

It's About Times

Abalone Alliance Newspaper

April-May 1983



Having failed to sell the MX missile as a "peacekeeper," Ronald Reagan returned to America's TV screens last month to push an even stranger weapon-for-peace. "Tonight we are launching an effort which holds the promise of changing the course of human history," the Great Salesman declared in a March 23 television speech. He went on to describe a "star wars" scheme for defending the country against incoming enemy missiles -- an approach that he said "offers a new hope for our children in the 21st century."

The new proposal was clearly meant to turn the widespread public fear of nuclear doom to the administration's advantage. In promising that an anti-ballistic missile system will "give us the means for rendering these [Soviet] nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete," Reagan was holding out a vision of not only "freezing" the superpowers' massive nuclear arsenals but of rendering them harmless and irrelevant. The idea of building a gadget to make the nuclear threat go away is appealingly simple. To some, it will seem a lot more concrete than the nuclear Freeze's vague "step two."

Yet even Reagan conceded that the ABM system won't be ready anytime soon -- as well he might, since many experts think that such a defense is fundamentally impossible.

The Reagan plan must be taken seriously because an anti-ballistic missile system is an essential part of a "first strike" capability.

And as with Reagan's last "peacekeeper," the MX missile, the sunny talk of a safe future was delivered in a distinctly Newspeakian accent.

First of all, the new anti-missile system is being promoted as an eventual goal, not an alternative to the development of missiles like the MX and Trident. Eliminating those programs, Reagan claims, would be to stop his peace plan "in midstream."

It seems the administration is trying to conjure a mirage of a peaceful light at the end of its arms-buildup tunnel in order to sell the real, offensive weapons it wants now. It is also attempting to divert the disarmament movement into arguing about Reagan's science-fiction fantasies -- while those real weapons slip into production.

Nonetheless, the Reagan plan must be taken seriously, because an antiballistic missile (ABM) system

like the one he proposes is an essential part of a "first strike" capability -- the ability to "win" a nuclear war by destroying most of an enemy's missiles in a surprise attack. What has always ruled out such a strategy is that at least some of the attacker's missiles will miss -- and only a few of the attacked missiles need survive and be launched in order to cause severe damage in retaliation.

Here's where the ABM comes in. No practical ABM system would be able to cope with the thousands of incoming warheads in a full-scale nuclear attack. But it might be able to destroy most of the Soviet missiles that survived an American first strike (or vice versa), limiting the retaliatory damage to an "acceptable" level. (Past statements by Administration officials indicate they

consider 20 million US deaths an acceptable price for "winning" a nuclear war.)

Over a decade ago, the aggressive character of ABM systems was officially recognized when the US and the USSR signed a pact severely limiting ABM deployment. Both parties recognized that ABMs undermined the stability of "deterrence," the understanding that neither side would attack since it would be destroyed in turn. Since a good ABM system would make retaliation ineffective, the side that first had a comprehensive ABM system would be free to attack the other without suffering the consequences.

But ABM development never really stopped. The 1972 treaty allowed research and experimentation, which both sides have been avidly pursuing ever since. Billions of dollars have been spent on studying and testing ABM systems, including particle beams and several varieties of laser weapons. And both the US and USSR regularly take practice shots at their own missiles (see "From Vandenberg to the South Pacific," IAT December/January 1983, for an account of recent US ABM efforts).

Coupled with the extreme accu-

Continued on page ten

Inside

Workers boil at Diablo	4
German missile men win	5
Vandenberg blockade #2	6-7
Life in the European Theatre	9
Corporate Entertainment Lies	12

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
American Friends Service
Committee, Inc.

AMERICAN FRIENDS
SERVICE COMMITTEE
2160 Lake Street
San Francisco, CA 94121

Letters



GANDHI AUTHOR REPLIES

Dear IAT,

I'm delighted my Gandhi article (*IAT*, November 1982) provoked so much response and interest. True, not all agreed with my interpretation. But at least the lines of the debate are clear (i.e. between a Marxian and pacifist understanding of Gandhi's nonviolence) for all to see and ponder on.

A few of the historical points made deserve contention. David Troup writes that Gandhi recruited only a medical unit during WW I "in keeping with his love of nursing," and did not, as I inferred, recruit combat soldiers. I recommend the chapter entitled "Recruiting Sergeant" in D.G. Tendulkar's *Mahatma* (Gandhi read and approved this biography). "If every village gave at least twenty men, the Kheda district would be able to raise an army of 12,000 men," urged the apostle of nonviolence. "If we want to learn the use of arms, here is a golden opportunity." The people were puzzled: "You are a votary of ahimsa (love), how can you ask us to take up arms?"

The episode was not exceptional. In 1944, Gandhi offered Britain "full cooperation in the war effort...if a declaration of immediate independence is made," but Viceroy Wavell found this bargain "quite unacceptable." Why Gandhi supported government violence while firmly rejecting popular violence against the government can't be explained without considering his class loyalties. In Harijan, August 13, 1938, Gandhi took the side of millowners during a countrywide strike wave and endorsed the violent crushing of picket lines by police.

Michael Nagler's letter refers to Gandhi's "lifelong toil for the peasants and disenfranchised castes." Gandhi's approach to the peasants was the same as for industrial workers. He sometimes led or gave support to local campaigns, reflecting his genuine sympathy for poor people. But Gandhi also ensured the demands were kept mild, the tactics tame, and that the movements acted under his strict tutelage. When peasants or tenant farmers opted for militant protests under their own leadership, Gandhi opposed them time and again. "We may not forcibly dispossess the Zamindars (landlords)," he warned. "They only need a change of heart." The peasants would have to stick to quiet appeals and voluntary suffering. If the rich weren't won over, well, the poor would have to be patient.

As for Gandhi's hailed championship of the untouchables' cause, his major project on their behalf was the Harijan Sevak Sangh, a paltry and paternalistic charity organization that encouraged a "slave mentality among the Untouchables towards their Hindu masters." (B.R. Ambedkar, *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables*, p.277.) Gandhi fought vehemently the untouchables' efforts to achieve independent political power as he said it would only "divide Hindus"

(just as women are sometimes accused of divisiveness in today's peace movement for seeking autonomous political status). While Gandhi preached against the touching taboo and related prejudices, he didn't really oppose the caste system, any more than he opposed the class system. This was a "natural order of society," Gandhi believed. "I am opposed to all those who are out to destroy the Caste System."

Gandhi's contribution to the Hindu-Muslim holocaust and division of India can be seen only within the larger political context of the 1940s and postwar period. When popular militancy encompassed India, notably during 1945-6, and Hindus and Muslims showed their ability to join hands against common oppressors, Gandhi and his colleagues either ignored their struggles or opposed them outright. They opted instead for friendly negotiations with the dividing- and-ruling British who successfully played the Muslim and Hindu leaders against each other.

The fasts undertaken by Gandhi at the risk of his life in the appeal for communal unity spoke to his utter sincerity and love for the Indian people. But the fact that he was willing to support Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis of moral appeals -- which ultimately could not prevent the mass bloodshed, except for temporary instances -- but not on the basis of a common popular struggle to undo the conditions of poverty and unfreedom, spoke to Gandhi's unwitting class bias. The sad irony of the nonviolent master was his willingness to risk his own life, yet staunch refusal to endanger the power and privilege of the Indian upper class, on behalf of India's poor majority.

Gandhi was a remarkable and committed man without doubt. But beneath the surface (simple lifestyle, etc.) his deepest bonds remained with the privileged elite of India and his nonviolent philosophy reflected those ties.

-- Howard Ryan

JUST WHAT WE NEEDED

Dear IAT,

Just what the fledgling statewide anti-nuke coalition needed -- a muddy, divisive article about the Jan. 24th Vandenberg action. I attended meetings in LA, Santa Barbara, Berkeley, San Francisco and Humboldt during the planning period and from my perspective Marcy Darnovsky's article "Anger over Alliance For Survival's Vandenberg Pullout" (*IAT* February-March 1983) did little to promote understanding of the events that led up to the Alliance For Survival's decision not to do a major rally at the time.

At Santa Barbara in September, representatives from San Luis Obispo presented a Northern California occupation strategy to the activists of the Santa Barbara / Lompoc area. The idea was not well received, partly because of a lack of necessary community outreach in the Lompoc area, turfism, poor feelings toward LAG and the sensitive nature of the furtive liason between local peaceworkers and Base-involved families.

At this time it became clear the Lompoc group preferred to work with the AFS on a peaceful, legal vigil because of its history of successful even-handed educational campaigns in conservative communities.

Then the joint Congress/Senate committee froze MX production and the fateful cancellation letter was sent out. It was, to my mind anyway, just an unfortunate choice of wording that led to the misperception that the AFS intended to

influence the civil disobedience action by canceling what was going to be a big draw glitter event with a bulging budget.

I want to point out that at that time the Alliance had just survived a tremendous amount of disruptive energy; it reorganized and the newly appointed director, Ellie Cohen, had been working under incredible pressure for just two months, fresh from Orange County where consensus is a dream of things to come. To err is human, especially under the conditions present at the time. I support her and AFS's decision not to go on with the big event.

Well, consensus hit like a mob of angry football fans. I personally spoke with Tamara Thompson (LAG staffer) and asked her to temper her judgement of the AFS for the sake of the future (which we're all working for) and because, at that moment understanding of the Northern California network methods were improving within the AFS.

But unfortunately Tamara, LAG, Heather and *IAT* have preferred to fix on the problem instead of continuing through to resolution. And unfortunately some of their statements about AFS are completely untrue, setting in motion a tragic resurrection of the negativity that for the past year we have worked so hard to change. I cried for about an hour when I saw this article.

I have personally observed the care, patience, ethics and flexibility of the staff of the AFS. To me they are models for us all. In my three years with the AFS I have never seen them cancel a major event. I know this was no hasty bureaucratic decision, but one of absolute necessity.

It does seem the momentum created by consensus process has its good and bad sides. Anger and grudges do not a peace movement make. I challenge the detractors to reevaluate their own motives in this sad episode. What kind of pacifist says "most people get shafted once and aren't willing to try again?" Especially when the "shaft" involves a terrifically successful event that was actually more appropriate in size for the local community at that point in the campaign.

Please, no more accusations like "sabotage." Project growth and improvement through crisis. We must keep our minds on the goal (which is PEACE, remember?). This movement has room for Truth in all its glorious diversity. In the immortal words of Janis Joplin, "Try just a little bit harder, so I can love, love, love you."

-- Anna Hamilton
Redway, California

AUTHOR RESPONDS

Dear Anna,

The anger and hard feelings created by Alliance for Survival's cancellation of the Vandenberg rally won't go away by ignoring them or by "projecting growth and improvement."

As I tried to show in my article, the problems between Livermore Action Group and AFS weren't caused by an "unfortunate choice of wording." They're based on substantive differences in politics and approach, and as your letter explains more fully than I did (thank you for the historical notes), the divisions go back some way.

In spite of their acknowledged differences, LAG and AFS agreed to sponsor events at the same place, during the same week, with the same focus. If this attempt to work together is a model of a reasonable way to proceed, it's also one that requires great sensitivity to the needs and expectations of all the groups involved. AFS' eleventh-hour unilateral pullout just doesn't meet the minimum necessary requirements for responsible coalition politics. In fact, I'd call it divisive.

While I'm sorry that you found my article so upsetting, you should know that AFS' cancellation provoked many hours of tears among the organizers of the Vandenberg action. Fortunately, the rally that LAG pulled off on its own was, as you say, a great success. But it was touch and go until the very last minute, and the desperate scrambling it required didn't warm LAG's feelings toward AFS.

Aside from clarifying our basic disagreement about what to do with dirty laundry, I found your letter confusing. In the same paragraph, you excuse the AFS pullout by citing work pressure, you admit that AFS erred (though you don't enumerate about where, when or how), and you throw your support behind the decision.

Then, you charge that some of the statements about AFS reported in *It's About Times* were "completely untrue" but don't say which ones. You accuse my article of being divisive, though it went on at some length about a proposed meeting, agreed to by all the players, to try and salvage a means of cooperation.

I'm all for "glorious diversity" (though I'm not sure that's precisely what Janis had in mind with those lyrics). But diversity isn't the same as "do your own thing."

-- Marcy Darnovsky

It's About Times

Abalone Alliance Newspaper

It's About Times is the newspaper of the Abalone Alliance, a California antinuclear/safe energy organization consisting of over 50 member groups (see page 11). The opinions expressed in *IAT* are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the Abalone Alliance.

It's About Times is a project of the American Friends Service Committee. *IAT* is published ten times a year. The annual subscription rate is \$8.00.

IAT welcomes letters, articles, photos and artwork, but reserves the right to edit them.

Managing Editor: Steve Stallone

Editorial Staff: Marcy Darnovsky, Mark Evanoff, Sandy Leon, Tim Redmond, Bob Van Scoy, Ward Young

Poetry Editor: Bill Garrett.

Typesetting: Cindy Cornell and Bill Garrett

Cover Graphic by Melinda Gebbie
Copyright ©1983. Permission is given to reprint articles and graphics if credit is given to *IAT*. Please send us a copy. *It's About Times* /2940 16th St. Room 310 / San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 861-0592.

Chilling mishap at New Jersey nuke

In the early morning hours of February 25, two stuck relays at the Salem I nuclear plant in New Jersey caused an event that the nuclear industry had long considered nearly impossible: the total failure of an automatic shutdown system. Fortunately, the plant was operating at only 20% of full power, and an alert operator noticed the problem and shut the reactor down manually. No damage was done -- but that was a matter of luck, not design.

There was little immediate press coverage of the incident, apparently because it didn't cause a radiation release and so didn't seem in the same league as accidents like the near-disaster at Three Mile Island in 1979. But the shutdown failure sent shock waves through the nuclear establishment.

Harold Denton, the director of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, told the NRC that, "The implication of this is that it is the most significant accident precursor since Three Mile Island." A utility spokesperson, Dick Silverio, put it less bureaucratically to the *New York Times*: "This is serious. Those are the two breakers we have always said are the things that will trip [shut down] the plant if any of 30 things go wrong."

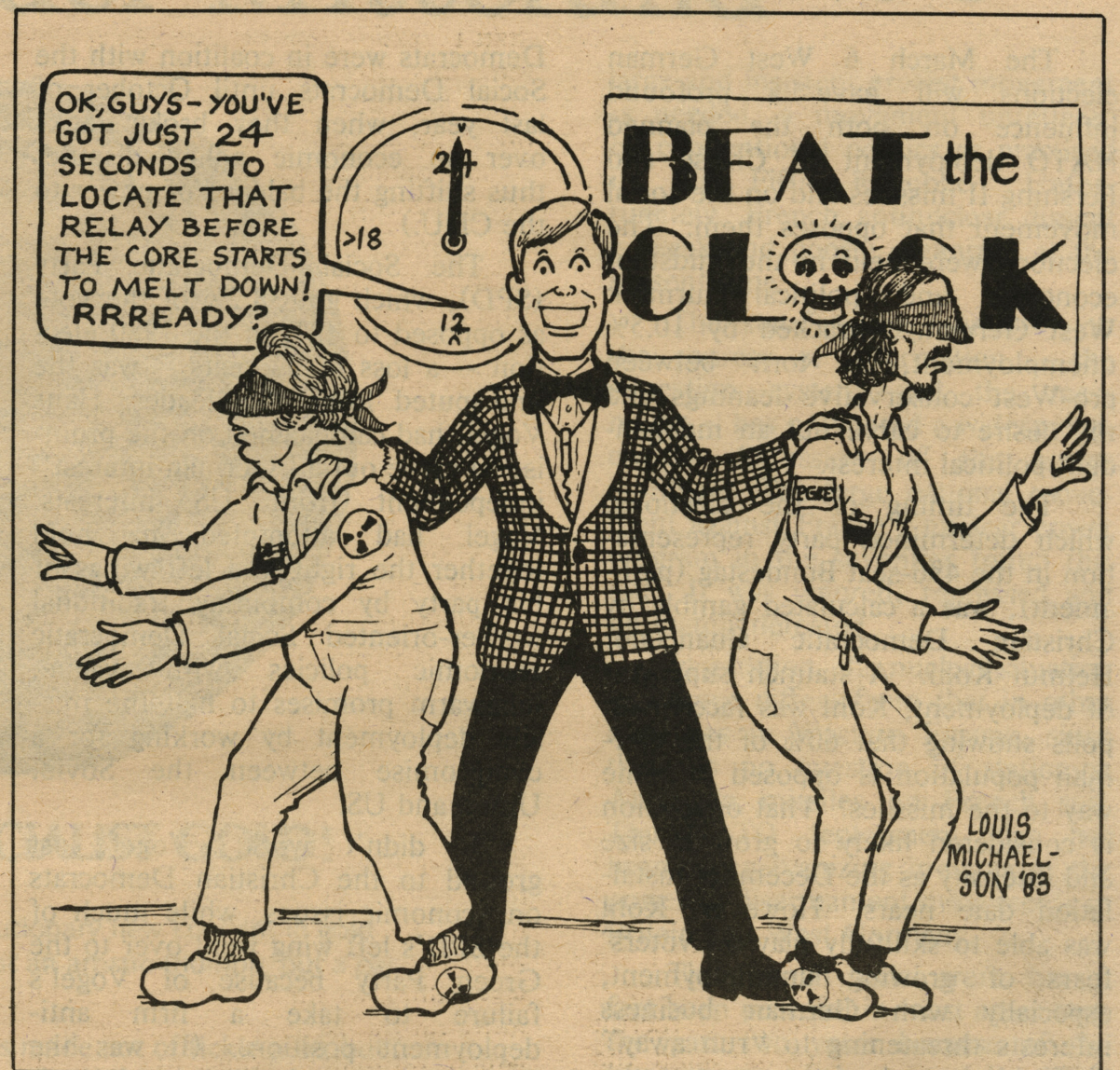
It's unusual for utility and government officials to express such concerns openly -- they tend to favor soothing comments like "no danger to the public"-- but they're unusually worried. An operating nuclear reactor generates a tremendous amount of heat -- heat that is normally taken away by turning a torrent of water into the steam that runs the plant's generators. But if that water stops circulating and the reactor isn't automatically shut

down, the temperature and pressure in the reactor vessel soars. Unless the operator realizes what's happening and reacts fast, the reactor vessel or critical piping may burst -- and after that, the meltdown of the reactor core and a massive radiation release are likely.

So how long does the operator have? Utility sources say as much as 10 minutes. But according to Robert Pollard, a former NRC safety inspector, "It's terribly fast." Pollard, who now works with the Union of Concerned Scientists, says that if Salem had been operating at full power and the supply of water to the steam generators failed, as sometimes happens, "if it took the operator 24 seconds [like it did this time] he might as well have saved his efforts."

In the aftermath of the shutdown failure, several other disturbing incidents at Salem came to light. It turned out that an identical problem had occurred three days earlier, but had gone unrecognized. On that occasion, a control handle broke off when an operator tried to shut down the reactor manually, and had to be reinserted before it could be shut down.

Problems at Salem are not new; the plant has twice been cited by the NRC for "below average" performance. Its six-year history includes everything from apparent sabotage to security breaches to improper radiation protection for workers. The NRC has shut down the plant until its owner, the Public Service Electric and Gas Company, has outlined the steps it will take to improve Salem's equipment and procedures. But paper promises don't mean the plant will be any safer, and the NRC action may be more a public relations exercise than a real attempt to



change the way Salem is run.

The Commission is no doubt feeling some heat from local residents. A study it sponsored last year concluded that because of the Salem plant's location, just 20 miles south of Wilmington, Delaware, a major accident there could kill more people than one at any other plant in the country.

Both the utility and Westinghouse, which made the circuit breakers, are seeking to blame the other for the shutdown failure. For its part, the utility claims that Westinghouse neglected to provide proper maintenance instructions. Westing-

house counters that the instructions were sent to Salem and that plant personnel failed to heed them. But it doesn't make much difference whose fault it is.

The nuclear industry has shown again that it is no better managed than any other business, and that its machines, no matter how cleverly designed, are no more failure-proof than any other kind of machines. And that, considering the stakes, just isn't good enough.

-- Bob Van Scoy
IAT staff

-- from the *New York Times*, 3/16/83, and the *SF Chronicle*, 3/20/83.

Bechtel scurries for license

Workers boil over Diablo toil

"We Can't Do Shit" stickers emblazoned on hard hats are popular these days among construction workers at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant. Bechtel Power Corporation's project managers hired 4,000 workers to make the plant "safe" and issued "We Can Do It" buttons to emphasize their sense of urgency. Although the pay is good, frustrating work conditions and poor management have prompted many workers to discard the original slogan.

PG&E is anxious to get the plant on line and had hoped to get approval from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to load fuel by March 31. But the utility wasn't able to meet its own deadline, and has requested that the NRC postpone voting on a permit for fuel loading.

The speed-up and round-the-clock staffing adopted by PG&E required them to hire inexperienced workers and has led to some doubtful practices. Approximately 80 percent of design drawings have been

rejected by inspectors. Because of this, a new procedure was devised to expedite corrections. Rather than trying to establish why the mistake occurred in the first place and noting what other systems may have been affected by it, inspectors simply make the needed corrections directly on the drawings.

Another problem occurred in February when supervisors assigned too many welders to a small space and several required hospital treatment for exposure to toxic fumes.

The Mothers for Peace of San Luis Obispo, the legal intervenors against the plant, are not satisfied with the extent of the design review conducted by Teledyne, Inc. They have called for:

- The Brookhaven Labs to study all parts of the plant vital to safety.
- Public hearings to verify the PG&E/Bechtel recalculations on Diablo's seismic design, including determining if the plant can really withstand a magnitude 7.5 earth-

quake.

- Implementation of all recommendations by Teledyne, PG&E and the NRC, after analysis of the procedure and verification that the design changes are done correctly.

- Completion of hearings on quality assurance before fuel loading. (The NRC staff agrees the Mothers met the criteria to reopen quality assurance hearings, and the Commissioners will vote on the matter April 14.)

The Abalone Alliance is organizing the People's Emergency Response Plan, which will be put into effect if the NRC gives the go-ahead for fuel loading. The extended action will include civil disobedience, marches and vigils, according to the Diablo Project Office staff member Raye Fleming. The action will begin after fuel loading is authorized, but before nuclear operation of the plant begins.

"Affinity groups willing to risk arrest will decide whether to go into

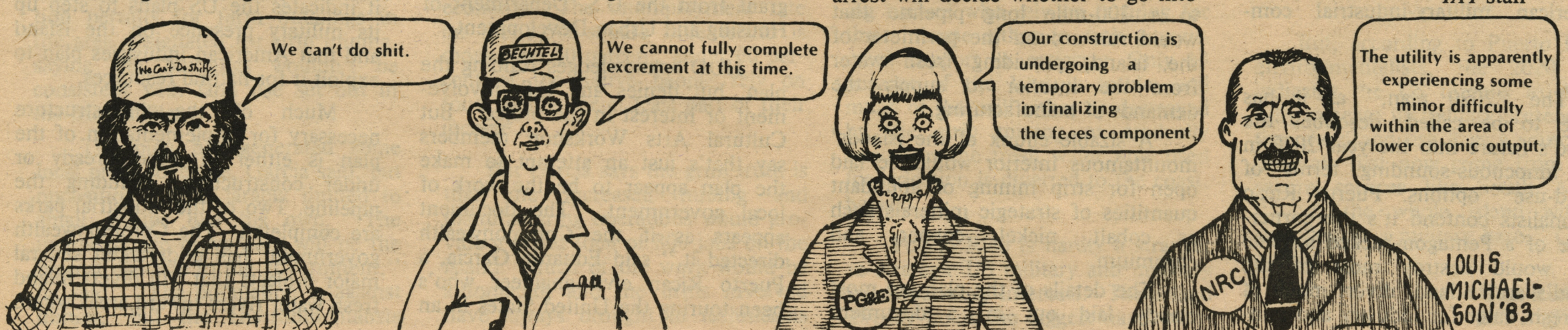
the plant site, blockade roads, occupy PG&E land or any number of other creative actions consistent with the Abalone Alliance nonviolence agreement," explained Fleming.

This year, rather than staying at a central campsite, affinity groups will stay in homes in the San Luis Obispo area. The purpose is to involve the community more in the opposition to Diablo. Rather than staging a massive blockade, affinity groups will be encouraged to make advance reservations, spacing the civil disobedience actions over a several month period in order to create a constant presence at the site.

A planning group is now meeting once a month in San Luis Obispo to work out the details of the event. All member groups wanting to work on the action are encouraged to attend.

Contact the Diablo Project Office for more information. (805) 543-6614

-- Mark Evanoff
IAT staff



But Greens get foot in the door

German missile men win election

The March 6 West German elections will have a profound influence on both the planned NATO deployment of Cruise and Pershing II missiles and on the social movement that opposes them. The elections were held in the midst of economic and political turmoil: West Germany, wracked by 10.5% unemployment, is torn between pro-West conservative leanings and the desire to carve out an independent political interest.

The timing of the elections, which determined party representation in the 496-seat Bundestag (parliament), was a calculated gamble by Christian Democratic Chancellor Helmut Kohl. A staunch supporter of deployment, Kohl was faced with polls showing that 60% of the German population is opposed in some way to the missiles. That opposition is considered likely to grow in size and intensity as the December installation date nears. However, Kohl was able to skillfully play on voters' fears of growing unemployment, especially with German business interests threatening to "run away" if Kohl's pro-business party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) wasn't re-elected.

As the election results show, Kohl's gamble paid off handsomely. The CDU and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union, together won 48.9% of the vote. Though their new ally, the Free Democrats, was reduced from 10.5% to 7%, the seats they still hold insure the Christian Democrats an undisputed majority. (The Free

Democrats were in coalition with the Social Democrats until October of last year, when they broke ranks over an economic policy dispute, thus shifting the balance of power to the CDU.)

The Social Democratic Party (SPD), which got 38.2% of the vote as opposed to 43% in the 1980 election -- a loss of 27 seats -- was the undisputed loser. Its leader, Hans Vogel, had campaigned on the promise to carve out a "German interest" independent from US interests. Vogel had attempted to hold together the right and left wings of his party by combining traditional worker-oriented Social Democratic economic policies with vague, lukewarm promises to halt the missile deployment by working for a compromise between the Soviet Union and US.

It didn't work: Vogel lost ground to the Christian Democrats on economic issues, while much of the SPD's left wing went over to the Green Party because of Vogel's failure to take a firm anti-deployment position. (It was the Social Democrats' previous chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, who was the first European to propose the deployment plan in the late 1970's.)

The Green Party was the maverick upstart, capturing 5.8% of the vote. This gave them representation in the Bundestag for the first time, with 27 seats. (The Greens had fielded candidates in 1980 elections, but received only 1.5%, far below the required 5% for admission to the Bundestag.)

Parties in Political Spectrum Left to Right	Green Party	Social Democrats SPD	Free Democrats FDP	Christian Democratic Union (CDU) Christian Social Union (CSU)
March 6 Election Results % vote / # of Bundestag seats	5.6% 27 seats	38.2% 191 seats	7% 34 seats	48.8% 244 seats
1980 Elections	1.5% 0 seats	43.2% 218 seats	10.5% 53 seats	44.8% 226 seats
Net Change Seats	+27	-27	-19	+18
Note - shading indicates parties in majority coalition				

A small group of Puerto Rican activists is slowly uncovering evidence of a massive US government plan for the island's future that would transform the Caribbean commonwealth into a center of mining and manufacturing to support the American military-industrial complex.

The "2020 plan," as it has come to be called, describes the island's future into the year 2020 in the innocuous-sounding terms of "land-use" options. Puerto Rican nationalists contend it's the cornerstone of a Pentagon-backed scheme that would destroy most of the island's arable land, divert much of its fresh water for industry and min-

ing, and force many of its occupants to leave.

The 2020 plan calls for ringing the island with 11 industrial "parks," each connected with a newly-constructed American military base. The parks would be linked to a 300-mile long pipeline that would run around the perimeter of the island, providing fresh water from the interior to supply the demands of manufacturing.

A sizable chunk of the island's mountainous interior would be laid open for strip mining of abundant quantities of strategic minerals such as cobalt, nickel, copper, and chromium.

The details of the plan are most clearly laid out in a document



The Green Party, which was conceived in the late '70's as a fusion of ecological, counter-cultural, and antinuke politics, has been a major force in the battle against deployment, and Green popularity has steadily grown, particularly among younger voters. Previously, the Greens have campaigned on a wide, somewhat eclectic range of demands, but for this election their platform was narrowed to two demands: absolutely no missile deployment and an end to nuclear power plants. A great deal of international attention was focused on the Greens' campaign, from their mock trials of the nuclear superpowers to the flamboyant news conferences of one of their leading spokespersons, Petra Kelly.

While the Greens attained their short-term goal of representation in the Bundestag, they didn't realize their more grandiose pre-election hopes of forging a ruling coalition with the Social Democrats. The Greens had anticipated that the SPD might gain a few Bundestag seats and find themselves in a situation of needing the Greens in order to put together a majority. The Greens had already offered their cooperation in such a coalition if the SPD would unequivocally oppose deployment. But the scheme fell flat when the SPD lost seats instead.

The election was very bad news for the German antinuclear movement. It means that, barring events outside Germany, the Cruise and Pershing II's are likely to be deployed. On the other hand, if the scheme to force a Green Party/SPD ruling coalition had succeeded, the Greens would have been under a lot of pressure to act "responsibly." They may have found themselves trying to reorient the German disarmament movement to a letter-writing, appeal-to-politicians-to-keep-promises type of affair, similar to the mundane state of most of the movement in the US.

Now, the Greens can take advantage of their minority position in the Bundestag to promote their views, while helping to organize a movement that includes "direct action" and other more radical possibilities outside the electoral arena. Ironically, the Greens may find that the Social Democrats, now out of power, are more willing to oppose deployment: Social Democrats in Norway and Denmark shifted leftward when they lost power.

All told, it does not promise to be a quiet summer on the Western Front.

-- Gary Roush

Puerto Rico gets drafted:

officially entitled "Land Use Master Plan for Puerto Rico." The document, copies of which have been obtained by the Cultural Arts Workshop, a Puerto Rican environmentalist group, was prepared by the Puerto Rican Planning Board under a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

HUD acknowledges funding the plan, but denies any U.S. involvement or interest in the project. But Cultural Arts Workshop members say that's just an attempt to make the plan appear to be the work of local government. "The document appears as if the Commonwealth directed it," said Eduardo Garcia, a Puerto Rican civil engineer who's been touring the United States in an

effort to expose the plan. "But that's a common trick. It's done to dilute opposition from the population."

The document itself hasn't been released to the public, but evidence collected by Garcia's group strongly supports the group's contention that it indicates the US plans to step up its military presence on the island and that American industries plan to exploit it for natural resources.

Much of the infrastructure necessary for implementation of the plan is either in place already or under construction, including the pipeline. Two of the industrial parks are completed. The Commonwealth government has undertaken several major projects that will divert inland fresh water rivers toward areas where

Cold-war socialism

Nukes as usual under Mitterand

On January 20, the Socialist president of France, Francois Mitterand, addressed the West German parliament. One might have expected a call for detente, a fresh viewpoint to international relations.

Instead, Mitterand delivered a hawkish speech, supporting NATO down the line and making its continued existence the central question in the debate over the Euromissiles. He even undercut the position of the German Social Democrats, his supposed allies by giving implicit support to the Christian Democrat Helmut Kohl in the March elections.

However surprising Mitterand's speech may have been to some Americans, it was no turning point for his Socialist Party. Rather, it was consistent with the Socialists' support for nuclear weapons in Europe: both for France's own independent arsenal and for the American "nuclear umbrella" over the rest of Western Europe.

The reason for this position lies in the structure of the French state and the Socialist Party's relationship to it. Under the Fifth Republic, established in the early sixties after De Gaulle's rise to power, France has become a sort of monarchy headed by a president elected every seven years. The president appoints the national government, which makes most of the important political decisions for the entire country. Independent centers of power like the national legislature, the courts and local governments are much less important than in the United States. This tight political control has been supplemented by economic control in the form of regulation and direct national planning.

Nationalization has extended government power most significantly by the complete takeover of the banking system, a major portion of which has been under government ownership for years. Through its control of the banks, the French government has been able to act like a giant conglomerate with tentacles stretching into all sectors of the economy.

In such a highly centralized state capitalist system, nuclear technology--both military and civilian--plays a political role quite apart from the question of its military or economic practicality. Here the purpose of nuclear reactors and bombs is to advance state power at home and abroad.

Within France itself, the decision to embark on massive nuclear



ET VOILA! SOCIALIST GOLD!

From la belle France, a revolutionary new concept in gold coins! The Mitterrand, not just an artistic triumph, but a *par-fait* hedge against inflation.

For, you see, the Mitterrand is made not of fickle gold, but of *entirely worthless metal!*

The Mitterrand - plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose!

weapons and power programs has promoted the establishment of a society "full of cops," as one critic put it. In other words, these programs rely on a much strengthened central state apparatus to provide them with the nationwide organization, resources, security and radioactive waste handling they require.

Internationally, indiscriminate exports of nuclear technology have furthered French influence all over the planet. In addition, France's nuclear arsenal lends major support to its pursuit of a foreign policy at least somewhat independent of the United States. Part of this is its claim to be Western Europe's defender of the last resort in case of American default or defeat. The existence of its own nuclear strike force thus gives France more

influence in Europe than it would otherwise have.

The Socialist Party cannot be depended on to stop the threat posed by nuclear technology. Above all else, it is a willing participant in the established French political system, with all that implies for nuclear policy. Worse yet, the Socialists' plan for economic reconstruction involves massive new nationalization and the promotion of advanced technology as the savior of French industry. This can only strengthen the Socialists' pro-nuclear mindset. Finally, the Socialist Party's animosity to the USSR and its allied Communist Parties has resulted in the the very antagonistic Cold War attitudes expressed in Mitterand's speech.

To turn the situation around, a

large and insistent protest movement is needed, a movement unfettered by conventional politics as practiced in the Fifth Republic. Unfortunately, French antinuclear dissent is weak and poorly organized at the present time.

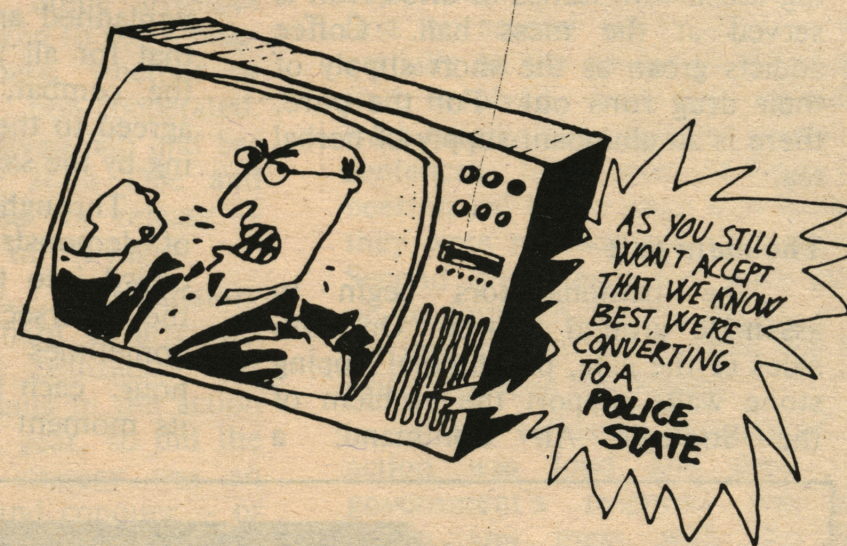
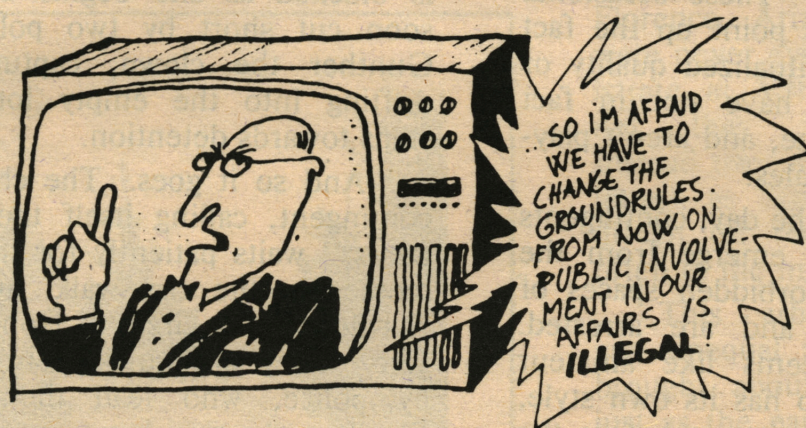
The state's near monopoly on the sources of information -- the education system and the mass media -- has prevented a widespread, critical discussion of the issues involved. The large national movement against France's nuclear power program in the seventies found this out. It was ignored, repressed and ultimately defeated.

In addition, the nuclear situation in France differs from that in other countries in Western Europe, since there is no question of stationing American missiles on French soil. The NATO deployment plan has been the galvanizing impetus of the powerful disarmament movements in Britain and West Germany.

The French social arena has in fact been peaceful in most areas over the past two years because of the honeymoon between the ruling Socialists and the independent left. After 23 years of Nixon-style government, the new regime was like a breath of fresh air. Its stance on social issues and civil liberties was a marked improvement over the past. It even made some cuts in the nuclear power program, mainly by cancelling plants in areas where opposition to them was widespread. Most importantly, the Socialists' rhetoric suggested that they did want to create a more democratic society.

This period of tranquility is now ending. With the dismal economic situation as a backdrop, an increasing number of groups (Breton nationalists, auto workers, solar power advocates, etc.) are openly criticizing the government for its failure to fulfill campaign promises. Tension is certain to build up over the next few years. In the process, French nuclear policy is sure to be challenged.

-- David Gilden



the "2020" militarization plan

they can be fed into the coastal pipeline.

Garcia said recent Planning Board permit decisions show large sections of the island's interior have been "frozen" for mining use. The Planning Board has denied construction permits for farm buildings in the area designated for strip mining, saying the buildings wouldn't be consistent with land use set out in the Master Plan.

The plan has generated some local press coverage, Garcia said, but opposition still is largely limited to small groups like his own. "The independence movement will be the biggest obstacle to the government," he said. "The population is against mining, but the environmentalists

aren't powerful enough to have much effect at this time."

The poverty-stricken population also may prove reluctant to oppose something that the Commonwealth claims will be a boost to the island's economy. The unemployment rate on the 3,500-square mile island is more than 40 percent; about 60 percent of the native people rely on food stamps for at least part of their income.

But Garcia says the grim truth is that the increased mining and manufacturing operations would provide a grand total of 800 jobs on the island. Much of the work would be automated, and the firms involved have always brought in technicians

from the US to handle skilled work, he said.

In fact, Garcia's group says the long-term effect would be to devastate the non-manufacturing sector of the Puerto Rican economy, forcing natives who rely on farming for their income either to seek government support or emigrate. Only 13 percent of the land is arable, and much of that will either be destroyed by the strip mining or gradually wasted as the fresh water now used for irrigation is diverted to the coast, he said.

Puerto Rico is hardly a stranger to strategic US military and military manufacturing interests. The island already holds the biggest naval com-

plex in the Atlantic, and the Commonwealth government in recent years has offered tax incentives and exemptions from environmental regulations to entice US mining, electronics, and pharmaceutical firms to open operations there.

But, according to Puerto Rican environmentalists, the 2020 plan indicates the US intends to drastically increase its military presence on the island and use it as a source for minerals that now come from less-secure sources like South Africa. "Soon, the whole island will be classified as a military base," Garcia said.

-- Tim Redmond
IAT staff

Impressions of a CD action

On Monday, March 21, the year's second major civil disobedience action at the Vandenberg Air Force Base began. It continued throughout the week, with final arrests on Thursday bringing the total to well over 800.

From the Vandenberg base, located in central California's Santa Barbara County, flight tests of many of this country's strategic missiles are launched. The first test of the MX missile will take place here as soon as Congress approves a basing plan. At each test, a missile arcs thousands of miles over the Pacific Ocean to a target on Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands, which has been evacuated so that the US military can play its war games. Both protests were intended to publicize, hinder and disrupt the development of first strike weapons.

Because advance media work in the Bay Area was sparse, the recent action didn't get the notice it deserved in the press. Yet its size and enthusiasm was overwhelming.

Sunday: the warmup rally

On a stage erected at one end of a cavernous hall at the Santa Maria public fairgrounds, a band with flute, electric guitars and tablas is playing a kind of rock-reggae. Face paint and masks abound in the swirling crowd. Two blue-clad cops, one with an elaborate waxed moustache, look pained at the carnival atmosphere. Outside it rains.

Monday morning

Before dawn on the day of the blockade, those who plan to slip onto the base and hike through its back country wake each other up. They huddle in circles, then make for the vehicles that will carry them to their drop-off points. A little later, steaming mush with lumps of dried fruit is served at the mess hall. Coffee addicts groan as the short supply of their drug runs out. For the pure, there is an abundant supply of herbal tea.

The main gate

The demonstrators begin to assemble around 7 a.m. On both sides of the gate, ornamental sloping stone walls support the emblem of the Strategic Air Command: a

mailed fist clutching bolts of lightning. The walls are wrapped Christo-like in clear plastic to protect them from blood or spray paint.

Guards in an assortment of uniforms bespeaking various ranks and status defend the gate. Some gleam in sado-masochistic splendor, berets at jaunty angles, lots of white brocade, pegged pants tucked into boots, black leather accessories. The ordinary grunts wear fatigues and carry simple wooden clubs held at waist height.

At the intersection in front of the gate, state and local police are preventing people from walking against the lights. A green line drawn in January, still faintly visible, indicates the boundary of federal property. To cross this line without permission is to trespass.

On the opposite side of the intersection is an empty lot. It too is apparently valuable federal property, for it has its own line of MP's. Every once and a while a spectator who backs up an inch too far onto this bit of land is seized by the MP's

Guards gleam in sado-masochistic splendor, berets at jaunty angles, lots of white brocade, pegged pants tucked into boots, black leather accessories.

and hauled away. Never mind that he or she didn't intend to get arrested.

A woman caught in this manner is dragged backwards across the street, followed by a stunned child who is snatched out of the way of traffic by friends. These occasional unplanned arrests point up the fact that for all the ritualized quality of the combat, we have not in fact agreed to the game, and aren't playing by the same rules.

Throughout the day, contingents of demonstrators emerge from the crowd into the forbidden spaces of the intersection and are arrested. Sometimes it seems like amateur hour: each group has its own style, its moment to do its act before the



Hopeful participants at the Missile America contest held at Vandenberg.

Photo by Rachel Johnson

hook of authority descends.

One group converges from the four corners of the intersection with the practiced timing of professionals. They bring with them a cardboard mock-up of the MX missile, which they set in the center of the roadway. They cluster round, falling on top of it as if it were an opposing halfback stopped at the line of scrimmage. The cops pry the pile

sight-feel-touch of the missile launching sites, the silos, and the assembly buildings.

Throughout the week, rumors of their exploits circulate. The papers report that the base commander is annoyed at the serious breaches of security. One group, which reached the missile assembly building, prevented workers from entering it for nearly half an hour. Another fifty occupiers reached the Minuteman silos. From the southern edge of the base, at least two groups set off for the high security Space Shuttle area. After a grueling 10-hour hike through darkness and rain, one group was rewarded with the sight of the Space Shuttle buildings emerging from the fog.

After the arrests

One clogged phone line leading to the legal office conveys inadequate information about the fate of the arrestees. They are like mountain climbers lost from sight of the base camp. All of them have rehearsed their performance in jail. They are ready for the final act of the protest: the confrontation between the jail solidarity of the protesters and the determination of the system to make of them a deterring example. But how is the performance going? We on the outside have only the vaguest idea.

Their chief antagonist is assistant US attorney Bill Landers. Rumors have it he has been given complete authority to deal with the situation as he wishes. Rumors say he is getting calls from military bases all over the country asking advice. This is his chance to shine.

I catch a glimpse of him on Monday when he emerges briefly into a crowd of chanting demonstrators at the gate. The painted and masked protesters swirl around him. He looks young and pained and rigid with self-importance. It is as if he is afflicted with the moral equivalent of the hormone imbalance that causes young children to grow prematurely old and wrinkled.

The sentences and treatment of the prisoners vary wildly. Some, chosen in a seemingly arbitrary way, are released almost immediately. Others, especially if they are "second offenders," are held for nearly two weeks.

As this story is written it is too early to give a summation of the jail experience. [But see the accompanying story -- Eds.] Yet it seems certain that this second invasion of Vandenberg won't be the last.

-- Osha Neumann



Leafletting Air Force personnel.

Photo by Rachel Johnson

Rumors

Prepared with rituals and rain gear, the "occupiers" are dropped off on rural roads in a landscape of rolling chaparral. Hidden by the immense spaces and low-lying shrubbery, they hope to hike within

Vandenberg blockade

Jail solidarity vs. the Feds

The Vandenberg action of March 21 to 24 resulted in about 800 arrests, a much higher number than had been expected. Those arrested by state authorities on the highway in front of the main gate were taken to the county jail and cited for obstructing traffic, then released.

Most of the demonstrators, however, were arrested by Air Force security police and were held for at least a day and a night in classrooms at the Vandenberg education center.

The quality of the protestors' contact with Air Force personnel varied greatly. Groups with leaflets met many military people who were willing and eager to accept their

windows, or while passing each other as they were escorted to and from the bathrooms. On Tuesday morning, the word went up and down the row of classrooms that one group had been handcuffed all the previous day and night, and that four people being held in isolation from their groups might be facing stiffer charges.

Immediately, group after group demanded that those handcuffed be unshackled and that the four isolated people be returned. Others attempted to resist the booking procedure until these demands were met. Many a protestor was dragged unwillingly out of the classrooms.

They hoped the male marshalls wouldn't touch a bunch of naked women.

literature. One Air Force guard reportedly asked for more leaflets "for his friends," while others talked openly with arrestees when their superiors weren't around. At least one was willing to pass notes between protestors detained in different rooms. And a base security officer abandoned her post, saying she couldn't take it any more.

On the other hand, many tired and overworked Vandenberg SP's were happy to flaunt their power. Some threatened to unleash attack dogs on non-cooperators while others confiscated blankets at 5:30 a.m. from people trying to sleep on the cold hard linoleum floors.

Groups of prisoners in different classrooms managed to communicate with each other through walls and

The US attorney on the case, Billy Landers, let it be known that if first time offenders simply gave their names, they would be released with "ban and bar letters." Apparently second time offenders (those having received such letters in January) would be dealt with in a harsher manner.

Solidarity discussions at the camp before the action had prepared participants to non-cooperate on a larger scale than at past antinuclear actions. Hundreds were willing to stay in solidarity with second time offenders, demanding equal treatment for all.

The first mass solidarity tactic was non-cooperation with the booking procedure. Hundreds of the prisoners were processed without



One group blockaded the road in front of the main gate with an MX missile.

Photo by Rachel Johnson

giving their names or any other information, thus becoming Jane or John Doe number whatever. Others tried to contort their faces while being photographed and did not readily give their fingerprints -- until a court order and threats of violence by federal marshalls caused them to succumb. After the booking procedure, small groups were taken by marshalls, at times forcibly, to be arraigned.

All but a few of the hundreds of Jane and John Does refused to enter a plea in front of the magistrates, in hopes of eventually being granted a mass arraignment to insure more equal sentencing. After seeing the magistrates, demonstrators were transported to one of several facilities where they were held for up to 12 days at the time of this writing. The facilities included Lompoc Federal Correctional Institution, Los Angeles and Orange County Jails and Terminal Island Federal Prison in Los Angeles.

Later in the week, thirty men were taken to a federal prison in Florence, Arizona. Some arrestees were never even taken to see a magistrate at Vandenberg, whether or not they had non-cooperated. Instead they were given ban and bar letters as Jane or John Doe and driven off the base for release -- often in the middle of the night.

This arbitrary, discriminatory and unequal treatment of arrestees brought about the realization that just as the participants in the action had their tactics in gear, so did the government. Its strategy was an attempt to divide and conquer -- or at least to divide and confuse (which often succeeded).

On Saturday morning, federal marshalls came into the training center at the Lompoc prison where approximately 100 women were being held and called out the numbers of ten Jane Does. Not wanting to be separated from the larger group, many of the women took off their clothes and huddled together, hiding their faces so they couldn't be identified. They also hoped that the mostly male marshalls wouldn't dare touch a bunch of naked women. But the marshalls were not deterred.

The scene which followed was a horrifying one. Women were dragged apart and handcuffed, their arms twisted and bruised and their hair pulled until the marshalls were satisfied that they had the ten women they wanted by way of matching photos and faces. This and

other instances of violence and threats of violence made it clear that the marshalls would get what they wanted, regardless of resistance.

Solidarity had worked, at least to a point. But it was clear that certain demands, such as mass arraignment and equal sentencing, would have to be foregone unless everyone was willing to hang tough for quite awhile longer.

It did seem a little silly for first timers to wait another week just to be given a five-day sentence, when second timers were saying they didn't mind serving their extra few days. The first timers, they said, should feel free to leave with clear consciences since they had already demonstrated their solidarity -- which had allowed second timers to get off more lightly than they had originally feared.

When the sentences were finally meted out by the magistrates, it was clear that solidarity had resulted in relatively lenient, but not completely equal, treatment for everyone.

Sentencing seemed partially to depend upon the person's status as a first or second time offender and partially on the whims of the magistrate involved. First time offenders were mostly given five- or seven-day sentences. Since most of them had been in jail longer than that already, they were released for time served. Second time trespassers were given up to fourteen-day sentences, a far cry indeed from the months that had originally been threatened.

If the solidarity message of the action was loud and clear, the government's response was too. When you mess with the feds they're gonna mess with you right back.

It's little wonder that the government wants to instill fear in anyone contemplating further actions at Vandenberg. Base commander Major General Jack Watkins confirmed that protesters made their way to sensitive areas of the base, a serious breach of national security. It will be hard for the government to go ahead with its MX test if the Vandenberg back country is swarming with protestors like it was during the Vandenberg action, Part Two.

The government's scare tactic may make some think twice before returning to space and missile country. But the strength of the movement's solidarity has mad many a Jane and John Doe want to come back for the next round.

— Jane Doe #161



Photo by Rachel Johnson

Back in camp, General Von Bomb readies for the action.

Short Circuits

LESS IS MORE

If you're a little skeptical of PG&E's "need" for those huge rate boosts over the past few years, the company's newly released annual report will confirm your suspicions. Although PG&E sold 9% less gas and 2% less electricity last year than in 1981, its profits zoomed up 40% -- to a total of \$810 million.

The company's management is hardly satisfied with this nearly billion-dollar bonanza. It has already filed an application for still another rate boost, aimed at increasing its stock dividend to 19% in 1983 -- about double the current interest rate on "money market" investment funds.

Once more, the annual report proclaims that Diablo Canyon's operation is just around the corner. But the traditional warnings of summer brownouts without Diablo are missing. They apparently fell victim to the fact that PG&E's peak electric load dropped an unprecedented 11% last year, demonstrating that the utility's customers don't need Diablo's electricity or its costs.

-- based on 1982 PG&E annual report

SHOREHAM HEATS UP

The state of New York and Suffolk County have flung down the gauntlet against the NRC and Long Island Lighting Co. (LILCO) which want to bring the Shoreham nuclear power plant on line this fall. For the first time ever both the state and county oppose the off-site emergency response plans, with the Suffolk County legislature having found that "Long Island cannot be evacuated" in the event of a catastrophic accident at the plant. The county claims that the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board now holding hearings on Shoreham cannot license the plant without a county-approved plan.

In the beginning Suffolk Co. and LILCO worked together on an emergency response plan. When the county later decided to hire a consultant to produce its own version, LILCO on its own took the original document to the New York State Disaster Preparedness Commission. Outraged, the county sued and won the right to submit its own plan concurrently.

When LILCO learned that the county would likely find evacuation impossible, it threatened to have the state "enforce" LILCO's plan on the county. Now that state officials have refused to "sic 'em," the controversy will likely come before the NRC.

Coincidentally, another study underway by the NRC may affect the dispute over Shoreham. The NRC's requirements for emergency planning may get watered down as it revises estimates of how much radioactivity will escape from a major nuclear accident.

Meanwhile, Rep. Ed Markey of Massachusetts made public an internal NRC letter written to NRC Chair Nunzio Palladino one day after the NRC's emergency preparedness rules took effect in 1981. Executive Director for Operations William Dirks wrote Palladino that the rules didn't require enforcement -- that utilities with inadequate plans would not be shut down nor would their operations be subject to any limitations.

-- *Nucleonics Week*,
Feb. 3 & 24, 1983



SUCH A BARGAIN

The two new reactors at San Onofre may cost Southern California ratepayers \$1.5 billion in extra electricity bills, according to a new analysis by Public Utilities Commission economist Ron Knecht. The study, presented to the PUC staff and Commission on March 22, compared the cost of generating energy from the \$4.2 billion nuclear plant with the cost of burning gas or oil to generate the same amount of power.

According to Knecht's predictions, the declining cost of oil and the rising costs of building the nuclear plants will make nuclear power cost 27% more than oil or gas would have over the plants' lifetime. In 1984, the year the new reactors are scheduled to enter service, Southern California Edison customers will have to shell out \$500 million more than they would have without San Onofre -- or about \$5 extra per month on the average residential bill. The customers of San Diego Gas and Electric, which owns a 20% interest in San Onofre, will pay an average of \$6 more per month.

The study bent over backwards to avoid drawing the obvious antinuclear conclusions. According to Knecht and PUC financial examiner Ray Czahar, "The point of this analysis is not to argue that San Onofre 2 and 3 should be abandoned (they certainly shouldn't, since termination costs would have to be paid in addition to oil/gas generating costs), or even to criticize the original decision [by the utilities and the PUC to build the reactors]. Rather, the point is that the ratepayers have been saddled with almost all the risk here, and the stockholders with very little; and the result is that the ratepayers will pay for almost all the losses of nearly \$1.5 billion [due to building the project]."

-- based on *SF Chronicle*, 3/23/83

THE WORLD OF CANCER

There's no lack of evidence that radiation causes cancer, but the owners of nuclear facilities around the world continue to claim that workers and the public get doses too small to have any effect. That's not true, according to numerous past studies -- and three more released this month.

In their review of a study of workers at the Rocky Flats plant in Colorado, which processes plutonium for nuclear weapons, Researchers Dr. Alice Stewart and Diane Eisenberg found that "elementary mistakes" had been made. The flawed study, which failed to find any excess of brain cancer among the plant workers, was performed by the Department of Energy (which also administers the plant). When the errors were removed, the data showed that Rocky Flats workers do suffer more brain cancers than other industrial workers -- a conclusion also supported by Dr. J.W. Thiessen, a DOE official, in testimony before a House Subcommittee.

A study of a 1957 fire at a British nuclear reactor by the National Radiological Protection Board concludes that it may have caused 260 cases of thyroid cancer among the public, 13 of them fatal. That estimate agrees with the independent calculations of ecology groups, which also predict higher future death tolls from the continuing radioactive emissions of the still-operating Windscale facility.

Finally, a study by the French Committee for the Surveillance of Nuclear Power Plants has found that the mortality rate for cancer in the area surrounding the La Hague nuclear fuel reprocessing plant has increased by 60% since the plant began functioning.

-- from *WISE*, 3/10/83

HOMEGROWN NUKE OPERATORS

Nuclear plant operators in the US are suffering from "air traffic controller syndrome," according to presentations made to the Atomic Industrial Forum, an industry trade group, in San Francisco in late January.

But the "syndrome" clouding the minds of nuclear officials concerned rising wage demands, not stress or safety. Citing over-training and an industry-wide shortage of personnel, R. Pierce Head of Georgia Power suggested that many nuclear workers, particularly plant operators, "have an inflated view of what their salaries ought to be."

J.J. Kirby of Combustion Engineering, which builds nuclear plants, blamed college education for producing engineers who tend to be itinerant and fall prey to boredom. Kirby also blasted the media and a hostile public for treating nuclear operators like "social lepers," which may lead to their annual predicted drop-out rate of ten percent.

To cope with these problems, Kirby told utilities to train high-school graduates from areas near nuclear plants, "home-grown local candidates." Kirby held out the strategy of one-upping the anti-nukes and their supposed reliance on celebrities like Jane Fonda or Ralph Nader. By skillfully using local trainees' already-established web of social connections, he said, the industry could mold trusted resident experts on nuclear power. And no doubt at a fraction of the cost of ordinary celebrities!

-- *Nucleonics Week*,
Jan. 27, 1983

UC AND THE BALTIMORE CONNECTION

Baltimore, Maryland is one of the frostbelt cities where figures on unemployment, plant shutdowns and home foreclosures are steadily climbing. In part because of this economic misery, it is also a city where community and neighborhood organizations abound. So when the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BG&E) requested a \$142 million rate increase last December, a noisy opposition arose.

BG&E's justification for this increase, which will boost the average residential bill by \$108 a year, is based not on higher fuel costs or even on proposals for new power plants. Instead, the utility wants a higher rate of return so it can pay larger dividends to its stockholders.

Typically, BG&E's public relations imply that its stockholders are all starving widows and orphans. In fact, the biggest stockholder is our own University of California. The university recently increased its holdings by about 75%, so that it now owns close to four percent of BG&E's common stock. At current dividend rates, this brings UC over \$3 million annually.

Upon learning of the Baltimore connection, a couple of Berkeley students went into action. Vivian Kendon of Berkeley Students for Peace drew up a petition that gives "members of the UC community" a chance to express their opposition to the rate hike. Several hundred signatures were quickly gathered by an ad hoc collection of student groups, and a resolution expressing similar sentiments was passed by the student senate.

These efforts will be much appreciated in Baltimore, where organizers are preparing for five hearings of the Public Service Commission, the regulatory body that must rule on the rate hike request.

Between rock and a hardened base

For many of us who were born in the post-war baby boom and weaned on rebellious rock'n'roll, the mid-seventies were a barren time indeed. Disco and heavy metal phallic rock, with its lyrical banality (the "ooowee fuck me baby!" genre), left us without new songs to blast from our previously well-seasoned stereos.

The late seventies brought us the British punk invasion. Meaningful and political lyrics were back. The music had authenticity and integrity -- even if it was raw and at first usually lacked the virtuosity to which we had become accustomed in the late sixties. The punkers and new wavers who've survived have learned to play their instruments and compose songs (with more than three chords) that can get even the most jaded old rock critics on their feet and dancing.

Now WEA Records, yet another branch of Warner Communications, has released a collection of previously recorded songs by some of Britain's best bands. Entitled *Life in the European Theatre*, the LP is a benefit for four British antinuclear organizations -- that is, the musicians' share goes to the movement. The tunes selected include some fine rock with political/antinuke/antiwar lyrics you can feel good about singing in the shower.

The album opens with Britain's premier political punk band, the Clash, banging out their *London Calling*. The song is an optimistic calling to arms in some future yet inevitable uprising.

*London calling to the faraway towns
Now war is declared and battle come down*

*London calling to the underworld
Come out of the cupboard you boys and girls.*

This is followed by *Little Boy Soldiers*, an anti-militarist song by a neo-mod trio, The Jam. Their sound recalls the early Who, and this song displays a musical composition and sarcastic wit equal to some of Peter Dinklage's finest.

Rocking strong, the singer complains that the politicians, who never paid much attention to him before, now need his help -- he's being drafted -- to shoot strangers in a foreign war. The music then breaks into a military march as:

*Think of honor, queen and country
You're a blessed son of the British Empire
God's on our side and so is Washington
Come out on the hill with the little boy soldiers
I'm up on the hill playing little boy soldiers.*

Then in slow, saccharine tones:

*Come on out side I'll sing you a lullaby
I'll tell a tale how goodness prevailed
We ruled the world, we killed and robbed
The fucking lot, but we don't feel bad.
(breaking back to rock)
It was done beneath the flag of democracy.*

The next cut is by the English Beat, perhaps the best of Britain's two-tone ska bands. In a country where racism is a real problem, blacks and whites playing music together is a political statement in itself. But the Beat don't stop there. *I am Your Flag* is a biting, no-holds-barred anti-patriotic statement.

*So as I fly so proudly you will see
That you won't dare break up this family*

THE JAM - THE CLASH - BAD MANNERS SPECIALS - PETER GABRIEL - MADNESS ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN - THE BEAT XTC - IAN DURY & THE BLOCKHEADS STRANGLERS - UNDERTONES - AU PAIRS LIFE IN THE EUROPEAN THEATRE



*See the happy children on parade
With wooden guns that mother made
And see me dancing on the breeze that
blows them away
'Freedom's' just a new deodorant
The money's spent and you've been
had.
You don't believe me? Ask your dad.
I am your flag
Took your hat off in Wisconsin
Took your head in Vietnam
Dying to become a man
Well, I am your flag*

All the while the Beat's leader,
Dave Wakeling, who raises rhythm

*Russia and America are at each
other's throat, but don't you cry
Get on your knees and pray and while
you're down there kiss your ass good-
bye*

*I stick my fingers in my ears and hope
they make it up before too late
If we get through this one alright
they're due for replay, 1998.*

Between each line the backup
singers repeat *Living through another
CuBA*, as if to simulate the big one.
Throughout, the band cooks with
intensity and ends with some playful
rock scat/percussion exchanges.

*In a semi-conscious state
I dream of people fighting me
Without any reason I can see
In the morning I awake
My arms, my legs, my body aches
The sky outside is wet and grey
So begins another weary day*

The vocal harmonies and horn
arrangements combine to achieve a
full, lush sound and the weeping
lead guitar almost wrenches tears
from the speakers.

Au Pairs, a woman-led band
with strong feminist leanings whose
songs often comment sardonically on
sex roles and sexual relationships,
close out the album. *Dier* is about a
woman stuck in the confines of her
housewife role and what it does to
her.

*He works the car, she the sink
She's not here to think
Sits with the paper, discuss the news
She doesn't have political views.*

The song goes on to describe the
products she uses to keep her house
and laundry clean, her guilt for not
taking enough care with her child
and, of course, the mandatory diet
she is on. Then:

*There's a constant pain behind her eyes
She needs to be tranquilized.*

The avant-garde funk, Gang-of-Four
styled music provides a fitting mood
for the stark and bitter lyrics.

All in all, *Life in the European
Theatre* is a lot of fun. Besides,
where else can you get an LP with
liner notes by E.P. Thompson? So if
you want to rock to some "politically
correct" music and make a donation
to the cause at the same time, pick
up a copy. You'll be glad you did.

-- Steve Stallone
IAT staff

The Beat's *I Am Your Flag* is a biting, no-holds-barred anti-patriotic song.

guitar to a fine art, drives the band
on in some of the most danceable
music you'll ever shake it to. Saxa,
the horn player, blows hot and nasty
throughout the instrumental section.

Another two-tone ska band, the
now-defunct Specials, have contrib-
uted their song *The Man at C and A*
to the album. Its chorus (*I don't
have a say in the war games that they
play*) and the next cut, XTC's *Living
through Another Cuba*, express much
of the European movement's feel-
ings of powerlessness, of being
pawns in the superpowers' nuclear
chess game. XTC sings:

*It's 1961 again and we are pit in the
middle
While war is polishing his drum and
peace plays second fiddle*

Several songs on the second side
don't quite display the same energy
and talent as side one. These
include Ian Dury and the Block-
heads' *Reasons to be Cheerful: Part 3*
(a sort of rap tune with a boringly
repetitive disco beat), Bad Manners'
Psychedelic Eric (about a weird kid no
one likes except his perverted grand-
mother) and Echo and the
Bunnymen's *All That Jazz*. On the
other hand, *Grey Day* by Madness is
a moving if depressing song about
the misery of life in the workaday
world.

*When I get home it's late at night
I'm black and bloody from my life
I haven't time to clean my head
Cuts will only sting me through my
dreams
It's well past midnight as I lie*

Announcements

PEACE WALKATHON

The Abalone Alliance has been invited to participate in a fundraising walkathon co-sponsored by the Agape Foundation and the Disarmament Resource Center. The Walkathon will take place on Saturday, May 14 at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. Funds raised will be split 50-50 between the two sponsoring groups and the Abalone Alliance. This is a great opportunity to fund our peace and anti-nuclear work in California.

Walkers will solicit pledges for a given amount of money per mile completed of the 10 kilometer walkathon course.

For more information and ways in which those outside the Bay Area can participate call Rachel at the AA statewide office at (415) 861-0592.

DRAFT REGISTRATION SLIDESHOW

Choice or Chance: 20 minutes that can save a lifetime is a new slideshow on registration and the draft. It begins with the current "poverty draft" situation where poor Third World young people (and increasingly many middle class young men and women) are forced to join the military because it is their only option for employment.

Choice or Chance is being distributed through the Northern California Regional office of the American Friends Service Committee and was produced by independent filmmakers Judy Ehrlich and George King. It is available for \$80 from A.F.S.C., 2160 Lake St., S.F. 94121. (415) 752-7766. A free preview copy is available to potential purchasers.

T-SHIRTS

T-shirts with this "Nuclear Free Zone" design are available from Community Against Nuclear Extinction (CANE) for \$7 each. Add \$1.50 postage and packing for one shirt, \$2.00 for 2, and an extra 30 cents for each additional shirt. Please specify size(s) (XL, L, M, or S). Make checks payable to CANE, PO Box 377, Palo Alto, CA 94302.

Telephone inquiries: Mary Klein, (415) 328-0367.

FAST FOR LIFE

On Hiroshima Day, August 6, a small international group will begin an unlimited fast against the nuclear arms race. By this action the fasters hope to push for an immediate halt of the development, testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons by all nuclear powers. We hope to inspire people to demand an end to the dual crisis of impending nuclear holocaust and the continuing holocaust of starvation in the world. For more info. contact Fast for Life, 942 Market St. # 710, SF, CA 94102. (415) 982-4637.

HELP STOP THE CRUISE MISSILE

Production of the "Tomahawk" cruise missile at the General Dynamics/Convair plant has been stepped-up to meet the Reagan Administration's scheduled deployment of cruise missiles in Western Europe in December, 1983. Realizing that our community has come to be known as the "home of the cruise missile," we are planning an educational and action project focusing on the negative effects of military spending on the economy and employment with the goal of stopping production of the Tomahawk. We plan educational presentations, lobbying, and peaceful rallies and protests as well as civil disobedience at the site of Cruise production.

Your group can help us fight the Cruise where it is built by sending us any information you have on this deadly new weapon. We are especially interested in learning of any and all resources available including films, slide shows, video tapes or other multi-media programs.

Please also provide us with the names of any groups that you know of which are opposing deployment of the cruise.

We plan to produce a brochure for public distribution, and we will produce a videotape if we can obtain funding. Contact Community Energy Action Network, PO Box 33686, San Diego, CA 921103. (619) 275-1162.



Princesses Against Plutonium circulate "Let Them Eat Yellowcake" leaflets in honor of the Queens March 3rd visit to San Francisco.

CALDICOTT VIDEOTAPE AVAILABLE

The Final Solution: A Talk by Dr. Helen Caldicott is a videotape on the dangers of nuclear power and weapons.

The tape discusses radioactive materials production and storage, the arms race, cancer, nuclear attack, accidents, survival possibilities, strategies for bringing about permanent

changes in nuclear policy and much more.

This is a fine tape for organizing, fundraising and the classroom. Purchase price per copy is \$35.00 for individuals and \$45.00 for groups. For more info. contact The Final Solution, c/o Pat Henry, Box 753, Sebastopol, CA 95472.

EUROPEANS APPEAL FOR DISARMAMENT

European disarmers are planning a campaign to educate American citizens on the extent of European opposition to the deployment of Cruise and Pershing II missiles through direct personal appeals. The "People to People Appeal" will involve European individuals and groups sending messages directly to their American "counterparts" -- women to women, church members to church members, unions, teachers, etc. -- in an effort to counter American perceptions that the people of Europe want increased American military presence.

Local groups that want to participate in the appeal -- as a local coordinating group or part of a national network -- can contact the People to People Project, St. James Church, 197 Piccadilly, London W1, England, c/o Sabine Kurjo.

LAST BLAST: The ABM game

Continued from page one

racy of the MX and Trident missiles and US advances in anti-submarine warfare, the new moves to further intensify ABM development supports the idea that US is seeking a first-strike capability. Several other recent revelations support this point:

- The Trident submarine program is being expanded from 12 to 20 subs, and each Trident II missile may carry as many as 15 warheads. Since there are 24 tubes on each sub, the Trident force will carry a total of 7200 extremely accurate warheads. Those extra 8 subs almost escaped notice in the press -- but will carry twice as many warheads as the entire proposed 100-missile MX system.

- The 18-satellite Global Positioning System, also known as NAVSTAR, will allow missiles (including those launched from submarines) to be guided to within 100 feet of their targets. Cut by the Pentagon and

Congress from the 1981 budget, the Reagan administration brought it back in 1982 as a "Number One priority program."

It has recently become public that the satellites will carry another nuclear warfare system called NUDETS, which can pinpoint the exact location of nuclear explosions and therefore allow "missed" targets such as missile silos to be instantly retargeted with another warhead. Such a capability has no defensive purpose. If the US had been attacked, Soviet missile silos would already be empty -- and there isn't much point in blowing up silos unless they have missiles in them.

- Next year, the Pentagon proposes to spend about \$35 billion -- more than twice the salaries of all Army personnel -- on developing sophisticated electronic intelligence and communication systems, nearly double the

expenditures in the Carter administration. Much of this money will go toward developing equipment that can withstand the electromagnetic pulse effects of nuclear explosions -- and enable commanders to continue fighting a "sustained" nuclear war.

While Reagan regularly denounces the Soviets for not keeping their word, he's now openly proposing to disregard both the ABM treaty and the Outer Space Treaty by deploying a space-based anti-missile system. And he plans to put more warheads on Trident missiles than SALT II allows. Reagan calls the USSR "the focus of evil in the modern world" and a few days later suggests that the US might give the Soviets ABM secrets so it too could feel secure.

Sometimes it's hard to take him seriously.

-- Bob Van Scoy
LAT staff

GROWING UP IN THE NUCLEAR SHADOW

Growing Up in the Nuclear Shadow is a 25-minute video-film documentary on children's responses to the threat of nuclear war. One reviewer notes, "The children appear remarkably thoughtful and mature. . . more mature than our leaders in Washington."

The documentary is available in various video-tape and film formats at rental rates from \$25-\$40. It is also available for purchase. Contact: Educational Film and Video Project, 1725 B Seabright Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062, (408) 427-2624.

Calendar

April 12: Soviet/American Reconciliation Study Group

with Peter Klotz-Chamberlain and Karen Enns of Resource Center for Non-violence. 7:30 p.m., Tuesdays, 515 Broadway, Santa Cruz. Contact: (408) 423-1626.

April 12: Livermore Action Group orientations on how to get involved in the June 20 Livermore Labs blockade or to organize your own action on or around the International Day of Nuclear Disarmament. 7:30 - 10 PM, Unitarian Fellowship, 1924 Cedar at Bonita, Berkeley. Contact: 644-2028.

April 13: Bay Area Peace Network

All groups welcome. 7:30 PM, Dolores St. Baptist Church, 15th and Dolores, SF.

April 14: "On Trial: The People of Alameda County Versus The Reagan Military Budget."

A People's Court with Alameda Supervisor John George presiding. Testimony by Tom Bates, Dave McFadden, Gus Newport, and others. Part of Jobs with Peace Week. Contact: (415) 843-7686.

April 15: War Tax Day Is Non-Collaboration Day.

Join War Tax Resisters public ceremony to pledge non-payment of military taxes. Noon, Federal Building, 450 Golden Gate, SF. Contact: (415) 849-2360; 861-8522; 834-2172.

"The Human Impact of the Military Budget on the City of San Francisco," public hearings with representatives of peace groups, trade unions, etc. 10 AM-2 PM, SEIU Hall, SF. Contact: (415) 558-8615.

April 17: The Nowhere to Run Run. A race to continue the human race, Livermore Labs. Race start and finish at Robertson Park. Contact: (415) 549-0361.

April 18: *Demonstration at Westinghouse* to protest its involvement in cruise, MX, and other nuclear technology. 4:30 PM, Murphy Park, Sunnyvale Ave. and California Ave., Sunnyvale. Contact: (415) 326-8873.

April 20: Consensus/Meeting Facilitation Workshop, Part II, Free. Contact: (415) 285-9685.

April 20: *Marx's Relevance to Women's Liberation, the Black Dimension, and the Third World Today.* Feminist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya, U.C. Berkeley, 4 PM, Tilden Room, Student Union. Contact: (415) 658-1448.

April 21: Women as Thinkers and Revolutionaries, Feminist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya, 8 P.M., Stanford University, History Corner, Bldg. 200, Room 2. Contact: (415) 658-1448.

April 22: King of Prussia, Livermore Action Group Film benefit, 8:00 PM. Contact: (415) 845-7248.

April 23: *Technical Professionals and the Arms Race: Defining Our Ethics and Responsibilities.*

A conference sponsored by the Technology and Society Committee and Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility. 1-6 PM, Syn-tex Gallery, 3401 Hillview Ave., Palo Alto. \$5 advance; \$7.50 at door. Contact: (415) 968-8798.

Welcome Home for Vandenberg Protestors 2 PM, New Varsity Theater, 456 University, Palo Alto.

Book and Record Sale to benefit CISPES. 11 AM-5 PM, La Pena, 3105 Shattuck, Berkeley.

April 25: *Walk for Justice from DQ University* to Davis to the Federal Courthouse in Sacramento. Contact: (415) 441-7841.

Peace and Security Forum on "The Effects of Nuclear Weapons."

7 PM, Fort Mason Center, SF. \$2 general; \$1 student. Contact: (415) 841-6295.

April 28: Film Benefit for Casa El Salvador Farabundo Marti. Two films by Les Blank and Maureen Gosling

It's About Times / April-May 1983 / page 11

"Always for Pleasure" and "Garlic is as good as Ten Mothers." 7 and 9:30 PM, Roxie Theater, 16th and Valencia SF. \$3.50

April 28: Livermore Blockade orientation, New College, SF, 7:30 - 10:00.

April 30: Massage-a-thon, 10 AM to 8 PM. Put your body on the table for peace to support June 20 International Day of Nuclear Disarmament. \$20.00 Donation (or more) for a one hour treatment. Oceana Center, 831 Delaware, Berkeley. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. Contact: (415) 534-5749.

May 1: Berkeley Anti-Reagan Festival (BARF). All day in Provo Park.

May 8: Women's Day at Golden Gate Park.

May 9: *Mother's Day Blockade* at Livermore Lab. Contact: Mica, (415) 653-0320.

May 10: Livermore Blockade orientation, 7:30 - 10 PM. Unitarian Fellowship, 1924 Cedar at Bonita, Berkeley.

May 20-22: Strategy Development: a weekend workshop for nonviolent activists. A skills-sharing workshop on developing strategy, setting long-term goals and organizing campaigns to achieve those goals. Sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, 2160 Lake St., S.F., 94121.

AA Safe Energy 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

ALBION:
PACIFIC TIDEPOOL ALLIANCE,
P.O. Box 462/95410 • (707) 964-7468
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

COMPTHE:
COMPTHE CITIZENS FOR A SAFE ENVIRONMENT,
P.O. Box 326/95427

EL VERANO:
NO NUKE OF THE NORTH,
P.O. Box 521/95433 • (707) 938-0622

EUGENE, OREGON:
SOLARITY,
358 W. 4th Street/97401

LAYTONVILLE:
CAHTO ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSIBLE ENERGY,
P.O. Box 902 • (707) 984-6170

MENDOCINO:
ALL US MOLLUSKS,
P.O. Box 1385/95460 • (707) 937-4068

OCCIDENTAL:
BOHEMIAN GROVE ACTION NETWORK
P.O. Box 216/95465 • (707) 874-2248

POINT ARENA:
POINT ARENA ACTION FOR SAFE ENERGY,
P.O. Box 106/95468

REDWAY:Southern Humboldt County
ACORN ALLIANCE,
P.O. Box 858/95560 • (707) 923-2277

SANTA ROSA:
SONOMore Atomics,
1030 Second Street/95476 • (707) 526-7220

SONOMA ALTERNATIVES FOR ENERGY,
P.O. Box 452/95476 • (707) 996-5123

SAINT HELENA:
UPPER NAPA VALLEY ENERGY ALLIANCE,
1472 St. Helena Hwy./94574 • (707) 963-4728

UKIAH:
NEUTS AGAINST NUKES,
1155 South Dora/95482

CENTRAL VALLEY & SIERRA

CHICO:
CHICO PEOPLE FOR A NUCLEAR FREE FUTURE,
930 Walnut St./95926 • (916) 893-9078

DAVIS:
PEOPLE FOR A NUCLEAR FREE FUTURE,
411 5th St./95616 • (916) 753-1630 M-F 12-6 P.M.

FRESNO:
PEOPLE FOR SAFE ENERGY,
175 Blackstone/93701 • (209) 266-5471, 485-9444

GRASS VALLEY:
NEVADA COUNTY PEOPLE FOR A NUCLEAR FREE
FUTURE, P.O. Box 471/95945 • (916) 272-6418

MODESTO:
STANISLAUS SAFE ENERGY COMMITTEE,
P.O. Box 134/93354 • (209) 529-5750

MOUNTAIN RANCH:
FOOTHILL ALLIANCE FOR PEACE,
P.O. Box 66/95246 • (209) 728-2698

PLACERVILLE:
ENERGY FOR PEOPLE,
1459 Lane Drive/95667 • (916) 626-6397

SACRAMENTO:
CITIZENS FOR SAFE ENERGY,
312 20th St./95814 • (916) 442-3635

VISALIA:
SEQUOIA ALLIANCE,
3017 South Conyer/93277 • (209) 733-9050

WILLITS:
ARTISTS FOR RESPONSIBLE ENERGY,
27900 Skyview/95490
WILLITS NUCLEAR AWARENESS COALITION,
P.O. Box 393/95490 (707) 459-4852

GREATER BAY AREA

BERKELEY/OAKLAND:
EAST BAY ANTI-NUCLEAR GROUP,
1600 Woolsey St./94703 • (415) 841-6500,665-1715

BOLINAS:
LEGAL ACTION FOR UNDERMINING GOVERNMENT
HARRASSMENT IN SOCIETY,
P.O. Box 249/94924 • (415) 868-0245

EL GRANADA:
COASTSIDERS FOR A NUCLEAR FREE FUTURE,
P.O. Box 951/94018 • (415) 728-3119

PALO ALTO:
COMMUNITY AGAINST NUCLEAR EXTINCTION,
P.O. Box 377/94302 • (415) 328-0367, 857-9251

PLEASANT HILL:
CONTRA COSTANS FOR A NUCLEAR FREE FUTURE,
P.O. Box 23103/94523 • (415) 934-5249

PT. REYES:
PELICAN ALLIANCE,
P.O. Box 596/94956 • (415) 663-8483

SAN ANSELMO:
ABALONE ALLIANCE OF MARIN,
1024 Sir Francis Drake Blvd./94960 • (415) 457-4377

SAN JOSE:
GROUP OPPOSING NUCLEAR ENERGY,
520 So. 10th St./95112 • (408) 297-2299

SAN FRANCISCO:
ALLIANCE AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER,
UC Med Center, c/o Michael Kosnett, MU 249/
94143 • (415) 666-2010
AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE,
Liz Walker, David Hartsough, 2160 Lake St./94121
• (415) 752-7766

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION MINISTRY,
942 Market St., Room 310/94102 • (415) 391-7112
GOLDEN GATE ALLIANCE,
2735 Franklin/94123 • (415) 673-7422

LUMPEN GUARD,
143 Noe St./94114 • (415) 864-4589
PEOPLE AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER,
1824 Lake Street/94121 • (415) 285-2262

CENTRAL COAST

AVILA:
PLEXURE,
P.O. Box 564/93424

CAMBRIA:
MOONSTONE ALLIANCE,
849 Drake St./93428 • (805) 927-3542

LOMPOC:
LOMPOC SAFE ENERGY COALITION,
P.O. Box 158/93438 • (805) 736-1897

SAN LUIS OBISPO:
PEOPLE GENERATING ENERGY,
452 Higuera/93401 • (805) 543-8402

SANTA BARBARA:
SANTA BARBARA PEOPLE FOR A NUCLEAR FREE
FUTURE, 331 N. Milpas St. Suite 7/93103
• (805) 966-4565

SANTA CRUZ:
ACTION COMMUNITY ON DIABLO CANYON,
P.O. Box 693/95060
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA NON VIOLENCE TRAINERS/
PREPARERS COLLECTIVE, P.O. Box 693/95060
• (408) 476-8215

SANTA MARIA:
UNIVERSAL LIFE CHURCH,
512 W. Evergreen/93454 • (805) 922-1309
481-2757

SOUTH

LOS ANGELES:
ALLIANCE FOR SURVIVAL,
1503 N. Hobart/90027 • (213) 462-6243
END NUCLEAR DUMPING IN THE PACIFIC,
614 Gretna Greenway/90049 • (213) 472-4406
NUCLEAR RESISTANCE COALITION
DIABLO CANYON TASK FORCE,
4670 Hollywood Bl. #103/90027 • (213) 666-1517,
395-4483
WALDEN WEST,
c/o Michael Newcomb, 44 Ozone Ave./90291

OJAI:
STOP URANIUM NOW,
P.O. Box 772/93023 • (805) 646-3832

RIVERSIDE:
RIVERSIDE ALLIANCE FOR SURVIVAL,
200 E. Blaine St./92507

SAN DIEGO:
COMMUNITY ENERGY ACTION NETWORK,
P.O. Box 33686/92103 • (714) 275-1162

TOPANGA:
LOU SNIT,
P.O. Box 1252/90290 • (213) 455-2867, 455-2768

VENTURA:
VENTURA PEOPLE FOR A NUCLEAR FREE FUTURE,
P.O. Box 308/93002

CORPORATE MEDIA LIES DEPT.

Despite NBC's breathless promotion for "the most realistic movie you'll ever see," its recent "Special Bulletin" turned out to be just another made-for-TV mediocrity. Its "realism" was based on a single gimmick: that it appeared to be a series of genuine, live TV news bulletins on the "RBS" network. That premise -- and the wooden acting -- got tiresome fast, but it was convincing enough to prompt thousands of frightened phone calls to TV stations around the country despite frequent on-screen disclaimers.

What distinguished "Special Bulletin" wasn't its artistic merit, but its politics -- which amount to nothing less than a direct attack on the disarmament movement.

The movie's plot is simple enough. It begins as a band of terrorists on a boat get into a dockside shootout with the Coast Guard. The terrorists capture a TV news crew that happens on the scene, and they demand to be put on the air. They announce they will blow up the city with a homemade atomic bomb on the boat unless their demands are met.

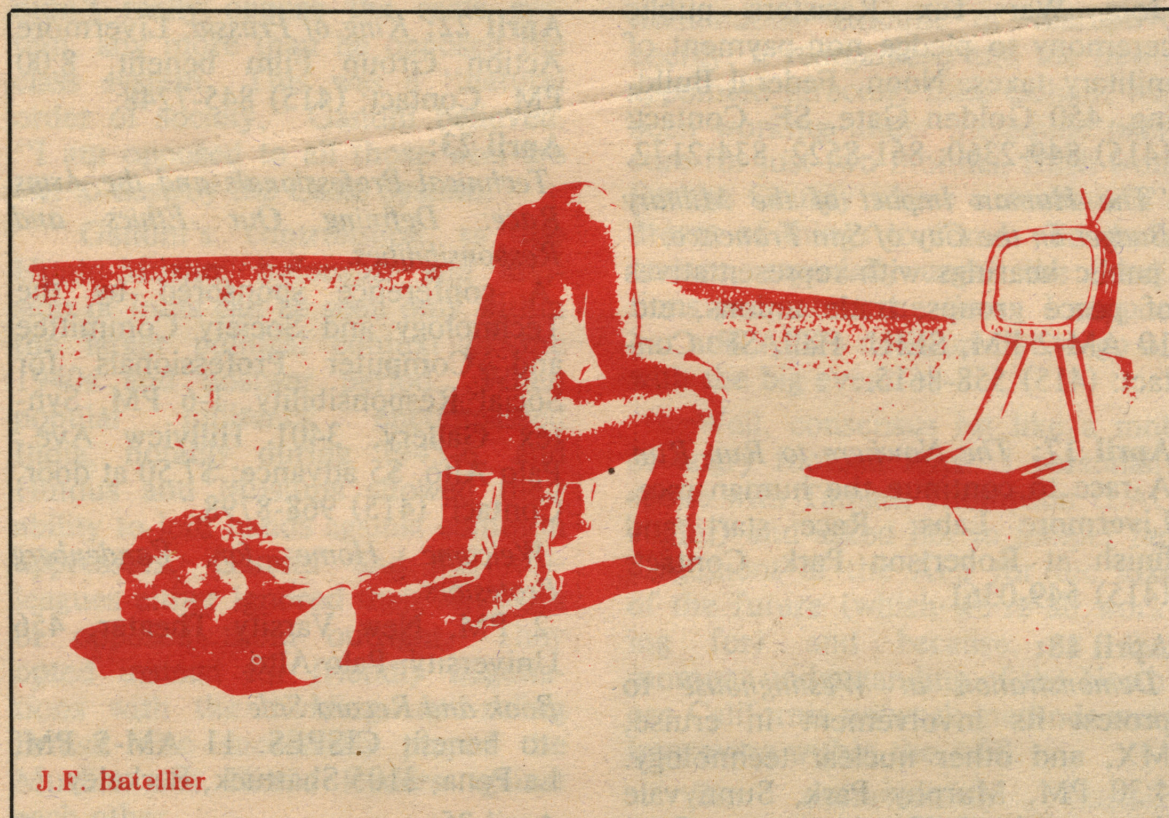
Sounds like a "Hawaii Five-O" rerun, right? But don't touch that dial: these aren't your run-of-the-mill criminal bad guys. The ringleaders are a political scientist and a physicist, and their demand isn't gold or diamonds but nuclear disarmament.

To be sure, their idea of what disarmament involves is just a little naive. All they are asking, in return for their not blowing up Charleston, South Carolina, is that the "detonating modules" from the 1000 or so US nuclear weapons in the area be delivered to their boat for disposal at sea.

Now it isn't clear what a "detonating module" really is, but presumably the government can have more of them made -- if, indeed, they aren't already sitting on the shelf at some Air Force base.

These movie "terrorists" are so timid that they aren't even demanding the destruction of the nukes, only that they be put out of action temporarily. That's hardly unilateral disarmament.

But the movie pretends that destroying those thousand detonators would create grave threats to the US. Congresspeople are shown agonizing over whether to give in to the



J.F. Batellier

demand, and we are told darkly that the Russians have put their forces on alert -- as if they might be tempted to attack if faced with 'only' 8500 nukes instead of 9500.

In case we still missed the point, we get an interview with a spokesperson for the nuclear Freeze. She bitterly denounces the terrorists and informs us that all the "responsible" people are for *bilateral* arms control.

That's the movie's political Lesson One: getting rid of *even a tenth* of US nuclear weapons would be intolerably dangerous -- and that only terrorists would demand that the US take the first step in reversing the arms race. Left out of the NBC version of reality is the fact that the US started the nuclear arms race and has always led it -- and leads today by *more* than those thousand warheads.

As the show goes on, we get to know more about the terrorists' backgrounds as the ever-vigilant FBI makes their files public. (Good thing it's keeping tabs on all those antinuke *potential* terrorists.) Here the viewer gets quite a shock, for the lead terrorist is unmistakably modeled on a real person: Daniel Ellsberg.

From Marine Corps to CIA staffer to dissident, the character's resume leaves little doubt as to who he really is. He is even shown speaking at an antinuclear rally, uttering Ellsbergian phrases. There is a little fictitious violence tacked on: assaulting a police officer and a

prison term for inciting to riot. Such creativity in a *real* news broadcast would invite a libel suit. But even though the program looks like the real thing, its producers can hide behind the claim that it's "only fiction." The effect is to discredit Ellsberg and his politics without ever identifying him by name. Since Ellsberg has associated himself with issues other than nuclear weapons -- for example, he regularly criticizes unquestioning obedience to authority and US interventionism -- and since he participates in civil disobedience and demonstrations, the message about the acceptable limits of dissidence is reinforced.

The terrorist physicist, who stole the plutonium for the bomb and built it, is also a familiar type in the antinuclear movement: the former government scientist with an attack of conscience. We are informed that he was fired from the Hanford, Washington plutonium plant "after he participated in an antinuclear demonstration." So here's Lesson Two: today's peaceful protester is tomorrow's terrorist.

The rest of the terrorist gang is more traditional. There's an articulate black communist poetess who is also wanted for a townhouse bombing, and a trigger-happy crazy who was the lead character's prison buddy. There's also a very unhappy young mother who, it is implied, really wants to return to home and family, but doesn't. She's presumably the group dupe.

Considering their supposed pol-

itical experience, our fearsome fivesome are awfully naive -- not only in their approach to disarmament but also in dealing with all those little crises of a terrorist's life. They are devastated when one of the Coast Guardsmen they shoot dies (is that what guns do?) They get upset that the network is trivializing their actions. They drop their weapons and start celebrating when the vans which are supposedly bringing the "detonating modules" arrive. Everyone who's ever watched a TV cop show knows that the payoff is always the moment the SWAT team makes its move.

Sure enough, the SWAT team invades the boat and machine-guns most of the baddos. But the physicist, who is the only person who knows how to defuse the bomb, shoots himself -- thus proving that the following events are his fault, and not the result of the government's double-cross.

The government experts rush in to disarm the bomb. But they botch the task, and it blows up.

The next scenes are truly horrifying. The city erupts into flames, and thousands die despite an earlier evacuation. The camera jolts by flaming buildings and zooms in on what's left of a burn victim's face. Finally, the intrepid reporter, on a boat only two miles from Ground Zero, struggles to consciousness and comes on the air with the burning city in the background. She is dazed and seriously wounded. She keeps asking, "Am I going to die? Is the radiation coming? Is the radiation coming?"

Having evoked our deepest nuclear nightmares, "Special Bulletin" calls it a day. It has raised our fears not against the governments which hold us all hostage to nuclear war, but against some shadowy terrorist demon lurking behind those protests at the local Air Force base.

That idea -- that antinuclear protestors are a bigger nuclear threat than the superpowers they protest against -- is absurd. But a "fictional" propaganda piece like "Special Bulletin" simply invents its own reality in the service of its creators' politics. Such "entertainment" should carry another disclaimer: let the viewer beware.

-- Bob Van Scoy

IAT staff

Subscribe!

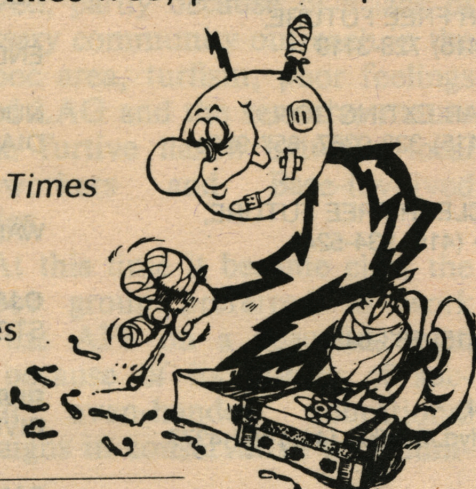
If you got this copy of *It's About Times* free, please help us

- ☐ New subscription
- ☐ Renewal (please include label)
- ☐ Here's \$8 for 10 issues of *It's About Times*
- ☐ I can afford \$
- ☐ I can contribute \$ to help IAT
- ☐ Here's \$5 for a set of IAT back issues

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

NEW ADDRESS: *It's About Times*,
2940 16th St. #310, San Francisco, CA 94103

Make subscription checks payable to *It's About Times*. Donations over \$25 are tax deductible if made payable to the Agape Foundation.



THE
NOWHERE TO RUN
RUN!
10K AT LIVERMORE LAB



SUNDAY, APRIL 17, 1983

10 AM sharp. Participants must preregister by April 7; the \$6 entry fee (\$4 under 12 or over 65) entitles each finisher to an attractive 2-color T shirt.

For information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to *Nowhere to Run Run*, PO Box 9947, Berkeley, CA 94709, or call David at (415) 549-0361. Donations of time, money, and raffle prizes are also needed.