

AN OPEN LETTER BY WOMEN, EAST AND WEST

We are women in five European countries where the deployment of new American and Soviet weapons has begun. We are women from different cultures, from Eastern and Western, Northern and Southern Europe, some of us involved in the church, others not, some of us feminists, pacifists and members of many other human rights and environmental movements.

Despite our differences, we are united by the will for self-determination, to struggle against the culture of militarism in the world, against uniforms and violence, against our children being educated as soldiers and against the senseless waste of resources. We demand the right of determination for all individuals and peoples. We want to make a specific cultural contribution to change existing social structures. That is why we also challenge conventional gender roles and why we ask men to do the same.

The freedom to determine one's own fate also means freedom from exploitation and violence in our thoughts and actions, at our place of work, in our relationship to nature and the relationship between men and women, between East and West and between North and South in global terms.

Together we want to break this circle of violence, and the anxieties created in us by this violence: anxiety about nuclear weapons, fearing the death of humanity and the end of the earth, fears about the rape of our bodies and souls. Together we wish to confront these anxieties and be able to overcome them, no longer illegally, but with the right to free expression of opinion for everyone, especially in those places where the rights is denied on a daily basis. There can be no realistic peace perspective without respect for human rights.

The deployment of new nuclear weapons in our countries has limited freedom and increased our fears. Our obligation to break the circle of violence has grown because of our potential shared responsibility for a possible catastrophe. We are con-

scious of being both perpetrators and victims of systems of violence. In both roles, we are not the ones who have made the decisions. We reject both roles. Nor are we reassured by the fact that representatives of both superpowers are about to negotiate over our heads again in Geneva. Once again we are expected to pin our hopes on their seeing reason and voluntarily renouncing the production and use of weapons of mass destruction. Once again talks on how to hold talks are supposed to make us believe that it is possible to solve the problems from above. Instead of this, we choose the way of self-determined initiatives from below. This road does not go via the militarisation of society, which is why we reject any involvement in the preparations for war—nor does it traverse missile ramps or the destruction of nature and interpersonal relationships.

We do not want a peace which oppresses us, not a war which will annihilate us.

Forty years after Auschwitz and Hiroshima, forty years after the bloc confrontation began, we want now, at last, to begin collectively getting to know and understand each other better and meeting one another beyond the wall which divides not merely the borders of our countries but all too often our hearts and minds as well.

We have begun detente from below: Join us!

This statement has been signed by women from all five missile deployment countries: United Kingdom (women peace groups and parliamentarians of the labour party), German Democratic Republic (women for peace—intependant groups), Federal Republic of Germany (women for peace and parliamentarians of the Greens), Italy (women for peace and many women parliamentarians) and Czechoslovakia (women from Charta 77).

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The Women's Crusade


 (International)
 

We, members of the Women's Crusade, believing that the men and women of all nations are the brotherhood and sisterhood of the great Family of Humanity, assert our opposition to all war, conscription and slavery.

We pledge ourselves to support, by our influence and voting power, only those who will work for freedom and peace, and the suppression of militarism under all forms.

We desire social and political purity, the world for the workers (to whom it belongs), the true religion, which is the fulfilment of the Golden Rule, the creation of a safe and happy world for the unborn.

SAVE THE BOYS.

Sister Women,

The forces of Militarism—the evil fruit of war—are let loose upon the world. We women, who love our kind—who care more for our dear ones than for “separation allowances”—are banding together in a great effort to combat these forces of unutterable darkness. In our Crusade we do not recognize frontiers, and already women from Great Britain and the United States are enrolled with us in Canada. The forces of love and goodwill are gathering power. The world is war-weary; many hearts are broken; many fear and dread the news the day may bring.

Mangled, torn, blinded, maddened, slain, are the victims of this inhuman strife. Europe is a vast charnel house, yet still the Molochs of War cry out: “More men; more of the flower of earth's manhood,” and still the monster is insatiate.

Vainly have we looked to the servants of the Prince of Peace to lead the way out of the horror.

False apostles, they have “bowed the knee to Baal,” and have joined in the mad orgie of blood and lust in the name of righteousness.

There is nothing left—no hope, save the pent-up forces of the world's motherheart. Sister women, we can end the war; we can destroy Militarism. Will you help? If you will, read carefully the above pledge and send your name and address signed below, with 25 cents membership fee, by return mail to the address below.

Name

Address

“Dreamer of dreams,” we take the taunt with gladness,
 Knowing that God, beyond the jeers we see,
 Hath wrought the dreams that count with men for madness,
 Into the substance of the life-to-be.

(Mrs.) GERTRUDE RICHARDSON,
 Swan River, Manitoba,
 Canada.



*Résistance Internationale
des Femmes à la Guerre*

INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT OF WOMEN
AGAINST WAR
WOMEN SAY NO TO WAR

Women, we represent more than half of the world's population, and we are mothers of the other half.

All too often, decisions are taken without our being consulted, including decisions to use the taxes we pay for the manufacture of arms which do not increase our security. While civil needs go unsatisfied, we cannot accept the continuing increases in military spending.

**WE WISH TO BE TREATED AS FULLY-FLEDGED
MEMBERS OF SOCIETY
TOGETHER**

WE CALL FOR an immediate freeze of all nuclear arms, for a halt to military research and to the testing and manufacture of all weapons.

WE ASK that armament factories be concerned to create useful jobs.

WE REFUSE arms exports. The industrialised nations are sending arms to governments whose people are dying of hunger.

WE DEMAND that the media give coverage to all those who **REFUSE** the present horrific rise in violence.

WE REFUSE to be intimidated and to give way to the rising tide of hatred for those who are portrayed as the enemy.

LET US ACT

- So that serious studies would be undertaken on the non-violent means of resolving conflicts.
- To promote peace education, and the removal of incitements to violence at all levels of education, at home, at school and in the media.

Pass this information around. Reproduce this text and make circulate it. Contact us for information on our actions. Tel: (1) 883 90 89

INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT OF WOMEN
AGAINST WAR
B.P. 265 75960 PARIS CEDEX 20

AIMS: To stimulate thought, debate and action against war, against all its causes and in all its forms. To encourage women to become aware of their strength and to incite them to accept responsibility at all levels. To develop and promote **PEACE EDUCATION.**

**APPEAL TO THE GOVERNMENTS ON THE
OCCASION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF WOMEN IN NAIROBI**

We women of Europe are deeply concerned about the increased danger of a nuclear catastrophe and the growing cost of armaments. History has taught us the bitter lesson that nuclear weapons mean death and destruction. Today, a nuclear war would result in the annihilation of mankind.

A policy of military superiority endangers not only peace; it is achieved at the expense of social progress and of women's rights. It creates famine, illiteracy, poverty, sickness and death throughout the world. Without a secure peace there can be no progress and no emancipation.

We thus appeal to you to heed women's demands for equal rights and for a life in peace.

As a first step towards achieving a secure peace, we call for an immediate freeze of all nuclear arms.

GB: Julie Christie

FRG: Senta Berger, Ina Deter, Gertrude Degenhardt, Ingeborg Drewitz, Gisela Elsner, Marianne Koch, Eva Mattes, Inge Meysel, Marie Marcks, Luise Rinser, Erika Runge, Hanna Schygulla, Tisa von der Schulenburg, Margarethe von Trotta, Vera Tschechowa, Mary Tucholsky, Florence Hervé

France: Claire Etcherelli, Hélène Martin, Emmanuelle Riva, Martine Sarri, Francesca Solleville, Anne Sylvestre, Rita Thalmann, Suzanne Prou, Claude Bessy, Viviane Théophilides

Belgium: Monette Loza, Annie Duparc, Daria de Martynoff, Marion Quoilin

Sweden: Bibi Andersson

Italy: Milva

Finland: Kristiina Halkola

Austria: Erika Pluhar, Elfriede Jelinek, Käthe Kratz

V.i.S.d.P. Florence Hervé, Degerstr. 21, 4000 Düsseldorf 1

A PETITION FOR ALL WOMEN
TO ALL GOVERNMENTS
WOMEN COUNT—
COUNT WOMEN'S WORK



WHEREAS women do 2/3 of the world's work, receive only 5% of the income and own less than 1% of the assets;
WHEREAS women are the poorer sex, Black and Third World women are poorest of all, and the poorer we are the more work we are forced to do;
WHEREAS women produce all the workers of the world, yet this is not considered work and we are not considered workers;
WHEREAS women, with the help of children, grow at least half the world's food, yet we are denied the technology of our choice;
WHEREAS though women do the work of caring for children, yet we are often threatened with the loss of child custody;
WHEREAS most of the work women do is invisible and unpaid, and any welfare, pensions, benefits or services we receive are considered not a right, not a wage but a charity;
WHEREAS despite our enormous contribution and despite lip service to women's equality, women everywhere are denied equal pay, occupational safety, health, housing, food, education, information, childcare, birthing conditions and birth control of our choice, in other words, our basic human rights;
WHEREAS there is no peace as long as people anywhere, beginning with women and children, are struggling to survive the holocaust of overwork, ecological devastation and famine;
WHEREAS according to governments, raising a child is not counted as 'work,' but being in the military and killing one is;
WHEREAS because of women's pressure internationally, the United Nations has called on all governments to count 'the contribution of the unpaid work that women do in the farms, at home and in other fields' (UN Decade for Women Draft Program of Action, 1980);

THEREFORE we petition every government to count the contribution to the economy of all women's work, so that it is recognized and reflected in every Gross National Product.

(The Gross National Product—GNP—is supposed to be the total value of goods and services produced, but up to now it has only included good and services exchanged for money. Women's unwaged work, which is estimated in some countries to produce as much as 50% of the GNP, has been left out.)

Name Address/Country Occupations, Waged/Unwaged

Issued by International Wages for Housework Campaign and International Black Women for Wages for Housework. Address in UK: King's Cross Women's Centre, 71 Tonbridge Street, London Wc1, England. Tel: 01 837 7509. Mail to P.O. Box 287, London NW6 5QU, England.

*Every Woman's Peace Camp
Unity Statement*

Women from Canada and the United States are planning a peace camp for women and children, April 26-27, 1985, to coincide with the annual Vancouver Peace Walk. The purpose of EveryWoman's Peace Camp is to provide a women's focus within the context of the overall peace march.

Peace is a global issue, and women all over the world have been working for peace for hundreds of years. We want the camp to be a symbol of working together without regard to the imaginary national borders imposed on us by governments. It's clear that those borders serve no real purpose for the people, but have actually become dangerous to world peace. Leaders attempt to use such boundaries to direct people's loyalties to one specific nation, rather than to the survival of the human family. We feel as Virginia Woolf felt: "As a woman, I have no country. As a woman, I want no country. As a woman, my country is the whole world."

EveryWoman's Peace Camp is a place for women to come together and celebrate our accomplishments in working for a peaceful and just world. Too often, women's achievements are hidden and ignored. It is time for us to reclaim our work and proclaim it proudly.

An example of a little known women's action is a campaign by Vancouver women in 1971. A group of mothers in the

Raymur area, who had been pleading for months with authorities for an overpass of a dangerous rail line near their homes, finally got results when they took direct action and pitched tents on the tracks, refusing to let any trains pass until they got firm guarantees for the overpass. The action helped unify the group of mothers, who went on to organize a community center and food co-op for their neighborhood and also served as a model for other local groups fighting for day care and other needs. EveryWoman's Peace Camp is dedicated to the Raymur mothers and their courageous action.

In the past few years, women have formed peace camps all over the world to resist the insanity of the nuclear arms race. The camps have been both a celebration of women's power and places for focusing and strengthening our power. We have begun to explore the connections between personal violence, most often expressed against women and children, and the global violence of racism, poverty, and militarism. The oppression of women is an integral part of every oppressive institution in the world. By uniting as women, we become a powerful force for change.

The women's camps have used nonviolent action as an answer to the violence of those who are willing to destroy the world out of fear and for the sake of profits. Nonviolence challenges the power of the oppressors, by refusing the cooperation necessary for the oppression to go on. To paraphrase Edmund Burke, "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good women to do nothing." We believe that active, nonviolent resistance to violence and oppression is the most powerful step we can take to bring about peace and justice. At the same time, we recognize the right of people everywhere to determine for themselves the form their struggle will take.

With the deployment of Euromissiles and Reagan's proposed "Star Wars" buildup, the danger to world peace has never been greater. The world simply cannot survive another major war. If we are to avoid extinction, we must mobilize all the power at our disposal for peace. Women, as one of the largest groups of disempowered people in the world, can have a major role in ending the nuclear threat. We cannot afford to remain powerless and numb, waiting for the end.

EveryWoman's Peace Camp invites all women and children to join in this celebration of women and to form a strong contingent in the Vancouver Peace Walk.

Petition of the Global Nation of Women for Recognition of Full Member Status in the United Nations

Women constitute a global nation in exile behind all borders. We are systematically excluded from all of the political and economic power structures of the existing nations. Our world is on the brink of economic, military, and ecologic disaster because women's values and skills are neither respected nor practiced by any government. We nurture life. We use caring, cooperative skills to resolve conflict without losers. We use diversity to foster growth and enhance creative change. We strive to reunite a world polarized by patriarchal values so that all humans may work together in partnership. Therefore we, the undersigned, declare ourselves a global nation of women and claim full nation status in the United Nations with representation in all United Nation's bodies.

Printed Name	Address	Signature
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Mail to the Global Nation of Women in Exile at one of the following addresses:

Beaulieu House 47, Queens Road Coves, I.O.W. England	2809 Rosemary Lane Falls Church, VA 22042 U.S.A.	100 Harris Street Guelph, Ontario N1E 5T2 Canada
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November 15, 1983
Box 467
Waterdown, Ontario
L0R 2H0

Mr. Peter Gzowski
CBC, Box 500
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Peter:

I spent the morning of November 11 with you and your guests and felt reflective and thoughtful. At a few minutes to 11, I put on the tely to (also) view the service at the National War Memorial.

My family history is British Imperial Army and Anglican Church. I see now how extraordinarily similar these two institutions are, and as a female growing up in this male dominated world, I, like my sisters before me, accommodated my life according to male expectations. My secret existence and the way things really worked were two separate realities. As a child I was puzzled by this, but as a woman I have two states of being, one rage and the other numbness. The only alternative to unexpressed rage is numbness for me.

Anyway, back to "Lest We Forget." We don't forget the fact and the life of a son, a friend, or a lover when they are wrenched from us so violently and so soon. We don't need bands, flags and parades for that. They, in fact, help us to remember how to make war, "lest we forget" (how).

I used to mark Armistice Day, as it was then (perhaps more accurately) called, with my mother, the daughter of the professional soldier. She had served in France in the WAC's 1914-18. On November 11 she simply buried her face in her hands and sat quietly for two minutes. She told me she was remembering her friends. I went to many a parade as a child and teenager. Our church was the garrison church and I used to watch the often shabby old men stepping out as smartly as their age and infirmities would allow. I used to worry the bugler would sound a bum note. Always I felt sad, which was the natural response and the required response. I also always felt uneasy, alarmed, puzzled.

Now in my fifties, I too have had friends killed, felt pain, seen evidence of war's atrocities and seen "man's cruelty to man." I've also seen these same cruelties encouraged by cheering crowds, music, flags and prayers. I've born sons and know how very precious they are.

So having been put in a thoughtful frame by your program, I slipped my sleeping grandson into his bed and watched the service in Ottawa. There was the Silver Cross Mother. Her twenty-year-old has been killed in Korea. The Silver Cross Mother is always the same. She is old. She wears a dark coat and hat. The Prime Minister or the Governor General always steer her by her elbow to the monument. She is always surrounded by the military, ecclesiastical, political members of the boys' club. She is always dutiful, quiet, respectful. One year I actually knew the Silver Cross Mother and her four dead sons whose sacrifice brought her to Ottawa. She too looked quiet, respectful. Surely what they really are is numb? I

always watch and I always wonder why they are not screaming. But I know why they are not screaming. It simply would not do to make a fuss. We learn that so very early and we learn it well and the atrocities go on and we are quiet. What would happen if we whirled and screamed and shrieked in our grief and our pain? What if we demanded it to STOP?

I have a fantasy about a possible replay of Remembrance Day 1983.

The Silver Cross Mother is late. The officials are nervous, edgy. Where is she? Who was responsible for getting her there? Find some other old woman in the crowd to stand in for her. The clergy are nearly finished with their prayers. Where is she? We hear the sound of pounding hooves. A sleek, excited horse, its tail and mane flying out behind it comes galloping into view. It has neither bit nor saddle. It runs with all the strength of all the calvary horses in history in its limbs. Its eyes are triumphant and clear, the nostril flaring. Riding as one with the beast is the Silver Cross Mother, her gray hair loose and long. Her eyes are like fire and she is brandishing a sword around and around her head line an athlete about to hurl a discus. She is summoning energy from the very sky. The crowd parts, scatters. Her rough wool, crimson cape streams out behind her, leaving sparks in her wake. The boy scouts flee, the girl guides gape, the old soldiers see a vision. She mounts the steps of the centaph and comes to a stop. She utters a high pitched scream. The monument crumbles to dust. The men all fall into a deep, deep sleep. The women all begin to dance and dance and dance. They cry and they dance and they cry and they dance. They dance until their dance becomes a song and their song becomes a croon and the croon becomes a lullabye.

Along the line of their eyes and their cheeks the crooning women stroke the men and the boys. They open their eyes and they have forgotten how to make war. All their lives they have been told not to forget—but they have forgotten.

Yesterday the cruise missiles were delivered to the air base at Greenham Common in England. I love those awful, rude, singing, screaming, unseemly women at that camp.

Sheila Brown

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