

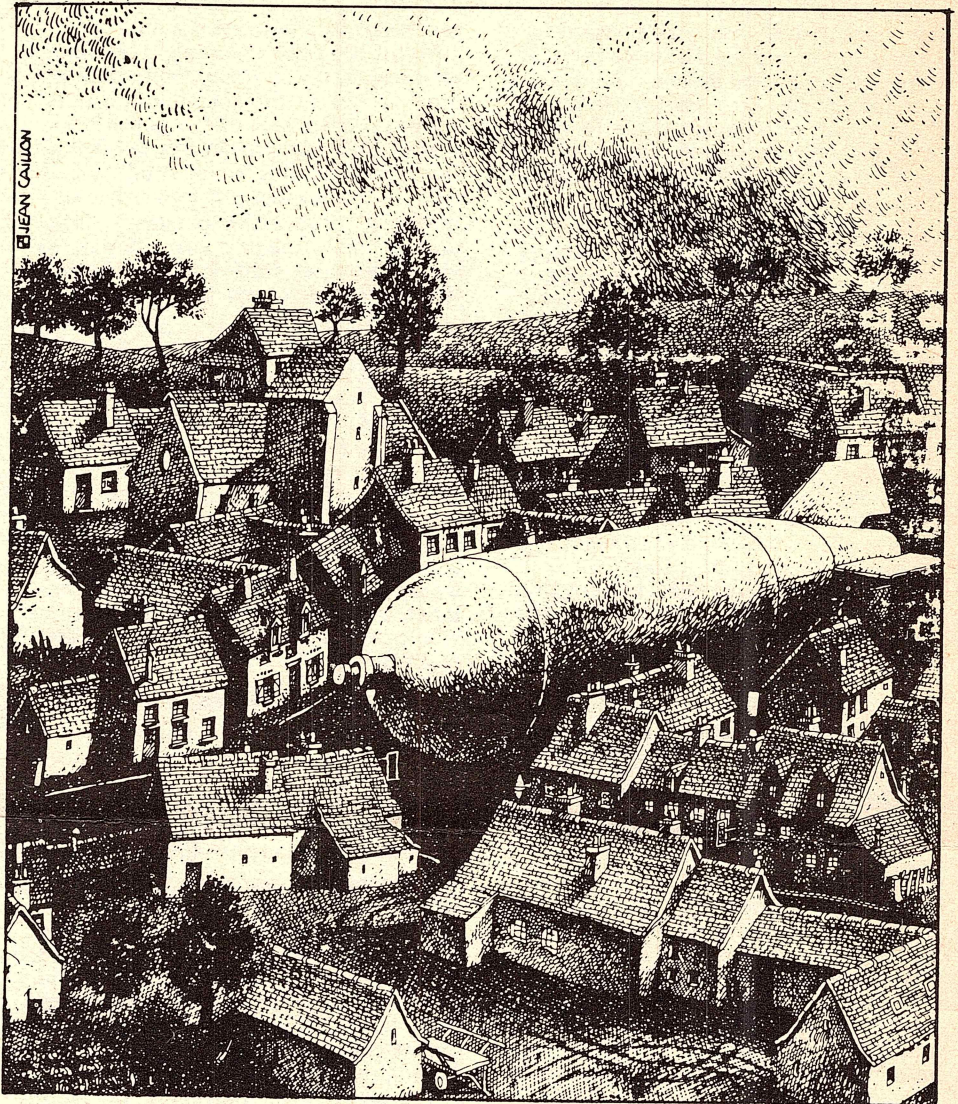
CIVIL OFFENCE

It is the concern to preserve state power and maintain law and order rather than save lives that is the key to an understanding of civil defence in this country. Thus, the main message of the *Protect and Survive* propaganda offensive was that we should "stay put" and help ourselves. It is hard to still the suspicion that the real purpose of such a policy is to ensure that a large proportion of the urban population do *not* survive a nuclear attack. If you lived in a town and entertained *any* thought of surviving the immediate effects of a nuclear explosion, you would be crazy to stay put. By way of illustration: in the Operation Square Leg exercise of last autumn it was assumed that Coventry was hit by a 3 megaton bomb exploded at ground level—there were no survivors. The Home Office expect at least 200 megatons of explosive power to be dropped on Britain in a nuclear war.

Whilst we are being blasted, incinerated and suffocated, and/or exposed to lethal doses of radiation, a select few of mainly military personnel will be ensconced in deep bunkers around the country. Whilst the civilian population is expendable, the state apparatus will continue to function in its system of bunkers and hideaways (see *Peace News* 2127, September 5 1980, still available for 35p). Most of the personnel who will staff these centres of post-attack government and control will have practised their skills at some time or other at the Home Defence College at Easingwold, some 9 miles north of York. There they play a somewhat unreal war game that goes by the name of "Hot Seat". Air Marshall Sir Leslie Mavor, civil defence supremo and past head of the college, has expressed his conviction that "contrary to popular belief and to the unscientific, irrational and intemperate views that assail us from day to day, millions will survive". All the staff at the college are either ex-military officers or police/military on secondment. According to one of their number, "all the dying want is a bit of TLC—tender loving care". He might also have added that in the event of a nuclear war that is about all they stand a chance of getting.

DOOMSDAY DREAMS

What then do the planners and doomsday dreamers have in store for us apart from rations of TLC? Official thinking anticipates a three week run-up to the holocaust. "Defeatists" who planned to flee from the urban centres of extinction during this phase would find it extremely difficult, even if they managed to obtain petrol before fuel supplies had been curtailed. Most of the main roads and all the motorways in Britain have been designated as Essential Service Routes (ESRs). Access to them in times of emergency such as a pre-attack period will be restricted and controlled by the police, possibly with military support. The general public will be kept off, to quote the relevant government circular, "to facilitate the free movement of essential traffic of all kinds engaged in the implementation of transition-to-war measures".



If you tried, moreover, to phone those dear yet not so geographically near to you in order to exchange a few last words, you would find that the telephone system had ceased to operate under the Post Office's normal rules. It would be operating the "Preference Scheme", whereby the bulk of private subscribers would be disconnected by the throw of a few switches. People would, however, be reunited with friends and relatives who had been in hospital immediately prior to the pre-attack period. It is planned that the vast majority of hospital patients would be sent home—no doubt to help with the construction of the DIY fall-out shelters. Medical personnel, on the other hand, will be moving in the opposite direction: they will be evacuated to outlying centres such as rural cottage hospitals where blood banks and stocks of drugs would be established.

MEDICAL MATTERS

It is generally accepted by the medical profession that in times of emergency medical personnel should risk their own lives in order to minister to the needs of the suffering. According to Squadron Leader Jack Curry of the Home Defence College, "normal medical ethics will be

maintained" in the aftermath of a nuclear explosion. How does such a public statement square with the contents of a rather less public circular which categorically states that medical care will be deliberately withheld in the immediate post-nuclear attack period. "Medical staff who would be irreplaceable except in the long term, should not be wasted by allowing them to enter highly radioactive areas to assist casualties". In other words, the two or three weeks after an attack would be a no-care period at a time when suffering would be at its greatest.

Once fall-out levels had dropped to less than lethal levels, first aid posts would be established with the purpose of forwarding people to Casualty Collecting Centres. The main function of these centres would be to sort people according to the "triage" system. People would be divided into three categories: those that will die, those that could survive with treatment, and those that probably will survive with treatment. The first category would be left to die without drugs or treatment, the third category would have to wait for treatment, whilst medical attention was focussed on the second category. Those suffering from radiation sickness would

continued over

receive no treatment, there is no known cure, although a civil defence manual of the 1960s did recommend that sufferers be kept warm in conditions of physical and mental rest!

FOOD

It is not clear how the authorities plan to deal with the psychological effects of a nuclear attack, neither is it clear how they plan to deal with health hazards consequent upon the inevitable collapse of water and sanitation systems. A great deal of attention has been paid, however, to the problem of feeding people—because hungry people become apathetic and unpredictable, and so could constitute a threat to security.

Emergency Feeding Officers would requisition all the stocks in the supermarkets and move them to Emergency Feeding Centres (EFCs) such as schools, where emergency rations are already kept alongside the normal stocks of provisions in the school kitchens. These EFCs would also be supplied with food from the buffer depots which are scattered throughout the country: warehouses stocked with powdered milk, potatoes, stocks of tinned foods etc. In the interim before stocks were delivered to the feeding centres, people will have to fend for themselves. As regards cooking the food, there is likely to be plenty of rubble to burn, even if there is no gas or electricity. It is anticipated that each person would get one stew-type meal per day—the greater the

shortage, the weaker the stew. There would have to be strict rationing for a number of years.

LAW AND ORDER

There would be considerable anger expressed by those prevented from leaving the urban target areas, also by dissidents persisting in their efforts to stop the process leading to war. Combined with a general air of panic—even though a majority of the population might be filling sand bags and water containers—law and order would be threatened and that is where the main task of the police is focussed. According to the Police Manual of Home Defence this would entail “controlling the movement of subversive or potentially subversive persons”. That means, most probably you and me. We would probably find ourselves placed in the internment camps that are planned.

Justice for troublemakers and disturbers of the peace will be brisk. The Regional Commissioners housed in the Armed Forces Head Quarters (AFHQ) will appoint Commissioners of Justice who will be empowered to act as judge and jury. Non capital offences will receive sentences of forced labour, reduced rations, and something described in a Home Office memorandum as “exposure to public disapproval”—the stocks? There would be no right of appeal against sentence. As regards capital offences, these would be judged by three Commissioners of Justice.

It has been claimed that civil defence is necessary to convince a potential aggressor that Britain dares to risk using its nuclear weapons, as the means are available to protect a significant proportion of the civilian population. Civil defence thus makes the nuclear deterrent credible, and is thus an integral part of defence and war-making strategy. This is the claim.

The reality is that civil defence is primarily about preparing the mechanisms which will enable our rulers to go on ruling us, with or without our consent, even when there are very few of us left on the surface to be governed. Civil defence is about making it possible for our rulers to risk our lives in their nuclear posturing without having to worry about threats to “civil order” from dissidents and subversives—that is, anyone who disagrees too vocally or actively with the madness of nuclear arms and nuclear war.

As such civil defence needs to be seen in the context of the steady erosion of civil liberties and democratic practice in Britain and the strengthening of the repressive apparatus of the state. Consequently the campaign to prevent the nuclear holocaust cannot be divorced from the struggle to oppose state power. The sense of outrage that mobilises us when we think of the madness and criminality of the arms race and the likelihood of nuclear war needs to be widened to fight the powers that the state is accruing to control and manipulate us.

ANDY RIGBY

TOOLS

JOHAN GALTUNG

Peace News readers will have become acquainted with the work of Johan Galtung over the last six months. (See PN January 9, March 6 and 20.) If you managed to get hold of his few books available in Britain, the search for his many papers referred to in the notes will have proved a difficult task. They are all over the place, in many different languages. Fortunately for us, most are in English. His writing is essential for anyone wanting help in thinking through the theory of peace and nonviolent revolution. As a starter, I'd highly recommend *True Worlds: A Transnational Perspective* reviewed in PN November 1980. It is now in paperback and available from the Institute for World Order, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York 10017, USA, price 10 dollars.

After *True Worlds*, a bibliography becomes invaluable. *Johan Galtung: A bibliography of his Scholarly and Popular Writings 1951-80* lists 676 publications and is still incomplete. It also contains three critical essays on Johan's ideas and an essay on their evolution and impact. Available from: International Peace Research Institute, Radhusgata 4, Oslo 1 Norway.

CHRIS JONES

REALISTIC GOALS

An interesting recent essay by Gene Sharp —“Making the Abolition of War a Realistic Goal”—has been produced as a pamphlet in America, and is now being distributed in Britain by Housmans Bookshop. It argues that despite the continued existence of conflict, the lack of change

in “human nature”, the unlikelihood of mass conversions to pacifism—and other assumptions one may dislike and/or disagree with—a realistic approach exists to the problem of war: replacing military “defence” with civilian-based defence.

Approaching disarmament from this direction is obviously very frustrating for pacifists. However, even if our hopes and expectations turn out to be better-founded than Gene Sharp thinks, the sort of argument in this pamphlet is valuable in the short-term as a way of getting disarmament considered by those who might otherwise dismiss the idea. It costs 40p (+12p post) from: Housmans, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 (tel 01-837 4473).

ALBERT BEALE

CND SCARF

Leicester CND have produced a disarmament scarf (see below). It costs £3 for one, or £26.50 for ten (this includes the cost of postage). Orders to: Ron French, 290 Evington Road, Leicester. Cheques should be made payable to Leicester CND.



ANIMALS AND NUKES POSTER

The London Greenpeace Group has produced a new poster showing an animal lying beneath a mushroom cloud, with the wording “Nuclear Weapons Kill Animals Too”. Its in two colours—black and red—and is A3 size. The poster costs 20p plus a large SAE. Orders of 10 or more get a 25% discount and are post free.

Send orders to: Greenpeace (London), 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1 (tel 01-387 5370).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

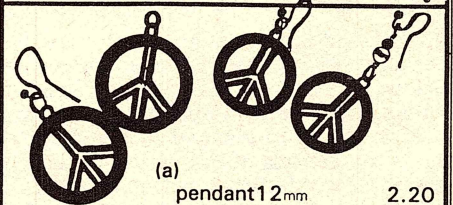
In *Questions and Answers About Nuclear Weapons*, published by CND, Frank Allaun answers various questions put to him over the years by pro-nukers. Most of the standard pro-nuke points are represented, and most of these are answered satisfactorily. It's obtainable from radical bookshops, price 40p.

CONSCRIPTION OBJECTION

Conscription and Conscientious Objection is a survey of the legal and *de facto* rights and obligations of COs in each of 13 European Countries, plus less systematic information on the position of COs in other countries (mainly non-European). Copies cost 69p, plus postage, from: War Resisters International, 55 Dawes Street, London SE17.

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