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WHY ARE WE SEEING FLYING SAUCERS?

I believe that the Atomic Age has plunged us into a period of massive irrationality - that the day before Hiroshima was the last day anything made any sense. ...It was obvious that we had come to a fork in the road. We chose to pretend that nothing had happened. "Traditional thinking" prevailed, and we sought safety from our new invention - the Bomb - by making thousands more of them.

Today, 33 years later, traditional thinking still prevails. Every day more nuclear weapons are created - we profess to believe that the perfect shelter from fire consists of living in a tinderbox. And no one believes it.

Instead, we believe in flying saucers. If beings from another planet can visit us and we can't visit them then obviously they are of superior intelligence. And if they are superior perhaps they will tell us where the path is, for we have lost our way. Perhaps they will even transport some of us to another planet when the destruction of our own globe is imminent - many of our currently popular charismatic religions prophesy the holocaust and the salvation of the true believers.

Well, faith is faith. Mark Twain defined faith as "believing something that you know isn't so." In other words, irrationality. In our times, the irrationality starts at the top with the commitment to nuclear deterrence and spreads on down to the bottom, where it surfaces as faith in saucers, Gurus, pyramids, reincarnation, life after death, spoon bending, and leaving your body for a joyride to Alpha Centauri.

The marketplace today is filled with a proliferating number of wondrous ways to "find personal happiness while living under the sword of Damocles." Why not just remove the sword?

(From Richard M. Powell's editorial in the March '78 issue of La Wisp.)

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Enclosed is our subscription renewal for '78/'79. Thank you for the latest STRONG issue. (I liked "Star Wars" interpretation!)... Winnipeg VOW has been active mainly as a support group around women's issues - recently seeing the public hearings on Family Law Reform to the bitter end (our present gov't. has stated that women really aren't quite equal). Your newsletter helps to re-activate our letter-writing system and keep us aware of the need to sustain pressure on governments to look realistically at disarmament procedures. - Teri Gray, Winnipeg

CEASE - FIRE ACTIONS

- by Jim Douglass

Nonviolent direct action can't stop nuclear war once the missiles have been fired. You can't sit in front of a launched missile. Responsibility for stopping nuclear war begins much sooner. To be understood in a realistic way, the act of nuclear war can't be identified with the specific commands and pulling of levers which will launch the missiles. That would be like identifying the genocide of the Jews with the specific action of turning on the gas in the extermination camps. The act of genocide, whether in Nazi Germany or in nuclear war, begins much sooner than that final turning of levers.

The act of nuclear war has two major steps: the building of inconceivable weapons systems, and the indoctrination of an already apathetic citizenry. Those two steps are occurring now. The technology of first-strike weapons is proceeding quickly in the United States. At the same time, a propaganda war against "the Soviet threat," justifying our first-strike missiles, is being given little rebuttal. Once the first-strike technology protected by propaganda has reached a certain momentum, nuclear war will be inevitable no matter what anyone does, - in the same sense that people had no power to stop their being murdered once they were standing naked in gas chambers. Nuclear war, like the earlier genocide, can only be stopped when the technology for it is being built. The building of that technology, and the lies sustaining it, comprise the very act of nuclear war. The missile launch completes it in horror.

Therefore, to break through apathy and respond to the reality of nuclear war, we must engage in cease-fire actions now. The missiles are being fired through the planning and construction of nuclear weapons systems now. The only way to cease firing the Trident missile system is to stop its construction or dismantle its already existing components - now. We have to enter the Trident base, and proceed to the construction sites and already existing parts of the system, to carry out a nuclear cease-fire.

So far we have entered the base - in sporadic, growing numbers since 1975, and finally, on May 22-23, in large numbers. That process has involved an enormous victory, the overcoming of fear. The Bangor fence has been much less of a physical barrier than a spiritual and psychological one. This first barrier has been effectively overcome. Hundreds have gone over the fence. A large community has been freed from the fear the fence represents.

A second major accomplishment of base entries, and of our May actions in particular, has been the development of good will. Our emphasis on nonviolence has been understood widely. In response to a non-violent discipline and practice, there has developed a widespread good will toward Trident resisters. A significant portion of the people on the other side of the fence have felt our good will toward them. The public has seen and felt this, too. In this context of nonviolence and mutual good will, support for civil disobedience has grown. A foundation for more serious direct action has been laid.

The next step, for effective cease-fire actions, is to go further into the base. This can be done best by particular affinity groups, acting as individual units and in solidarity in an overall strategy.

As we always said (but haven't yet carried out), May 22 was only a beginning. May 22 brought into existence more than 40 tightly knit affinity groups prepared for nonviolent direct action. Those affinity groups, acting in succession at the base and joined by more

affinity groups in a continuous growth process, have the capacity to carry out an effective nuclear cease-fire.

On timing: the May 22-23 trials hold the promise of another victory because the Government can't deal with 265 indicted resisters. Some charges will probably be dropped, and the Government will be ineffective in punishing convicted defendants. The pre-trial and trial period will hold affinity groups together through the court-preparation process. Once the victory over the Government has become apparent - no effective punishment, perhaps even a few good moments in court - the time for further direct action will have arrived. The base will have been opened up for further action.

Beginning of a possible scenario: This fall, after the trials, an announcement is made to the media that affinity groups will begin entering the base periodically for a continuous "preventive presence" - to prevent nuclear war - by small groups going regularly to the site of its preparation.

Within a week or so of the announcement, an affinity group goes over the fence (without stating in advance the specific time and place) and walks a mile into the base, to the Critical Area. They are spotted by Marines and civilian security guards. The Marines threaten them in the arrest, saying the protesters are lucky they weren't shot - and would be, if they should try to go over that fence. Charges are placed by the Government for trespass. Relatively little publicity is given the action because there are no media on the scene and the Government doesn't want to attract attention, by higher charges, to the degree of penetration into the base.

A few days later, a second affinity group walks into the base at another point and are arrested as they approach the Trident Training Facility, their hands filled with leaflets. More charges are placed. Within another week, three more affinity groups are apprehended at various points on the base: leafletting at the Marine barracks, praying at the Chapel, sitting in at a weapons-delivery point. The Government has become aware of the seriousness of the situation: repeated security breaches, and the promise of more to come because the sprawling base perimeter fence and roads can't be adequately patrolled - plus the threat of another court overload with no effective punishment of resisters because the affinity group actions have occurred so quickly (in solidarity) that just a few people in one affinity group can't be isolated and hit with higher charges and/or sentences in time to deter growing numbers. Direct action in the Trident campaign has, for the first time, begun to pose in Government minds a possible future threat to efficient operation of the base. A critical escalation is occurring. (They're also startled that all this action has begun in the fall, when Trident resisters are supposed to have gone back to school and work.)

The process is one of affinity groups acting individually and creatively, within the context of agreed-on nonviolence training and co-ordination of the groups (to insure regular actions). The training is done openly. There is no secret that these groups are going into the base, at times and places of their choosing, according to a nonviolent discipline. Particular times, places and objectives are not announced publicly - but are, in any event, made flexible enough so that secrecy is not a factor in an affinity group's carrying out any action. The primary and continuous action is simply crossing the fence regularly, to become present in a nonviolent way at different key sites on the base. A group arrested while marching inside toward a particular site has in an important sense already reached that objective, by simply stating their purpose in action.

As we go farther into the base, our nonviolence is critical. At higher-security points in the base, it is our very presence which is most threatening and obstructive to nuclear war preparations. In those areas especially, the most dramatic action we can do is simply be there, and stay as long as possible, in a loving, truthful way. In these actions, as on May 22, it should again be an agreed-on guideline to have no property destruction, which would muddy public understanding and support of cease-fire actions by raising unnecessary side issues.

The point of these actions: If we can repeatedly go far enough into the base, in a gentle enough way, and in growing numbers, nuclear war preparations will be obstructed.

And - a subject for deepening reflection - the seriousness of our nonviolence will be tested by a stiffening Government, aware that an escalation in our resistance has occurred. We are beginning to get in the way of Trident. Heavier jail sentences and/or systematic violence by base security guards will begin to happen in response.

In our past international law arguments in court, judges and prosecuting attorneys have always challenged us on how we could expect to stop the crime of first-strike nuclear war from being committed. A continuously growing nonviolent presence, on the site of preparations for the world's most destructive nuclear base, should help to provide an answer. In the context of a wider campaign strategy emphasizing education and outreach.

Actions at key places on the base perimeter can help a Trident cease-fire strategy: Nuclear weapons delivery trucks could be identified and followed as they approach the base, by cars with flashing warning signs. Nuclear submarines coming to Bangor could be spotted off Port Townsend by affinity groups in that area, then followed by small craft as the subs move down the Hood Canal. While docked off Bangor, these subs could eventually be boarded from such craft by affinity groups for our first sub sit-ins. At the railroad tracks on the south end of the base, when missile parts begin to be shipped in, continuous sit-ins and dig-overs (from earth banked up beside the tracks) could effectively block the trains.

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"There's nothing subversive about wanting to survive!" - Anon.

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****** P R O F I L E of a "VOICE": Jo Hart of Courtenay. ******

JOSEPHINE HART practices what she preaches. At age 75, she is a living testimonial to the value of the advice she delivers each working day from behind the counter of her Natural Food Store in Courtenay, B.C. Her message is a simple one: eat nutritionally wholesome food, as close to natural as you can find, and you'll be on the road to better health.

When the store opened in the mid-fifties, the goal was to provide a nutritional education service and a place to purchase those good foods - an aim that still stands today. "It goes beyond selling," says Mrs. Hart. "It costs money to run, but prime reason for the store is to get people to live with an improved diet. If the sole reason was money, we would have closed the doors long ago."

"It has been a very, very uphill climb - in fact, the business itself was touch-and-go many times for about 15 years. Until 10

years ago we were just getting by. The health food business really came into its own about that time as people began to realize that additives are being put into food at an alarming rate."

Now, the store has a steady diet of customers, some of whom are children of the original customers from the 1950's. They come for natural foodstuffs like unpasteurized honey, raw sugar, molasses, untreated flour, grains, coffee and tea substitutes, and meat substitutes. But besides the food, the store also offers advice. "We help them form diets, get people to eat properly, and just make them see how much better they can feel."

With her advancing age, Mrs. Hart isn't as active with the store as she once was. Now, she only works in the afternoons, but much of her spare time is spent keeping up her reading and studying of the food industry and continuing towards her goal of educating the public. "They're not being educated as fast as I would like, but it's progressing and is bound to get better."

The above excerpts are from a half-page account of Jo and her store which appeared in the Comox District Free Press after Jo's 75th birthday this year - much to the delight of her friends. Fellow VOW members in the Comox Valley will agree that Jo's activities range much further than the health food field. She finds time for public meetings and private discussions on peace and environmental concerns. In her store she is warmly generous with time and space for petitions, bake sales, signs, displays, literature tables and even an unofficial message-and-parcel-leaving service - kind of a free VOW post office - without which, I might add, the wheels of our newsletter production and distribution would often have seized up. Thank you, Jo!

- Deeno Birmingham

TYNHEAD ZOO - A Matter of Urgency

EVE SMITH, past ecology chairperson of B.C. VOW, advisedly considers the proposed zoo for Surrey, B.C. to be an ATROCITY against which we should be working hard. In a recent article she calls eloquently for our efforts to prevent the establishment of such a place, and refers to a staunch ally in the matter - Jean Yves Domalain, author of "The Animal Connection."

For further information send, SOON, to Eve Smith, R.R. 1, Port Washington, S. Pender I., B.C. VON 2T0, enclosing a stamped and self-addressed envelope.

+++++++BOOKS+++++++

BAREFOOT GEN - by Keiji Nakazawa, translated and published by Project Gen; Vol. 1; 285 pages; 1978; \$3.80. Available from: Jim Peck, War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette St., New York, N.Y. 10012

Cartoonist Keiji Nakazawa was a grade one child in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. He saw a living hell. His father, sister and brother were burned to death in an instant; he and his mother narrowly survived. This long cartoon story is based on his own experience; he wrote it with the memory of what he saw before his eyes. This is not just a cartoon about the atomic bomb, but a story describing Japan's situation and the life of children before and after August 6, the climax of the hell they survived. It is much like a long novel, in a form which, it is hoped, will carry its message world-wide. Ask Mary Cox, R.R. 1, Fanny Bay, B.C. VOR 1W0, about local copies.

FOOD AND YOUR HEALTH - by Sylvia Wright; booklet, published by Kingston Whig-Standard, 306 King St. E., Kingston, Ontario K7L 4Z7 \$2.00

A series of stories dealing with the food we eat and how it affects our health. The result of months of exhaustive research by reporter Wright, and reprinted in booklet form after overwhelming response. Eve Smith says: "Up-to-date. Quotes from Gov't. authorities and many others, pro and con. A good picture of food. I have read and studied this - it is excellent."

THE COUNTERFORCE SYNDROME: A Guide to U.S. Nuclear Weapons and Strategic Doctrine - by Robert C. Aldridge; 60 pp; paperback. Transnational Institute, 1901 Q St., N.W., Washington D.C. 20009. \$2.50

A summary of U.S. strategy, nuclear weapons and military doctrine. "The essence of the arms race," says Jim Douglass. "The best thing I've seen published on the nuclear arms race. He puts together the whole strategy. Military activities touch each of our lives intimately; it behooves us to have some understanding of what is now taking place."

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RECENT PRINTS from the Literature Committee
(% Mary Cox, R.R.1, Fanny Bay, B.C. VOR 1W0)

The CANDU Safety Myth - Lille D'Easum (as in June 1978 VOICE) . 1 page

The Erosion of Our Civil Liberties - Speech given by John Stanton to Voice of Women meeting, May 13, '78, Squamish, B.C. . . 7 pages

Peter D. Jones (Friends of the Earth, Australia) - asking for written support for the Aborigines of Arnhem Land whose future is threatened by 4 uranium-mining companies including Noranda of Canada.

The Medical Implications of Nuclear Power - Dr. Helen Caldecott. A shocker for the unconvinced, in folder form.

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COMMUNITY EXCHANGE *****
by Martin Rossander *****

I welcome this opportunity to enlarge on the games and role-play offered on Friday evening at the Voice of Women Spring Conference held this year at Squamish, B.C. I'm sure it puzzled many, myself no less.

All too briefly it was explained that we'd role-play "Community Exchange" in a situation hypothetically deemed devoid of money as we know it. Barter, as old as mankind, is a bit unfamiliar to our people whose commercial teeth were sharpened on jellybeans that represented a penny each at the grocer's, and whose schooling in arithmetic centered around Arthur's profit when he sold an apple for 10 cents which he'd been able to buy for 5 cents.

I'd like to quote a basic assumption from Claude M. Steiner's book, "Scripts People Live" - one which he attributes to Dr. Eric Berne of "Games People Play."

"Human beings, are, by nature, inclined to and capable of living in harmony with themselves, each other, and nature."

I like that, don't you? It dissolves the perennial propaganda that human greed will forever prevent a decent equitable society, so why try? It affirms instead that inborn human capacity to learn harmonious living,--with one another, with the environment, and with other life forms. It suggests that when this potential is not manifest it is due to some external pressure or circumstance. Well, that's a healthy switch from the crippling culture of original sin! Community Exchange, here we come!

I supposed that many in attendance shared my conviction that our monetary mechanism is basically competitive, wielding a negative influence over our lives and the quality we'd like to give it. Like a game of musical chairs the system generates more and more bystanders called "lazy" or "underskilled" or even "overtrained"--anything to field criticism of the system and lay guilt upon the victims.

I supposed, too, there would be present persons who expect to be finalists with Rockefeller, Rothschild and Co., who will lend tacit support to the ultimate poker game by milling enviously about the fringes and wishing themselves in for a hand,--not too surprising, considering our legacy of conditioned competitiveness. My object was to show that we do have choices, that we can veer off to play our own game based on cooperation, inclusiveness and mutual support.

It's not hard to visualize barter between two persons whose exchange commodities match their needs. Complications set in when more participants are needed to complete the flow of exchange, requiring: 1) possibly a central accounting of debits and credits; 2) possibly a denominator to serve as a common unit of value; 3) possibly a limit set on the amount of credit or service that anyone can draw from another or from the "pool" without giving a return value or posting a security, or ante; 4) an inventory indexing of each member's needs, assets or services available; 5) a decision if this is to be a do-it-yourself service or one centrally facilitated for a fee; 6) the posting of some helpful guidelines to aid members in arriving at some relative value of things to be exchanged. I'm sure that final option should rest with the persons directly concerned, but they may need help in relating a sack of carrots to a music lesson or a used car, or equating a professional service with unskilled help.

In the absence of experience, role-play is the next best teacher, or so it seems to some of us who have taken part in nonviolence training sessions with Pacific Life Community. Role-play clarifies one's own position and that of the devil one faces. So, to get Community Exchange beyond the realm of pure theory, I welcomed this workout with a sympathetic group such as VOW, bearing in mind that end results might be quite different from those produced by, say, a group of second-hand automobile salesmen, or a gang of bankers.

Of the situations offered, one was as follows: 1) Babysitter needs lodging; 2) Roominghouse keeper needs renovations; 3) Carpenter needs dental work; 4) Dentist needs babysitter; 5) Fifth party facilitates and records, assisted by audience input. It took a while for the players to recognize the all-inclusive full-circle exchange, at which point the bargaining ceased rather than beginning in earnest. Imagine a babysitter's time rating equal exchange with the dental profession.

Other situations were introduced which offered some competition between players, but VOW people just aren't into advancing pecuniary interests, even in role play.

A humorously convincing role of Mr. Brickland as a hard-headed auto manufacturing opportunist desperately in need of transportation was

played by Hector Rutherford. Mary Cox as owner-operator of a taxicab aptly demonstrated that altruism carried beyond the point of self-survival is neither generous nor wise, and for a time it seemed that Mary's practical approach would force some consideration of her extra costs related to her personal time-contribution.

The final test for Community Exchange came with the brain-storm. What advice could we, from a hypothetical Utopia, send back to uplift our planetary neighbors who were still hooked on exploitive growth, commerce, transnationals and nuclear potential? The popular votes were given to: 1. A personal garden, a spot where one is free to come in touch with oneself and the universe. 2. Diversity of experience and work situations, probably along the lines practised by the new China, where no one is permitted to lose touch with basic occupation and primary production. 3. Can you remember? I can't.

Not once was Community Exchange mooted as advice to our unfortunate planetary neighbors. How about that!

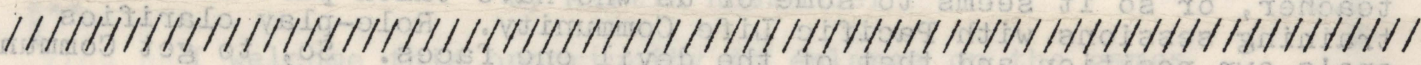
FOR THE CHILDREN - "Whenever you get discouraged, think of the children who can't speak for themselves and need you to speak for them. Forget about the adults, those moral cripples; just care about the children. Don't let anybody tell you it's not important that you be here. See you at the next demonstration." - Dr. Benjamin Spock, at Seabrook, New Hampshire, June 24, 1978.

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