

A UNITED Nations International Year of Peace begins next month and peacemongers here are preparing for a vigorous campaign. No one knows just how many New Zealanders would identify themselves as allies of the peace movement but the number of groups working for peace has grown rapidly. Apart from the major organisations like Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Greenpeace, professional groups that cover doctors, scientists, nurses, engineers, artists and landscape gardeners have emerged in the last three years. And local peace groups in rural and suburban areas have increased throughout the country to more than 300.

The old "lunatic fringe/pinko weirdo" labels no longer stick as the ranks swell for peace marches or demonstrations on nuclear issues. A Heylen Poll in February this year showed that 73 per cent of New Zealanders approved the Government's policy of banning nuclear armed ships.

The days of vilification, when New Zealanders were spat on, declared traitors and imprisoned for waging their personal war on war are memories for many of the older workers in the peace groups. But it's not plain sailing trying to set society on a course for peace, even when current events are relatively calm. The politics of waging a fight for peace are as complex as the struggles that lead to war.

The sight of the Greenpeace boat Rainbow Warrior, only two days after sailing jauntily into Auckland Harbour, lying bombed and submerged, listing helplessly against Marsden Wharf while crew members mourned their dead photographer colleague, became a vivid image for all New Zealanders of the realities of raising a voice against war.

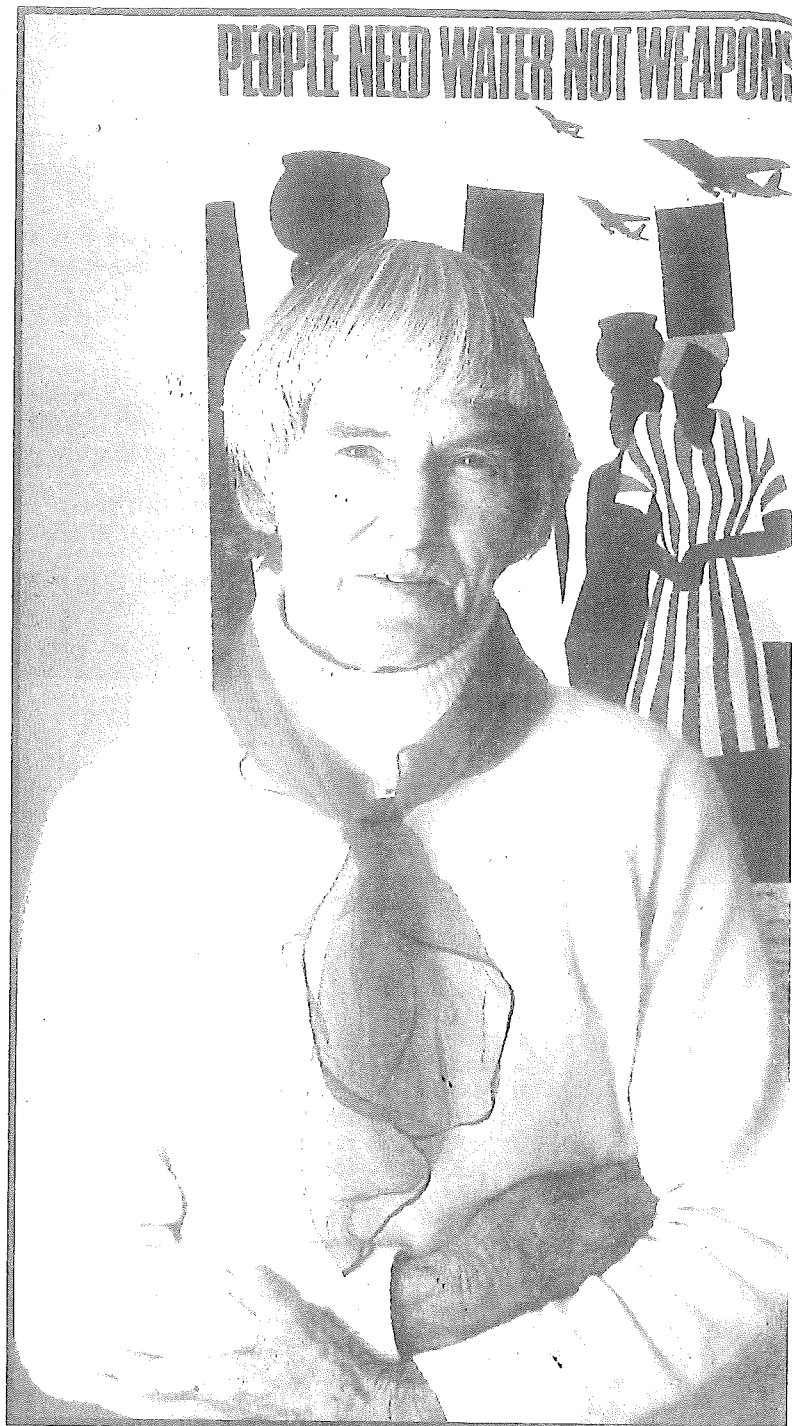
Debate on the best means to the desired end often rages fiercely, stirring turbulence from homes to the House, where politicians vote on issues that have immediate and concrete impact. Backgrounding the peace debate is the role of the Foundation for Peace Studies, an independent organisation set up a decade ago to stimulate education at all levels and provide information for as wide a network as possible.

Leaving the spectaculars that reach the media to more radical groups, the Foundation has worked steadily to provide a solid base of information and promote public awareness of peace issues. Its headquarters are in one of the gracious old homes opposite Auckland University in Princes Street, but there's nothing charming about its cramped unpretentious offices where a child's poster declares: "We could learn to live in peace if you give us a future." ▶

PEACE

THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM?

N.Z.W.W. SEPTEMBER 9, 1985



Veteran campaigner Kath Knight (above) is among a growing number of New Zealanders actively working for peace. But although the peace movement gathers strength its task — even in times of relative calm — is by no means easy. For the politics of waging a war for peace are as complex as the struggles that lead to war. Trish Gribben reports.

The library and audio-visual material provides the country's biggest range on peace-related issues, used by groups and schools the length of the land.

Patrons of the Foundation are a distinguished group: Mrs Betty Holt, Bishop A.H. Johnson, Sir Guy Powles, the Rt Rev Paul Reeves, Sir Dove-Myer Robinson, Mrs Miraka Szaszy, Archbishop T.S. Williams and Dame Catherine Tizard. The Director is the Rev Leslie Clements, a life-long battler for peace.

The Foundation sponsors an annual peace lecture, a Media Peace Prize (the first, last year, was presented by Australian author Patrick White), a Peace Digest published five times a year and brings speakers from overseas to lecture here.

The visit of paediatrician and author Dr Helen Caldicott, whom the Foundation first sponsored here in 1983, sparked a passionate public reaction, initiating many of the new peace groups, especially among professionals.

"That wouldn't have happened if the ground hadn't been well prepared by years of rising consciousness of what nuclear war was all about," says Peace Foundation co-ordinator, Ms Marion Hancock.

Next month Ms Charlotte Waterlow, an English campaigner for peace education, will lecture throughout the country for the Foundation.

Father-of-six and director of Auckland Technical Institute, John Hinchcliff emphasised the complexity of the "Peace issue" and the need for new ways of thinking when he delivered the Foundation's annual peace lecture:

"... We need every ounce of insight from every source and we need to be able to integrate it into a comprehensive vision, a revitalising social myth with which we can transform society.

"We tend to laugh at the myths of people like the Ayatollah and ignore the integrating myths which provide direction for our culture (eg the technical fix, might makes right, personal wants are elastic and so economic growth is essential to satisfy them, technology is neutral, there is nothing we cannot know, ins-

WAR WITH WORDS

PEACE may be a dirty word in some camps. But the US State Department has another term for it: "permanent pre-hostility."

The jargon on all sides of the war and peace debate grows steadily and sometimes gruesomely.

The US Council of Teachers of English have an annual award for the worst cases of misuse of the language and the State Department is a regular collector of prizes. Among this year's award winners were:

- "permanent pre-hostility" — *peace*
- "unlawful or arbitrary deprivation of life" — *killing*
- "controlled flights into terrain" — *plane crashes*
- "collateral damage" — *civilian casualties*

tant information is good information etc).

"We need wisdom to be able to critically examine the myths and values we live by and the wisdom to develop new ones. I endorse the belief that many of the myths propelling our society are dysfunctional and anachronistic, that, in this critical moment of history where we find ourselves — perhaps it is the hinge of history — we must awaken to new paradigms for thought and behaviour.

"I believe such a transformation is possible because the precedents for such fundamental shifts in presuppositions are many. With Copernicus we turned away from the comfortable, homely, medieval Universe. We became finite specks in an infinite universe. Darwin challenged our pride of place in creation. We become inheritors of a rather haphazard process of biological survivalism. Freud turned us away from beliefs about our being eminently reasonable and revealed the influential instincts and superego. The agricultural, industrial, and information revolutions have dramatically changed the nature of society.

"So a metamorphosis is possible and a metamorphosis is necessary if we are to guarantee a future to our children.

"Loyalty — courageous loyalty of the John Wayne variety — has been a major factor of the wars of the past. Not hatred or anger or aggression. But an emotional commitment to a flag, a leader, religious or political ideals.

"We need to give loyalty another focus, a new vision that is positive, creative, life affirming."

Convinced that peace in our future can only stem from peace in our homes, in our schools and communities, the Peace Foundation believes that education for every individual on ways of achieving peaceful relationships is a vital need in our society. No start is too small.

Learning Peaceful Relationships, a book prepared with the foundation's education committee (chaired by Mrs Kath Knight), has many ideas for approaches and games to resolve conflicts and foster harmony.

It is hoped a version for secondary schools will be published during IYP.

Co-ordinator Marion Hancock, says the Foundation is acutely aware of an urgent dual task — an immediate need to marshal all possible forces to turn the present nuclear-brink situation around, and a long-range task of changing people's attitudes to make peace possible.

"Even if the nuclear issue could somehow miraculously disappear, the Foundation would continue working to create a climate of peace in New Zealand society," she says. "We plan to expand and seek new members during IYP."

Peace workers are taking hope from some recent events:

Public response to the bombing of Greenpeace's Rainbow Warrior was immediate and practical: more than \$170,500

was donated, as well as food and clothes.

It came 10 days after \$6 million was given to Telethon, and while another \$4 million was pledged to Live Aid, the rock concert that linked the people of the world through music and technology to give help to Africa.

Hope is seen as crucial in the IYP campaign.

"The political implications of that Live Aid concert are exciting," says long-term peace worker Jim Chapple, a member of the national IYP committee.

"It showed how strongly people support that thrust to unite us. We've got to transcend national boundaries — if we can't do that we don't deserve to survive. That kind of audience makes a reality of the global village cliché.

"If it can be done through music and words to feed people in Africa, what can be done for peace?"

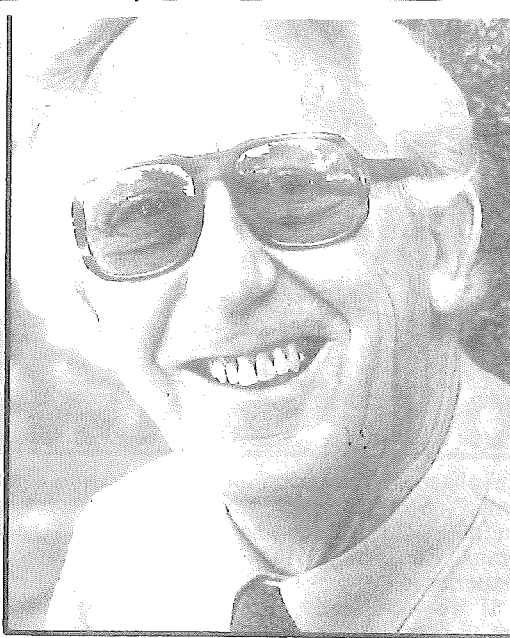
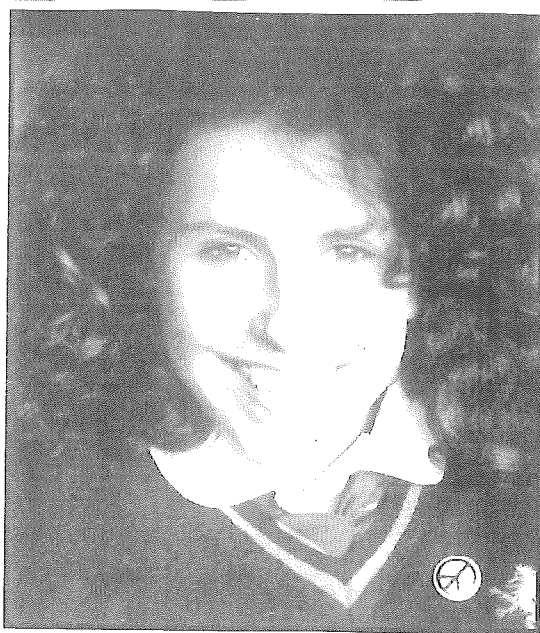
Every attempt to sample adolescent feelings and attitudes taken this decade — whether here, in Australia or the US — has shown that an overwhelming majority of young people do not expect to survive.

"It blights everything about their view of life," says Jim Chapple.

"If the kids feel they cannot do anything about it, of course that leads to apathy and despair."

The horrors of nuclear destruction have been detailed in all their gruesomeness as a weapon in rousing public energy to oppose it. But, especially for the growing-up generation who, it is evident, are convinced that the perils of nuclear war are cataclysmic, a feeling of power to make changes, a message of hope, is seen as imperative. This is one of the concerns of those working for peace studies in schools — a topic sure to provoke widespread debate during IYP.

"Peace studies begin at the very beginning," says Jim Chapple. "If a child learns that if she can tackle things in a way that is imaginative, creative and constructive, she can make things happen she can see something change then she learns that reality is alterable. Change is possible; by getting involved, you can do something that has effect."



Actions speak louder...

KATE Smellie (15), of Kumeu (above) last year decided that concern alone was not enough. At the time of increased public debate about the nuclear issue, especially during the election, she initiated peace activities at her school — Massey High School, just north of Auckland.

"People all around me were worried. There was a local peace group forming and I heard of others starting up. So I decided I wanted to do something, not just talk about it.

"I read a lot about the subject — books like *Nuclear Free New Zealand Now* by Ray Galvin. There was no talk about it at school so I decided that was where I should begin. "I talked to two of my friends, Amanda Northey (no relation to the MP) and Donna Sheerin, then I found one teacher who was sympathetic, our maths teacher, Mr Rhodes Donald."

Kate began by organising a petition to make Massey High School nuclear free, a gesture she recognises as symbolic, but useful for raising discussion of the issues. Apathy was the dominant reaction, closely followed by sneers or jeers. "But nobody's going to bring a bomb here," some said.

Stalls were held, selling buttons, posters and booklets... there were small meetings to talk about peace issues. Having begun when interest levels were low at her school, Kate and her friends got 500 signatures on their petition. The school roll is about 1300.

Many of the school's pupils come from families stationed at Whenuapai Air Base and the headmaster, Mr Jack Adams, was not happy about possibly alienating those parents. So there was no declaration of Massey being nuclear free but for Kate there were valuable lessons learned.

She camped at Whenuapai over the weekend of the Trident exercises involving New Zealand, Australia and the US early this year, and she feels her commitment and actions did influence peers around her. "We all hate the idea of nuclear war. But I feel it's better to do something positive to help generate action, than to just despair."

Kate is now in the fifth form at Auckland Girls Grammar where she belongs to another peace group.

Opting for hope

THE Rev Leslie Clements, 71 (above), joined the Christian Pacifist Society 50 years ago. With its prominent leaders, the Rev Ormond Burton (a soldier twice decorated in World War I) and Archie Barrington, Les Clements was sent to prison as a "conchie" for three years, three months. "We were very severely dealt with"... one of his many understatements.

Methodist minister, first senior chaplain to prisons and first director of the Marriage Guidance Council in New Zealand, Les Clements in 1968 went to Geneva for nine years as executive secretary of the Family Ministry Department of the World Council of Churches ("anything to do with human relations came my way"). He became president of the Peace Foundation in 1981 — following the first president, Mr John Male. After a lifetime actively working for peace he is overjoyed by the current surge in peace movement activities.

"It's exciting, thrilling, wonderful. Not only the obviously activities, but the trend away from authoritarianism. It's so encouraging. I'm convinced this younger generation are making better parents, in spite of all the gloom we read about."

He welcomes the diversity that arises from the different groups. "Peace workers are often strong individualists. They have to have strong convictions or they wouldn't be heading in those directions, which have been against mainstream thinking. They're not good joiners. Diversity means people can find a group they feel comfortable in.

"One of the things we've always had to battle is the image of pacifists being passive, doing nothing. Objection to war is seen as a negative. But many of us have been working actively and positively all our lives for a better world.

"Peace, justice — those are not as visible as war, as obvious as soldiers in a uniform. We can see them with guns every night on television. That is part of our indoctrination.

"But it's not all doom and gloom. The world's response to Live Aid gives a glimpse of another world — caring and compassionate. A hint perhaps that something new is about to break through.

"Hope and despair are pretty close together on the whole. I'll opt for hope. I'm hoping the nuclear allergy will spread like mad and the human race, finally sick of killing, will turn around and build a new world."

ANTIDOTE TO DESPAIR

FUNDS are being raised all over the world for The Peace Film by Oscar-winning British film-maker Peter Watkins whose movies with anti-nuclear themes have created controversy ever since his award-winning War Game in 1966.

The Voice of Women (a Dunedin peace group) and the Peace Foundation have raised about \$10,000, but double that amount is sought.

The film is Watkins' response to The Day After, which he found appalling — a Hollywood soap opera, with a dangerous after-effect that limits people's concerns about nuclear war, making them feel helpless and unable to affect the issue. Particularly he noted the widespread reaction of young people that nuclear war was inevitable.

Watkins' The Peace Film is focused on ordinary families in 11 different countries and has a positive theme of how nuclear war can be prevented.

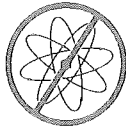
The film includes what Watkins calls "a kind of global electronic interlinking". Each family filmed has passed on a videotaped message to a family in another country.

The Pacific segment was the last to be filmed and the Canadian National Film Board is now providing free processing, editing and sound mixing as a major contribution to the project. The Australian Film Commission has given \$A25,000 and the Australian People for Nuclear Disarmament \$A10,000. There has been no official contribution from New Zealand. The rest of the \$600,000 budget has come from peace groups around the world.

• Donations can be made through the Foundation for Peace Studies, Box 4110, Auckland.

PEACE

I'd rather be in New Zealand
(It's nuclear free)



'I'M PROUD OF OUR COUNTRY'

"I'd rather be in New Zealand — (It's nuclear free)" says the bumper sticker. It's the first thing I see when I walk into the home of one of this country's veterans on the warpath for peace.

Kath Knight's 72-year-old eyes sparkle under her silver shining hair.

"Isn't it marvellous?" she said. "It came from a cousin in New York state, a US reaction to our anti-nuclear stance you never hear about."

The years have not dimmed the sense of strong energy that flows from Kath Knight; she longs for the day when peace is not a dirty word.

"How that word 'peace' raises fears. People have been so suspicious — they still are — of any organisation that has 'peace' in its name.

"War is not a dirty word in our society. But peace often is."

Centred deeply in her Quaker faith, Kath Knight voices her passionate concerns, hopes and fears with that tempered overview that comes with age and years at the fighting front. In one breath she delights in the current rush of members to the peace movement; in another she pauses to examine her worries:

"It's absolutely wonderful to see so much support. I feel able to relax a bit now, the younger ones are taking over for us — and I'm jolly glad for it. I don't always have to go out to demonstrate on a cold wet night; there are so many others there.

"But I believe one's convictions have to come from a really deep place within. It's so easy to be shaken or swayed by grim horror stories. In the Falklands War, for example, there were moments in the heat of the crisis when even I, after a lifetime of commitment to pacifism, thought what else could Margaret Thatcher do? Only moments mind you; it was a shocker. There was no excuse...

"This is what worries me about some of the young, and the pre-

sent phase of the peace movement." She chooses words carefully, not being one who condemns the young for their inexperience.

"If we were really genuinely face-to-face with a crisis, how many would waver?"

"We're all so full of fear and concern for ourselves, our standard of living, our property.

"There are all too few who wouldn't crumple up. I feel individual commitment has to arise from what I call a religious conviction.

"I spoke to a group of older Anglican women recently, and they all said they were pacifists. But I don't believe it. It's not a passive way, working for peace. If they'd been pacifists they'd have had to stand up and be seen; they'd have been in trouble in their lives."

The gentle-mannered Kath Knight is no stranger to trouble. For 50 years, ever since her involvement with the Christian Pacifist Society in the 1930s she has been in the thick of trouble of all kinds, from Sunday soapboxes in the Auckland Domain advocating pacifism as the country geared for war, to demonstrations against wartime law which sent friends like Les Clements, Ormond Burton and Archie Barrington to prison as conscientious objectors.

"Women didn't count for much in those days," she says of the '30s, when she and her friends would "make things difficult" for the police. "We weren't important enough to be thrown into jail."

More recently there were anti-Vietnam war marches and classrooms where aggressive boys hectoring her during her talks on Hiroshima.

"The boys always want the military, mechanical details — how big was the bomb? The girls show more concern and shock for the people."

She knows what it's like when

her friends are called traitors, to be a target for thrown eggs, white feathers in the letter box, tangles with the police.

"Have I been on the streets? Heavens, have I! 'Why don't you go home and do the washing?' were the mild words shouted at us." Kath Knight laughs now at the thought of herself as street woman, but the memories of forcing herself to be visible when she felt like curling up inside, of being shunned, of miserable, bleak days battling against the mainstream of attitudes when there was only one way to care for your country, are vividly present.

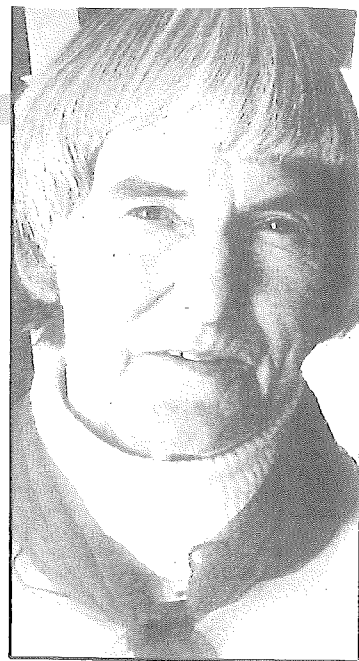
Being of the generation that had unpaid careers supporting husbands (she was matron of a boarding school for emotionally disturbed children for years) and slogging on with voluntary work, Kath Knight "retired" earlier this year after nine years as secretary of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, one of the oldest peace groups in the world. She is still sorting papers and redirecting the mail that comes to her Onehunga letterbox from all over the world.

It was not without pangs that she relinquished the job but there is a mountain of other work to keep her beavering on — "I won't be able to drop out."

As a founder member of the Peace Foundation, the educational activities which Kath has spearheaded remain dear to her heart.

Learning Peaceful Relationships, the book she initiated as head of the Foundation's education committee, has been quietly but spectacularly successful — more than 7000 copies have sold since it was first published during International Year of the Child.

While there is immense satisfaction from knowing teachers and parents are pursuing its ways of defusing conflict and promoting co-operation



ABOVE: Kath Knight... "People have been suspicious — they still are — of any organisation that has 'peace' in it." Photographs: Jenny Scown.

from pre-school to puberty, there's no chance of sitting back: Kath Knight is eager to help meet the demand for a version for older children to be published during IYP.

A danger she sees arising from the current nuclear debate is individuals feeling they no longer count, the hopelessness of "there's nothing I can do" thinking.

"The power of slogans and clichés is so strong and dangerous. Indoctrination comes from all sides. That's why it's so important to teach our young people to think for themselves, to realise there are steps they can take to make a better world.

"Somebody's got to make a start against war; that's what we've tried to do through most of this century.

"Now I'm very proud to be in the country that has made a start against nuclear warships.

"I'd like the Government to go further. But I realise I've become more realistic. I've learnt not to be so devastating and headstrong. I realise this Government never claimed to be pacifist; so they will build up the military to justify their stance, to carry the doubters.

"I could accept things like policing the seas and fishing zones, civil defence. But I think spending more on the armed forces is a wicked waste. However, it's one step at a time; let's absorb the change." ●

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