

NEW CIVIL DEFENCE

LAWS SNUB

Daily Telegraph Reporter

NEW civil defence regulations cannot be implemented unless the Government discloses the assumptions it has made about the size and effects of a nuclear attack, delegates at a national nuclear free zones conference were told in Manchester yesterday.

Delegates from 83 councils which have declared themselves "nuclear free" attended the conference yesterday, hosted by Manchester city council to formulate a response to the Government's new civil defence regulations which came into effect in December last year.

The conference agreed to adopt a process of "minimal compliance" with the new laws, in a campaign to resist their implementation, without breaking the law.

Delegates were told by Mr Duncan Campbell, a journalist and a special adviser to Greater London police and public safety committee: "We must say 'Yes' to the Government's new civil defence regulations, just to acknowledge the supremacy of Parliament, but mean absolutely 'No'".

Legal opinion

After consulting the legal opinion of Mr David Turner-Samuels, QC, the nuclear-free zones steering committee believes a new law may be unenforceable unless the planning assumptions on which the civil defence measures are based are made clear.

As a first step in their campaign of opposition, the 151 nuclear free authorities are to write to the Home Office demanding the planning information "which is so fundamental to the preparation of any plans."

They will be asking for the likely warning time before an attack, the likely targets, scale and nature of an attack in their area, the effects of such an attack and the effects and problems likely to be caused outside their area.

Sir. — I have been a CND supporter for five years and, like many others, have watched the Greenham Common events since they started. The awful truth is that your Rage correspondent (Letters, March 16) understands the reality of those events more clearly than the women themselves. The Greenham protest has not just had setbacks, it is an outright failure for all sorts of reasons.

The one fact seen by all sections of the general public is that the Greenham women are a joke. I was in a college TV room when film of the recent convoy came on the news. Many were stunned by the fast-driving, brightly lit armed presence but when you heard those Red Indian whoops in the background, it brought the house down.

At first it may be thought of as narrow bigotry, but it is widespread and has evolved into the opinion that nuclear protesters in general need not be taken seriously. Right from the beginning, this protest isolated the

genuine feeling against cruise — which was occurring anyway — to a spot "somewhere in the South," excluded half the population (male), and stopped any anti-nuclear activity from spreading throughout the country.

The failure to understand the role of the state and its ability to sweep away a relatively small clique has led to demoralisation among their supporters nationally, boredom from the public, and the discrediting of feminist politics which are now seen as weak, naive, and intellectually lacking.

Both the CND and Labour Party nationally were drawn into the mess, and it did them more harm than good.

For the women at this stage to consider that they are seriously disrupting manoeuvres or can run an effective campaign from outlying woods, is straightforward self-delusion — which is all that is holding them together. Telephone trees, no leaders, snakes, and mirrors are all irrelevant. In a few months they will all be officially gone, but in fact

Greenham Common is finished now and has been for some time.

The Government could not have planned it better. —

Yours faithfully,

Mary Costain.

London, E.11.

Sir. — About Greenham: guerrilla tactics dictate that, when one has attracted the full weight of the enemy's attentions, one vanishes, to appear somewhere else. Has not the moment come to do this? Any demonstration is a means, not an end. The end is not to create martyrs, but to change public policy. — Yours,

Mary Midgley.

Department of Philosophy,
The University of
Newcastle upon Tyne.

Sir. — Rage is an apt name for the Newbury ratepayers' association for it is the emotion that such an organisation is bound to foster in any sane and humane person.

Anthony Meyer writes that he has never experienced hate and violence, but the presence of cruise missiles on his front doorstep and a foreign occupation force un-

fettered by allegiance to English law is a violence not only against the people of Newbury but also against the whole population of this country.

The "grotesque" behaviour of the Greenham women is not something to fight against: like any who live in inhospitable conditions, cut off from basic amenities and abused by "ordinary decent people," they may well fail to meet the standards of dress and appearance expected by house-owners in this desirable residential area. But Mr Meyer would be well-advised to support their fight against the insanity of a modern age rather than looking only at his own selfish ratepaying interests.

CND is in no way diminished by the Greenham women. On the contrary it is annobled by their sacrifice. They are the conscience of us all. — Yours faithfully,

Jeremy Harmer.

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(SUPPORT)



M.S. 7/4/84

US women wage war on war

Film star Sally Field (above) took part yesterday in launching an American women's campaign against nuclear war.

A Washington press conference was told that the National Women's Conference on Preventing Nuclear War planned mass meetings in the US congress in September and a worldwide gathering in 1985.

Speakers denounced it "horror," "craziness" and "madness" of the nuclear arms race by male-dominated governments.

Anne Cahn, a former official of the US arms control and disarmament agency, decided in pursuit of bigger and better missiles. "Women look at that and say it's missile envy."

The speakers said the Washington conference would be led by academy award winner Joanne Woodward and would include 250 outstanding American women from education, politics, the arts, business, sports, medicine and social sciences.