From War to Post-War: Security Lost and Found

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter traces the ways in which activists in both countries became aware of the dangers of nuclear weapons in the immediate post-war period and how they developed the first campaigns. It highlights how they tried to carve up new spaces of activism as their societies were reconstructed. It highlights the importance of political traditions from the 1920s as reservoirs for political actions and ideas. The chapter also emphasizes how important memories of the Second World War were for the perception of the present as an 'atomic age', when the rejection of the military uses of nuclear weapons went hand in hand with the often enthusiastic endorsement of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy as a marker of modernity.

Keywords: post-war, reconstruction, pacifism, politics of the past, democratization, Second World War memories, nuclear age, nuclear power

At the beginning was the end. The end of war provided the central reference point for the politics of security that British and West German peace activists advanced in the post-war period. As the philosopher Günther Anders pointed out in the early 1950s, 'the moment at which the bomb appeared was … the least convenient that could have been chosen from the point of view of someone wishing to direct a film. For it was precisely that moment towards the last phase of the war, during which the present fear that war and dictatorship had brought began to relax.'[1] There was already some reflection on the changing character of war in the light of these experiences. In Britain, there was now an awareness that 'our island [was] no longer a detached participant', sharing in wars 'only

through the adventures of masculine youth', vulnerable as it had become to bombing raids from elsewhere.[2] But there was very little explicit reflection on the nature of the threat that the new weapons brought. The predominant feeling in Britain and West Germany was, however, one of relief, relief that the war was finally over.[3] The dropping of two nuclear bombs on the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August 1945 therefore received only scant attention in both countries.

This chapter traces the ways in which British and West German peace campaigners developed an awareness of the repercussions of what came to be known as the 'atomic age', how they responded to it, and why they responded in the ways they did. The period from the mid-1940s to the mid-1950s saw the transition from a politics of peace to a politics of security. In 1945, most Britons and West Germans thought that they had **(p.17)** lost all their security. During this time period from 1945 to the mid-1950s, discussions about the nuclear arms race and the nuclear age became an opportunity to discuss losses, but also hopes for a better future, that were borne out of the experiences of violence and death in the Second World War. This happened as British and West German peace campaigners and their governments embarked on a multitude of ways to find security again. Peace activists had problems addressing these issues head-on, however: bombing war and nuclear weapons had destabilized exisiting languages of peacemaking, and pacifist organizations had problems addressing these issues within the framework of post-1945 politics. The ideological cold war between Soviet peace campaigns and the Western emphasis on freedom came to constrain their activities further. Thus, whereas the politics of peace had contained notions of moving towards a better and often utopian future, the politics of security sought to generate movement not by referring to utopian ideals, but by conjuring up hopes for stability and the status quo as an essential ingredient of peacemaking. The late 1950s saw the convergence of a number of attempts at finding security in the nuclear age that fundamentally differed from that sought by governments: instead of separating issues of material and military security, they advanced a holistic politics of security through networks and activism from below, building on, but also transcending, the peace activism of the traditional pacifist organizations.

The story that this chapter tells was at once a shared history of common perceptions, fears, and hopes, and a history of fundamental differences in their resonances. We can also detect many transnational connections through mutual observations and direct personal contacts. Both British and German societies were connected to each other: first on opposite sides of the aerial bombings of the Second World War; then together in the 'Western' camp of the cold war and its nuclear arms race. But, whereas British society had to deal with reconstructing the country economically, socially, and culturally, West German 'reconstruction' remained conjoined with the racial violence of the Nazi regime and carried with it a fundamental moral problem. This meant that talking

directly about violence obtained a particularly strong stigma in West Germany in the post-war years.[4] It was first an occupied, and then a semi-sovereign and divided nation, so the politics of security gained a significance in Germany that differed fundamentally from that in Britain.

(p.18) August 1945: Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Britain and Germany

Britons and Germans perceived '1945' as a 'zero hour', as a point of time in history where they had the opportunity to start afresh, from which to look back and gaze forward and to remake their countries and their lives. Everyone in their own individual way experienced the end of war as 'one of those rare moments in which history's continuum became shattered in the most spectacular fashion'.[5] Remembering the end of war thus became a way of establishing distance from those events that were characterized by existential fears for survival, radical moral and emotional uncertainty, but also the opportunity for new beginnings. Ideas of 'reconstruction' that were tied to this moment were therefore related to a multitude of political projects that had been borne out of the experiences of fear and violence of the war years. Fundamentally, this was about coping with 'man-made mass death'.[6] The means Britons and Germans found of un-making death was to depolicitize and to anonymize its causes by attributing it to machines and technology rather than to individuals. Early interpretations of 'the bomb' therefore turned the new weapon into an anonymous technological force with its own agency, an agency from which people could not escape. Often, Britons and Germans discussed the bombs as they would have discussed natural disasters. Comparisons with earthquakes and volcanic eruptions were especially frequent.[7]

In Britain, '1945' and the victory of the Labour Party that year served as markers for a barrier to the hunger, poverty, and want that many Britons had been experiencing during the economic depression and the war years. This meant, though, that people's hopes for a better future were conjoined with images of death and destruction; hopes for prosperity and security linked to fears of pain. This gave the manifold projects for creating less violent, better, and more hopeful futures in the immediate post-war their particular valency. The end of the war did not immediately bring the desired security, but rather more uncertainty. Pain was cordoned off so as not to be able to pollute the future that Britons and Germans wanted to build for **(p.19)** themselves.[8] The moral repercussions of such attempts of anonymizing and depoliticizing the war were particularly problematic in Germany: the extreme violence of the last months of fighting and the fundamental rupture between the ideology of the German *Herrenmenschen* and the feeling of moral bankruptcy that dawned upon the war's losers endowed '1945' with a significance there that it did not have in Britain.[9]

British and German histories of pain and prosperity were intricately and intimately connected. The air forces of both countries had bombed each other's cities and towns; and Britain's role as an occupying power in Germany after the National Socialists' unconditional surrender on 8 May 1945 connected the politics of both countries further. People's expectations for the post-war period were framed by the assumption that the end of war would bring security—in both countries, fear and anxiety had been regarded as detrimental to the war effort. Not least, there was a general Western sentiment that put a high premium on security and was highly critical of fear that applied to both Nazi Germany and wartime Britain. 'Freedom from fear', US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had stated in his State of the Union address in January 1941, became one of the war aims and subsequently became part of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.[10] For British and West German peace activists after the war, Roosevelt's ideas for a novel international order, based upon a functioning and united international organization with effective mechanism for the peaceful settlement of international disputes and connected with an agenda of harnessing individual economic and social well-being, provided the central template and reference point for thinking about issues of international order.[11] Post-war peace activists measured their political successes and disappointments against this yardstick. It was this desire for an undivided and indivisible world that initially guided their critique of the American government's use of nuclear weapons as a bargaining chip in the emerging conflict with the Soviet Union over the geostrategic implications of the post-war order.[12]

 (p.20) It was in this context that British and German peace campaigners read about—and watched on newsreels—the bombings by US bombers of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August 1945 respectively. They struggled to make sense of these issues, as their conceptualization of 'peace' was still framed by either utopias of a non-violent social order, the remits of liberal internationalism, or socialist ideas of peace through social justice that sat uneasily with the individualist language of human rights that was emerging and that stressed not social progress, but individual safety and security. British and German peace campaigners were part of two societies that could yet make little sense of what had happened: very few people in Britain and Germany realized the full significance and implications of the events. Little concrete information on the implications of the new technology was available. There was also little or no awareness of the dangers stemming from radiation. Pictures of the disfigured, the dying, and the dead had been censored. And the newsreels and newspapers showed rubble landscapes that looked very similar to what Britons and Germans knew from their own countries.[13]

In Britain, which continued to fight with the allied powers in Asia, the war continued until Japan's unconditional surrender on 15 August 1945. Hence, the initial debates about nuclear weapons emerged in the context of discussions about the usefulness of the bombs for ending a war, a war that most had seen as

a 'good war', fought as it was against National Socialism, fascism, and Japanese imperialism. But perceptions were not at all clear at the time, and the author of the *Manchester Guardian*'s editorial published two days after the Nagasaki bombing wondered whether this really meant that Britain had reached the 'brink of peace'.[14] Some even hoped that the new weapons, precisely because they were so strong and horrific, would be able to put an end to war as such, as no government would dare launch war if threatened with the new superweapon.[15]

So, when Britons recorded their reactions, fear and uncertainty characterized the first responses to the dropping of atomic bombs. In Britain, most contemporaries phrased their reactions in terms of both hopes for a better future and threats of a new war. One male participant in the British *Mass Observation* surveys wrote in his diary that 'such hideous destruction seems to knock the moral bottom out of life … Ideals, hopes **(p.21)** and principles seem to fade to nothingness.'[16] A 15-year-old boy wrote: 'I don't think I'll put my name down for hop-picking now—it's not worth while.'[17] *The Times*'s diplomatic correspondent, by contrast, highlighted the weapon's character as both a source for evil and a source for good, a trope that would determine debates well into the 1960s. He pointed to the bomb's 'wider and fearful possibilities' that were 'as yet undisclosed'. And, the next day, the paper diagnosed that 'the world stands in the presence of a revolution of earthly affairs at least as big with potentialities of good and evil as when the forces of steam or electricity were harnessed'.[18]

British intellectuals who discussed the politics of the new weapons highlighted the repercussions their development and use would have to questions of the morality of the British war effort, especially with regard to aerial bombing. Such issues had already agitated some peace campaigners, left-wing politicians, and clergy in the context of the night bombing of German cities during the war. These debates were framed primarily within the context of 'just war' theory and discussed specifically the question whether a war that was fought against the civilian population could still be called 'just', however just its cause.[19] They now rehearsed similar arguments and applied them to what this meant for the transition from war to peace. At the request of an angry Victor Gollancz, the left-wing publisher, Revd John Collins, then Dean of Oriel College, Oxford, and later a founder member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), rang his friend Sir Stafford Cripps (who had just become the President of the Board of Trade in the new Labour government). The purpose of the phone call was to gain reassurances that, at the very least, no more of these new bombs would be used against Japan. Collins also tried to ring the Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher, but he did not answer the phone, so Collins was left discussing the matter with a chaplain: in light of the discussions of the war years, Fisher found the problem too tricky to address it head-on.[20] George Bell, the bishop of Chichester, who had been one of the main Anglican voices against bombings of German cities during the war, was more outspoken. He called the destruction of

Hiroshima 'a crime against humanity' that should be punished in ways similar to the war crimes trials against Nazi leaders that were being **(p.22)** contemplated at the time.[21] Highlighting the particularly cruel nature of the attacks, C. C. Thicknesse, the dean of St Albans, refused to ring the bells in the Abbey tower, and did not give permission for a service of thanksgiving in the Abbey to mark the end of the war, causing a national controversy: 'I cannot honestly give thanks to God', he wrote in an open letter, 'for an event brought about by the wrong use of force, by an act of wholesale indiscriminate massacre, which is different in kind from all the acts of open warfare hitherto'.[22]

This mixture of fear and hope that Britons recorded when they heard about the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki resonated fundamentally differently in occupied Germany. Given the situation most Germans were in, few were interested in discussing the direct political implications of the new weapons. If politics mattered, it was primarily in the context of hopes for reconstruction rather than with regard to distant Japan. While Germans also discussed the promising features of nuclear energy (rather than nuclear weapons as a source for another war), the aerial bombings and fire storms that had ravaged Hamburg in late July and August 1943, and Dresden on 13/14 February 1945, were still very present in people's minds.[23] While the majority of German bombing raids against British cities had occurred during the first phase of the war in the early 1940s, most of the German war deaths, both on the battlefields and through allied bombing raids, had occurred in the second half of the war. Many Germans, moreover, had an uncanny feeling that nuclear weapons had been developed to be used against them in the first place:

> We Germans feel a bit detached [*abseits*] from this question of humankind, and we almost register our relief. We have something behind us that has made us awfully tired. We are glad that our hands do not have to shake when enjoying our luck, for what we have experienced was already a first example of applying the smashing of atoms—against us.[24]

Such connections between nuclear issues and wartime experiences meant that the 'atomic question' was crowded out by issues of social and economic reconstruction in the immediate post-war years. Soon, Germans and Britons lost interest in the atom bomb question. George Orwell remarked laconically in October 1945 that, 'considering how likely we all **(p.23)** are to be blown to pieces by it within the next five years, the atomic bomb has not roused so much discussion as might have been expected.'[25] Veteran liberal internationalist Leonard Woolf's assessment even regarded the discussions as part of a frenzy caused by the mass media. The atomic bomb, he argued in 1946, was typical of those ' "sensations", whose depth is measured by the height of sales of evening papers' but that were 'of their nature short-lived and in effect transient and abortive. They pass away with the last Derby or last scandal leaving much the same kind of mark on human history.'[26] For most British peace campaigners, as

oriented towards educated middle-class ideas of culture and civility as Woolf, the issue of nuclear weapons came as an afterthought to more general debates about the status of civilization in the wake of war.

This lack of interest or understanding was at least partly a function of the international climate: only those interested in the high politics of negotiations for a deal to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons after the war and those who, like Orwell, had an acute sense for the political importance of the atom bomb in the context of the growing geostrategic competition between the Soviet Union and the United States were able to develop some basic understanding of the role the bomb might play in international politics. But, even for public intellectuals such as Orwell, the dimensions of the nuclear arms race that would unfold between the United States and the Soviet Union after the first successful Soviet test were hard to fathom in the context of the immediate post-war years. The fact that most of the discussions took place within the secrecy of the governmental bureaucracy re-enforced this trend further.[27] In Germany, nuclear weapons were simply a non-issue, as conventional, let alone nuclear, rearmament seemed beyond reach in the destroyed and occupied country.

Organizing for peace in post-war society

The British and West German peace campaigners who wished to organize their activities not only had to make sense of the new technology in the light of their war experiences but were also constrained by the nature of **(p.24)** politics at the time. The re-emergence of pacifist organizations was part of a 'transnational moment of change' in 1945 that affected continental Europe as well as British politics.[28] In the UK, this was a continuation of the pluralism that had characterized British political culture before and during the war. On the political left, it was particularly closely linked to some strands of Methodism and left-wing Anglicanism. A similar pluralism had also characterized German politics before the rise of the National Socialists to power in 1933.[29] In Germany, its re-emergence was a direct consequence of the complete breakdown of political structures and the structured revival of party-political organizations within the four occupation zones. As in Britain, it was often linked to activism of the churches. Protestantism—and especially those sections of the German Protestantism that had belonged to the Confessing Church, which had been critical of some aspects of the Nazi regime—was particularly relevant for peace campaigns.[30]

This blossoming of non-governmental activism and campaigning was very narrowly circumscribed, however, so that pacifist organizations were unable to tap the yearnings for security from within the framework of their old pacifist organizations. The reasons for this were organizational and sociocultural. In occupied Germany, grass-roots organizing was quite popular, and the emergence of anti-fascist organizations across the country highlighted the dynamics for

social transformations. Likewise, there was a plethora of voluntary organizations that populated the politics in the British occupation zone in particular and that reintroduced Germans to middle-class models of organizations that revitalized popular politics: the most notable activities were those by the Quakers and other Christian groups that provided material relief and were not satisfied with the top-down planning of relief efforts that the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) provided.[31] It was through these efforts that British and German peace campaigning came to be connected for the first time after the war. Quakers did not only bring European aid to Germany; they also brought with them their ways of thinking and campaigning. It was through Quaker groups' advocacy of non-violent **(p.25)** means of conflict resolution and through the attempts of Quakers to help with the education of young German people to democratic citizens that many of the later anti-nuclear weapons activists first came in touch with British pacifists. It was a little ironic that it was the Quakers, criticized before for their direct involvement in the war effort as paramedics on the various fronts, who now imported new ways of thinking about peace to Germany.[32] For the British and West German Quakers, for the related activities at the youth camp on an estate near the north German town of Vlotho, the seat of the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad, and the centre for youth contacts that was set up in the town of Bückeburg, this amounted to an experience of conversion. It acquainted them with the British Peace Pledge Union (PPU), founded in 1936 with an agenda of personal discipline and non-violence, and meant that 1945 was both an end and a beginning for them.[33]

But the general outlook for peace campaigning was bleak. Germany had been divided into four occupation zones, governed by US, British, French, and Soviet authorities respectively. The material situation was dire, as those who had stayed at home competed for scarce resources with returning soldiers and refugees. Unlike their British counterparts, German peace campaigners could not tap images of a 'peaceable kingdom'. They still had to face prejudices in a society that had been mobilized for racial warfare. The National Socialists had dismantled all peace organizations and many pacifists had to go into exile, often to Britain, but also to the United States. Many had died there or committed suicide; some of those who had remained in Germany had ended up in concentration camps. Yet there was still a community of peace activists who tried to revitalize their organizations and campaigns, buoyed by the belief that the war experience would have bolstered their position within society.

With this in mind, the German Peace Society (*Deutsche Friedensgesell-schaft* (*DFG*)) was re-established in November 1946. It was still dominated by those age cohorts who had been active in the 1920s.[34] In particular, a more radical pacifist wing around Fritz Küster drove the discussions and continued to argue for a centralized and disciplined movement that would oppose any governmental efforts to create 'peace', as it argued that **(p.26)** governments were prone to becoming militaristic.[35] The *DFG* 's revival was part of the rebirth of a plethora

of political and cultural organizations and institutions that sought to revive primarily bourgeois modes of organization and the culture of the educated middle class as a bulwark against the revival of National Socialism. More broadly, the *DFG* was part and parcel of efforts to create a democracy from below that would anchor democratic thoughts and practices more strongly in the German population. They wanted to create a new democratic future for Germany by reviving ideas from past pacifist thought and activism, primarily looking back to the 1920s as an era of fruitful democratic engagement.[36]

DFG activists argued that a change of hearts and minds was fundamental to establishing peace after the war: they pointed out that the war had become possible only because of the acceptance of positive ideas about the military in German society. Hence, political renewal could occur only once the German mind had been disarmed, and the 'belief in the power of the sword' had been replaced by alternative modes of social interaction.[37] Crucially, this implied that peacemaking was a national German problem and thus required national solutions.[38] Neither peace activists nor the general German population considered themselves citizens of the world and continued to highlight the importance of their 'fatherland'.[39] Efforts at peace campaigning across borders were therefore very limited. There were small-scale attempts, for example, by the World Organization of Mothers of All Nations (WOMAN), which aimed to transcend national boundaries by appealing to essentialist conceptions of mothers as representatives of a global moral conscience.[40] And there were those who revived ideas of liberal internationalism or world government from the interwar period.[41]

 (p.27) British peace campaigners did not see themselves in a much better position than their German counterparts. But they were able to appeal to a political culture that prided itself on its civility. They could proudly look back to the campaigns of the 1930s that had opened up governmental foreign and defence policy decisions to democratic scrutiny.[42] Experiences of the anti-fascist popular front activities that had campaigned against the fascist occupation of Abyssinia in 1935 and had taken an active role in mobilizing significant sections of the British left in a campaign to aid Republican Spain against Franquist forces from 1936 to 1939 were still highly resonant in the immediate post-war period.[43]

Yet British peace campaigners were also the victims of the relative popularity of their general beliefs in British society. The campaigns of the 1930s had left a heritage of political divisions. There still existed fundamental disagreements that stemmed from the debate between those who had advocated appeasement, those who had argued in terms of collective security arrangements within the League of Nations, and those (primarily in the PPU) who saw personal experiences of conversion and asceticism as the key to creating peace through the practice of non-violence. These had already limited the political reach of

pacifist organizations in the 1930s, and they continued to cause schisms after 1945.[44]

Moreover, peace campaigners' particular political recommendations raised many eyebrows. Now, after 1945, many campaigners—be they non-violent pacifists, more moderate advocates of non-intervention, or mere critics of governmental policies—were faced with accusations from outside their circles that they were fellow travellers of the Nazi regime who had made appeasement against Hitler in the 1930s possible and that they had indirectly supported the Nazi war effort when campaigning against the night-time aerial bombing against German cities during the war.[45] As late as March 1945, Vera Brittain, herself active in the Bombing Restriction Committee, had complained against publicizing news of Nazi death camps in the British media as a way of 'divert[ing] attention from the havoc produced in German cities by Allied obliteration bombing' and thus implied, too, that it had been only through war, rather than through a political programme of annihilation, **(p.28)** that the Holocaust had become possible.[46] The discovery of the Nazi camps and an increasing awareness of the Holocaust seemed to have dealt peace activism a vital blow. Pacifism, John Middleton Murry observed in summer 1945, 'assumes an irreducible minimum of human decency … which no longer exists'.[47] An editorial in *Peace News* was therefore at pains to deny 'the assumption … that pacifists are, as a body, sceptical of Nazi depravity'.[48]

The fundamental challenge that British and German peace campaigners faced in 1945 did not have to do with organizational questions or political issues. It had to do with the kinds of problems and issues they faced and how they were able to respond to them within the framework of their concepts of peace. This was a question of how they engaged with, contributed to, and thus reforged the sociocultural context in which they campaigned. In both countries, the debates of how to master the transition from war to peace took place against the backdrop of the thorough mobilization for war of British and German societies that had shifted the focus away from utopias of peace towards an emphasis on security.[49] Hence, the meanings of 'peace' in political culture had changed as a consequence of war experiences. Peace campaigners were now able to voice their claims for a novel international order within languages of patriotism: peace, popular involvement in politics, and nationhood thus became part and parcel of the same policy.[50] In Britain, this revitalization of agency and hopes for popular involvement were connected to the revival of ideas of anti-fascism connected with the Spanish Civil War when it had been a lingua franca for large parts of the liberal, social-democratic, socialist, and communist left. The post-war society that emerged in Britain was, therefore, emphatically 'the people's peace' in that it signified these hopes and aspirations, although it was initially far from clear what 'peace' meant.[51]

(p.29) In the wake of rising tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, utopias of peace and social justice soon lost even more currency in mainstream political discussions, as they came to be tied to efforts by the Soviet Union to destabilize Western societies. Hence, 'peace'—and the notions of progress and reordering of society that the term implied—was soon replaced by 'security' as the key word of the time. This shift from peace to security was, in both countries, encapsulated by the slogan 'Never again': the term established distance from the violence as well as from the economic and social crisis of the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s, and used that as a source for political and social transformation. It would therefore be wrong to conclude that the shift towards a politics of security implied a general apathy, as this shift also entailed different emphases and a transformation of the forms of politics.[52] Whereas concepts of 'peace' were about opening up opportunities for political and societal change and offered utopias of a better world, the emphasis on 'security' as it emerged in British and West German political cultures potentially emphasized the limiting of choice and the closure of opportunities for choice. While peace was about movement, security concerned stability.[53]

The tension between 'peace' and 'security' that peace campaigners faced was a direct outcome of the war years. The 'people's community' in Nazi Germany and the interpretation of the war effort as a good 'people's war' as responses to the challenges of aerial bombardment had created a language of political empowerment.[54] Moreover, the war experiences in both countries, albeit with entirely different connotations and meanings, meant that the pull went away from diversity towards unity of purpose. In Britain, even pacifists had been part of this development. Most preferred to 'serve their fellow citizens than to defy their state'.[55] Such sentiment led to the revival of humanitarian projects, such as the Friends Ambulance Unit, in order to assist the war effort.[56] Ironically, therefore, **(p.30)** peace organizations were those that perhaps profited least from the blossoming of non-governmental activities at the war's end. Their position at the margins of efforts for reconstruction therefore highlights a general paradox of the aftermath of mobilizations for war in both societies: that 'large-scale democratic breakthroughs' depend on 'processes and conjunctures that massively *strengthen* state power'.[57]

This paradox explains why the flourishing of non-governmental organizations in both countries did not imply a sustained 'movement away from party'. This movement would have offered an alternative mode of political organization and was what many of the British extra-parliamentary bodies and movements that campaigned for peace and, as they claimed, 'for the country' rather than for personal interests had desired.[58] But parties were swiftly recreated in occupied Germany, and the resilience of party organizations during wartime highlights the continued importance of party-political organizing in Britain.[59] War experiences meant that popular campaigning from below struggled to find a permanent place in the politics of security in Britain and West Germany. There continued to be a

general expectation of political change through governmental intervention in both societies. Expectations of popular involvement in politics always remained part and parcel of an endorsement of state intervention: 1945 was not a libertarian moment *tout court*.[60] Governmental 'planning'—as opposed to the 'fellowship' promoted by pacifist organizations—was the order of the day.[61]

Peace as security

As they strove to address and contribute to the broader processes of the reconfiguration of the politics of peace in the wake of the Second World War, peace campaigners had to find new languages of campaigning that **(p.31)** addressed the challenges of the sociocultural shifts that the war years had brought. The response of the executive committee of one of the main British pacifist organizations, the PPU, was indicative of this shift. It resolved that not the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but the 'Save Europe Now' campaign that sought to address hunger and want on the continent, 'was the most important form of activity'. This also had implications for how both societies might relate to each other: while Germans had already begun to portray themselves as victims of war and of Hitler's National Socialist state, Britons' engagement in humanitarian war efforts helped reify this German sense of victimhood by casting them as hungry, dishevelled people in need of help.[62]

Another response was to revive thinking in terms of world government and international order and to adapt it to the United Nations.[63] British peace campaigners in particular tried this route and wanted to revive their efforts from the 1920s and 1930s to campaign for a working international government. But these efforts soon ran up against the realities of international politics in the early cold war. The United States and the Soviet Union failed to come to an agreement in the United Nations disarmament committee over the proliferation of nuclear weapons and there were growing tensions over the future of the European and global geostrategic order between the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and the United States, Britain, and their allies, on the other.[64] Thus, in 1947, the annual report of the United Nations Association (UNA), the successor of the League of Nations Union of the interwar period, pointed out that the cold war made its work for world government within the United Nations 'unbelievably difficult'.[65] Murry had feared this as early as 1945: 'Visibly the United Nations are not united … To the short-term vision the prospects of future peace look as black as human imagination can conceive.'[66] Some former peace campaigners had even gone so far as to request the construction of world government by force, and by atomic bombing. Victor Gollancz, the publisher and founder of the Left Book Club as well supporter of many popular causes in the 1930s, praised the bomb for **(p.32)** ending the war quickly.[67] The illusions British campaigners harboured about world government is even more evident from the ways in which they tied it to the issue of nuclear weapons. John Middleton Murry and Bertrand Russell even mused about an attack against the Soviet Union to prevent a nuclear arms race.[68] Proposals such as this still relied

on the assumption of Britain's status as a world power. But the economic and financial constraints highlighted to many activists in the UNA that the fundamental assumption behind this argument had broken away.[69] By the early 1950s, few British peace campaigners still regarded liberal internationalism as a viable basis for a peace campaign, especially because the division of the world into a Soviet and a 'Western' camp appeared to have been even more entrenched.

Likewise, German peace campaigners' emphasis on developing utopias of 'peace' ran up against the twin obstacles of economic reconstruction and the cold war: after the currency reform of the western zones of occupation had been accomplished in June 1948, interests shifted towards the generation of economic and social security rather than towards utopian ideas of peace. In Germany, at the front line of the geopolitical conflict, the cold war constrained pacifists' field of action even more than in Britain. Peace campaigners had to take account of a cold war conception of 'peace' that thought in terms of stability and international security, rather than in terms of movement and utopias of self-fulfilment. Crucially, official cold war readings of 'peace' stressed that individual freedom had to be created as a precondition for peace—and that that freedom, in good Hegelian manner, could be had only in the context of a strongly armed state that was willing to defend freedom against its enemies.[70]

In the late 1940s, British and West German peace campaigners were faced with cold war ideological divisions even more acutely, as 'peace' became a propaganda tool for the Soviet government and thus discredited many peace campaigns and campaigners in mainstream political culture. In Britain, the parameters of subsequent debate about maintaining peace during the emerging cold war drew a firm line between those who were in favour of disarmament efforts generally, but refused to cooperate with any Soviet efforts, and those who regarded cooperation across the blocs itself as a symbol for the removal of tensions. The Stockholm Peace Petition, **(p.33)** issued by a number of internationally prominent public intellectuals in August 1950 and the Soviet-sponsored World Peace Council (WPC), therefore found an extremely mixed reception among British peace campaigners. The same was true for the Second World Peace Congress that the WPC wished to stage in Sheffield in November of that year, but that failed to materialize as the British government prevented the delegates from entering the country. It also affected the ways in which the churches and nonconformist groups, during the war years divided but normally at least lukewarm supporters of pacifist causes, were able to conduct these debates.[71]

In Germany, in 1949, the *DFG* was banned in the Soviet zone of occupation, as the traditional pacifist organization stood for 'reactionary bourgeois pacifism' rather than for the movement for a state-sponsored peace that the East German regime of the Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*

(*SED*)) wanted to see. This was also why, paradoxically, 'peace' soon became associated with communist subversion of 'Western' values, which made campaigning for peace in Germany extremely complicated.[72] This meant that protests for disarmament and peace in West Germany always involved a direct competition with East German peace campaigns for the legitimacy of the politics of peace. More generally, they concerned the boundaries between what could legitimately be said and done in West German public affairs.

The German communist party (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (*KPD*)) did indeed try to capitalize on this competition. It highlighted what it regarded as the inverse relationship between armament and economic growth, and there was a perception among the British occupation authorities that this contributed to attitudes against rearmament and fears of a new war.[73] Within the new West German state, extra-parliamentary protests offered one of the few avenues for asserting its aims, as all other political parties shunned them. Reviving ideas about 'peace and socialism' from the 1920s and wishing to capitalize on the general public mood in the Federal Republic, 'peace' campaigns appeared to communist organizers to be especially promising, and several peace conferences were **(p.34)** supposed to generate a mass movement towards a socialist peace, combined with German reunification. Many of the meetings ended in violent clashes with the police, most famously the 'youth caravan' in Essen in May 1952 during which the police shot dead a young protester.[74] Yet, although many *KPD* activists still participated in genuinely communist ventures of launching local peace committees and events in factories, the level of motivation began to decline. In reality, however, it signified a desire to maintain stability. Hence, many *KPD* activists preferred the mainstream protests to the militant traditions of marching in columns that the *KPD* organized.[75]

The *KPD* had misread the yearnings for security in West German society as an indication for a mood of societal transformation. The particular ways in which British and West German societies dealt with the heritage of violence and loss that the Second World War left meant, however, the majority of the West German and British public defined 'peace' in terms of 'stability'. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, these feelings were not expressed directly and publicly, but they were part and parcel of private experiences. Opinion polls reveal this privatized history of mass death and the yearnings for security. In West Germany, such feelings were especially pronounced, and it is telling that British pollsters did not even care to ask the relevant questions. The US opinion pollsters Anna and Richard Merritt, working on behalf of the US military government in West Germany, diagnosed 'highly anti-militaristic views' amongst Germans in the 1950s, while Britons still thought about the role of the military for the defence of the realm in essentially the same ways as they had done before the Second World War.[76] Such fears became especially acute during the debates about German rearmament that started when plans by the Adenauer government to promote the creation of a West German army became public. One opinion poll

found that 75 per cent considered it 'wrong' to serve as soldiers—or for their husbands and sons to serve. Only 7 per cent were **(p.35)** undecided.[77] While the Adenauer government used imagery of the Russian threat, often harking back to National Socialist iconography, the propaganda did not have the desired effect of mobilizing the West German population, although the majority agreed that there existed an imminent threat of war in the early 1950s.[78]

These sentiments reflected the fundamental fact that most Germans saw a trade-off between social and economic reconstruction and military security.[79] They were often connected to conjuring up the material security of the Nazi regime during which the 'people's community' had created a sense of belonging.[80] Germans still liked the *notion* of conscription and a standing army, however—they had not suddenly become pacifists. An overwhelming majority still regarded the Nazi *Wehrmacht* as an honest army that should not be judged badly by anyone—and they still cherished it as a 'people's army', but not as a military organization.[81] This paradox—a dislike of conscription, but an approval of the idea of conscription—reveals the central elements of the West German politics of security, as opposed to a politics of peace that emerged with the debates about rearmament.

Discussions about the new army stressed that the military would not be a German organization, but integrated into either a European or a NATO force—for many, a non-German army was not worth having. Fundamentally, there existed a distrust of the state as an institution that protected personal safety and security—Germans had seen the violence a state could mete out. Germans' refusal to contemplate conscription—the key connection between citizenship and statehood—illustrates this sense of **(p.36)** 'injured citizenship' particularly well. The new West German state did not seem to honour their experience by trying to take a national defence force away from them; whereas the Nazi regime, according to perceptions visible in a number of opinion polls, had exposed them to unimaginable dangers.[82] It meant that Germans were willing to trust the state again only if it guaranteed them some form of security. And they tried to achieve this by keeping themselves busy by pursuing material and social security.[83] This was aided further by the cold war context of the divided Germany: welfare policy —and security policy more generally—was Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's version of Bismarck's late-nineteenth-century *Sammlungspolitik* (policy of integration) that the Social Democratic Party, itself burnt by what it perceived as the betrayal of communists in the final days of the Weimar Republic, could not ignore.[84]

Contemporaries framed this mood as one of 'without me' ('Ohne mich'). But it was really a movement that should be called 'in favour of me' ('für mich') that argued for personal security that was supposed to protect an 'unpolitical space of action for economic achievements and private successes'.[85] This mood found its political expression in the debates about German rearmament that became

virulent when Chancellor Konrad Adenauer made public his wishes for participating in the Western defence alliance by building up a West German army. Supported by a number of organizations, ranging from Christian groups, to traditional pacifists, and sections of the Free Democratic (*Freie Demokratische Partei* (*FDP*)) and Social Democratic (*Sozialdemokratische Partei* (*SPD*)) parties, this critique of official defence policies was also linked to the emergence of a form of political neutralism that wished to maintain Germany's status as an unarmed and neutral country in central Europe and thus keep the possibility for national unification open.[86] The Protestant politician Gustav Heinemann, who resigned from the Adenauer government in **(p.37)** protest against the policy of rearmament and who founded the 'Emergency Community for Peace in Europe' *(Notgemeinschaft für den Frieden Europas)* and later the 'All-German People's Party' (*Gesamtdeutsche Volkspartei* (*GVP*)), was probably the most famous representative of this line of argument. Martin Niemöller, the Protestant Church President of Hesse-Nassau, was another famous protagonist.[87]

The West German debates about rearmament established some of the networks around which the campaigns against nuclear weapons would gather later on. More importantly, they also made available a new language for the politics of security—a language that stressed the rationality of the claims, emphasized the control of emotions, and argued in terms of the control of the future rather than the multitude of possibilities. This development was especially striking for women's peace campaigners who took part in the campaigns and who had propagated programmes for peace as part and parcel of an agenda for a thorough societal transformation. They employed maternalist images of victimhood (rather than active female agency) from mainstream commemorations of the war years to make their case. Moreover, they articulated their claims as part of a discourse of emotional control. They voiced their wartime experiences only as long as they could be expressed with rational arguments.[88] By the mid-1950s, mainstream public discourses, by contrast, had begun to move away from the emphasis on death and destruction and imaginings of disaster and moved towards an engagement with the reality of the emerging consumer society and the beginnings of affluence in the context of an ideological conflict between the Eastern and Western bloc.[89] The structure of the paradox of security that emerged during this time period can therefore be glimpsed only from the margins.

This paradox behind the politics of security—playing material security out against military security—can be gleaned particularly well from local commemorative practices in West German towns and cities that had been subject to aerial bombardment. In Kassel, which had been subjected to a massive air raid in October 1943, the local campaign against rearmament played on this trade-off, using the slogan 'Never again!' to signal the distance that the Kassel population had already gained by rebuilding parts of **(p.38)** the city,

while warning of what the protesters regarded as the remilitarization of public life and deepen the division of Germany. These issues were especially acute for Kassel: the city had hosted a garrison before 1945, and the stationing of soldiers there would expose the city, which was no more than 50 kilometres west of the border with the GDR, again to an enormous risk in a new war.[90]

A similar rejection of direct involvement in armaments and the military, while still emphasizing material security, also existed in Britain. As in Germany, the welfare state—and the material security it provided—were used by both Labour and Conservative governments as a way of making Britain safe against communist subversion.[91] This paradox between the desire to rely on the state in some areas related to material security, but to reject its grip in others related to military security, had already affected the salience of British peace movements, such as the Union of Democratic Control, during the First World War. They were content to support the state as an actor in social and welfare policy, while opposing military conscription as a sign of the kind of authoritarian statehood that Britons were fighting.[92] It had only been after Nazi Germany's occupation of the whole of Czechoslovakia in the wake of the Munich conference in 1938 that many peace campaigners and their sympathizers in the 1930s accepted that military intervention could be justified under certain circumstances, although they continued to warn of the dangers that Britain could itself become a 'voluntary totalitarian state', as Aneurin Bevan called it at the 1937 Labour Party conference.[93] This conflict was resolved when most peace campaigners established a direct link between their campaigns and British nationhood by highlighting the essential Britishness of peace and civility. This meant that references to nationhood and 'patriotism' became essential ingredients for any political campaign that wished to appeal to more than fringe groups within the population, and the Labour Party especially, non-governmental groups in its direct orbit, as well as communists managed to portray themselves, in these circumstances, successfully as representatives of the 'ordinary Briton'.[94]

 (p.39) When the war was over, some peace campaigners, together with socialists and left-wing Labour politicians, sought to oppose the symbolic connection between military statehood and 'the people' that had been forged during the Second World War. They argued for the abolition of conscription in March 1947, and, still appealing to a socialist variant of British patriotism, they sought to establish the UK as a leader in European and international reconstruction.[95] Yet they ran up against the significantly weaker position of the UK in the international system, owing to its lack of financial and economic strength as well as of political clout, vis-à-vis the United States and the Soviet Union.[96] The specific balance between material and military security continued to cause significant problems into the early 1950s: in 1951, Aneurin Bevan resigned from Prime Minister Clement Attlee's Labour government in protest against Hugh Gaitskell's successful proposal to introduce certain charges and reduce some free services in the National Health Service to help finance a

hugely expanded arms budget.[97] The debate's salience differed, however, fundamentally from its importance in German society. While we can see how the memory of war came to be connected with notions of a community of active citizens during the Blitz that elided the social, political, and racial exclusions of that community, there was no sense of injury.[98] In British political culture, the war appeared as a 'good' conflict that had been fought against the 'right' enemy in a society that regarded itself as a 'peaceable kingdom'.[99]

Interestingly, however, the connection between sovereignty and the nuclear arms race led to structurally similar interpretations of the role of the United States in the cold war. In Britain, both critics and supporters of government policy linked nuclear weapons directly with the need to remain independent from US hegemony and to maintain British sovereignty in world politics and to overcome the experience of the 'American occupation of Britain' during the Second World War.[100] The conservative **(p.40)** government under Prime Minister Harold Macmillan preferred nuclear weapons as the cheaper alternative to a conventional army to keep Britain's role on the world state intact; critics, by contrast, with the exception of diehard pacifists who opposed all armaments *tout court*, pointed out that a conventional standing army would offer a far safer alternative. Experiences of aerial warfare during the Second World War offered a central reference point in these debates. But both positions were carried by a more or less fundamental mistrust of the intentions and rationality of US foreign and defence policies.[101] These debates were played out in the various debates about foreign policy in Britain during the 1950s, often, as in the case of the debates over the British intervention at Suez in 1956, with rather odd alliances between ultra-conservatives and non-violent pacifists.

In West Germany, the situation was much more acute: while the successive Adenauer governments sought to use armaments policies as a means of regaining sovereignty within the context of the Western alliance, the population remained fundamentally sceptical. The visible presence of US forces in occupied and semi-sovereign Germany was, together with the threat coming from the Soviet army on German soil, singled out as the source for insecurity: in West German self-perceptions, the aerial bombardment of Dresden (often incorrectly attributed to the United States) and the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki differed little. As opinion pollsters registered it, memories of mass death influenced perceptions of the possibility of an impending nuclear 'annihilation' of Germany that could ultimately be traced back to the responsibility of the United States. In 1954, nearly half of the West German population felt that way.[102]

These similar developments had their root in the general context of international defence policy as it emerged over the course of the early 1950s. The military command structure had been internationalized within NATO under US hegemony. The consequences of warfare were no longer restricted to soldiers.

Rather, the violence and destruction of a future war would be felt by societies as a whole—the trend for the socialization of violence that had already been a reality for those cities affected by the bombing raids of the Second World War would be completed in the scenario of an all-out nuclear exchange.[103] Britain was almost as affected by **(p.41)** this development as semi-sovereign Germany. At first, Britain had no legal arrangements in place that regulated the presence of US troops when they returned to bases in East Anglia in 1948, and the Visiting Forces Act of 1952 granted them more extra-territorial rights than any other country, with the exception of occupied Germany. Nonetheless, Britain maintained some direct say in policymaking by maintaining its own arsenal of nuclear weapons, precisely in order to avoid being entirely at the whim and will of US defence policy. The military, and the government in its wake, regarded society as an object of planning. According to this scheme of thinking, it was the state as an abstract unit that endowed society with security. In West Germany, in particular, this had a special resonance: as those former officers who planned the creation of a German army under democratic auspices formulated it in their 'Himmerod Memorandum' (October 1950), it had been the state that had given German society back its 'concept of freedom', a concept of freedom that could be protected only by the military; German society therefore had to learn to re-engage with the role of the military in society.[104]

Campaigning for security: Embracing the atomic age

The issues of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons were uniquely suited to debates about the role of nationhood, community, and society in the post-war world that had remained under the surface since the mid- to late 1940s: like no other available issues, they encapsulated the contradictions between material and military security and the role of states vis-à-vis societies. 'Atomic energy' soon became a source of hope in British and West German discussions, even among peace campaigners, and a symbol for the end of the immediate post-war period and for economic reconstruction. A source of cheap and enormous energy, the new energy offered a healing balm that could cover up the wounds of war and help build a new technical age on Europe's ruins.[105] Given the experience of post-war reconstruction in Germany, this binary opposition between the experiences of pain and hopes for prosperity was more pronounced there than in Britain. It meant that the distinction between either 'curse' or 'blessing' **(p.42)** that nuclear energy could bring was a much more powerful means of political communication in West Germany than in Britain.[106]

But before the campaign for security in the nuclear age could emerge that could turn this paradox of security into a political issue, the international context had to change. One precondition was the brief opening in East–West politics that Soviet leader Krushchev's admission of Stalin's crimes created, especially among the members of the British left, who could now realistically claim that an end to the cold war division of Europe had become conceivable, especially when set against the backdrop of the short period of détente between the superpowers in

1955 and the emergence of what appeared to be a poweful movement of non-aligned countries around the world. The debate about Krushchev's 'secret speech' in which the Soviet leader admitted Stalin's crimes, about the British intervention in Suez in 1956, and about the nuclearization of the new West German army created the concrete occasions at which networks of activists first coalesced and developed new agendas for a politics of security that sought to overcome the strictures of pacifist activism, while relying on similar personal connections and modes of campaigning.[107]

The nascent anti-nuclear-weapons campaigns in both countries were connected through the same international context in which they emerged: the proliferation of nuclear weapons in world politics, which turned into an arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union in the early 1950s. In October 1949, the Soviet Union successfully tested its first nuclear bomb. In October 1952, Britain tested its first nuclear device in the Monte Bello Islands. On 1 November 1952, the United States performed the first test of a thermonuclear weapon that was heralded as the new superweapon. From the end of 1953, the United States started to deploy smaller-scale, short-range nuclear weapons in West Germany in order to support the conventional forces stationed there, while the negotiations for German rearmament continued. These years saw the first campaign against these weapons in Germany, led primarily by Protestant clergy. They linked the 'new Wild West morality' of the US way of warfare with the continuation of the 'mass bombing of West Germany' from the Second World War.[108]

(p.43) These developments, culminating in the adoption of nuclear deterrence as the cornerstone of British defence policy together with the abolition of conscription in Britain in 1957 and the nuclearization of defence policies in the Federal Republic (albeit under Allied control), were part and parcel of a trade-off between material and national security that the British and West German governments wanted to introduce. In response to the bungled Suez intervention, the British government sought to introduce a more cost-efficient way of guaranteeing its great power status that imposed a lighter burden on British citizens than a conventional army. Likewise, the nuclearization of West German forces was a direct response to recruitment problems as well as an attempt by the Adenauer government to become a more fully fledged and sovereign member of the Western alliance system and to prevent an American withdrawal from German territory.[109] These moves aroused the suspicions of the Soviet Union. Settling these issues without the outbreak of war and the construction of a post-war international order in Europe could occur only in the wake of a number of crises—the two Berlin crises of 1958 and 1961, as well as the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 chief among them—that were fundamentally about the status of Germany and nuclear weapons in international relations and that

brought the world repeatedly to the brink of nuclear war between the Soviet Union and the United States.[110]

More generally, then, these concerns had their origins in the changing configurations of the cold war and, in particular, the role that governments assigned to nuclear weapons in trying to achieve peace and stability in the international system. In December 1954, NATO shifted its strategic emphasis from conventional armaments to nuclear weapons, as its members, most importantly the United States and Great Britain, believed that only nuclear armaments could provide a financially sustainable and politically justifiable defence of Western Europe. Yet this created the inexorable dilemma for the West European front in the cold war that the use of nuclear weapons in defence might well result in the complete destruction of Europe. The parameters of security had shifted towards a very dramatic image of future warfare and an all-embracing conflict between **(p.44)** the 'Western' and 'Eastern' political, social, and cultural systems. Defence planning now threatened to place political systems and societies under the shadow of planning for a devastating war.[111]

The United States, because of its geographical distance from the Soviet Union, at first remained shielded from the potential effects of these policies until intercontinental missiles had been developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s. However, the nuclearization of NATO strategy had more immediate and far-reaching implications for the defence policies of all West European nations. Its impact was particularly pronounced in Britain and West Germany. American short- (so-called tactical) and medium-range nuclear weapons were stationed in Britain and the Federal Republic from late 1953 onwards. Successive British governments sought to acquire independent nuclear weapons capabilities by testing hydrogen bombs and by placing the main strategic emphasis on the 'nuclear deterrent'.[112]

West Germany had hardly regained partial sovereignty after the Second World War with its admission to NATO and the remit to build up conventional forces, when, in late 1957 and early 1958, it planned to adapt to international strategic developments by acquiring nuclear-capable launching pads, used under a dual-key arrangement with the American NATO forces. Yet, even more than was the case for Britain, what might have been in the Federal Republic's foreign political interest, also turned central Europe into a potential nuclear battlefield.[113] Both the British and West German governments also regarded nuclear weapons as a key marker for political sovereignty and modern government: for them, nuclear weapons were essentially about leaving the post-war world behind, whereas those sceptical of nuclear armaments regarded nuclear weapons as the continuation of the war by other means. For the movement activists, the post-war period felt less and less like the order and stability they had yearned for after the ravages of the Second World War. They began to experience the cold war as a 'cruel peace'.[114] Nuclear weapons tests, in particular, were the focus of

the first campaigns: they made visible the dangers stemming from nuclear weapons by highlighting the destruction **(p.45)** that a future nuclear war would mean. They were essentially simulations of nuclear warfare.[115]

During this time period, British and West Germans peace campaigners developed a growing sense of the implications of nuclear energy. They used their perceptions to develop a politics of security around the issue of the 'atomic age'. The development of this awareness was itself tied to the international context. The American 'Atoms for Peace' campaign that President Dwight D. Eisenhower had launched in a speech before the United Nations General Assembly on 8 December 1953 was meant to accompany the testing of new powerful hydrogen bombs sought to promote this image of modernity. In his speech, Eisenhower warned the public of the grave dangers stemming from nuclear weapons, but called for a programme that would harness 'atoms' 'for peace' and involve the internationally controlled use of nuclear energy.[116] Celebrations of the power of nuclear energy in conjunction with items of consumer culture (such as the bikini) in both countries attest to this.[117] Already in 1947 'atom trains' had travelled Britain in order to educate the general public about the new 'atomic age', sometimes accompanied by scientists such as Joseph Rotblat, who had been involved in the Anglo-American bomb-building efforts during the war and who was later one of the most prominent peace campaigners in the scientific community.[118]

Thus, the science writer Ritchie Calder, later the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's vice-chairman, could still write enthusiastically, in an article entitled 'The Atom Goes to Work for the Housewife' about the opening of the Calder Hall reactor at Windscale in Cumberland in October 1956, that it was 'a historic and symbolic act—Britain's entry, in the forefront of all the nations, into the Atomic Age, with the atom tamed for domestic and industrial purposes'.[119] Similar interpretations were true for West Germany as well, where, in addition to signifying modernization **(p.46)** and an end to wartime restrictions, dreams of generating electricity through nuclear energy also served as symbols for gradually regaining sovereignty.[120]

But there also developed a growing sense of the dangers of nuclear weapons. With the increase of tensions in the emerging cold war, highlighted by the crisis over the reconstruction of Greece in the first half of 1947, the emergence of communist governments in Poland and Czechoslovakia in the second half of the same year, the crisis over access to Berlin in 1948–9, and the creation of two German states in autumn 1949, British and German peace campaigners began to reflect on their time period as the 'atomic age'. Over the course of the 1950s, there emerged a growing scienitific and popular knowledge of the dangers of radioactivity for human bodies. In September 1949, the director-general of the World Health Organization had written in *Peace News* that nuclear weapons were 'child's play compared to biological weapons' because there was 'a product

in existence which if spread extensively can kill on contact or if breathed in'. By the mid-1950s few but the most enthusiastic supporters of nuclear weapons would lack an awareness of the invisible dangers of radioactivity.[121]

The 'atomic age' had fundamentally different resonances in Britain and West Germany. The war in divided Korea that started in June 1950 and ended with the permanent division of the country in July 1953 was a turning point for perceptions in Germany, whereas it failed to have a major impact on British discussions on nuclear energy. Many Germans feared that Germany could soon be a 'second Korea' and that a war over Germany would be waged with nuclear weapons.[122] For Germans in both government and society more generally, the Korean war helped turn the cold war into experiences of a constant pre-war situation, imagined by drawing on images of the aerial bombardment of German cities in the Second World War. 'Aviators were above the city, birds evoking disaster. Landing and take-off, rehearsals of death, a hollow roar, shaking, memories in ruins. The planes' bomb shafts were still empty. The augurs smiled. No one looked skywards.'[123] Thus opens Wolfgang Koeppen's 1951 novel *Pigeons in the Grass*. In the wake of the Korean war, this knowledge of **(p.47)** material destruction was directly connected to the issue of nuclear testing and the invisible dangers stemming from nuclear radiation. Nuclear weapons tests became, for Germans much more than for Britons, projection screens for their own annihilation, as one observer put it. The mass-market cinema and newsreel as well as the new medium, television, made these experiences directly available to viewers.[124]

The West German and British governments played a part in creating this awareness as part of their efforts to educate their societies for the threats of the nuclear age. Most households obtained basic information about 'the Bomb' through civil defence efforts and civil defence drills—and they also acquainted them with the discourse that was required to address the threat: not fear, but rationality was required to respond adequately to the challenges of the new age.[125] The official Home Office civil defence pamphlet, published in 1957, advised Britons that cleanliness and good hygiene were the best answers to the threat of radioactivity: 'Radioactive dust on the body could be washed off with soap and water, particular attention being given to the nails and hair.' Washing machines should be avoided, as radioactive particles might stick to the drum, whereas 'a bucket or tub would be better'.[126] In West Germany, public civil defence efforts were a bit slower to take hold, given that state agencies still had to be rebuilt in the semi-sovereign setting of an occupied country. But when they discussed these issues, civil defence planners suggested similarly everyday measures for protection, such as using a briefcase to cover one's head in the event of a nuclear strike.[127]

While the increased testing had led to a growing awareness of the dangers of radiation from nuclear tests, it was an incident involving a Japanese shipping vessel that led to the emergence of the first sustained campaigns for security in the 'atomic age'. When the crew of the Japanese fishing vessel *Lucky Dragon* was exposed to severe radiation from a US hydrogen bomb test in 1954, it had become clear to many peace activists that they needed to find a novel language beyond traditional patterns of liberal internationalism and non-violent pacifism to address the dangers of nuclear weapons testings as a simulation of a future nuclear war for **(p.48)** which traditional pacifist paradigms no longer sufficed. In Britain, which ran its own tests, there now emerged a new set of organizations that used 'direct action' and that focused on the radiation coming from tests as well as the brittle nature of the arms race. The BBC's Panorama programme broadcast a special programme on the *Lucky Dragon* incident that involved the philosopher and mathematician Bertrand Russell and the scientist Joseph Rotblat.[128] While some, like the Labour defence policy expert and nuclear scientists P. M. S. Blackett, argued that nuclear weapons had 'abolished total war', peace activists and intellectuals pointed to the warlike character of the arms race: the dangers stemming from radioactive radiation from tests as essential part of this arms race and from the febrile nature of international relations at the time.[129]

The first of these reconfigurations of more traditional peace activism in Britain was *Operation Gandhi*, organized by a few activists with a PPU background. It sought to protest through sit-downs at Whitehall offices and military installations. The second important venture was the 'Hydrogen Bomb National Campaign' that aimed at supporting a parliamentary motion, brought in by a Labour MP, for a multilateral arms control treaty. The socialist Methodist Revd Dr Donald Soper chaired the campaign; John Collins, now Canon of London's St Paul's Cathedral, was also involved. The campaign was soon torn apart, however, by the old rifts between traditional pacifists, Labour and socialist internationalists, and UN supporters. The attention these campaigns received led to more local iniatives that campaigned for an end to testing and that further popularized knowledge on the dangers stemming from nuclear weapons through leaflets and screening of films such as *Children of Hiroshima*.[130]

The second impulse for campaigns against nuclear weapons testing came from scientists who were dissatisfied with the political messages attached to the 'Atoms for Peace' programme. The combination of thermonuclear threat and hopes for a more stable international system that would control nuclear weapons effectively led to a joint venture by several Western scientists that came to be known as the Russell–Einstein Manifesto. In the public presentation of their programme for peace in the nuclear age on 9 July 1955, the analytical philosopher and mathematician Bertrand Russell and the Nobel prize-winning physicist Albert Einstein declared that only a general cognisance of the fate of 'humanity' ('remember your humanity, and forget the rest') should guide foreign

policies **(p.49)** in East and West and lead to a rapprochement between the two blocs: 'we now know … that nuclear bombs can gradually spread destruction over a much wider area than had been supposed … the best authorities are unanimous in saying that a war with H-Bombs might quite possibly put an end to the human race.'[131] Shortly before, in April 1954, the Nobel peace prize-winning missionary and theologian Albert Schweitzer had published an open letter in the London *Daily Herald* that urged politicians to take the dangers of hydrogen weapons seriously. Both statements show that Hiroshima as a reference point had almost entirely lost its importance. Instead, the debate now focused on the present dangers stemming from nuclear weapons.

While these efforts received a significant level of attention in the British media as both the *Lucky Dragon* incident and Eisenhower's speech were still fresh in people's minds, it was in West Germany that they had a fundamental impact on the ways in which peace activists discussed the dangers of nuclear weapons. This was directly related to the specific salience of technological 'progress' and material security in West German political culture as a way of dealing with the consequences of war, violence, and man-made mass death. Thus, the Nobel prize-winning chemist Otto Hahn, a veteran of the Nazi atomic bomb project, gave a lecture on the north-west German radio station NWDR on 'Cobalt 60—danger or blessing for mankind' that was subsequently translated into English.[132] Accordingly, the main thrust for the renewed awareness did not come from the general public or non-governmental organizations. Rather, scientists who discussed the dangers of radioactivity in the context of hydrogen bomb tests prompted a more far-reaching debate. Many of the German scientists who had been previously involved in nuclear weapons programmes published a declaration on the island of Mainau in Lake Constance after a gathering of mainly German Nobel laureates in July 1955. Outlining the risk of self-destruction, the statement warned in stark terms of the dangers that the nuclear arms race posed and called on all governments and nations 'to come to the decision voluntarily to renounce the use of force as the last resort of politics'.[133]

(p.50) As a result, the 'atomic age' became a term used to describe contemporary society in all its shapes and forms. Images of poverty and images of economic growth and paradise of plentiful consumption came to be linked to this description. In West Germany in particular, challenges of democratic government and planning also came to be linked to the nuclear age, as Germans discussed the nature of technology in contemporary society more generally.[134] Activists began to use one of this age's elements—the one denoting material security, peaceful governmental planning, and programmes of modernization that aimed at hiding the heritage of war and violence—to expose the other key element of the atomic age: the danger of all-out destruction, a danger that activists now imagined by drawing on the repository of experiences they had gained in the Second World War.

The early discussions about nuclear testing, civil defence, and the role of standing armies in the context of the cold war were rehearsals for the more pronounced and explicit debates about the role of nuclear weapons in national and international politics in the late 1950s and early 1960s. They involved a discussion about the fundamentals of the cold war international order in the light of experiences of the Second World War in general and aerial bombing in particular. At their core, they were one attempt of many, situated at the borderlands of the cold war in British and West German societies, to find security again after it had been lost. Inititially, peace activists trying to revive their campaigns from the interwar period had problems engaging with the new context. Gradually, however, they found a language of security that moved away from an emphasis on nationalism as a cause for international strife towards one that incorrorated an awareness of the social structure of peace, and its ideological dimensions between East and West in the cold war. While, in line with their efforts from the interwar years, peace activists continued to look for supranational solutions to the problem of war and peace, they rejected the particular international order that the cold war had made.

In both countries, peace activists in the 1950s lacked, however, the organizational platforms that were appropriate for communicating these ideas to a broader public. Moreover, their assessments initially lacked resonance as they grappled with reconciling existing concepts of peace with the new realities of the 'atomic age'. Crucially, they also did not have an awareness of the democratic and social implications of this way of organizing military affairs: British and West German activists as well as **(p.51)** the general populations and the respective governments debated the relationship between the internationalization of military command structured within NATO and the fact that the impact of a future war would not only (or even primarily) be borne by soldiers alone, but that military violence was now potentially something that would involve society as a whole, continuing trends from the ways in which the Second World War had been waged.

Hence, while the memories of the Second World War lost their immediacy from the mid-1950s onwards, they never disappeared. They undergirded the ways in which contemporaries thought about and publicly discussed the dangers posed by nuclear weapons.[135] 'The world the Cold War made'[136] contained within it traces of the destruction that the Second World War had wrought. But it also contained the seeds of hope for political, social, cultural, and moral transformation that had characterized the 1945 moment. This moment was characterized by 'complex motives, diverse intentions, and turbulent circumstances', especially with regard to the heritage of the Second World War in these societies and the legacies of anti-fascism.[137]

The debates of the late 1940s and 1950s therefore involved more than discussions about the precise shape and size of the military commitments. They were about 'fundamental questions of constitution of politics and society on the whole'.[138] While providing the central reference point for discussions about nuclear weapons and the role of the military in both countries, 'security' in post-war Britain and West Germany never simply and only implied a status quo oriented policy. Its definitions were contested, and the concept had the potential to be used for the critique of defence and foreign policy, just as the British and West German governments used it for purposes of legitimation. The protests against nuclear weapons that emerged in the late 1950s did just that. And they did so in a form and with a way of campaigning and with broader languages of contestations that managed to transcend the structural constraints that traditional pacifists had faced from 1945 to the late 1950s, while still drawing, in new contexts, on the languages of popular political identifications of the immediate post-war period.

 (p.52) Debates about 'the atom' became key sites at which the memories of the Second World War, the experiences of the cold war, and hopes for the future met, not only in Britain and West Germany, but across the Western world after 1945.[139] The general structural similarities of the debates in both countries are surprising. Britain possessed its own nuclear weapons, while the content, if not the rhetoric, of the West German debate centred around the stationing of tactical and medium-range nuclear missiles on West German soil and on the equipment of the Federal Army with nuclear-capable equipment. Also, Britain had already opened its first nuclear reactor—also used for producing weapons-grade plutonium—in Windscale in 1950. A research reactor was already operational at Harwell.[140] In 1953, a carbon-dioxide gas-cooled reactor opened at Calder Hall as the first British reactor devoted to the generation of electricity only.[141] Under Allied statutes, nuclear research in the early Federal Republic was severely restricted, and the Federal Republic was banned from possessing its own nuclear weapons. The West German government created a Ministry for Atomic Affairs only in 1955 after some restrictions upon sovereignty had been lifted as part of the Federal Republic's accession to NATO in 1955. The first research reactor opened in Garching near Munich in 1956 shortly before the foundation of the European Atomic Community in March 1957, which allowed for research collaboration between France, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the Federal Republic.[142]

For the protesters in both countries, conjuring up apocalyptic images of nuclear war meant, albeit to different degrees and in different forms, reliving their experiences of warfare and violence of the previous years. Imagining the apocalypse was, therefore, the flipside of the ways in which the protesters on the marches regarded themselves as 'pilgrims' and 'victims'. Yet, for the majority of activists, the apocalypse was no longer religious and transcendental.[143] Although the concept still evoked strong **(p.53)** Christian feelings about the

'end of the world' and the final Revelation, for most protesters it had come to sit in the real world.[144] Through their marches and through their binary rhetoric of 'apocalypse or prosperity', the movements both expressed and created a feeling of accelerated time. But it was precisely in this situation that the future appeared as something that could be influenced and moulded through clear political decisions.[145]

The question was not 'if', but 'when', one would be blown up.[146] The protests were, therefore, the 'last chance' to save the world.[147] West German protesters pointed out that they lived 'in a global state of emergency'.[148] One West German protester even resorted to eugenic language to justify his claims: whoever wanted someone else to adopt his own ideology by force had not understood the realities of the nuclear age and was, therefore a 'parasite of the community' ('Gemeinschaftsschädling'), because existence of the whole of mankind was at stake.[149] Given the dangers of nuclear weapons, 'clear decisions' were necessary from everyone. Ambivalence, by contrast, had to be avoided at all costs, as this was a life-or-death matter.[150] Murder and the dominance of fear through nuclear weapons stood against progress through economic and technological developments.[151]

Activists in both countries based their assessments on the same body of information about nuclear tests and the impact of nuclear weapons when assessing the impact of nuclear war on the respective national territories. Particularly important were the widely publicized results of NATO's *Battle Royal* combat exercise in 1954. NATO powers had used ten imaginary nuclear weapons in order to throw back a Soviet tank division on an 80-kilometre front. Some 2,000 square kilometres of German soil would **(p.54)** have been contaminated.[152] The second important reference point was the 1955 NATO combat exercise *Carte Blanche*: 335 hypothetical nuclear bombs were dropped on Germany on more than 100 targets; 1.7 million mock deaths of civilians were counted; and 3.5 million were wounded. This was more than three times the number of German civilian casualties of the Second World War. And casualties from fallout had not even been computed. One commentator put it bluntly: 'Germany would become a desert', and the NATO exercise *Lion Noir* in March 1957, shortly before the deployment of some Allied missile battalions to the Federal Republic, seemed to confirm this.[153] A third important reference point was the *Fallex 62* combat exercise, which showed that West German forces were unable to counter a Soviet attack without causing severe damage to German territory by resorting to nuclear weapons.[154] British protesters believed that nuclear weapons had once and for all destroyed the protection that the island had provided in previous wars, and they felt that the results of combat exercises on the Continent were immediately relevant to them.[155] The combat exercise received particular attention in the Federal Republic, as the magazine *Spiegel* published confidential information on the disastrous death toll among Germans that the exercise had revealed and the Secretary of Defence, the Christian Social

Union (*CSU*) politician Franz Josef Strauß, had the responsible journalist and the magazine's editor Rudolf Augstein arrested for treason. The Easter Marches played an important role in organizing the public protests.[156]

The 'clock of doom', depicted on each issue of the American *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* since 1947, formed a further transnational reference point. In addition, public opinion in Britain could draw on the publication of a detailed report by the British mission in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, although the questions in the House of Commons at the time were primarily about the effects of the bombing on wildlife.[157] When **(p.55)** transferring this knowledge to their protest announcements, the activists pointed out that they dealt with 'objective physical danger[s]'.[158]

Whereas British protesters gradually moved towards assessing the problems of technological developments and faults in bureaucratic decision-making as causes for nuclear war, West German activists continued to see international politics as the main source for nuclear war. West German protesters, by contrast, had at once a more abstract and more immediate vision of catastrophe that led to a spatial conception of security: nuclear destruction would happen because of a war above and on German soil. The first air combat exercise in Europe in 1955 had demonstrated that 268 bombs, two-thirds of the total payload, had been dropped on the territory of the Federal Republic, and the scenario envisaged that 1.7 million Germans had died, with 3.5 million wounded.[159]

Unlike in Britain, the location of the future war appeared to coincide with that of the last war. Characteristic for British visions of the apocalypse was Nevil Shute's 1963 novel *On the Beach*: after a Third World War had wiped out all life in the northern hemisphere, Australians tried to carry on with their normal lives, but died through radiation blown to them by the wind. Shute had already written invasion-scare novels during the 1930s, mainly concerned with a possible breach of British air defence by Nazi stealth bombers.[160] Rather than depicting violence or looting, Nevil Shute's novel emphasized the role of the nuclear war survivor as a wretched victim.[161]

Interestingly, Shute's novel did not feature in West German movement discussions at the time. It seems that Germans' own memories of violence were so close that German activists did not need to externalize them to faraway territories. Indeed, what was striking about the arguments put forward by West German protesters was the extent to which they depopulated the apocalypse. West German activists drew on the same scientific data on the impact of nuclear weapons, and they conveyed their opinions by using similar charts. One commentator used Berlin as an example and argued that the whole area of the city, 'except **(p.56)** perhaps Spandau and Köpenick', would be in a zone where buildings would collapse immediately.[162]

Yet theirs was an end to the world without any people, but it nonetheless revealed an 'uncanny knowledge of what total annihilation was'.[163] While the West German activists spoke of their nightmares, these visions, in line with the general memory of the bombing war in the Federal Republic, contained only lunar landscapes of buildings in Cologne, in Hamburg, and across the Iron Curtain in Dresden. Most pictures still depicted depersonalized images of destruction; many even depicted conventional fighting.[164] Often, brochures showed anonymous people from far away, walking past bombed-out buildings.[165] The victims were inanimate, devoid of life. Buildings and things had become historical subjects and victims of both the National Socialist leadership and allied bombing.[166] Alternatively, the victim the West German activists invoked, following the language of the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal, was 'humanity'.[167] As it had happened at Auschwitz, planning for nuclear war signified a complete dehumanization.[168] Echoing arguments within the German Protestant Church immediately after the Second World War, activists framed their own time as that of a 'dehumanized humanity' and of 'bloody confusion'.[169]

Not only had the German apocalypse lost its transcendence, it had also lost its actors. The title of CND's exhibition 'No Place to Hide' had, when it moved through the Federal Republic, the far more dramatic title 'Keiner kommt davon' ('No one will be able to escape'), drawn from Hans Hellmut Kirst's novel on bombing in the Second World War.[170] The links **(p.57)** between Hiroshima and German cities were often very abstract, but expressed uncertainty about the future: 'Hiroshima 1945—Munich?'[171] The possible Third World War appeared to continue a trail of violence in twentieth-century Germany that had started in 1914.[172]

While apocalyptic scenarios were not absent from CND's rhetoric, the West German campaign emphasized the inevitability of destruction in much more drastic terms.[173] In 1965, the Easter March played on this theme ironically, by staging the 'Action People's Coffin' (*Aktion Volkssarg*) (see Figure 1). Although there were campaigns against the lack of efficient civil defence efforts, it is hard to imagine that British organizers would have chosen such a language of death to communicate their aims.[174]

For one speaker at the Easter March in Hesse and the northern Palatinate, war had burnt itself internally into the Mainz cityscape: 'We could already see the new truths on 27 February 1945. Then, this city, Mainz, burnt for 12 hours. They [the new truths] have become even clearer through the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the tests at the Bikini Atoll and at Nowaya Semlya.'[175] The German cold war thus turned into a 'terrorism of fear' and the root of the future 'hot war and its mass murder'.[176] Accordingly, West German activists characterized nuclear weapons, evoking memories of post-war German experiences, as a form of 'naked violence, the rape itself'.[177]

Hiroshima achieved a much greater symbolic significance in West German protesters' arguments about the apocalypse than in those of the British activists. Both British and West German protesters argued that Auschwitz and Hiroshima could be equated. Yet the concrete *location* of this memory differed substantially. When West German protesters mentioned Hiroshima, they moved away from their own past. What had **(p.58)** remained a neutral void in the memories of German bombing sites became graphic when they invoked Hiroshima as the geographical location of the apocalypse.

The perceptions of the dangers of nuclear weapons were highly gendered. Female activists in both countries made similar arguments about the nuclear threat by pointing to their responsibilities as mothers for the future of their children and by claiming that male politicians acted irresponsibly.[178] In both countries, such interpretations resonated with more mainstream discourses about primarily female and young victims of war; they were not
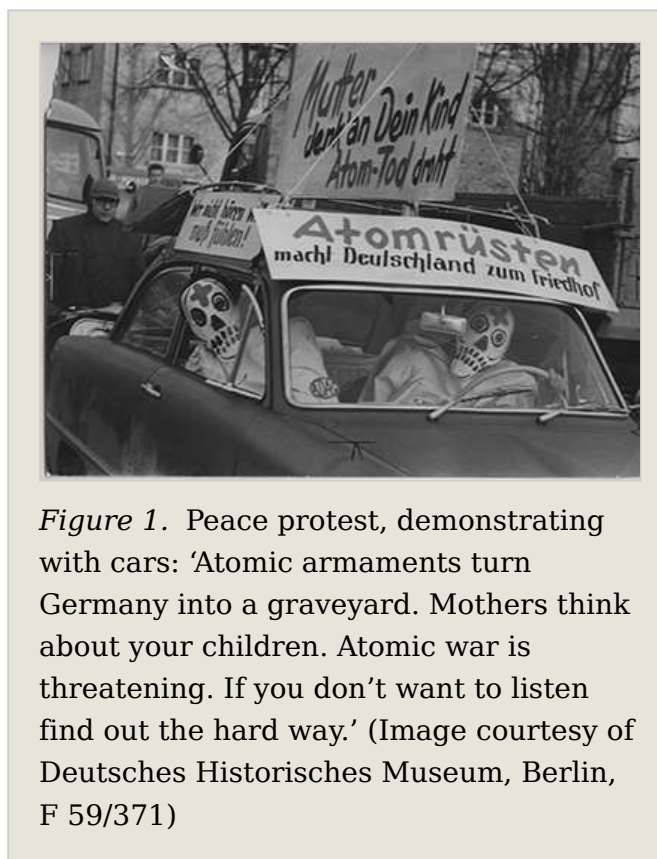

Figure 1. Peace protest, demonstrating with cars: 'Atomic armaments turn Germany into a graveyard. Mothers think about your children. Atomic war is threatening. If you don't want to listen find out the hard way.' (Image courtesy of Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, F 59/371)

significantly different from general discourses that **(p.59)** highlighted the importance of the nuclear family for post-war social and moral reconstruction.[179]

Because of different war experiences and the different geostrategic position in the cold war, British images of the apocalypse did not have a concrete location in Britain's geography. Increasingly, the emphasis was on accidents that might trigger catastrophe in Britain, but that so far had happened elsewhere. History appeared to provide guidance in this respect. As A. J. P. Taylor argued in his books and CND pamphlets, both the First and the Second World wars had been started by accidents.[180] CND pamphlets regularly mentioned the seven crashes of new B-47 bombers under Strategic Air Command, especially the incident in March 1958 when a nuclear bomb accidentally fell from a bomber on South Carolina, a news item that reached the general public in April, but that was

registered by the pacifist press in Britain.[181] Images of mad generals were also far more widespread in Britain than in West Germany.[182]

The dangerous present that the activists faced created its own problem for the activists. As Rolf Schroers, an activist and former *Wehrmacht* officer who had been involved in the war against partisans in Yugoslavia and who was therefore well aware of the conditions for social bonding in wartime, pointed out: 'The future cannot produce a present community of suffering'—trying to realize it would only mean chaos today in order 'to prevent tomorrow's catastrophe'.[183] West German activists solved this problem by thinking of both the present and future together and interpreting the politics of security as one of a dramatic choice between unmitigated death and disaster should nuclear armaments continue, and a prosperous and affluent future if nuclear armaments were stopped and 'the atom' be used 'peacefully' in order to create nuclear energy.[184] Exploiting the non-military uses of nuclear energy was, from this perspective, a 'blessing', while using 'the atom' militarily was a curse.[185]

 (p.60) These two options have to be read together in order to make sense, as they represented the framing with which protesters addressed their audience. Günther Anders's idea about the 'atomic age' as an existential condition that required not human action, but phenomenological analysis and intellectual engagement in order to prolong the time that was left had remarkably little resonance within the movements. Activists still made sense of their cold war by reading the presence of the nuclear arms race through the past of the Second World War.[186] Nonetheless, movement discussions in both countries perceived their present as an 'atomic age' in a non-existentialist fashion. The *SPD*'s campaign even had a journal called *Atomic Age* (*atomzeitalter*). Its purpose was not primarily to warn the population of the dangers of nuclear energy, but to introduce them to a 'rational dealing' with these matters.[187]

Accordingly, the perceptions and arguments about an impending apocalypse were not 'anti-modern' or 'romantic'.[188] One can, therefore, not make sense of the activists' arguments if interpreting these images of the apocalypse in isolation. They were, very much in line with those of the general public at the time, directly connected to a wholehearted endorsement of technological progress in general.[189] Protest against nuclear power was minimal and remained restricted to neighbours of the relevant sites, not resulting in larger social networks.[190] No one protested when the first West German research reactor in Garching, just outside Munich, celebrated the completion of the roofing on 12 January 1957 and the owners served an 'atomic menu', including 'uranium sticks' (Bavarian *Weißwürste*), 'fat isotopes' as the unspecified desert, with **(p.61)** 'cooling water' (beer) to drink.[191] In Britain, likewise, early exhibitions of nuclear energy more or less ignored the military uses, although the 'Atom Train' that toured Britain in the late 1940s at least carried one

carriage that alerted the population to the dangers connected with the military uses of nuclear energy.[192]

The activists' enthusiasm for science served as a powerful argument at a time when the movements were accused of contributing to public hysteria. But it also had its source in the declining strength of cultural pessimism and in the rise of a more empirical analysis of society, which manifested itself in a veritable euphoria for democratic planning in both countries.[193] There was agreement that 'the atom' had, for better or for worse, become the signature of a new period in human history. While the general public discourses in both countries came, from the early 1960s onwards, to be increasingly euphoric about the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the sceptical and euphoric interpretations continued to sit side by side within the British and West German movements against nuclear weapons.[194]

While the military use of 'the atom' would result in the impossibility of all planning, using nuclear energy peacefully could contribute to the more rational ordering of societies and thus to the efforts to overcome the legacies of war and destruction. This emphasis on the peaceful uses of atomic energy was linked to the changing cold war climate of détente. The proponents of this view did not regard arms and military developments as the most important area of battle between East and West, but emphasized the areas of technology and culture instead.[195] The distinction between peaceful and military uses of 'the atom' was especially welcome for activists on the political left represented in the movement: it allowed them to combine thinking about progress with social utopias and could be linked to the conviction that the future could be designed and planned.[196]

(p.62) The knowledge of the dangers of the cold war and the pitfalls and opportunities of the 'atomic age' that peace activists heard about and discussed in and through the mass media created the political reality that the anti-nuclear-weapons activists of the late 1950s used to develop a politics of security that challenged, but also replicated, key features of governmental conceptions of military and material security.

Notes:

([1]) Günther Anders, 'Über die Bombe und die Wurzeln unserer Apokalypse-Blindheit', in Anders, *Die Antiquiertheit des Menschen: Über die Seele im Zeitalter der zweiten technischen Revolution* (2 vols; Munich, 1956, 1980), i. 265–6.

([2]) Vera Brittain, *England's Hour* (London, 1941), p. xiii.

([3]) Richard Bessel, *1945. From War to Peace* (London, 2009), 246–78; David Kynaston, *Austerity Britain 1945–1951* (London, 2007), 60–83.

(⁴) Michael Geyer, 'The Stigma of Violence, Nationalism, and War in Twentieth-Century Germany', *German Studies Review*, 15 (1992), 75–110.

(⁵) Geoff Eley, 'A Disorder of Peoples: The Uncertain Ground for Reconstruction in 1945', in Jessica Reinisch and Elizabeth White (eds), *The Disentanglements of Populations: Migration, Expulsion and Displacement in Post-War Europe, 1944–1949* (Basingstoke, 2011), 291–314, here 305, and Mark Mazower, 'Reconstruction: The Historiographical Issues', *Past & Present*, suppl. 11 (2011), 17–29.

(⁶) Edith Wyschogrod, *Spirit in Ashes: Hegel, Heidegger, and Man-Made Mass Death* (New Haven, 1990).

(⁷) 'Atombombenexplosion in der Wüste von Neu-Mexiko', *Wochenschau Welt im Film* 19/7 (September 1945); 'Die Atombombe', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 11 August 1945.

(⁸) Monica Black, *Death in Berlin: From Weimar to Divided Germany* (Cambridge, 2010), 229–70; Pat Jalland, *Death in War and Peace: A History of Loss & Grief in England* (Oxford, 2010), 157–75.

(⁹) For this and the preceeding argument, see Michael Geyer, 'Die eingebildete Heimkehr: Im Schatten der Niederlage', in Daniel Fulda et al. (eds), *Demokratie im Schatten der Gewalt: Geschichten des Privaten im deutschen Nachrkieg* (Göttingen, 2010), 72–96, here 76.

(¹⁰) Peter Stearns, *American Fear: The Causes and Consequences of High Anxiety* (London, 2006), 14.

(¹¹) James Hinton, *Protests and Visions: Peace Politics in 20th Century Britain* (London, 1989), 139.

(¹²) See the document issued by the Federation of American Scientists: Dexter Masters and Katharine Way (eds), *One World or None: A Report on the Full Meaning of the Atomic Bomb* (New York, 1946).

(¹³) 'Der Mensch und die Atomenergie', *Herder-Korrespondenz*, 1/6 (1947), 306.

(¹⁴) 'The Brink of Peace?', *Manchester Guardian*, 11 August 1945, 4.

(¹⁵) Ilona Stölken-Fitschen,'Der verspätete Schock: Hiroshima und der Beginn des atomaren Zeitalters', in Michael Salewski and Ilona Stölken-Fitschen (eds), *Moderne Zeiten: Technik und Zeitgeist im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1994), 139–55, here 143.

(¹⁶) Mass Observation Archive (M-OA), University of Sussex, FR 2272, 'Public Reactions to the Atomic Bomb', 1.

(¹⁷) M-OA, FR2272, 'The Atomic Bomb', 2.

(¹⁸) Editorial, *The Times*, 7 August 1945; Editorial, *The Times*, 8 August 1945.

(¹⁹) Andrew Chandler, 'The Church of England and the Obliteration Bombing of Germany in the Second World War', *English Historical Review*, 108 (1993), 920–46.

(²⁰) L. John Collins, *Faith under Fire* (London, 1966), 98–9.

(²¹) Letter to the editor, *The Times*, 14 August 1945, 1.

(²²) *Daily Herald*, 16 August 1945, 3, and the responses in *Daily Express*, 16 August 1945, 1; *Daily Mail*, 16 August 1945, 1; *Daily Telegraph*, 16 August 1945, 5; *Manchester Guardian*, 16 August 1945, 5; *The Times*, 16 August 1945, 2.

(²³) 'Die Welt atmet auf', *Kö lnischer Kurier*, 14 August 1945.

(²⁴) 'Atombombe', *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*, 27 October 1945; 'Harter Doppelschlag gegen Japan', *Kö lnischer Kurier*, 10 August 1945; 'Die Atombombe', *Berliner Zeitung*, 9 August 1945.

(²⁵) George Orwell, 'You and the Atom Bomb', in Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (eds), *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, iv. *In Front of your Nose, 1945–1950* (London, 1968), 6.

(²⁶) Leonard Woolf, 'Britain and the Atom Bomb', *Political Quarterly*, 17 (1946), 14.

(²⁷) Matthew Grant, *After the Bomb: Civil Defence and Nuclear War in Britain, 1945–1968* (Basingstoke, 2010), 10.

(²⁸) Gerd-Rainer Horn and Padraic Kenney (eds), *Transnational Moments of Change: Europe 1945, 1968 and 1989* (Lanham, MD, 2004); Geoff Eley, 'Legacies of Antifascism: Constructing Democracy in Postwar Europe', *New German Critique*, 67 (1996), 73–100.

(²⁹) Helen McCarthy, 'Parties, Voluntary Associations, and Democratic Politics in Interwar Britain', *Historical Journal*, 50 (2007), 891–912; Diethart Kerbs and Jürgen Reulecke, eds., *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen 1880–1933* (Wuppertal, 1998).

(³⁰) Christoph Kleßmann, *Die doppelte Staatsgrü ndung: Deutsche Geschichte 1945–1955* (Bonn, 1991), 121–55.

(³¹) Jessica Reinisch, 'Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNRRA', *Past and Present*, suppl. 6 (2011), 258–89.

(³²) Matthew Frank, 'Working for the Germans: British Voluntary Societies and the German refugee Crisis, 1945–50', *Historical Research*, 92 (2009), 157–75.

(³³) Helga Tempel and Hans-Konrad Tempel, 'Anfänge gewaltfreier Aktion in den ersten 20 Jahren nach dem Krieg', *Gewaltfreie Aktion. Sonderband* (Berlin, 1997), 63–88 ; Gerhart Sch öll, 'Zur politischen Bildung im Jugendhof Vlotho 1946–1960', *Mitteilungen des Landesjugendamtes Westfalen Lippe*, 139 (1999), 43–58.

(³⁴) 'Aus der Friedens-Bewegung', *Die Friedens-Warte* (1946), 120, 155–9; 'Die deutschen Pazifisten der Vorkriegszeit', *Die Friedens-Warte* (1946), 392–3.

(³⁵) *Programm und Aufgaben der Deutschen Friedensgesellschaft: Bericht ü ber den Zonentag in Bielefeld am 8. November 1946* (Hanover, 1946). On the background, see Helmut Donat, 'Die radikalpazifistische Richtung in der deutschen Friedensbewegung (1918–1933)', in Karl Holl und Wolfram Wette (eds), *Pazifismus in der Weimarer Republik. Beitr äge zur historischen Friedensforschung* (Paderborn, 1981), 27–45.

(³⁶) Gabriele Clemens (ed.), *Kultur und Kulturpolitik im besetzten Deutschland 1945–1949* (Stuttgart 1994).

(³⁷) 'Erste Tagung des Landesverbands Schleswig-Holstein der Deutschen Friedensgesellschaft (24–26 August 1946)', *Die Friedens-Warte* (1946), 392.

(³⁸) See for this argument: Andrew Oppenheimer, 'Extraparliamentary Entanglements. Framing Peace in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1945–1974', in Hara Kouki and Eduardo Romanos (eds), *Protest beyond Borders: Contentious Politics in Europe since 1945* (New York, 2011), 15–31.

(³⁹) Stefan Appelius, *Pazifismus in Westdeutschland. Die Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft 1945–1968* (2 vols; Aachen, 1999), i. 165.

(⁴⁰) Irene Stoehr, 'Der Mütterkongreß fand nicht statt. Frauenbewegungen, Staatsmänner und Kalter Krieg 1950', *WerkstattGeschichte*, 17 (1997), 66–82.

(⁴¹) Karl Holl, *Pazifismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt/Main, 1988), 221.

(⁴²) McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations*, 15–45.

(⁴³) Tom Buchanan, *Britain and the Spanish Civil War* (Cambridge, 1997), 189; Lewis Mates, *The Spanish Civil War and the British Left: Political Activism and the Popular Front* (London, 2007).

(⁴⁴) See Martin Ceadel, *Pacifism: The Defining of a Faith* (Oxford, 1980); Martin Pugh, 'Pacifism and Politics in Britain, 1931–1935', *Historical Journal*, 23 (1980), 641–56.

(45) Hinton, *Protests and Visions*, 100–17.

(46) Vera Brittain, *Testament of a Peace Lover: Letters*, ed. Winifred Eden-Green and Alan Eden-Green (London, 1988), 254.

(47) *Herald of Peace*, 22 June 1945, 2.

(48) *Peace News*, 4 May 1952, 2.

(49) Penny Summerfield and Corinna Peniston-Bird, *Contesting Home Defence: Men, Women and the Home Guard in the Second World War* (Manchester, 2007), and Bernd Lemke, *Luftschutz in Großbritannien und Deutschland 1923 bis 1939: Zivile Kriegsvorbereitungen als Ausdruck der staats- und gesellschaftspolitischen Grundlagen von Demokratie und Diktatur* (Munich, 2005).

(50) Geoff Eley, 'When Europe was New: Liberation and the Making of the Post-War Era', in Monica Riera and Gavin Schaffer (eds), *The Lasting War: Society and Identity in Britain, France and Germany after 1945* (Basingstoke, 2008), 17–43, here 36.

(51) Kenneth O. Morgan, *The People's Peace: British History 1945–1989* (Oxford, 1990); Eley, *Forging Democracy*, 278–98.

(52) Mass Observation, *Peace and the Public* (London, 1947), 44, but see Ross McKibbin, *Parties and People. England 1914–1951* (Oxford, 2010), 129, and Angus Calder, *The People's War: Britain 1939–1945* (London, 1969), 524–86.

(53) See Paul Betts and David Crowley, 'Introduction', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40 (2005), 213–36.

(54) Dietmar Süß, *Tod aus der Luft: Kriegsgesellschaft und Luftkrieg in Deutschland und England* (Munich, 2011), 25, 62–3, and Malte Thie ßen, *Eingebrannt ins Gedä chtnis: Hamburgs Gedenken an den Luftkrieg und Kriegsende 1943 bis 2005* (Munich, 2007), 45–55; Susan R. Grayzel, *At Home and under Fire: Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz* (Cambridge, 2012).

(55) Martin Ceadel, *Semi-Detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945* (Oxford, 2000), 397.

(56) L. Smith, *Pacifists in Action: The Experience of the Friends Ambulance Unit in the Second World War* (New York, 1998), 4–6. For the use of the word 'humanitarian', see *Peace News*, 8 September 1939, 1.

(57) Geoff Eley, 'War and the Twentieth-Century State', *Daedalus*, 14 (1995), 155–74, here 164.

(⁵⁸) See G. R. Searle, *Country before Party: Coalition and the Idea of 'National Government' in Modern Britain, 1885–1987* (London, 1995).

(⁵⁹) Andrew Thorpe, *Parties at War: Political Organization in Second World War Britain* (Oxford, 2009), 276–88, against Stephen Fielding, 'The Second World War and Popular Radicalism: The Significance of the "Movement away from Party" ', *History*, 80 (1995), 38–58.

(⁶⁰) McKibbin, *Parties and People*, 117–28, 140, 146–7; Matthew Hilton and James McKay, 'The Ages of Voluntarism: An Introduction', in Hilton and McKay (eds), *The Ages of Voluntarism* (Oxford, 2011), 1–26; Süß, *Tod*, 336–7, 485–6.

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(^{188}) The ambivalence of this framing is especially obvious from a film used by the Campaign Atomic Death: Key to Hell (Schlüssel zur Hölle), Cassiopeia Film, 16mm, b/w, 12 min, n.d. [1958]; I would like to thank Benjamin Ziemann for making a copy of the film available to me. Cf., by contrast, Veldman, *Fantasy, the Bomb, and the Greening of Britain.*

(^{189}) Cf. the polls, which show hopes and fears to sit side by side: *DIVO-Pressedienst*, May I—1958, 13–14; August I—1960, 10–11; October I—1961, 8–10; January II—1962, 13; George H. Gallup (ed.), *The Gallup International Public Opinion Polls, Great Britain, 1937–1975* (2 vols, New York, 1976), i. 458.

(^{190}) Ute Hasenöhrl, *Zivilgesellschaft und Protest: Eine Geschichte der Naturschutz- und Umweltbewegung in Bayern 1945–1980* (Göttingen, 2011), 232.

(^{191}) Hasenöhrl, *Zivilgesellschaft*, 204.

(^{192}) Sophie Forgan, 'Atoms in Wonderland' Laucht, 'Atoms for the People', *History and Technology*, 19 (2003), 177–96.

(^{193}) Cf. Francis Rona, 'Atomic Energy for Life and Progress', *Peace News*, 18 October 1957, 3; Bernd-A. Rusinek, ' "Kernenergie, schöner Götterfunken!" Die "umgekehrte Demontage": Zur Kontextgeschichte der Atomeuphorie', *Kultur & Technik*, 4 (1993), 15–21.

(^{194}) Cf. Stölken-Fitschen, *Atombombe und Geistesgeschichte deutscher Sicht* , 166–7.

(¹⁹⁵) Robert Jungk, 'Wenn der Frieden ausbricht', *Atomzeitalter*, 1 (January 1961), 3–6; BJL, JS-108: Ralph [Samuel] to Edward P. Thompson, n.d. [*c*.1957/8].

(¹⁹⁶) BJL, JS-51: E. P. Thompson to Stuart Hall and John Saville [1959]; *Peace News*, 8 September 1961, 5; Eugen Kogon, 'Demokratischer Staat —Moderne Technik', *Atomzeitalter*, 7 (July 1961), 147–51.

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