 19 Mozartstrasse, which functioned as an open meeting place." The occupants of the flat got involved in organizing an action on October 22, the day of international protest against the cruise and Pershing missiles. At five minutes to noon, peace activists from East and West met in front of the world

clock in Alexanderplatz, the central square in East Berlin.

When peace slogans began to appear on the walls of Weimar, the authorities took the opportunity to smash all autonomous peace and environmental activities. On January 25, they launched their attack on the Monday Circle, arresting the four men. Soon after, the flat at 19 Mozartstrasse was searched and sealed by the police.

Experience has shown that the Honecker regime is vulnerable to protests from socialists and peace activists in the West. Letters and telegrams mentioning the arrested by name should be sent to Erich Honecker, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Marx-Engels Platz, 102 Berlin, German Democratic Republic. Please pass this information to friends and fellow activists in the peace and antinuclear movements.

Trust Group members harassed in USSR

On December 8, 1983, the Soviet government announced that it would not reschedule the next START talks in Geneva. On the same day, Soviet police arrested four members of the Group to Establish Trust between the USSR and the USA. Moscow's independent peace organization. Geographer Olga Medvedkova, physicist Balery Godyak, economist Olga Lusnikova, and

mathematician Mark Reitman were charged with resisting officers.

The charges refer to an incident on October 13, the day that another Trust Group member, Oleg Radzinsky, was being tried in a town outside Moscow for the crime of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" (See *IAT* February-March 1984). Members of the Group on their way to the trial were detained by police,

pushed onto a bus, and taken to a police dormitory, where they were held until the trial was over. In the process, some of them were beaten by the police. Medvedkova, who was severely bruised, was charged with resisting an officer, punishable by one to five years of labor camp.

Medvedkova and the other three were asked to sign statements that they would not leave Moscow, and were allowed to return home. They were put under virtual house arrest and constant surveillance. At first, authorities told Medvedkova that she would be tried before January 1, and that the others would be asked to testify in court about the incident.

Medvedkova has suffered constant harassment, including sabotage of her car, since she joined the independent peace group in July 1982. In May 1983, she was invited by British women involved with the Greenham Common encampment to attend their meeting in Moscow with the official Soviet Peace committee. When Medvedkova explained that she was a member of the Trust Group, the Soviet officials stopped the meeting. Medvedkova left so that the British women could continue their discussions with the officials.

Trust Group member Oleg Radzinsky has been in internal exile in the Tomsk Region of Siberia since October. In December, Western correspondents in Moscow received a letter purportedly written by him.

It seemed unlikely that Radzinsky

could have written such a letter, found a translator and Xerox copier, and gotten the statement to Western correspondents. The letter demands that President Reagan stop exploiting Radzinsky's case to fuel the arms race. It also says that Radzinsky was not sentenced for his peace work, but for "specific crimes."

Later, in a taped telephone conversation, Radzinsky explained that he had in fact written a letter asking Reagan not to use his case. However, the KGB had added its own text to his letter.

In December, Radzinsky, who was ill, was brought to Moscow for a visit with his family and hospitalized. On January 25, under pressure from the KGB, he gave an interview over Radio Moscow during which he made statements incriminating himself. He was then sent back into exile. Now he is reportedly being charged with a new "crime." According to police, he is guilty of "escape from exile" because he left the hospital on one occasion without authorization.

— Helsinki Watch

You can help by sending politely worded telegrams or letters of inquiry and concern to Yuri Zhukov, Soviet Peace Committee, 36 Prospekt Mira, Moscow 129010, with copies to the Soviet Embassy, 1125 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036. Call Western Union (962-7111 in NYC, or 1-800-257-2241) to send an overnight cable, and it will be charged to your telephone number.



Viatcheslav Syssoiev

Visiting the Greenham Common peace camp

"You must be going to Greenham Common."

The lorry driver who had just picked me up on the road out of London knew exactly where I was going when I said my destination was Newbury. Talking with him and the other drivers who gave me a lift that day, it seemed that the number of people who knew about Greenham Common was equal only to the number of opinions on the subject.

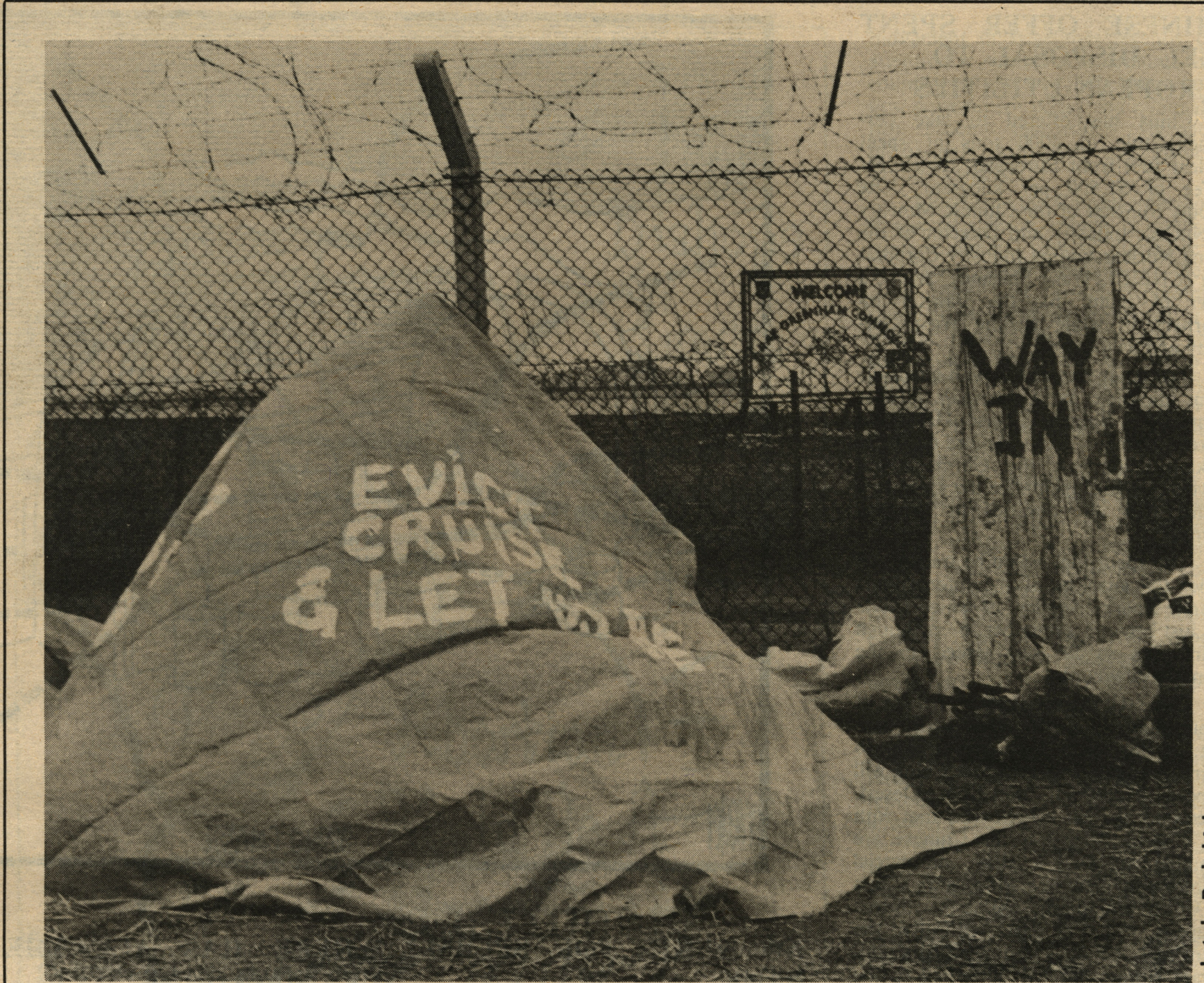
The women's peace camp began in September, 1981 at the main gate of the Royal Air Force Greenham Common base. Its purpose was to protest the planned deployment of US cruise missiles there. More than two and a half years later, after witnessing the arrival of the missiles in November 1983, surviving three bitter cold winters and enduring countless harassments and evictions, the women are still there. The original encampment has expanded to cover six more gates around the base.

The camps are all autonomous and each has its own special character, yet there is a very strong supportive network among them. Collectively, they are known as the Greenham Common peace camp. Hundreds of women have lived there for periods of time ranging from a few days to months or years. Tens of thousands have been there for large actions and Greenham Common has become an international symbol of resistance.

I was feeling a little apprehensive the day I set off for Greenham Common. It was very cold, I wasn't well-equipped for camping, and I had heard from other women that it's hard to feel welcome and included if you're a short-term visitor. My anxieties disappeared as soon as I arrived. I was immediately offered hot tea and biscuits around the fire and given extra blankets, an empty tent, and a ride around the base to have a look at the variety of camps. I chose to stay at one of the smaller camps on Greenham's north side, where the cruise convoy had come out. The women there were tired due to a recent rash of evictions and seemed to need the kind of moral support a new camper could offer.

The flow of visitors stopping by our camp with donations of supplies was amazing. In two days I witnessed the arrival of many loads of firewood, sleeping bags, blankets, ground cloths, clothing, water, pots of hot soup, homemade bread, chocolate cake, and cigarettes. One could literally sit by the fire and be handed meal after meal. A local woman known as "sugar mummy" goes around weekly to all the gates dropping off bottles of vodka. I felt taken care of and appreciated merely by virtue of being there.

I heard complaints that the support was almost too much that they'd rather the money be spent financing other



Greenham Common peace camp: "Evict Cruise and let us be."

photo by Rachel Johnson

actions in other places instead of over-supplying the Greenham women. But along with the determination and commitment of the women, support from the outside makes it possible for the camp to continue.

Workers are also organizing to support the peace camp. The bakers union is refusing to sell bread to the base, the builders union donates wood to the camp, and the workers at the firm that leased the giant "munching machines"

machine. When the officials leave, the women return and rebuild the camps. Recently the government developed a scheme to clear out the camps by widening the roads around the base. So a new wave of evictions is promised for April.

On March 9, front page news reported that the first "cruise convoy" had left Greenham Common early in the morning, "successfully" passing the women at the exit gate. A number of these trial runs is required before the newly stationed cruise missiles at Greenham can be declared fully operational. This the US hopes to report at an early April NATO meeting.

The British press proclaimed the deployment of the first cruise convoy a "major victory for the military." This major military victory consisted of a cruise launcher and a few supply vehicles passing a group of fourteen women who were surrounded by a hundred policemen just for the occasion. That this was sensational front page news indicates the impact the peace camp has made throughout Britain.

The day-to-day presence of the women at Greenham draws constant attention to the cruise missiles there, as well as to the arms race and militarism in general. In addition, many actions have been plotted and carried out by the peace camp women.

They have surrounded the base; cut fences and knocked them down; entered the base and danced on the top of missile silos; entered the control towers; blocked the roads with their bodies and cars; painted fences, signs, and military equipment; and sent up flares and balloons. They have, in essence, laid siege to the base. Base officials have added double fences, extra rolls of barbed wire, and 24-hour armed guards at frequent intervals around the entire base.

The Greenham Common women are deeply committed to their political action. But that didn't explain to my satisfaction how they could change their whole lives and live in the cold and dirt for such long periods of time. I soon realized that Greenham Common is an experiment in alternative community building and that, more than anything else, it is the strong sense of community that has developed among the women that keeps the peace camp going.

— Rachel Johnson

The Greenham women have cut fences, danced on missile silos, entered the control towers, blocked the roads and generally laid siege to the base.

That support has taken many forms. Women around England have organized a Greenham "nightwatch" schedule, so that various groups take responsibility for sending women to stay up each night and watch for signs of the convoy. This takes the strain off the women who live there continually.

that destroyed campers' belongings during the recent wave of evictions went on strike, temporarily ending the evictions.

I am told that when the campers are evicted, the women are given a few minutes warning to gather up their personal belongings and that whatever is left is then fed into the munching



One of the Greenham Common campsites.

photo by Rachel Johnson

Short Circuits Short Circuits Short Circuits

CHINESE OFFER SPENT FUEL DISPOSAL TO EUROPEAN UTILITIES

China has offered to take permanent title to 4000 tons of spent nuclear fuel from European utilities for a fee of \$1,500 per kilogram. The Deputy Minister of the Chinese Ministry of Nuclear Industry and Director of the China Nuclear Energy Industry Corporation (CNEIC), Wang Shisheng, signed a letter of intent for the transfer on February 11 while visiting West Germany and Switzerland.

The letter was signed with a consortium of three West German nuclear companies: Nukem, Transnuklear and Alfred Hempel KG. According to a Nukem statement, the Germans will serve as CNEIC agents for the spent fuel business in all countries in Western Europe.

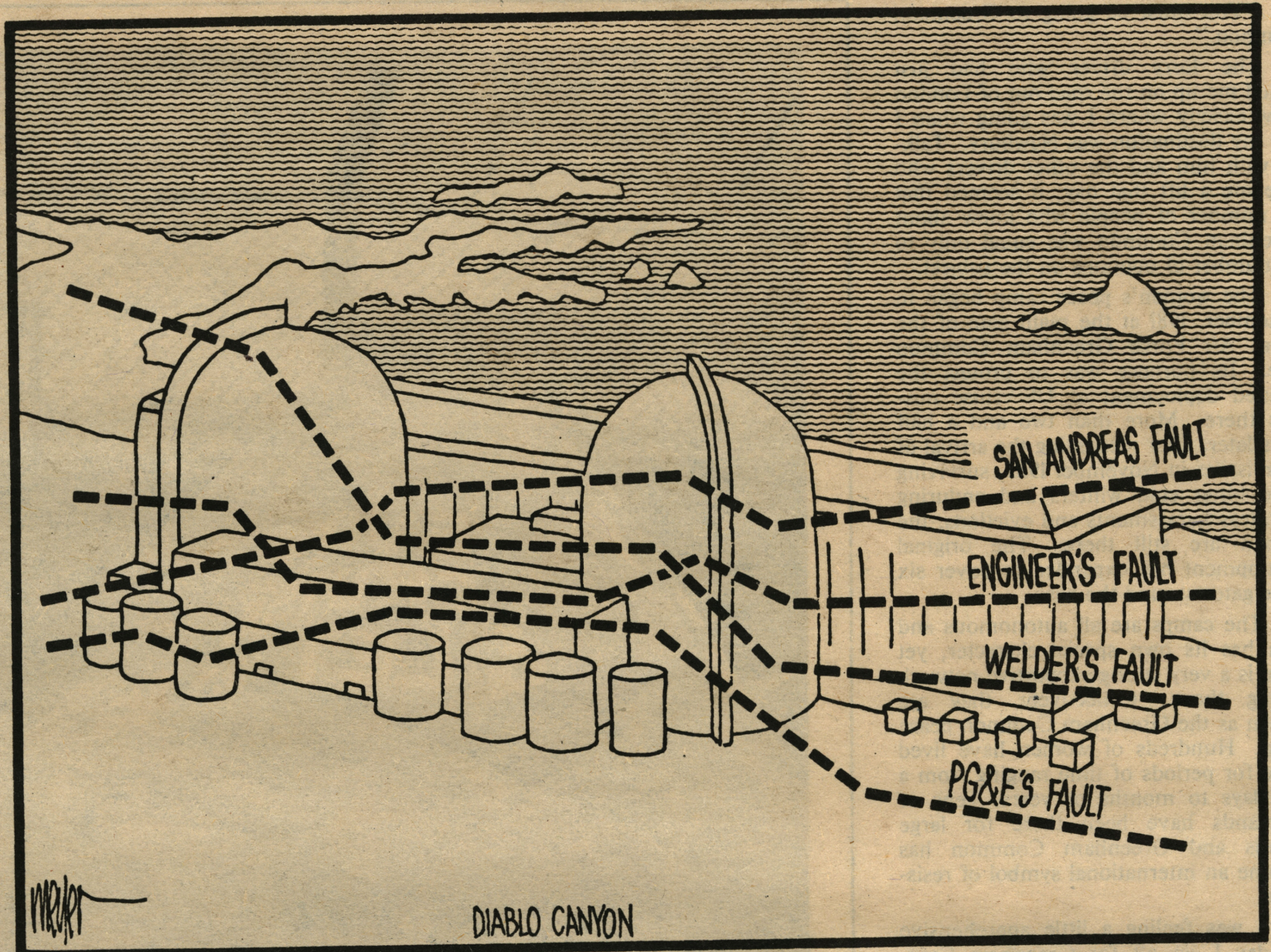
The spent fuel would be transferred under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency, of which China has just become a member, even though China has so far not agreed to the agency's safeguards.

The German-Chinese letter of intent does not specify what would happen to the spent fuel once it got to China, but it is expected that China will dispose of it in the Gobi Desert. According to one source who met with the CNEIC delegates, the Chinese are planning to build a large commercial reprocessing plant in northwestern China in which plutonium, usable in nuclear weapons, would be separated out of the spent fuel. China is also planning a temporary storage facility, according to the West German newspaper *Tageszeitung*.

In Western Europe potential business is believed to exist — Switzerland, Sweden and Spain have indicated interest in direct spent fuel disposal. What's more, the spent fuel takeover is seen as an opportunity for Austria to put into service its only nuclear reactor in Zwentendorf. Its operation was prohibited by a referendum, largely because no solution for the waste problem had been found.

The Chinese are not offering to take vitrified waste from reprocessing done outside China, but they are leaving open the possibility of taking such waste in the future when and if they develop a capability for handling it.

Despite the high costs, West German utilities might be happy with such a "solution." The contracts they have for reprocessing at the La Hague plant in northern France have proven to be no solution at all. La Hague is so far behind schedule that West German utilities may have to take back their unprocessed fuel. — WISE



NO NUKES FOR SPERM BANK

He's healthy, he's handsome, he's intelligent and he wants his sperm donated to a woman who plans to conceive through artificial insemination. But his offer has been refused because he works with radiation at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

"Do you think our recipients are going to choose him when they have a choice of 25 other men that may work somewhere else, and are just as good looking and intelligent?" asked Robin Stuart, manager of The Sperm Bank of Northern California. "Even if he worked driving trucks that delivered papers to the labs, we wouldn't accept him."

"We are not experts on radiation, but we do know enough to know that the radiation may affect sperm," said Stuart. The man "had an outrageously high sperm count, and in most cases we would have been happy with that, but because of his exposure we didn't know the cause of the count."

— *Eureka Times-Standard* 2/25/84

WHERE HAS ALL THE URANIUM GONE?

Over 1700 pounds of enriched uranium — about 85 atomic bombs' worth — have been reported missing since 1947 from the government's nuclear weapons plant at Oak Ridge. 178 pounds of it disappeared between 1979 and 1982, even after security and accounting procedures at the top-secret plant were tightened.

According to the Scripps-Howard News Service, which reported the story, government documents don't suggest that any of the uranium has been stolen. When uranium has been missing from other facilities, government officials have blamed faulty bookkeeping or said that small amounts of the element could have been lost in the production process.

The Scripps-Howard article said a 1980 classified government report cited "very serious" security problems at Oak Ridge, including broken locks and inadequate supervision of guards. The plant makes components for virtually all of the nation's atomic weapons systems.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2/16/84

CATCHING UP IS HARD TO DO

The Reagan Administration justifies its plans for massive increases in the military budget over the next few years by claiming that the US must catch up with superior Soviet weaponry supposedly deployed while the US was lulled by detente during the 70's. But the latest annual report by Donald DeLauer, the Pentagon's top scientist, shows that any catching up will have to be on the Russian side.

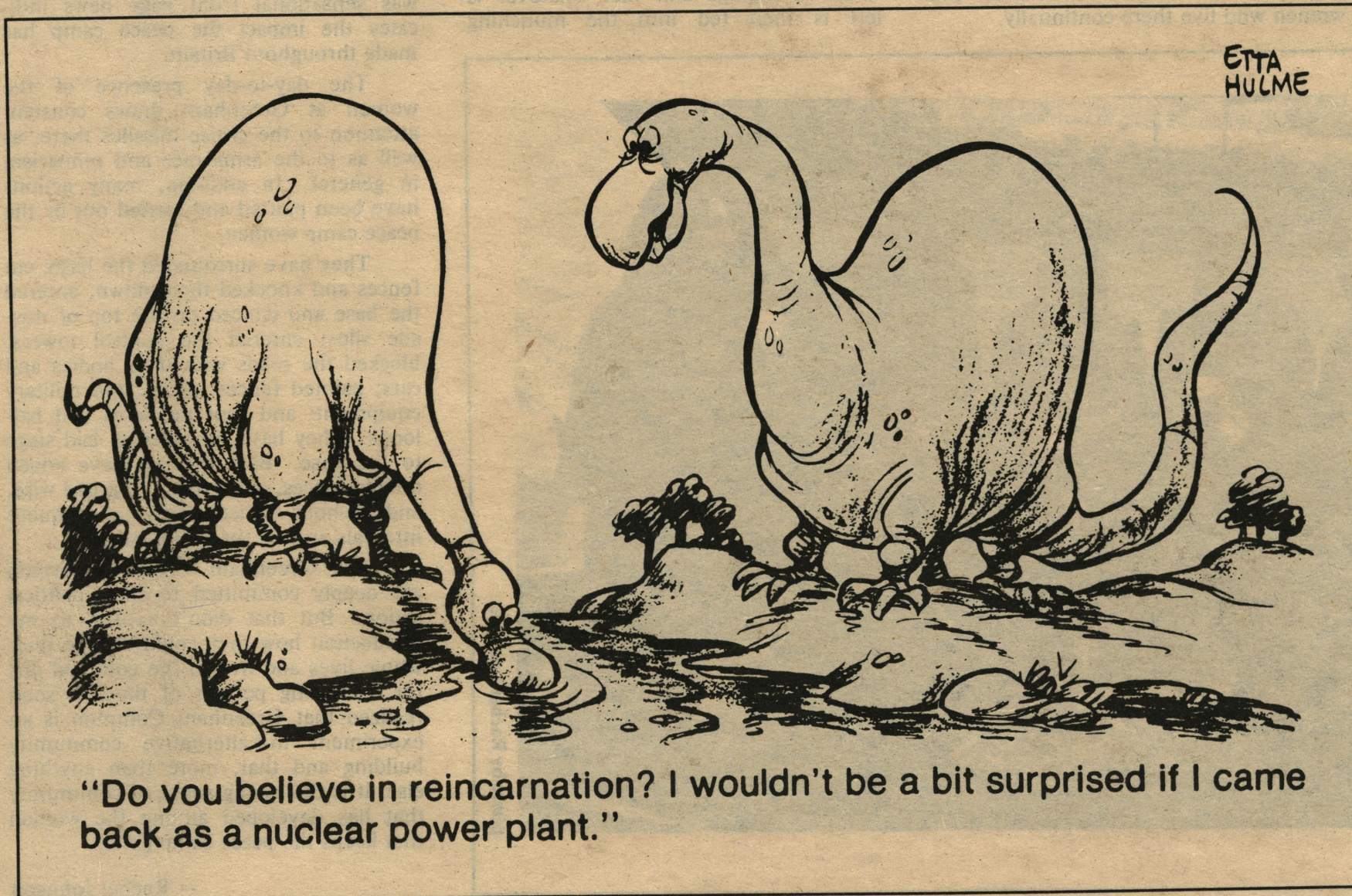
DeLauer states that the United States leads the Soviets in virtually every basic technology that influences military capabilities, including sensors, optics, life sciences, materials, microelectronics, propulsion, radar, robotics, signal processing, guidance, navigation, manufacturing, and telecommunications. He also says most US weapons systems are superior to their Soviet counterparts — and the distance is widening, not narrowing.

Since last year, for example, the Soviets have lost their edge in conventional warheads, and the US has improved its lead in computers, software, and submarine detection. According to the report, the Soviets spent \$100 billion more than the US over the last decade on weapons for their conventional forces, yet the US is equal or superior to the Soviet Union in 17 out of 18 tactical weapons systems. In strategic arms, the Soviets are behind in bombers, submarines, and submarine-launched missiles, equal in land-based missiles, and ahead only in anti-aircraft missiles.

DeLauer attributes these deficiencies to "inherent weaknesses" in the Soviet Union's weapons research efforts. "Equipment and instrumentation shortages plague most Soviet R&D efforts, and R&D organizations are often compelled to design and manufacture their own instruments. . . Computer services are in especially short supply. The USSR also tends to follow the United States in technology because Soviet rewards are for maintaining schedule rather than technical innovations that win contracts. . . Soviet engineering manpower is used inefficiently and is frequently overspecialized."

So here's a modest proposal: if the Reagan administration is really so obsessed with "restoring the military balance," maybe it should just give the Russians nine or so strategic weapons systems, along with some computers and instruments to give them a fair chance in the future. How 'bout it, boys?

— based on *Science*, 16 March 1984



"Do you believe in reincarnation? I wouldn't be a bit surprised if I came back as a nuclear power plant."

Short Circuits Short Circuits Short Circuits

PG&E SALES DOWN, PROFITS UP

For years, PG&E public relations officials have been pointing to the company's inflated predictions of future energy demand in order to justify expensive boondoggles like Diablo Canyon and the Helms hydroelectric plant. But PG&E's 1983 annual report is out, and it tells a different story.

For the second year in a row, PG&E's electric sales not only failed to grow, but actually dropped slightly. The drop in natural gas sales was an impressive 10%, which follows an even bigger drop in 1982. In fact, PG&E's customers have cut their gas use by a full third over the last 10 years.

Don't feel too sorry for PG&E, though. Although sales may have shrunk recently, profits over the same two year period surged 39%, from \$565 million in 1981 to \$788 million in 1983. And the new annual report proudly boasts that profits on utility operations are up to "99 percent of the return on investment authorized by the [Public Utilities] Commission."

In an interview with *Wall Street Week* commentator Louis Ruckeyser, included in the report, PG&E chair Fredrick Mielke admits that PG&E plans to crank up its rates another 9% when the first Diablo reactor goes into operation. But count your blessings, suckers: that hike "is a far cry from many other nuclear plants which require rate boosts of 40, 50 or more percent."

Mielke follows up with the familiar — and unsubstantiated — claim that customers will somehow get that money back later in the plant's life, a statement at odds with nuclear experience elsewhere. The interview then heads off into a discussion of how PG&E is going to spend all the money it will get from Diablo on all sorts of short-term projects, so that PG&E will be able "to earn on that capital promptly."

It's all very cozy, as commissioned interviews usually are. Ruckeyser somehow never gets around to asking why PG&E's customers should pay anything for Diablo, a \$5 billion bungle which is entirely the responsibility of the company's management.

— Bob Van Scoy
LAT staff

THE ISLAMIC BOMB

Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, a leading Pakistani scientist, said February 9 that Pakistan now has the capacity to enrich uranium. He also hinted that Pakistani scientists could produce an atomic bomb if they received an order to do so.

Dr. Khan said in an interview with the Pakistani daily newspaper *Nawae Waqi* (Voice of the Time) that "Pakistan has broken the Western monopoly in the uranium enrichment field." Furthermore, Khan said that if the President of Pakistan should give an "important task" to the team of dedicated scientists, then the scientists would not disappoint their country.

Khan's scientific bragging was not welcomed by the Pakistani government, which claimed to be completely surprised by his pronouncements. A government spokesperson said February 12 that they were trying to determine whether the newspaper correctly reported Khan's statements.

Despite diplomatic denials, there is little doubt that Pakistan can now enrich uranium. In a recent speech at an Islamabad seminar, retired Pakistani General A.I. Akram proposed nuclear cooperation between Pakistan and India. "Pakistan has an edge over India in uranium enrichment and India is way ahead in reprocessing," he said. According to *Nucleonics Week* (February 9, 1984), "Akram's speech marked the first time that a Pakistani official has acknowledged uranium enrichment capability."

Last October, Dr. Khan was tried, convicted, and sentenced to four years imprisonment in Amsterdam for stealing nuclear secrets from the enrichment company URENCO. The Pakistani government has appealed the conviction. Khan, who will certainly now be known as the father of the Islamic Bomb, was quoted in Weissman and Krosney's book, *The Islamic Bomb* (1981), as saying, "I want to question the bloody holier-than-thou attitudes of the Americans and the British. These bastards are God-appointed guardians of the world to stockpile hundreds of thousands of nuclear warheads and have the God-given authority of carrying out explosions every month. But if we start a modest program, we are the satans, the devils."

— WISE

ONLY YOU CAN



RUSSIAN NUKE FACTORY SINKING

The atomic euphoria of the early 1970's wasn't limited to the West. The Soviet Union, too, was sold on power "too cheap to meter," and its 1971 five-year plan called for building the equivalent of 30 large reactors over the next decade. But the Soviet nuclear program is literally crumbling, and has met only a third of its energy goals.

Russian nuclear plants have usually been built in the same way as their Western counterparts, and have suffered the same problems of mismanagement, inadequate materials, and poor quality control. The Soviet planners' "solution" to these problems was to build a centralized factory for producing nukes, designed to build complete, finished reactors ready for installation at construction sites. This concept was widely hailed as the wave of the future by nuclear advocates worldwide.

Construction of the huge, monolithic factory — called "Atommash" — began in 1972 on the shores of the Tsimlyanskoye Sea. A new steel mill was built alongside it to provide materials, and a new city was built to house the factory's workers. The six-mile long complex was to produce eight finished nuclear plants a year, to be towed by barge to sites in Russia and Eastern Europe. It was to be in full production by 1985.

As with many an American nuke, construction of the facility was begun with inadequate geological studies — and water from the nearby sea, which is at a higher elevation, soon went to work. By 1983, collapsing walls and foundations had already led to several serious accidents. The huge factory is literally sinking, and the only options seem to be to abandon it, move the whole thing to another location, or permanently freeze the ground beneath it. The last option seems unimaginably difficult, and moving the plant might delay the Soviet nuclear program for a decade or kill it altogether.

The Atommash debacle and the failure of the USSR's nuclear program in general have led to unprecedented shakeups in the Soviet Government. The head of construction for all Soviet nuclear plants has been fired, the Minister of Energy and Electrification has been severely reprimanded and has had his nuclear responsibilities taken away, and two high construction officials have been fired or transferred. The Politburo

has also created a new nuclear regulatory agency and a new corporation for nuclear power construction. It remains to be seen whether these personnel changes will be any more effective in solving the problems than similar reshufflings in Western nuclear programs.

— from *Not Man Apart*, 4/84

REAGAN APPOINTS NEW STAR COMMANDER

The Reagan administration is getting serious about its "Star Wars" missile defense system, already budgeting \$2 billion for it in fiscal 1985 and selecting a new director for the program.

Air Force Lieutenant General James Abramson, present director of the space shuttle program, will now head research for the effort, projected to cost \$26 billion (before cost overruns). Reagan's plan envisions orbiting automated battle stations that would fire high-energy beams of laser light at incoming missiles to destroy them in flight.

Forty-eight companies awarded government contracts last year are studying the new satellite and anti-missile technology. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger discounted critics who think the idea isn't feasible, saying, "each year may open up new avenues, which, when pursued, may lead us to a conclusion a lot more quickly than we thought we might otherwise do."

— *San Francisco Chronicle*, 3/28/84

BRAZIL TO JOIN NUCLEAR CLUB

A leading scientist in Brazil, the nuclear physicist Jose Goldemberg, said that Brazil is developing a project for the production of an atomic bomb. In an article published in early February in the newspaper *O Globo*, Goldemberg is quoted as saying that the program is being developed "parallel to the official" nuclear power program in Brazil.

Brazil has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It did sign the Treaty of Tlatelolco under the condition that it reserves the right to explode a nuclear device "for peaceful purposes."

— WISE

A Short History of WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

THE WAY I SEE IT, BRAD, SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE PURITANICAL PRACTICE AND THE HEDONISTIC GULLIBILITY IS THE FUSION OF PERMANENCE AND CHANGE, MADNESS AND COOL REASON — YEAH?

THIS GEEZER'S TOTALLY GA-GA?

ABSOLUTELY, ZEKE.



TULSA - 24 hrs

Last minute testimony

Whether from worries about getting caught once again licensing an unsafe plant, or pangs of conscience, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission decided on March 27 to delay voting on a low power test license for PG&E's Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant. The 3-to-2 decision came on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident.

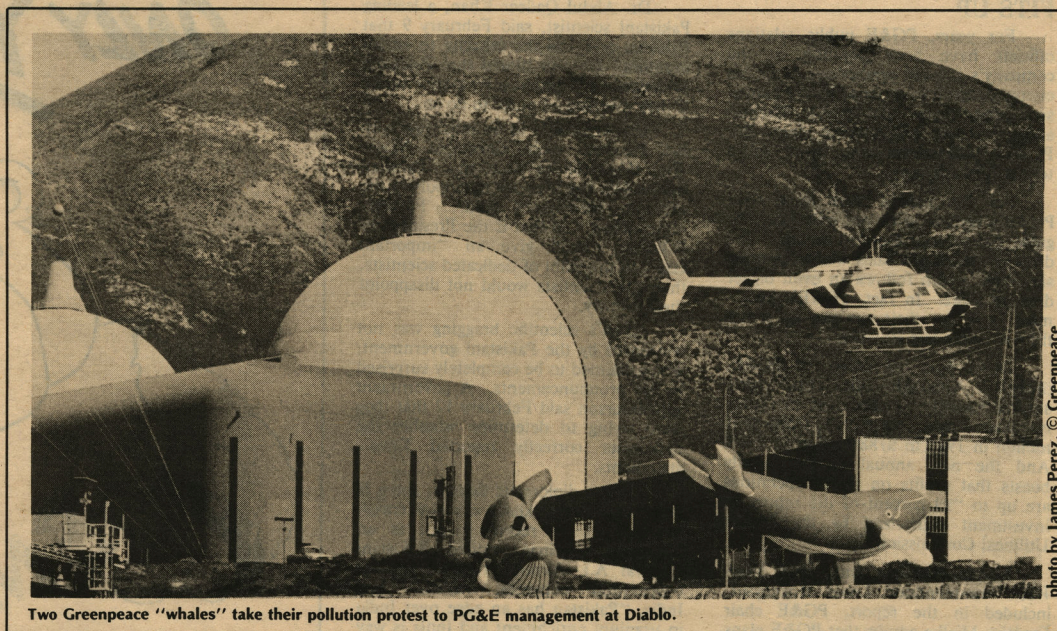
One thing is certain — the evidence put before the Commission by Isa Yin, the NRC's top pipe-stress expert, definitively contradicted the reports given to the commission by his colleagues. Yin told the Commissioners that there were, in fact, a "large number of design violations," and it would be "unwise to ignore them."

Shaken by Yin's testimony and concerned about inexperienced plant operators, the NRC Commissioners decided to postpone a vote on low power testing pending an investigation by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards.

The NRC staff has attempted to discredit Yin's findings since his arrival at Diablo Canyon near the end of 1983. Two weeks into his investigation, Yin, who has ten years experience with the NRC, and has worked for Bechtel, recommended delaying the plant's license.

Yin told the Commissioners that hundreds of snubbers, designed to brace pipes during an earthquake, may have to be replaced. Furthermore, the pipes they are protecting should also be reinspected because the NRC's sampling inspection program is inadequate.

Beginning low power testing, Yin said, would make later inspections more



Two Greenpeace "whales" take their pollution protest to PG&E management at Diablo.

photo by James Perez, © Greenpeace

whistleblowers charges. PG&E then supplied the NRC with massive documentation saying no problem existed — and the staff accepted this as fact in its report to the NRC Commissioners.

But when the workers reviewed the documents which PG&E provided, they found contradictions with the company's own internal memos. According to Tom

Project has assembled evidence that PG&E still had an inadequate QA/QC system during the plant's reversion program between 1981 and 1983. According to one inspector, in a sworn deposition to the NRC, "Personnel may still be reading the blueprints backwards." The inspector explained, "A meeting was held in January 1983 to clear up the confusion of whether to view blueprints from the 'inside looking out' or from the 'outside looking in.' Nothing was resolved. In fact, management conducting the meeting couldn't agree on how to view the blueprints. The inspectors were ordered back to work while the managers resolved the issue."

Pop goes the airlock

The plant has been plagued with problems since PG&E declared it ready to operate. On February 24, the outer door of the containment building popped open while workers were walking through the inner door. The pressure change created a wind so strong it actually lifted two men into the containment building while two other men held onto scaffolding and a door jamb to keep from being sucked in. Earlier that day, workers had twice been trapped inside the airlock chamber and emergency crews had to be called in to get them out. The door problems apparently stem from the hinges, which are fourteen years old — and already worn out even though the plant has not yet operated.

The NRC said the mishaps don't violate its rules because the plant was not radioactive, and the breach of containment lasted less than an hour. But

proper operation of the airlock, which now seems unlikely, will be vital to both worker and public safety when Diablo is running.

The Residual Heat Removal system, which helps to maintain core cooling in emergencies, suffered spurious valve closures twice in the last two years. (A stuck valve started the Three Mile Island nuclear accident.) The NRC calculates the likelihood of this kind of malfunction as six in a million — but it has already happened twice at Diablo.

A security guard pointed out that at least twice in one week and a half, the containment area has been closed due to lack of oxygen and the release of toxic fumes from paint on pipes heated during hot function testing.

Plumbing problems also are materializing as water is pumped through the plant. According to the guard, "There are so many pipe leaks in the hot function tests that crews are working constantly to fix them, with some areas closed off continuously and water everywhere you look."

Those responsible for checking the calculations "autographed drawings instead of seriously reviewing and approving them."

difficult because the inspectors would have to wear heavy protective masks and suits.

The official NRC staff report said otherwise. After reviewing 219 of the 500 allegations submitted by 47 Diablo workers attesting to poor construction practices, the staff concluded none of them "indicate problems of such magnitude (either individually or collectively) that should preclude authorization for criticality and low power operation."

PG&E's Dick Davin told the *Oakland Tribune*, "If we were to stop testing at Diablo until every [allegation] is resolved, [the opponents] would keep them coming in so the plant would never operate."

Rather than listening to the dissident workers or to their NRC colleague Yin, who submitted three critical reports last December, NRC Region 5 management asked PG&E to respond to the

Devine, legal director of the Government Accountability Project and attorney for the whistleblowers, "We've caught PG&E redhanded in their bluff, but the NRC isn't interested in dealing with it."

The problems are so serious that the Mothers for Peace, intervenors against the power plant, and seven other environmental groups have petitioned the NRC not to vote on low power testing until an independent auditor investigates the worker allegations and recommends a corrective program. The petition also asks for a reversion of the design quality assurance.

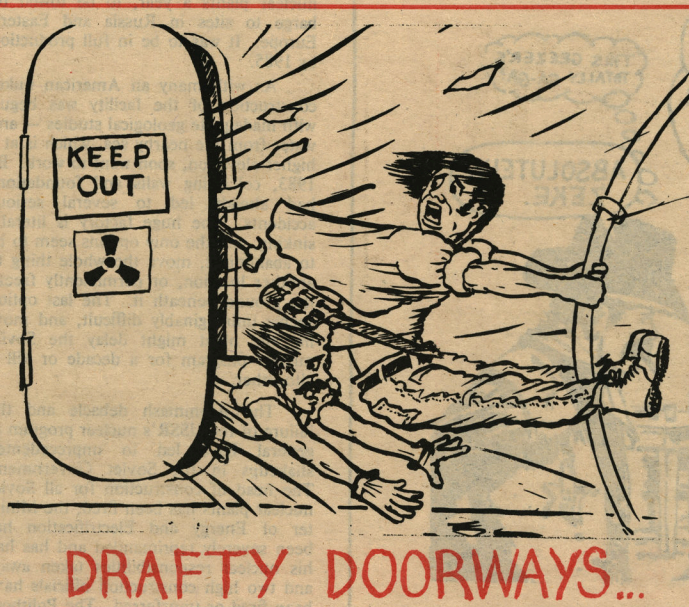
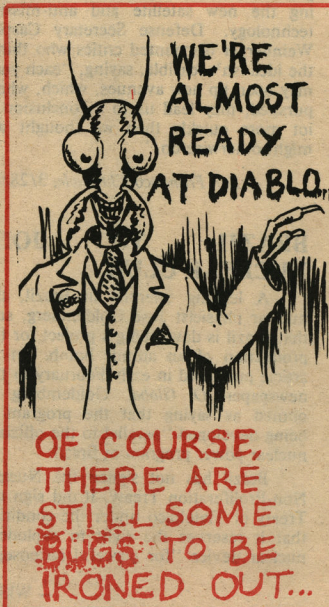
PG&E's own internal audits show the Pullman Power Corporation, a principal contractor at Diablo, had no quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) program. The NRC is now trying to discredit the conclusions of those audits. (See *IAT*, October-November 1983.)

The Government Accountability

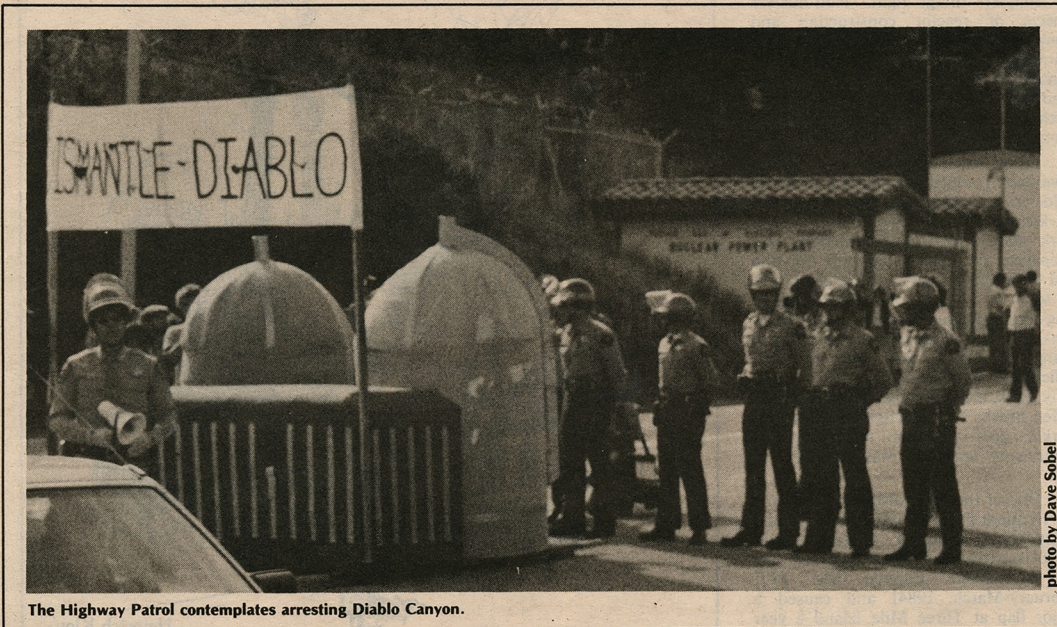
"There are so many areas are closed constantly everywhere you look"

The security leaks, too

Abalone Alliance members' uninvited visits inside the double security



y delays Diablo license



The Highway Patrol contemplates arresting Diablo Canyon.

fence surrounding Diablo are frustrating the security staff. A Pinkerton guard told the NRC, "The public should not remain ignorant of what is happening at Diablo Canyon." Three people have made it inside the double fence before they were noticed.

"Our security force is weakest just at the time it should be the most effective — as the plant is about to go critical. If a religious chanter could get inside the double security fence, I wonder what a professional terrorist could do," the guard continued.

Information on the security breaches is being withheld from the public. The police report for Thomas Miller, for example, who was arrested inside the double fence February 20th, listed apprehension at the front gate — seven miles from the sensitive area where he was actually taken into custody.

The security guard explained that management is requiring 12 hour work days, which is making the guards less alert. "Guards often do not pay close

just go through the motions. Those of us who have maintained pride in our work think our job as security has become an embarrassment."

Shining it on

Security guards are not the only people burdened by PG&E's repair program. Design engineers work 80 hour weeks and complain there is not time to adequately check the design of pipe hangers. The minimum time needed to document one pipe hanger is 9-12 hours, but the engineers are not allowed to spend more than 4 1/2 hours per hanger.

All the hanger calculations are supposed to be double checked, but field engineers complain that the people responsible for checking them "autographed the drawings instead of seriously reviewing and approving them. This happened because the tight time schedule made it impossible for them to study everything they were approving."

The list of problems goes on. Although the NRC admits PG&E hired unqualified welders and failed to provide adequate training, it doesn't appear concerned with locating defective welding. Many inspectors don't themselves know how to weld and could not be expected to recognize bad welds in any case. Workers also say that management allowed welding on pipes filled with cold water, a practice that can cause welds to crack months after the work is finished.

On December 28, 1983, PG&E management issued procedural modifications instructing quality control inspectors to accept welds that were not required by the design, and to accept the

absence of welds that were. In essence, they were instructed to accept whatever existed. One inspector said "I could not tolerate the operational philosophy that I was subject to. . . after a while even the good money was insufficient to keep me quiet about some of the practices."

Additional problems will materialize if the plant goes into operation. Inspectors

ducted for PG&E by Behaviordyne Psychological Associates. To isolate the "security risks," all workers are required to answer a list of 500 yes or no questions which include:

"My sex life is satisfactory."

"I am very seldom troubled by constipation."

"I do not always tell the truth."

"I would like to be a florist."

"I believe in the second coming of Christ."

"I never indulge in any unusual sex practices."

Three employees of PG&E subcontractor Pullman Power flunked the test, and PG&E announced over the loudspeaker that the men were security risks. The men said everyone knew "security risk" in fact meant that they had failed to pass the psychological tests and interviews. Jack Doody, Larry Brindle and Harold Williams were examined by their own psychologists — who found them stable — and PG&E commissioned a third opinion who also found them OK. The company rehired all three with full back pay. However, the men have filed suit in Superior Court for slander.

More Diablo actions

While the NRC pushes towards licensing Diablo Canyon, protests continue. On February 16, two people from the Greenpeace boat Rainbow Warrior landed at Diablo Cove, inflated their 25-foot-long whale costumes, and demanded to see the plant manager. They bore a petition against Company dumping of toxins into the ocean. Two California Grey whales swam by,

Twice in a week and a half the containment area was closed due to lack of oxygen and release of toxic fumes.

tors point out that the finished plant doesn't correspond with the original design documents given to plant operators. During an emergency, operators trying to locate a valve on the design sheets might not be able to find it.

Behavioral Modification

PG&E began the "Behavioral Observation Program" in January, which is designed to determine the psychological "fitness for duty" of employees with unescorted security clearances. Supervisors are required to file annual reports on subordinates' psychological profiles, and are to report any unusual changes in behavior. Danger signs that supervisors are told to watch for include "refusal to take orders," "challenging a supervisor's authority," "being extremely critical of the company," or "worrying excessively about radiation overexposure."

Supplemental tests are being con-

perhaps offering their support. A month later, seventy-five people danced in the Irish Hills behind Diablo over the Saint Patrick's Day weekend.

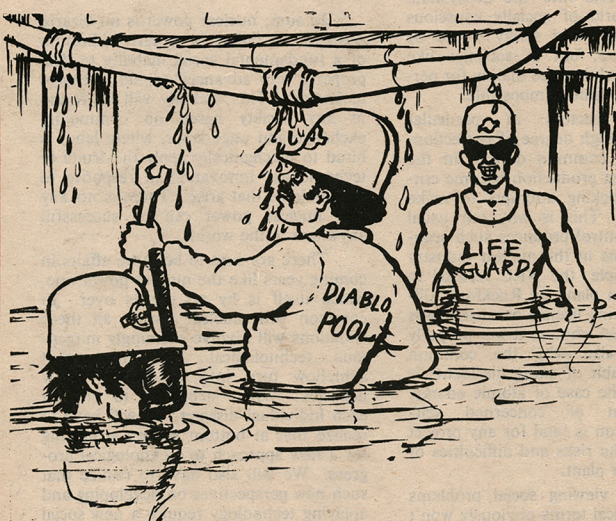
On March 25, the day before the NRC hearing, 1200 people marched outside the Diablo gates, and twenty were arrested, bringing arrest totals for the action to 455.

On the day of the NRC vote, protestors rallied outside PG&E corporate headquarters in San Francisco, while Abalone Alliance members Cynthia Sharpe and Barbara Levy attended the Commission meeting in Washington D.C. "Although we didn't talk directly to the Commissioners, we wrote them letters and they knew we were there," Levy said. "I think it is important for us to be there to apply pressure when the decisions are made."

— Mark Evanoff
IAT staff

pipe leaks that crews try to fix them. Some continuously with water

attention at x-ray screens on individuals who pass through security machines. Similarly, because there are so many padlocks, guards lose concentration and



LEAKY PIPES...



DOZEY GUARDS.. © MICHAELSON'84



Social roots of the nuclear power fiasco

Seabrook, Shoreham, Zimmer, Byron, Diablo Canyon. . . this winter has certainly been a disastrous one for nuclear power. Everywhere, utilities have been kept on the defensive by a stream of revelations concerning shoddy construction work at reactor sites. Worse yet for the utilities, massive cost overruns (1500% in the case of Diablo Canyon) have destroyed their borrowing power. The electric companies' ability to bring new atomic power plants on line is now very much open to question.

This financial and technical tangle is quite a turnaround from the electric utilities' traditional position in the American economy. Until about a dozen years ago these companies were frequently pointed to as an example *par excellence* of American organization and knowhow. Year after year they produced more electricity with an ever more sophisticated system while maintaining the lowest rates in the world. Utility profits were considered guaranteed, and their stock was recommended as the safest around, perfect for widows and orphans.

A common explanation for the problems utilities have encountered with nuclear energy is that they moved into the field too quickly, before the technology had been properly developed and tested. The resulting constant design changes added immensely to costs and contributed to disorganization. Even finished reactors still resemble construction sites more than they do operating power plants. Now that the electric companies are finally getting an idea of what they committed themselves to, they are finding that various alternatives to nuclear power would have been much cheaper.

Such an analysis reduces the trouble with nuclear power to an inexperienced management dealing with an immature, and ultimately impractical, technology. A lengthy, well-documented elaboration of this argument may be found in the December, 1983 Worldwatch Institute Report, *Nuclear Power: The Market Test*, by Christopher Flavin.

More than just technically unfeasible

The source of the utilities' problems must be much deeper than that, however. One of the striking features of the tales of woe coming from nuclear

power plants is that the utilities and their construction companies cannot do even the simplest things right. Non-nuclear aspects of reactor construction and operation are botched up, too. At Diablo Canyon, there was, of course, the famous blueprint mixup that went unnoticed for years while all the anti-earthquake supports were installed in the wrong place.

More recently, workers at Diablo have been complaining that some of the welds are so "abominable" that they can be kicked off. At Shoreham, a New York state report recommending that ratepayers be held liable only for the first \$2.3 billion spent on the plant (out of total of at least \$4 billion) found long-term serious management problems. Among other things, the utility is losing \$35,000 a day due to such difficulties with labor as "late starts, early quits, alcohol abuse, and protracted coffee breaks" — precisely the kinds of worker goof-offs that the traditional supervisory structure was designed to stop.

One of the most disturbing issues is the frequent firing of internal critics and whistleblowers during nuclear power plant controversies. This occurred last fall at Diablo Canyon [see *IAT*, February-March 1984] and caused a major flap at Three Mile Island a year ago [see *IAT*, June-July, 1983]. Now, penalizing conscientiousness is self-defeating behavior. It is an obvious impediment to the success of any project, whether involving nuclear energy or not.

These kinds of occurrences are not new. They happen in every steel mill and auto plant in the country. Yet in nuclear generating plants, they take on such importance that complete organizational breakdown results.

This has nothing to do with the exact maturity of nuclear generating technology, and another ten years of research or radically new designs are not going to make any difference. Rather, the nuclear power experience reveals the limits of what is technologically attainable under modern social conditions. The obstacles to atomic energy stem from a combination of its size, complexity, dangers and, especially, the setting in which it has been applied.

Nuclear power was supposed to solve the problem posed by the rapid



Heinrich Kley

exhaustion of nonrenewable energy sources. This is primarily a social problem springing from the consumerist nature of our society. The utilities did not see it this way, of course. They promoted increased demand for electricity. After all, the more electricity they sold, the more money they made. Their way of dealing with the issues raised by growing electrical consumption was therefore entirely technical: ever larger plants and ever more complex electrical grids.

The path the electric companies took involves the use of increasingly capital intensive technology. This type of technology is in general favored by bureaucratic production and marketing units for reasons that go beyond the profit motive to the question of control. Thus, when atomic energy was proposed, the utilities' entire economic position and history led them to embrace it as a cheap, abundant source of energy that would further ensure their hold on electrical production. In going nuclear, however, the utilities finally ran afoul of the basic drawbacks to the technological strategy they had pursued.

The end of the road

In the first place, highly capital intensive technology, which consists of enormously complex machinery and electrical circuitry to replace human labor, is very difficult to operate properly because of the lack of human oversight and constant repair work it entails. There is also great potential for environmental disruption stemming from the large amounts of alien material such technology injects into the ecosystem. Even in a world of socially conscious people, reliability and safety would be hard to achieve, but in societies like ours, where work is done mainly for personal gain, it is almost impossible.

Nuclear reactors in particular require such a high degree of perfectionism that very common defects in the way we organize production become critical factors blocking attempts to make reactors work. This is why our usual poor quality control produces such scandalous situations in the nuclear industry that, for example, the NRC refused to grant the Byron plant (in Rockford, Illinois) an operating license because it was impossible to tell whether it was properly built. It is also why the common bureaucratic habit of axing dissidents is so serious in the case of atomic energy. Discouragement of concerned self-critical evaluation is fatal for any project that presents the risks and difficulties of a nuclear power plant.

Secondly, viewing social problems in solely technical terms obviously won't work over the long run since it doesn't deal with root causes. Such an approach, which is a central feature of commodity-oriented societies, merely

relies on new technology to provide still more goods and services to make people's lives more pleasant. But social problems ultimately require changes in social organization to resolve. The delay in making such changes means that society gets more and more out of hand while the technology used in an attempt to preserve social equilibrium grows so unwieldy that it has its own deleterious effects.

This is just what has happened in the area of energy supply. At this point it would make a lot more sense to focus on conservation rather than to continue expanding production. Eliminating the present great waste of energy would reduce the total amount of required labor time as well as the damage human populations do to the environment. However, energy conservation implies great changes in lifestyles, urban planning, industrial organization, etc. Concentrating on conservation would also mean totally redirecting the electrical industry and breaking the current close linkage between technology and consumption.

For these reasons, energy conservation is not taken up in any serious way in this country. Electric companies have chosen instead to turn to nuclear power. This choice is consistent with their traditional role, but from a rational point of view it represents technological overkill. Nuclear power is much too grandiose and risky a scheme for the use to which it has been put. It can never prove feasible within the contemporary economic context.

A harbinger of things to come

In sum, nuclear power is no bizarre mistake. Its failure is an early indication of a fundamental social inability to deal properly with advanced capital intensive technology. This inability will be found in any society based on commodity exchange and wage labor, where labor is hired to mechanically apply the fruits of technological innovation in response to all problems that arise. There is no way that nuclear power can be successful anywhere in the world.

There are sure to be more affairs in coming years like the nuclear power one, which itself is by no means over. In common with nuclear power, all these situations will involve seemingly miraculous technological innovations that somehow turn into dangerous, costly debacles. When struggling to prevent each individual disaster, we will have to realize that at bottom we are struggling for a new approach to technological progress. We will also have to realize that such new perspectives on developing and applying technology require a new social vision. It is only through profound social change that we can hope to prevail.

— David Gilden



by Franz Masereel

“Prolifers for Survival”

Beware Bishop bedfellows

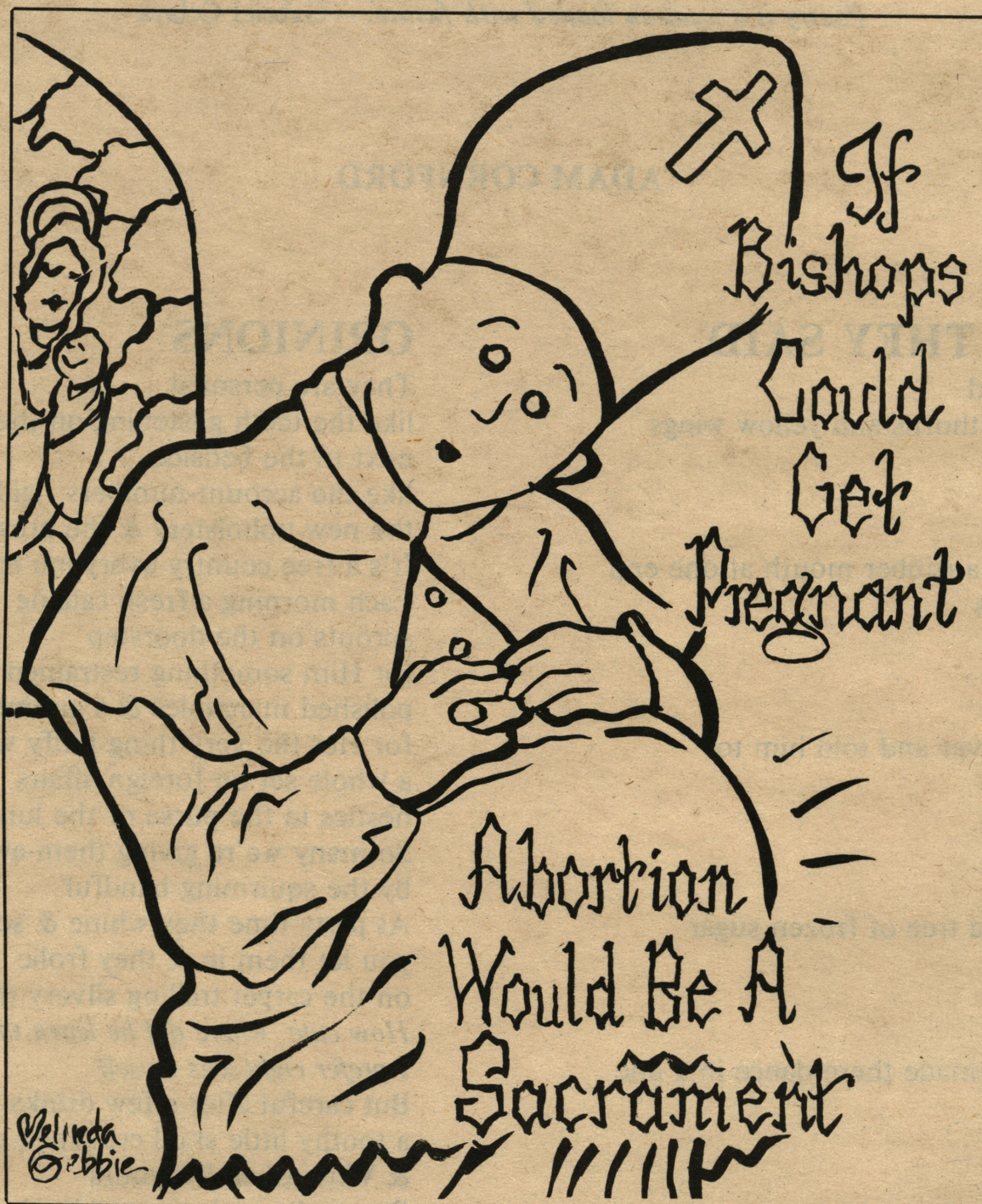
Well, what was *your* reaction when the US Catholic bishops came out for nuclear disarmament? If you're like me and a lot of other peace activists, you probably found yourself looking with a far more benevolent eye than before at the Church's moral influence, its temporal power, its sheer numerical force. After all, this weight was being swung over to *our* side, now. How many of us took the time to mumble a warning about peace politics sometimes making strange bedfellows?

Nearly a year has passed since that historic pastoral letter against the nuclear arms race. Now the bishops are apparently working on a statement calling the capitalist system into question and proposing some serious economic reforms.

Meanwhile, in mid-March, one of the principal authors of the peace declaration was installed as Archbishop of New York and took that solemn opportunity to speak out on a major social issue — not the bomb, not economic justice here and in the Third World, but the fact that our society has become what he calls a “culture of abortion.” His colleague, the Archbishop of Chicago, who was the chair of the bishops' War and Peace Committee last year, has now slid over to the same slot on the Pro-Life Activities Committee.

Nor is it just bishops who are making the connection. That demonstrator some of us spotted at Livermore last June or in downtown San Francisco in October with a sign reading “Prolifers for Survival” was not the isolated eccentric I, at least, took her for, but represented a national organization.

The 2500 members of Prolifers for Survival are convinced that nuclear arms and abortion are not only evil, but the *same* evil, and they are working to win peace people to oppose abortion as they win anti-choice people to peace. If we didn't worry about our strange bedfellows last year, it's clearly time to give some hard thought to consistency, contradictions and opportunism in move-



observation that so-called proliferers are concerned about human life only from conception to parturition. It was this sentiment the liberal *National Catholic Reporter* echoed when it declared in an editorial that “there is something wrong in a movement which... can value life in just one stage of human development.”

urged to move to a similar “consistency,” bringing our views on abortion into line with our other humane concerns.

Superficially, it's a seductive argument, and it has been espoused by some people whose peace credentials are impeccable. In fact, though, the contradiction is not in a movement that opposes the war machine and also reminds us that “a woman's life is a human life.” Rather, it resides in a Catholic hierarchy that calls for abolition of nuclear weapons while supporting both the oppression of women and the sexual restraints that are an intrinsic aspect of nuclear culture.

In the face of growing feminist rumblings on the part of Catholic lay and religious women, the Church has reasserted its position that the subordination of women is divinely ordained and that motherhood (it, too, divinely ordained) is the highest function of

movement in Israel has recently called attention to similar developments in that country: as the war in Lebanon continues, government policy and national culture become increasingly pro-natalist, increasingly retrograde on issues of women's rights.

Moreover, the Church's position on the social role of women is inseparable from its general view of human sexuality. Those of us who live in the Bay Area have been strikingly reminded, recently, of some consequences of that general view. There was the special commission appointed to define the Church's position on homosexuality, for instance, the one that declared it was okay to *be* one as long as you didn't *do* anything about it.

Gay sex necessarily dispenses with the sacrament of marriage and the possibility of reproduction, so it remains forbidden. Similarly, it was on the bishop's advice that San Francisco's mayor vetoed legislation designed to provide spousal rights for the “domestic partners,” gay or straight, of city workers who lived in couples but were unmarried. No benefits, the bishop pronounced, without benefit of clergy.

Even for married heterosexuals, however, the ban on contraception is meant to restrict sexual activity to its reproductive function. Rejection of the liberatory potential of sexual relations in the name of higher spiritual values reduces sex to its lowest common denominator, its most animal level. It also encourages an approach to sexuality that transforms people into private property and commodifies sex itself.

To give a person exclusive rights over another's sexuality is to make a human relationship into an object, something that can be owned, traded, fought over, something that can be manipulated and dominated. In this sense, it is part of a mechanistic approach to the natural universe that is part and parcel of the nuclear mentality.

None of this is meant to imply that an individual cannot have a sincere commitment to both disarmament and an anti-choice stance. For most of us, abortion is an issue with a confusing and very painful immediacy, and we tend to think about it differently from the way we think about other political questions. The real problem for the movement comes when an organized group exploits our confusions, cutting short the slow working out of what is really consistent and what is contradictory and replacing it with simplistic and fundamentally mistaken equations.

We have only to consider the way these groups talk about the *other* side —

While professing a commitment to peace, the bishops legislate the enforced maternity that has always characterized the world's most militaristic societies.

ments dedicated to safeguarding and liberating human existence.

Historically, being anti-choice has been associated with a cluster of anti-life attitudes: support for the arms race, the military draft and particular wars of aggression, the death penalty, the curtailment of welfare programs and traditional patriarchal authority in the family. In its most virulent forms, it has extended to defense of child abuse and wife-battering. It's a cluster fully warranting Congressman Barney Frank's

Now an editor of that very publication has written in a disarmament magazine about the linkage of the bomb and abortion, citing the bishops' efforts and those of Prolifers for Survival as moves towards greater consistency. “So far,” she tells us in *Nuclear Times*, “antinuclear organizations have neither publicly accepted nor taken exception to the bishops' twinning of the issues.” The peace constituency, which has tended to be associated with support for reproductive rights, is at least implicitly being

Rejection of the liberatory potential of sexual relations in the name of higher spiritual values reduces sex to its most animal level, the reproductive function.

female life. The whole range of human experience can be made available to women only to the extent that it does not interfere with their primary responsibility to bear and rear as many children as it pleases the Lord to send them.

It is these people who, placing gender above all other considerations in the determination of earthly destiny, deny women's full humanity and defend what New York's new Archbishop calls the “humanness” of a fertilized ovum. And it is they who, while professing a commitment to peace, legislate the enforced maternity that has always characterized the world's most militaristic societies.

It is those societies in which the war machine has been most highly mobilized — from Napoleonic France to Nazi Germany and beyond — that have insisted not only on women's prime reproductive duty, but also on a rigid division of sex roles and a system of cultural values supportive of “masculine” bellicosity. The Jewish women's peace

the *Nuclear Times* article bristles with phrases like “a hard sell... [with] potential for converting some proliferers to the antinuclear cause” — to convict them of blatant opportunism. And opportunism, even in a good cause, can never spread the kind of consciousness we need to build the movement.

It's a useful reminder for ourselves as well. If gratification over those 1.5 million copies of the pastoral letter on the arms race starts making us feel better about the institutional power of the Church; if, worse yet, we start muting our political analysis to avoid “turning off” a certain wing of the peace movement, that's *our* opportunism talking.

Of course, we welcome the bishops' declaration. But a true peace coalition can only survive on the basis of an unrelenting and principled critique of the other political positions they're now trying to wrap up in the same ideological package.

— Lillian S. Robinson

CRITICISM / SELF-CRITICISM

Lenin never had an abortion; neither did Che Guevara; or chairman Mao; or MarxnEngels; or any other soldier, statesman, theorist of the Revolution. In fact, in all of history, no one has ever had an abortion except a bunch of women.

Lillian S. Robinson



PAN: Poets Against Nukes

Poetry is a weapon loaded with future. —Gabriel Celaya

ADAM CORNFORD

SO YOU WANT TO THEY SAID

So you want to breathe they said
and they gave him a sky full of thorns and yellow wings

So you want to learn they said
and they put him in a box with a rubber mouth at one end
that ordered Forget your secrets

So you want to see they said
and they painted his eyeballs silver and told him to
look at the sun

So you want to eat they said
and they turned his bones into a tree of frozen sugar

So you want to build they said
and they cut off his fingers and made them dance in a line
under the clock

So you want to love they said
and they locked him into a telephone booth with a
bleeding echo

So you want to think they said
and they let him polish their skulls and he saw that
he was many

So you want to they said
and Yes he said and he tore their faces down from the air
and began

SLEIGHT OF HAND

It is long ago the low houses are crowded
around the marketplace with its tattered awnings
just as there off to one side
in that square full of eyes and brilliance
children are crowded
around a ragged conjuror
At first he flicks doves and flags from nowhere
turns eggs into barley red wine into red silk
his fingers whirling fluttering
Then he leans down to pull coin after coin
out of a girl's ear
until she is suddenly an old woman coughing and bent
He disappears behind his hundreds of hands
and the hands dance
over the little crowd they divide they multiply
The children find themselves
each one alone in a rank of identical strangers
facing a keyboard a rattling shuttle or a press
thumping like a heart
It is the conjuror's heart they are swung through his arteries
locked like oxygen into a traffic of bright iron
fed into vats and cables boiled out of his pores
into nothing
Then somehow the children are back in the same dusk
among the emptying stalls
the conjuror bows wiping the sweat from his bare chest
they do not know he will not tell them
those hundreds of dancing hands were their own
those hands which now they are clapping as they crowd
in his long shadow

OPINIONS

They are personal
like the teeth glistening on their wire
next to the bedside
like the account-numbers rigid between leather
the new upholstery & the prescription for rest
It's a free country everyone has their own
Each morning a fresh catalog
sprouts on the doorstep
for Him something restrained & conservative
polished mandibles & a gunmetal finish
for Her the very thing fluffy with lots of tiny bells
a whole set on foreign affairs
nestles in the purse or the lunchbox
So many we're giving them away
by the squirming handful
At party time they whine & scratch at the door
you let them in & they frolic
on the carpet trailing silvery threads of drool
How cute where did he learn that
I prefer eight legs myself
But careful after a few drinks they can get nasty
a toothy little skull crunched underfoot
& Who asked for yours
Best to keep them on a leash at all times
make sure they get plenty of blood for when
our smile comes to the door with a clipboard
asking to see them
then bet on the favorite & watch it come in ahead
Saturday afternoon on TV
Above all be sure to lock them indoors at night
safe from the floating shadows with owl's eyes
whose wingbeats
trouble your sleep into sweat & waking rage
Remember they alone are the measure of your freedom
without them we could never decide
what is best for you

PSALM OF THE ANGER

- I Because outside the ambulances howl at the dogs
- II Because the typist is forced to eat her own fingers
- III Because I come wrapped in cellophane and stamped with
a blue number
- IV Because brain-damage leaves a little trail of wildflowers
- V Because we speak to each other only through a wire
grille and our time is up
- VI Because even the forests are made to tell lies
- VII I want to crawl into the street soaked with burning oil
- VIII I want to smash clocks in my teeth and dig graves with
my fingernails
- IX I want to spit out the pin of a grenade like a plumstone
- X I want to splatter the maps in the boardroom with bloody
continents
- XI I want my screaming to dissolve cartilage
- XII I want my children's bodies to grow thick black fur

Massive radiation accident in Mexico

continued from page 1

junkyard's scrap apparently were exposed not only to gamma radiation but also to airborne cobalt-60, which may have stuck to their hair and clothing. In one of many criticisms of the way Mexican health authorities have handled the whole affair, US radiation scientists both in and out of government complain that the Mexican government has never checked the workers, their clothing, or their homes for radioactive contamination. Nor has it made a comprehensive search for the missing radioactive pellets, although it has found about 60 which apparently stuck to the tires of vehicles entering the junkyard and were thus scattered along roads. And the most heavily exposed workers, who have a high chance of dying from infection due to radiation-weakened immune systems, are only being monitored on an outpatient basis rather than being treated in a special germ-free isolation ward in a hospital.

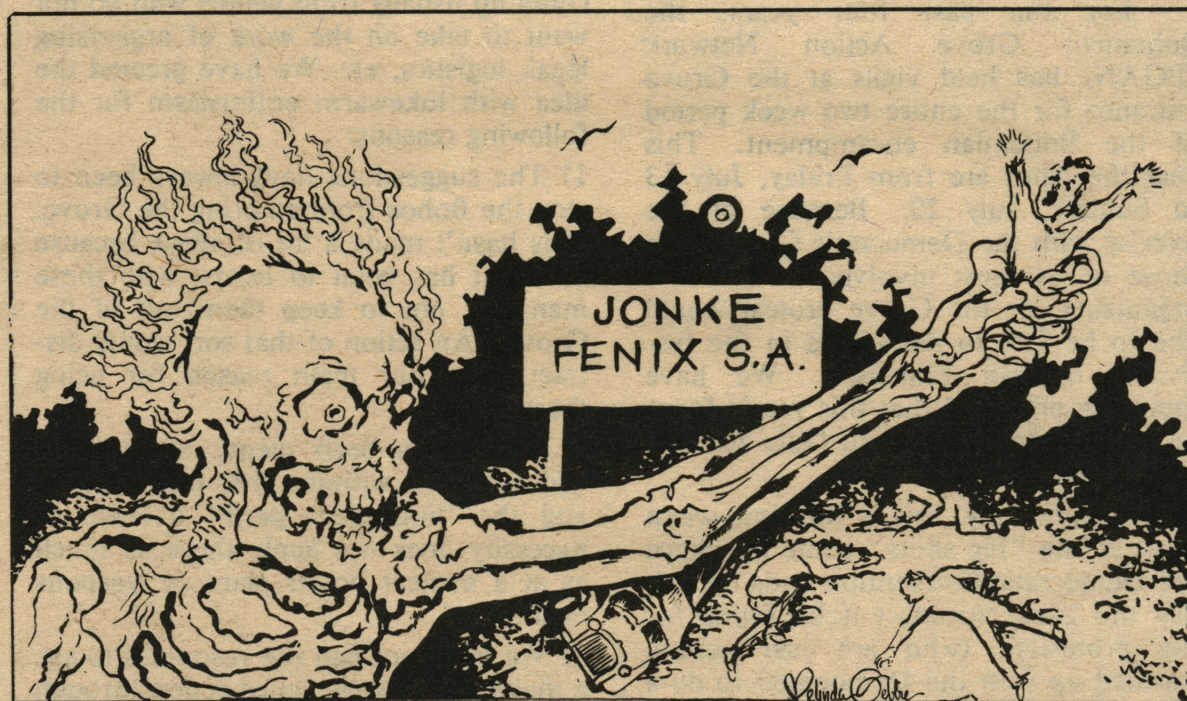
Perhaps the worst example of bureaucratic inaction is the saga of the pickup truck upon which the cancer treatment unit was dismantled. It remains intensely radioactive, emitting 50 roentgens per hour from one side, which could prove fatal to someone

nearby in under a day. It may have already caused its share of tragedy, since it was parked in one neighborhood for over a month, and children were seen playing on it.

Yet the truck remains parked in a fenced area in Juarez. City health officials in El Paso, Texas, tracing dangerously high radiation readings near a local high school, determined that their source was the truck, 300 yards away across the Rio Grande. Even at that distance, someone exposed continuously for a year could get as much as 12 times the allowed limit for radiation workers. Mexican officials are still looking for a place to stash the truck "outside the city."

But ignoring nuclear problems in the hope they will go away is a trait not limited to Mexican bureaucrats, as the story of how the cancer treatment machine got to Juarez illustrates. The machine, manufactured by the Picker company of Cleveland, was originally sold to Methodist Hospital in Lubbock, Texas. It received its last "recharge" of cobalt-60 in September 1969 — which fortunately had decayed to about one-sixth its original strength by the time the machine was cut apart last year.

The Picker machine was not a suc-



cessful model; due to structural and mechanical problems, the company made a policy of not refurbishing it. But the company did offer to dispose of the machine for a \$2000 fee. Rather than take this option, Methodist sold the unit to a broker in X-ray equipment, who in turn shipped it to the Centro Medico in Juarez in the fall of 1977.

Incredibly, although the clinic had no license to receive radioactive materials, the export went routinely. Texas state officials, who have been delegated the authority over such exports by the NRC, said that the broker's papers were in order. Apparently the only requirement for exporting a "reactor by-product," as cobalt-60 is called in the regulations, is that the package be labelled and shipped correctly.

What happened next is unclear. The unit sat in a Juarez warehouse until it was stolen either because the clinic never got around to hiring the cancer therapist who was to run it or because it was taken hostage for unpaid debts. But US officials must share the responsibility for letting such a potentially deadly item sit around in a warehouse like a sack of potatoes.

Such regulatory laxity has claimed victims before. In another Mexican case in 1962, a child found a gamma source — probably used in radiography — lying in the street. He took it home and kept it in a cookie jar. Except for the father,

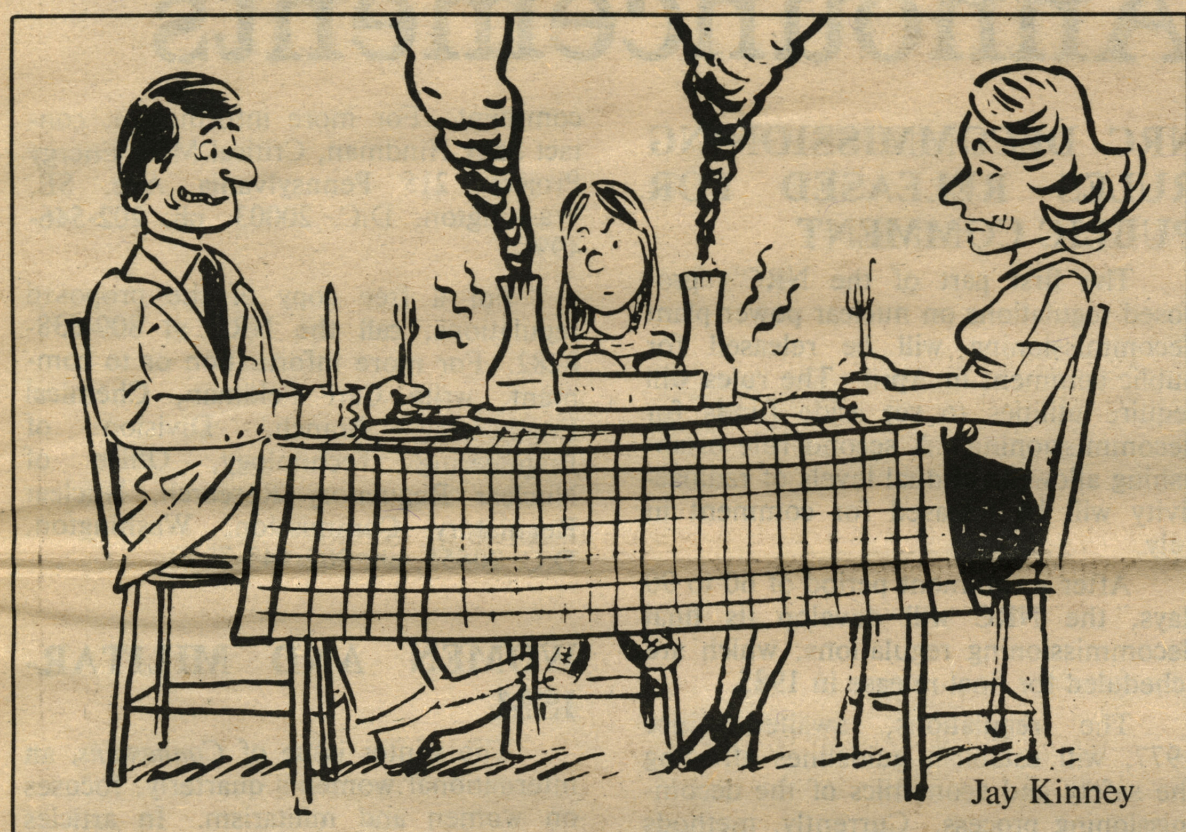
who visited on weekends, the entire family died.

In February, 1983, workers at a foundry in Auburn, New York, noticed that a steel thickness gauge — based on a radiation source and detector — was malfunctioning. A repairman was called, and his geiger counter began registering radiation the moment he walked in the door. The new steel coming out of the furnace was radioactive. The New York health department investigated and concluded that about 25 curies of cobalt-60 had been in the scrap that was melted, but the origin of the material remains a mystery.

The fact that an essentially unregulated nuclear export could result in an accident more severe, in radiation exposure terms, than Three Mile Island has raised concerns about new schemes for using radiation for food preservation. Robert Alvarez of the Environmental Policy Institute points out that the plan would involve deploying huge quantities of cesium-137 in Mexico, where an increasing amount of produce for the US market is grown. The export of this material, another "reactor by-product" (none dare call it nuclear waste!) would presumably also be poorly controlled, and could result in tragedies that would make the Juarez incident look minor.

— Bob Van Scoy

(based on *Science*, 16 March 1984, and Associated Press.)



Growing nukes in Idaho

Wasting away on the high desert

A half million acres of sagebrush-covered high desert in southwest Idaho are home to the remote and little known Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, operated for the US Department of Energy. Herds of antelope wander freely amidst the biggest and most diverse collection of nuclear reactors in the world, and snow-capped mountains are the backdrop for advanced research in nuclear power generation, fuel reprocessing, and waste disposal.

Established to carry out nuclear research in an isolated location, INEL is one of the many "hidden" facilities that contribute to the US nuclear arsenal. Because of sloppy practices, outdated equipment, and inadequate regulation, these facilities also threaten environmental quality and the health and safety of their workers.

INEL's reputation as a peaceful nuclear facility is unwarranted. Although many civilian reactor designs have been developed or improved there, the majority of work is of a military nature — and has been since the first research project in 1949 to develop reactors for nuclear submarines and ships. The Naval Reactor facility, operated by Westinghouse, tests nuclear reactors for the Navy and trains sailors in their operation. The Advanced Test Reactor is used to test fuels and materials for naval power reactors.

Other INEL links to the nation's nuclear weapons complex include the Idaho Chemical Processing Plant, which

reprocesses spent nuclear fuel from diverse sources including ships and submarines. The unburned uranium that the plant recovers is used to fuel reactors which produce nuclear weapons

irrigation water for three million acres of farmland, including the fields of famous Idaho potatoes.

The possibility of widespread contamination of the aquifer has led to pres-

INEL is one of the many "hidden" facilities that contribute to the US nuclear arsenal.

materials. The chemical plant is currently operated by Exxon but will soon be transferred to Westinghouse.

The chemical plant has produced millions of gallons of high-level liquid waste, which since 1963 has been converted to solid form through a process called calcination. A new calcining facility, which can handle 800,000 gallons of liquid waste annually, began operating in 1982. The resulting 3000 cubic feet of dry waste, although easier to store, is very light and could be easily dispersed if its storage canisters were to rupture. Presently, some 600,000 cubic feet of calcined wastes and two million gallons of liquid are stored at INEL.

Low-level liquid wastes are also produced at the "chem plant." These wastes, which contain over 25 different radionuclides, are diluted and injected directly into the Snake River Plain Aquifer. The aquifer is the primary source of drinking water for 200,000 people in southern Idaho, and provides

sure from many Idahoans, including Governor Evans. The DOE has recently announced its intention to shut down the injection well and put the waste into an unlined seepage pond instead. Local groups see this as just a public relations ploy, since the wastes will still find their way into groundwater.

Although INEL has never been designated as a permanent waste disposal site because of the aquifer and the area's seismic instability, it has nevertheless ended up with a quarter of the nation's military nuclear wastes. From 1954 to 1970, two million cubic feet of wastes contaminated with plutonium and similar materials were dumped into trenches packaged only in plastic bags or cardboard boxes. This practice was halted in 1970, and the 1.6 million cubic feet of waste accumulated since then has been stored aboveground in boxes and barrels. The DOE plans to move these containers to the WIPP facility in New Mexico, but the wastes already buried at

INEL will likely remain there.

As the second largest employer in Idaho — surpassed only by state government — INEL is a powerful political and economic force. Pro-nuclear Senator James McClure is chairman of the Senate Energy Committee and influential in promoting INEL, and traditionally there has been little opposition to the facility. With the formation of a number of antinuclear and peace groups in Idaho during the last five years, opposition has grown dramatically. This opposition has crystallized around a recent proposal by the DOE to build a new plutonium production reactor at the site.

Secretary of Energy Hodel announced in August 1983 that INEL was the prime location for the New Production Reactor (NPR) project. The announcement has focused attention on INEL as part of the nuclear weapons production cycle, and has motivated individuals and organizations to become more active in arms race issues. The potential economic and environmental impacts of such a large-scale project on the state have pulled together organizations with no previous ties.

Although Congress has delayed the Environmental Impact report on the NPR project, Idaho activists are not being lulled into inaction. They are continuing with research, education and outreach efforts, focusing especially on the national implications of the project on the continuing arms race and the growing national debt.

— Janice Berndt and Liz Paul

Blockade them in?

Getting ready for the Bohemian bigshots

For the past four years, the Bohemian Grove Action Network (BGAN) has held vigils at the Grove entrance for the entire two week period of the Bohemian encampment. This year the dates are from Friday, July 13 to Sunday, July 29. Because of the overlap with the Democratic Convention those of us most involved in the core organizing for the Grove protest would like to be free to participate in the festivities in San Francisco. We have therefore proposed that this year's focus be on the middle weekend (July 20 - 22) of the encampment.

Traditionally, this is the time when most of the "big shots" come in. Since the Democratic Convention ends on Friday the 20th, wouldn't it be fitting for the protesters (who are just getting warmed up with the Democrats) to do a car and bus caravan up to the Grove and hit on the Republican "Good Ol' Boys" network with banners and street theater? We are also discussing the possibility of a large gathering / teach-in type event for the afternoon and evening of Saturday, July 21.

Some people have expressed concern that there would be no one to protest the Bohos when they arrive for their annual "Cremation of Care" ritual on July 13. We are open to anyone who would like to take on the organizing for this weekend, but as it stands now we all want to be in the Bay Area for the proposed People's Convention. We can always leave a sign that reads, "We're busy! See you next weekend!"

For the past four years the subject of civil disobedience at the Grove has

come up usually from people who do not want to take on the work of organizing legal, logistics, etc. We have greeted the idea with lukewarm enthusiasm for the following reasons:

- 1) The suggestions have always been to stop the Bohos from entering the Grove. This hasn't made a lot of sense because our goal has been to *expose* who these men are, not to keep them out of the Grove. An action of that sort would distract from our main reason for being there.
- 2) There has been plenty of publicity and attention without civil disobedience and the "imminent peril" defense of necessity does not apply there as much as at a nuclear power plant or weapons facility.
- 3) We have not had the resources to see a major civil disobedience action through the legal system.

This year, however, a brilliant idea has emerged which bears some consideration. What about waiting until the last Sunday (July 29) and blockading the Bohos *in*? This act could be accompanied by a press statement declaring these men to be too dangerous to unleash back on the world. We could give specific examples why.

Do you like this idea? We need to know. Also, would you be willing to take on the work to make it happen? We have begun regular meetings (in Santa Rosa) and invite you to come. Call 707-874-2248 for the time and place of meetings. Write or send donations to BGAN / PO Box 296 / Occidental, CA 95465.

— Mary Moore



photo by Bob Van Scoy

The NRC's "believe it or else:" PR official Jim Hanchett debated the Commission's position on Diablo with protestors on January 12. Walnut Creek police add force to Hanchett's arguments and prevent unwanted visitors to the NRC offices upstairs.

Announcements

NRC DECOMMISSIONING RULES RELEASED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The first part of the NRC's proposed regulations on nuclear power plant decommissioning will be released for public comment in April. The rules will require utilities to set aside funds for decommissioning. A second rule establishing allowed residual levels of radioactivity will be released for comment in July.

After a comment period of 60 to 90 days, the NRC will develop its final decommissioning regulations, which are scheduled for final release in 1985.

The regulations, awaited since 1977, will establish guidelines affecting the safety and economics of the decommissioning process. Currently, methods to finance decommissioning are inadequate. It is possible that ratepayers will be required to pay the huge costs for decommissioning existing nuclear plants.

The Critical Mass Energy Project is serving as a national clearinghouse for decommissioning information and is working to promote public participation in the development of the regulations. The Project is seeking the names of people, particularly those in the scientific or academic community, who might like to

comment. For more information, contact Sally Hindman, Critical Mass Energy Project, 215 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003, ph: 202-546-4996.

For a free copy of the proposed regulations, call the NRC at 800-638-8282. For more information or to comment, write Carl Feldman, Chemical Engineering Branch, Division of Engineering Technology, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, ph: 202-443-7910.

WOMEN AND MILITARISM

The winter issue of *Connexions*, an international women's quarterly, focuses on women and militarism. In articles and interviews from all over the world, the diverse issues of war and militarism are examined: propaganda, torture, prostitution, women in the armed forces, national liberation and reconstruction, the peace movement and reproductive rights.

The special issue is available for \$3.50, and one-year subscriptions for \$10, from Peoples Translation Service, 4228 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA 94609 ph: 415-654-6725.

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Calendar

April 11: Livermore Action Group Orientation Meeting for newcomers. 7:30 pm, Friends Meeting House, 2151 Vine, Berkeley. 644-3031.

Nicaragua presentation: Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz and Harriet Rohmer combine a political update with a presentation of the traditional stories of the Indian, Black and Mestizo people of the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua. 7:30 pm, Modern Times Bookstore, 968 Valencia, SF. 282-9246.

April 12: Greenham Common: discussion with a representative from the Women's Peace Encampment. 7 pm, Resource Center for Nonviolence, 515 Broadway, Santa Cruz. (408) 423-1626. Donation.

"Wrong Side of the Fence," videotape on Big Mountain and the Native American Struggle. Monthly Meeting of Women's Party for Survival. 6:30 potluck, 7:30 program. SF Community College Auditorium, 33 Gough, (near Market.) 981-8909.

"Real Town: A Treaty of Peace," a play performed by Rosa Burke Perez. 7:30 pm, Picaro Cafe, 3120 16th St., SF. 381-0705.

April 13: Volunteer Day at the Disarmament Resource Center! Come see the office and help work on the May Calendar. 11-5, 942 Market St. Rm. 708, SF. 495-0526.

"Witness for Peace: 3 months in Nicaragua." Talk and slide show by Phil McManus. 7:30 pm, Resource Center for Nonviolence, 515 Broadway, Santa Cruz. (408) 423-1626.

Freedom Song Network, "2nd Friday" Political Song Swap. Singers, performers, sing-a-longers, please come and let freedom's song ring! 8 pm at New Space Gallery, 762 Valencia, SF. 431-7980. Free.

Slide Shows by the Abalone Alliance. 7:30 pm: European Peace Movement. 9:30 pm: History of the Abalone Alliance. Picaro Cafe, 3120-16th St., SF. 861-0592.

April 14: Danceathon for Livermore Action Group. Noon to Midnight. Willard Jr. High, Telegraph & Stuart, Berkeley. \$4 or \$5 at door.

Nonviolence Training, 11-5, Newman Hall, 2700 Dwight Way at College, Berkeley. Register in advance. Ecumenical Peace Institute, 391-5215.

April 15: Livermore Action Group final planning meeting for April actions, 12-5. 644-3031.

April 16: Tax Day Actions. Numerous activities protesting the use of tax dollars for war. A sampling:

Site 300 Civil Disobedience and Protest. Help declare a "People's Moratorium" on weapons testing by protest-

ing at this Livermore Lab facility where the detonators for nuclear weapons are tested. Through April 20. Info: Arc, 731-3708 or Saul, 495-0526.

Urban Decentralized Actions, Oakland/SF, 9 to 3. Convene for press conference and report at 3 at 555 Market, SF. LAG, 644-3031.

April 17: Civil Disobedience at Livermore Lab. Early morning. Sponsored by LAG: 644-3031. See page 16.

Legal Demonstration at Livermore Lab. Human billboard, music. 2-6 pm. Carpooling from McArthur BART station in Oakland, 1-4 pm. Sponsored by LAG, 644-3031. See page 16.

"End of the World's Fair," weekly planning meeting. 5:30-7 pm, Picaro Cafe, 3120 16th St., SF. 626-6048.

Opening of "Raven's Seed," a play about fusion breeder reactors. 8 pm, People's Theater, Fort Mason, Bldg. B, 3rd floor, SF. Through June 3. For info on showings and prices call Sansei Productions, 563-9011 or 751-5253.

April 18: "Track II Diplomacy," video on KQED with some info on the Odessa-San Francisco Pairing Project. 8 pm. For info. on the project, 821-2861 or 285-7509.

Final planning for Good Friday civil disobedience at Livermore Lab. 7:30 pm. St. Leo's School, 4238 Howe, Oakland. Ecumenical Peace Institute, 391-5215.

April 19: "Real Town: A Treaty of Peace," 7:30 pm, Picaro Cafe. 3120 16th St., SF. 381-0705.

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April 23: "Soviet-American relations and the control of the arms race," panel with Alexander Sakharov, David Holloway, George Breslauer, Richard Smoke. 7:45 pm, Boalt Hall, UCB. Contact Peace and Common Security, 673-8866.

April 28: Oakland-Nikolayev Pairing Project, to establish people-to-people outreach to a Soviet city. 9:30-1:30, St. Augustine's, 29th and Telegraph, Oakland. 653-3935 eves.

May 7: "Stopping History," 8 pm, KQED (channel 9). Follows an affinity group through the June 20, 1982 blockade at Livermore Lab.

May 9: "Stopping History," KQED, 10:30 pm. See May 7.

May 10-31: War Resisters League/West invites all women to a series of four forums. All at the Women's Building, 3543 18th St, SF, at 7:30 pm.

May 10: Women's Spirituality: what it is and how we use it

May 17: Women and Gandhian Nonviolence

May 24: Women in the Souplines: a discussion of women and poverty

May 31: Men in the Women's Movement: are we ready?

\$3-5 donation requested per night unless unable to pay. Info: 731-1220.

June 15-17: War Resisters League / West regional conference, Santa Barbara. Conference theme is nonviolence and it will explore both skills and theory. Open to anyone interested in nonviolence. Info: 731-1220.

Abalone Alliance Groups

ABALONE ALLIANCE OFFICE: 2940 16th St., #310, San Francisco, CA 94103 • 415-861-0592

DIABLO PROJECT OFFICE: 452 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 • 805-543-6614

NORTH

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RIPPLES,
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WOMEN FOR SURVIVAL,
Box 72/95410 • (707) 937-0462

ARCATA:
REDWOOD ALLIANCE,
P.O. Box 293/95521 • (707) 822-7884

BOONVILLE:
ANDERSON VALLEY NUCLEAR AWARENESS COMMITTEE,
P.O. Box 811/95415 • (707) 895-3048

CAMP MEEKER:
NUCLEAR FREE SOCIETY,
P.O. Box 433/95419 • (707) 874-3197

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COMPTCHE CITIZENS FOR A SAFE ENVIRONMENT,
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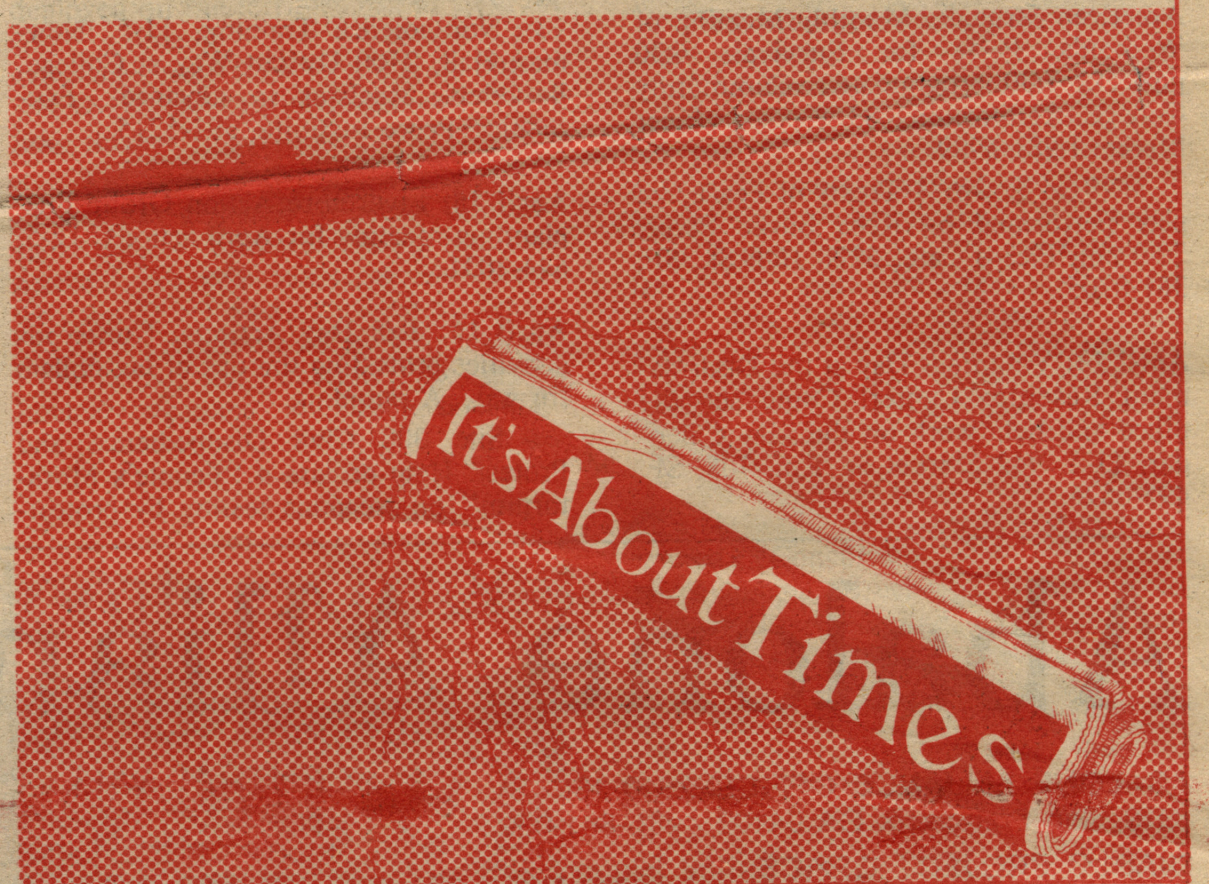
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The End of the World's Fair?... you've got to be kidding. No, we're not just 80's nihilists, celebrating our impending doom. We are concerned, however, that our lives are getting pretty close to the edge as the world inches to the brink of disaster. We want to invent a day where people can actively display their personal distaste for war, racism, politicians, eco-cide, sexism, boring jobs, physical, spiritual and sexual poverty. In doing so we want to create a place for people to meet, share ideas and projects, and perhaps catch a glimpse of an independent movement capable of creating a world we *do* want. But we're serious about doing all this in a fun way!

Envision a parade on the morning of May 12 from U.N. Plaza to Dolores Park, with the steel drums and frolic of *carnaval* curiously blending with legions of Cruise missiles, Orwellian floats, dancers, streamers and banners. Then conjure up a fair at Dolores Park featuring a multi-cultural mix of music, comedy, poetry and theater — but (*gasp!*) no speeches. Meanwhile participants can check out a variety of political/cultural booths, displays, and games, and share their concerns, skills and talents.

If you and/or your group want to add to this event, there are still 2,001 organizing tasks to do, both large and small. Now is the best time to develop ideas for floats and costumes, and reservations are presently being taken for booth space. Be there at *The End of the World's Fair*...

For more info, call (415) 626-6048

**THE END OF THE WORLD'S FAIR!!
MAY 12 — Dolores Park, San Francisco**

**PROTEST
WAR
TAXES**

APRIL 16 - 17



Monday, April 16

- 6:30 am Port Chicago, Concord Naval Weapons Station: Leafletting and presence as workers arrive, main gate.
- 9:00 am Oakland 12th St. BART Plaza
Morning gathering, get leaflets, plug into actions.
- noon Federal Building, 450 Golden Gate, San Francisco
Women's Peace Dragon gathering point. At 12:30 the Dragon leaves on a march to the Main Post Office, 7th & Mission.
- 3:00 pm Standard Oil Building, 555 Market St., San Francisco (Montgomery BART station)
Afternoon gathering for action story swap, press conference, street action.
- 4:30 pm Port Chicago, Concord Naval Weapons Station
Vigil as workers leave, til 7:30. Passover Seder at Port Chicago, 8:00 p.m.
- 9:00 pm Rincon Post Office Annex, Spear & Mission, SF
Refreshments, balloons, educational literature. Sponsored by Labor for Peace.
- ALL DAY Tabling (849-3020, Women for Peace); leafletting (731-1222, War Tax Resistance Day Care Project); decentralized actions (644-3031, LAG); guerilla theater (861-0425, SF CISPES).

Tuesday, April 17

- early am Civil disobedience at sites to be determined. Livermore Lab, Site 300 testing facility, and other locations are being discussed.
- 2-6 pm Legal demonstration at Livermore Lab as workers exit. Human billboard, theater, music, autonomous actions. Carpooling 1-4 pm from MacArthur BART. Please drive!

For more information, call LAG, 644-3031.