



GREG MARTIN

On September 29 Brian Willson was back on the tracks at the Concord Naval Weapons Station.

Deadlines

for the December Monthly Planet

Publication Date

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Poetry Submissions

Monday, November 23

Letters to the Freeze

Tuesday, December 1

Calendar Listings

Tuesday, December 1, 5 p.m.
(no phone calls, please)

Display ads

Friday, December 4, 5 p.m.
(call Risa at 427-3405)

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Direct Action Notes by Noel Sturgeon

Two Styles of Direct Action

On two consecutive nights this last month, Santa Cruz was visited by practitioners of direct action: Jim Douglass from Ground Zero in Bangor, Washington, and Katya Komisaruk, whose lone disarmament action at Vandenberg Air Force Base last June resulted in stiff charges. The two talks provided an interesting contrast in direct action styles, if not philosophies.

Jim and Shelly Douglass have been building a Christian community of resistance against nuclear weapons since 1981. Operating out of a house just outside of the Trident submarine base at Bangor, Ground Zero has set up a network of antinuclear activists which stretches all the way to Pantex, Texas, where all nuclear weapons are assembled. This network has been identifying, tracking, and blocking the trains which carry the nuclear warheads from Pantex to Bangor.

In the unseasonable heat wave of early October, Jim Douglass met with about 25 interested Santa Cruzans to talk about what "stopping the train" meant. Having visited Concord Naval Weapons Station on the way down, much of the focus of Douglass' remarks involved the maiming of Brian Willson while attempting to block the Concord train which carries weapons meant for Central America.

Douglass spoke about the "evil" of nuclear weapons and the national security state which supports them. For Douglass, nonviolent action means offering our lives in resistance to evil, with active love; nonviolence is "a prayer in action, an openness to the Spirit's will." Brian Willson, in risking his life to prevent violence, was a martyr, in the literal sense of the word, which Douglass said meant "living witness." Martyrs were necessary, according to Douglass, to transform us into the kind of beings that can overcome the violence of nation-states. Such transformation was evident in Willson, Douglass said, who had been given the same wounds as the poor and maimed in Nicaragua. "Transformation," said Douglass, "is the process of responding to suffering



by taking it onto ourselves."

A different but no less dedicated spirit is apparent in Katya Komisaruk, who damaged a computer connected to the Navstar communications system at Vandenberg Air Force Base, which enables the precise targeting necessary for the American strategy of nuclear first strike. Last June, with a small backpack containing a crowbar, cordless drill, hammer, and other tools, she hitchhiked from San Francisco to Vandenberg Air Force Base, which is just above Santa Barbara.

Following her USGS maps, which show the location of all the buildings at Vandenberg, she hiked to the Navstar complex. At the gate, which was wide open, she left a bouquet of red, white, and blue flowers, a box of Mrs. Field's cookies, and a greeting card. Inside the greeting card, she wrote: "I have no gun, You must have lots, Let's not be hasty, No cheap shots." Komisaruk described herself at the time as "very scared. My heart was just thumping, and I expected to see security guards any minute." But no guards appeared during the entire time she was there.

After finding and damaging the computer, Komisaruk had to decide whether to search for some security guards in order to turn herself in immediately or leave undetected. She thought that since Air Force security would most likely



DAVE EASON

interrogate her all night, and that she "wanted a shower more than anything else in the world," she would go home first. So she left the base, hitchhiked to San Francisco, and called a press conference the next day to turn herself in to the FBI at the Federal Building.

Charged with two felonies, Komisaruk faces a sentence of 20 years in prison, a \$500,000 fine, and a liability of a million dollars in restitution for the damage. Yet her wryly comic and open manner almost makes one forget the seriousness of her situation. She seems like just an everyday

sort of person, who decided to do the best she could to prevent a nuclear war.

Indeed, a letter from Komisaruk recently appeared in the nationally published Miss Manners column. Was a purchased, rather than homemade, greeting card okay to leave for the security guards, Komisaruk wanted to know, and what should she wear to the trial to show the jurors that she was a respectable person sincerely concerned about nuclear war? Komisaruk's sense of humor combines with her obvious commitment to make her action accessible, an understandable reaction to the imminent danger of nuclear holocaust.

[During Komisaruk's pretrial hearings, the Federal prosecutor is attempting to pass a motion limiting her ability to present the reasons behind her action, or any defense based on international law. Persons wishing to help with her legal support or go to her trial (which begins Nov. 6 at the Los Angeles Federal Courthouse) can call (415) 334-2734.]

Noel Sturgeon is an activist and student of the direct action movement. Any comments on this column, or information on past or upcoming direct actions can be sent to her c/o The Monthly Planet.

Upcoming Direct Actions in November (National and Local)

Ongoing: Nuremberg Actions at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. Daily presence to protest US war in Central America (408) 426-7822 or (415) 933-7850

Middle East Alert Network. On the day after any major US military attack in the Middle East, meet at 5 pm at Powell and Market Streets, SF, or call (415) 549-3077

7-9 Nevada Test Site: Catholic Worker gathering honoring Dorothy Day's birthday. (213) 267-8789

13 Washington, D.C. 13th anniversary of Karen Silkwood's death. Action at Nuclear Regulatory Commission Headquarters in Long Island. SHAD Alliance, (516) 360-0045

Update on Previous Action

— Well over 600 people were arrested at the Supreme Court on October 12, to protest anti-gay court rulings as part of the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay rights, which was attended by over 600,000 people.

Thanks to the Take Action Networking Calendar, P.O. Box 329, Eugene, OR, 97440.