

NNNPSC*

*2, December, '80

NEWSLETTER

*NATIONAL NO-NUKES PRISON SUPPORT COLLECTIVE

The National No-Nukes Prison Support Collective wants to hear from you!!

If you are interested in active support of jailed and imprisoned anti-nuclear activists and willing to write letters, please contact us and we'll put you on our mailing list. We have just begun the slow process of organizing this past summer, and want to hear your ideas on how we can effectively function as a clearinghouse for information and support for our sisters and brothers behind bars.

Altho our original aim was simply to generate letters of protest and support for jailed activists, some have responded to say that they do not necessarily wish that protest letters be written on their behalf. But as noted in the support actions in this newsletter, there are still ways in which we can help those behind bars, and bring their message and energy outside of the walls. Our overriding interest, beyond the narrow confines of generating protest letters, is to aid the imprisoned activist in whatever way a collective of letter-writers and local activists can. We strive to be flexible, and desire to hear YOUR ideas and work with you to make the collective an effective contribution to the movement.

In any movement for social change, many committed activists are jailed or imprisoned, thereby isolating them from their supporters and limiting their own activity. By building this support network now, we can help to maximize the contribution of those in prison and jail. This work is essential to the success of the movement.

As the Reagan regime comes into power, the necessity of this kind of work becomes even greater. The Heritage Foundation--a conservative 'think tank' whose director is deeply involved in the Reagan transition team--has just sent a report to Reagan advocating increased surveillance (bugging, wiretapping, mail-opening, and "at least occasional" break-ins at homes and offices of activists) of anti-nuclear and anti-militarist organizations. THIS IS NO JOKE!! The report goes on further to say that our civil liberties are of less importance than the maintenance of civil order and national security!!

Support ACTION -

SENTENCE: TWO YEARS

In early 1979, workers at the Surry Nuclear Power plant in Virginia discovered that someone had poured caustic soda on bundles of fuel rods awaiting a refueling operation at the plant. Later, two employees of the plant, Jim Merrill and Bill Kuykendall, turned themselves in, admitting to the sabotage but claiming a defense of justification at their trial. They claimed the act was necessary to highlight numerous safety violations and a cover-up attitude which they found at the plant.

For this act, they were convicted and sentenced in the fall of 1979 to two years in prison. To our knowledge, these are the longest terms so far handed down to activists. Recently, they both began serving their sentences, and will be eligible for parole in 6 months. Bill has written to ask that no protest letters be written on their behalf, and notes that the jailers frequently express their respect and support for the action. He writes, "I am content to do the time cheerfully and tell the public the truth again, when no one can say that I'm trying to save my own skin or that I have anything to gain."

As knowledgeable former employees of the industry, both men have valuable observations and insight to share with the movement, and are taking active roles now in prison ministry. PLEASE SEND A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO JIM MERRILL AND BILL KUYKENDALL, BOX 2209, PETERSBURG, VA., 23803.

HOLD THE GAL ONEY! STOP TRIDENT.

Many people have spent considerable time in prison and jail for actions against the Trident nuclear submarine base at Bangor, Washington. Two of them, Johnny Baranski and Charlie Meconis are currently being held, for six and four months respectively, at the Federal Correctional Institution, Box 2000, Lompoc, CA 93438. Both are active in the Catholic Worker movement.

Johnny is set to be released on January 5, 1981, but expects to remain inside longer for refusal to pay a \$500.00 fine. He and his wife, Grace Jewett, live in voluntary poverty and support themselves thru self-employment, while working at the Round Table House in Portland, OR, a hospitality house and soup kitchen for the poor and homeless. Johnny wrote that "though I received the maximum sentence and for all intents and purposes that seems unfair, it seems to me that energy spent on a letter writing campaign will result in a needless tie-up of time and finances that could otherwise be better used to speak out and act against the growing worldwide DOOMSDAY machine."

Therefore, he asks that if we can, we support him by helping maintain his wife and two daughters (4 yrs and 6months) and continue the operations of the soup kitchen, while he is still in prison. PLEASE SEND DONATIONS, HOWEVER SMALL, TO GRACE JEWETT, ROUND TABLE HOUSE, 1904 SE WASHINGTON, PORTLAND, OR 97214.

Also, Johnny is the author of two books of poetry: Lonesome Journey (\$2 + 60c postage) and Poems from Prison (\$2 + 15c postage), both available from Sunburst Press, Box 6, 4610 SE Belmont, Portland, OR, 97215.

Charlie Meconis is also an author. His book about the Catholic Left is called With Clumsy Grace, and is available from Seabury Press, 815 Second Av, New York, NY. He is currently working on a novel while in prison.

Another Trident resister, Jim Douglass, has just completed a 6-month sentence at Lompoc, and may be back again soon on a probation violation. His book, Lightening East to West (\$4.50 + 60c postage) is also available from Sunburst Press.

YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT THESE RADIOACTIVISTS BY PURCHASING THEIR BOOKS AND DROPPING A NOTE OF ENCOURAGEMENT THEIR WAY.

Ploughshares Eight



The Ploughshares Eight is the name chosen by the eight peace activists who entered the General Electric Re-entry Division assembly plant in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, last September 9, and destroyed two missile re-entry nose-cones. They used hammers they carried with them to smash the devices intended to deliver nuclear weapons to their human targets. Of the eight, Daniel Berrigan was released earlier on \$50,000 bond because of poor health. Three more of the eight--Molly Rush, Dean Hammer and Sister Anne Montgomery-- were released Nov. 25 on reduced bonds. The remaining four men--Elmer Maas, John Schuchardt, Father Carl Kabat, and Phil Berrigan are expected to remain in the Montgomery County Prison, 35 E. Airy St., Norristown, PA 19401, throughout the completion of their trial. The trial is expected to begin sometime in January, 1981.

The Brandywine Peace Community, 51 Barren Rd., Media, PA 19063, (215) 565-0247, is coordinating support for the eight. They are summoning all peaceful people to join with them for a festival of life, to be held outside the courthouse in Norristown during the trial. They are also asking that sympathetic groups stage support actions (demonstrations, leafletting, etc) at General Electric facilities in their own region at the time of the trial. Brandywine could use \$\$\$ and help in publicizing the trial and festival. PLEASE CONTACT THEM FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE FESTIVAL AND TO COORDINATE SUPPORT ACTIONS!! Send donations directly to them, also. REMEMBER, even \$2.00 sent their way will pay for 13 stamps!

Good News! The United States Attorney has told legal advisers for the eight that federal charges will not be filed against them. Apparently, the feds are content with the eight separate counts already lodged against the men and women. The imprisoned women reported that the women they met inside were more than sympathetic with their act, and the men have found a good deal of receptiveness inside, also. One of the men, John Schuchardt, was formerly a lawyer, and has been helping some of the other prisoners with their legal work, thus gaining their trust and spreading the concern for humanity which motivated the eight to act.

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even a dollar or two, or a few stamps placed in an envelope, is a

SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION!!

"take the toys away from the boys!"

On November 17, 1980, 160 womyn were arrested for "obstruction of an entrance" in a non-violent act of civil disobedience at the Pentagon. The arrests culminated two days of activities which brought over 2000 womyn to Washington to protest the war-making policies of the Pentagon, which hold us all hostage to the threat of nuclear annihilation.

The following account of the arrests and events that followed was prepared by Kathleen McInerney of the YinCrescentMoon affinity group from New Jersey: "Police removed their badges so they could not be identified; soldiers were ordered by superiors to walk with boots on top of womyn; womyn were thrown against the wall, dragged by their clothing, dropped on the ground, and told they had no human rights because they were in custody; womyn were not allowed legal counsel or phone calls prior to arraignments; womyn who pleaded guilty or nolo contendere ('I do not dispute the facts, but I committed no crime') were immediately sentenced to 10-30 day prison terms, and taken in body and arm shackles and leg irons to Alderson Federal Penitentiary in West Virginia (seven hours from Washington by car) where they were strip searched upon arrival."

The authorities may claim that the womyn were allowed to speak with their legal team. In fact, however, the womyn were allowed to speak with the lawyers for only about 10 minutes, in groups of 10-15, just prior to their arraignment, while actually in the courtroom, and in the presence of the prosecutors and U.S. marshalls who had arrested them. The discussions were certainly not private, and hardly of sufficient length to provide the womyn with adequate counsel.

34 womyn were shipped to Alderson in shackles, and in apparent violation of Federal statutes which prohibit anyone sentenced to less than one year from being held in a federal prison. About 35 other womyn were held in four D.C. area jails for their refusal or inability to post bail. Five of the 34 at Alderson received the maximum 30-day sentence, and are currently (Dec. 1) the only ones remaining there. They will be released Dec. 16. Three women still remain in D.C. area jails.

So far, only one woman has been fined—all others receiving jail time. This is a distinct shift in the official policy for those arrested at Pentagon actions. The conscious decision to treat the womyn more harshly than most people arrested for actions at the Pentagon (including 350+ arrested there last April) appears to stem from a meeting between the magistrates and U.S. Attorneys just before the Nov. 17 action. Organizers know that such a meeting took place in anticipation of the action, and with only one exception, a uniform 10-day sentence for first offenders and 30-day sentence for second offenders has been handed down on all convictions, without any consideration given to the situation or circumstances of the individual involved. Whether the conspiratorial inference is correct or not, the sentences signal the dawn of an era of much less tolerance for peaceful, conscientious acts of civil disobedience in the Washington area.

LETTERS PROTESTING THE HARSH PHYSICAL TREATMENT AND INDISCRIMINATE SENTENCING POLICY SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE JUDGES, MR. ELSON, MR. GRIMSLEY AND MS. MUNSELL, MAGISTRATES COURT, ALEXANDRIA, VA. These three are the judges handling the arraignments and trials, and are thus responsible for the treatment of the womyn, the denial of their access to counsel, and their sentences.

The five womyn immediately sentenced to 30-day terms are Hazel Tulacke #11068-083; Vera Williams #11077-083; Susan Pines #11080-083; Pam Osgood #11071-083; and Cassandra Dixon #11052-083. All are to be released Dec. 16, '80, but others are expected to take their places following later trials. Letters of support should be addressed to individual womyn, and addressed to Box A, Alderson, WV 24910. The womyn can then share the letters with each other.

For further information, contact Womyns Pentagon Action at (202)483-4284 (Washington) or (212)242-3270 (New York).

NNNPSC NEEDS YOU!

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Naturally, the NNNPSC cannot function unless we continue to establish contact with those who are jailed and imprisoned for anti-nuclear activities, particularly those who have been sentenced to a month or more.

PLEASE HELP SPREAD THE WORD OF THE COLLECTIVE, SO WE MAY ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH JAILED ANTI-NUCLEAR ACTIVISTS WHEREVER THEY ARE!

The information we need about those in jail includes:

- Name and jail address of activist. If they are being held for refusal to give their name, 'Mary Doe' or 'John Doe' is sufficient.
- Name and address of prosecuting attorney and sentencing judge. Letters of protest should be directed to them. If there is a particular problem, such as excessive force used during transportation or arrest, or difficulty in visiting the person, the name of the jailer or warden is also helpful, so letters can be directed to them.
- Length of Sentence and starting date, or date of trial for those being held until then. This will help us keep track of who is being held where and for how long. We would also like notification when someone is released, to share the news with the collective (especially if it is before the end of their sentence).

Articles in the Newsletter will often ask for contributions of money or stamps for those in jail and their support groups. And of course, we who publish the Newsletter can always use contributions to continue the work.

REMEMBER---Even a dollar or two, or a few stamps in an envelope, is appreciated.

HINTS ON WRITING PROTEST LETTERS

The Collective has assembled a list of hints for writing protest letters, and for bringing the attention of the media to locally imprisoned activists. If you would like a copy of these, please write, and we will rush it to you.

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PLEASE HELP INSURE THAT THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE NNNPSC NEWSLETTER, DUE OUT AT THE FIRST OF THE NEW YEAR, GETS TO YOU:::A SINGLE STAMP, ENCLOSED IN A LETTER TO US, WILL GUARANTEE THAT YOU DO NOT MISS THE NEXT ISSUE!! (& an extra few stamps is ok, too)