

Lobbying, rather than direct action

This Autumn, attention is focussed most intensively on the 'deployment countries'. But peace movements in other countries have also gathered momentum. In Norway, *Nei til Atomvapen* is making an invaluable contribution to winning the arguments for disarmament. One of their writers and activists JON GREPSTADT, here looks at the tactics and strategies peculiar to the Norwegian situation.

On three occasions during the past year, the disarmament forces in Norway have lost motions in the *Stortinget* (the Norwegian Parliament) by a single vote. The proposals have been that Norway should not contribute funds to the bases and infra-structure of cruise and Pershing II (22 Nov '82); that the Norwegian Government should ask that all preparations for deployment be halted and that a new offer be made in Geneva for no deployment in the West, reductions of SS-20s and counting in of British and French weapons (15 March '83); and finally that the Norwegian Parliament should be allowed to discuss the Government's position if an agreement is not reached in Geneva this year (16 June '83). It is possible that the Conservative Prime Minister's threat to resign if opposed by a majority in the missile question, has kept some MPs from supporting these proposals.

The decisive parliamentary debate will take place probably in October this year. There is still a realistic possibility that a majority in *Stortinget* will oppose deployment.

Meanwhile, the Norwegian campaign for nuclear disarmament, *Nei til atomvapen* (No to Nuclear Weapons), is escalating its actions against new missiles in Europe. As usual, the campaign includes critical expertise, lobbying, dissemination of information and mass demonstrations.

At the same time, *Nei til atomvapen* is preparing the next stage of its work, leading up to the General Election in 1985. Primary future foci will be prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons on or from Norwegian territory, the struggle for a Nordic nuclear-weapon-free zone, and the adoption of a freeze policy.

The following is a brief outline of our policies and strategies.

Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) and Geneva

During the past 25 years arms negotiations and agreements have been part and parcel of the arms race. 'Arms control' has become an integral part of the *ideology* sustaining, perpetuating and stream-lining the arms build-up.

A number of factors have made past negotiations unable to promote *disarmament*:

- While negotiations have been going on in one field, the arms race has continued unabated in others.
- An exaggerated emphasis on parity has been an obstacle to independent initiatives undertaken without waiting for the other side

to take the first step.

- Negotiations on the basis of strength have naturally led to further arms build-up: weapons systems presented as bargaining chips have always remained in the arsenals.

- When one side has been regarded as superior to the other in one field, it has levelled up rather than *down* to approximate symmetry.

- In several agreements there have been loopholes about 'compensations', so that the arms race has been able to continue unabatedly or with increased momentum.

There is a need for better public awareness about the way negotiations have functioned in the past, because our opponents try to reduce the conflict over new missiles to a mere disagreement about means, not about ends. Their alternative to the campaigning of the new peace movement is 'peace and quiet' and 'balanced negotiations'. This in practice turns out to be automatic support of whatever moves or non-moves the US makes in Geneva. So far the INF talks have not broken with the basic patterns of past negotiations — patterns which certainly do not lead to disarmament.

Our policy, of course, is based on the complementarity of unilateral (independent) initiatives and constructive negotiations. Unilateral steps indicate a willingness to disarm, are an invitation to the other side to follow suit, and may contribute to a favourable atmosphere for negotiations. Let us apply this to the present situation in the INF talks.

In spite of many unpredictable factors, the INF issue may follow one of three principal scenarios this autumn, some of which are more likely than others:

- The US and the USSR may arrive at an 'interim' agreement, ie an agreement that the US will deploy some missiles, the USSR dismantle some. The sum total will be a qualitative arms build-up, given the technology of particularly cruise and Pershing II.

- The US completes its first deployment plans, the USSR probably withdraws from the negotiating table, continues the logic of the arms race and responds with further arms build-up. Cold Warism is reinforced.

Both scenarios are unacceptable to anybody who wants disarmament. The first alternative is less likely than the second, since a number of authoritative Soviet statements indicate that the USSR will not accept this kind of 'interim' agreement.

The most realistic alternative to the above is:

- Gaining strong political support for an

appeal to the US to defer deployment and to the USSR to start to dismantle SS-20s as implied by the Andropov proposal of December 1982. Negotiations should continue beyond 1983. British and French weapons should be counted in.

More detailed arguments for a solution along these lines are given in the excellent editorial in *END Journal* No 5. While there is a growing tendency now in the INF debate to look for compromises, the third alternative would be a compromise with regard to *time*. Compromises which imply deployment of any number of cruise and Pershing II, are unacceptable to the disarmament forces. Obviously, a US/Nato decision to defer deployment would be greatly eased if the USSR started to implement the Andropov proposal.

Whether the proposal in the Norwegian Parliament this autumn will be for a definitive position against deployment, or for the position outlined in the third alternative is not yet clear. But it does seem certain that the Labour Party will oppose deployment in December, as will the Liberal Party, the Socialist Left Party, and some members of the Christian Democratic Party and the Centre Party, where there are now great divisions.

Nei til atomvapen will contribute to the process in the Norwegian Parliament through petitions endorsed by influential groups and individuals.

Norway and the nuclear option

Although nuclear weapons are not deployed in Norway in peace time, pre-positioning facilities for their use on or from Norwegian territory have existed for years.

Norway's role in the nuclear strategies of the US and the USSR, along with the proposal for a Nordic nuclear-weapons free zone (NWFZ), will be a major focus in *Nei til atomvapen*'s work during the next couple of years. The way has already been paved by our signature campaign for a Nordic NWFZ in 1981-82, when 540,000 individual endorsements were collected. In Spring 1982, we published a preliminary study, and last April a joint proposal by major Nordic movements was released (available in English). Eleven out of 19 countries, and 93 out of some 440 municipalities, have adopted resolutions for a Nordic NWFZ. In the local elections in September, *Nei til atomvapen* stimulated a useful debate by asking the voters to elect candidates who opposed nuclear weapons and supported a Nordic NWFZ. While a lot of our efforts so far have concentrated on the missile question, activists in our 300 groups now are impatient also to attack the specific Norwegian and Nordic questions.

As regards Norway's role in the nuclear strategy through airfields and other facilities (in many cases it is difficult to distinguish between their conventional and nuclear functions), our strategy will *not* be a series of non-violent direct actions against these facilities. Instead, we will be campaigning by means of petitions, dissemination of information and various types of mass action for a decision in *Stortinget* to prohibit definitively the use of



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Peaceful marching: the '83 walk from Eidsvoll to Trondheim, Norway.

nuclear weapons on or from Norwegian territory. Such a decision will imply a number of changes in the military planning of Norway, Nato and the US. A first step in this campaign has been taken through our recent study on Norway's contribution to nuclear strategy.

The campaign for prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons on or from Norwegian territory is complementary to our work for a Nordic NWFZ encompassing Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and the Faroe islands. We see it as part of a process aiming in the direction of a nuclear-free Europe. It is an independent initiative for détente and disarmament, primarily intended to show the possibility of an alternative security policy.

The first step in this process will be for the Nordic countries, singly or jointly, to issue a statement of intent, that within a certain period of time they will declare themselves to be a NWFZ. The next step should be a series of meetings at the level of foreign ministers and high civil servants of these countries to work out an agreement on the common basis for the zone arrangement. Afterwards they may, singly or jointly, undertake inquiries and consultations with allies and other parties affected, on the basis of this preliminary agreement. According to this proposal, the parties to the treaty will be the Nordic countries. Guarantees of the nuclear powers may be given in separate protocols.

Towards a Nuclear Freeze

Although Norway was the only Nordic country to vote against the Swedish/Mexican proposal in the UN for a nuclear freeze last December (Denmark and Iceland abstained, Finland voted for), the freeze idea has strong support both in the Norwegian Parliament and in the Norwegian public. The proposal is, for instance, supported by the Norwegian Labour Party, the Liberal Party, the Socialist Left Party, and by the Centre Party and groups in the Christian Democratic Party.

Nei til atomvåpen will place more emphasis on the freeze idea the next couple of years. Our basic position is outlined in our statement issued in connection with last year's debate in the UN: 'The proposal for a halt in testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons is a decisive step in the efforts of nuclear disarmament.'

'In the shadow of arms control negotiations, new nuclear weapons are being developed — both in the East and in the West. These are weapons which — unless they are stopped — will be deployed in the years to come. To halt the nuclear build-up is the first step towards disarmament.'

'This proposal will also provide a new and favourable point of departure for negotiations about arms reductions. One cannot on the one hand reject a proposal for halting production of new weapons, and on the other hand speak in favour of disarmament of such weaponry.'

'Neither the East nor the West has a "need" for new nuclear weapons. Both sides have enough nuclear weapons to annihilate each other several times over. Nuclear weapons are means of massive extermination which cannot be used for defence of any values.'

Our policy is a call for *freeze now*. To some extent it may be useful in our debates about the freeze concept to distinguish between the functions of the *freeze proposal* and the question of how to arrive at a *bilateral/multilateral freeze*. For Norway, commitment to a *freeze proposal* would imply absolute opposition in Nato to future nuclear build-up. It would be an act of solidarity with the Nuclear Freeze Movement in the US, and (together with other countries) a way of putting pressure on the nuclear powers to halt testing, production and deployment immediately.

To us, *freeze now* means that the proposal should be implemented by the US and the USSR (and other nuclear powers) through independent declarations. If a freeze is to be negotiated, it will probably suffer the fate of past disarmament proposals. The very sim-

plicity of the concept also ought to make a negotiating process almost superfluous, although some aspects and definitions may have to be classified. Since the term 'freeze' tends to denote a state of affairs, rather than a punctual action, it is important to underline that a freeze is only a point of departure for nuclear disarmament.

The freeze proposal is an ambitious proposal. It means curbing the power of the armaments complexes in the West and the East, as major driving forces in the arms race. But this, after all, is what our struggle for nuclear disarmament is about.

General Strategy

Nei til atomvåpen's general campaign strategy comprises four components: critical expertise, dissemination of information, lobbying, and mass action. Our major projects are always chosen with a view to their potential influence on our parliament and government. A frequent element in our work has been the use of petitions endorsed by influential individuals or groups in different sectors of Norwegian society.

The question of nonviolent direct action or civil disobedience has not arisen to any significant extent. In fact, it is recognised by almost everybody in our movement that this is not a relevant instrument in our present situation. A campaign is to a large extent a means of communication: in our situation, nonviolent direct action would probably function as noise in the communication channels and alienate important groups which support us today, and which have made *Nei til atomvåpen* one of the most powerful forces in our post-war history.

In other countries, such as the potential deployment countries, the situation may be different. But whatever we do, our actions should reflect the mass character of the movement. In the final analysis, it is through massive support and critical expertise that we exert power.