

let there be  
no hierarchy  
no top no bottom

let there be  
a circle  
a web a network

let us all  
look to each other  
to you to me

let us speak  
and listen  
and take and give

let us live  
let us love



"Women's Peace Camp  
Newsletter", February  
1983 Courtesy of Mayday  
Rooms, London, United  
Kingdom

## Thank You

This exhibition would not have been possible without the contributions of many people, including the women who lived and protested at Greenham Common, as well as all the individuals who saved materials documenting this movement. We are grateful to the following people: Linda Abernster, Theresa Carr (1954-2014), Leslie Dick, Gwyn Kirk, Margaret Muir, Alessandra Nichols, Sasha Roseneil, Hazel Roy, Rae Street, and Elizabeth Tebbs.

Many of these women also opened their homes to us, fed us, spent many hours talking to us about their lives, shared their memories and collections, and allowed us to photograph and record sound and video of our exchanges.

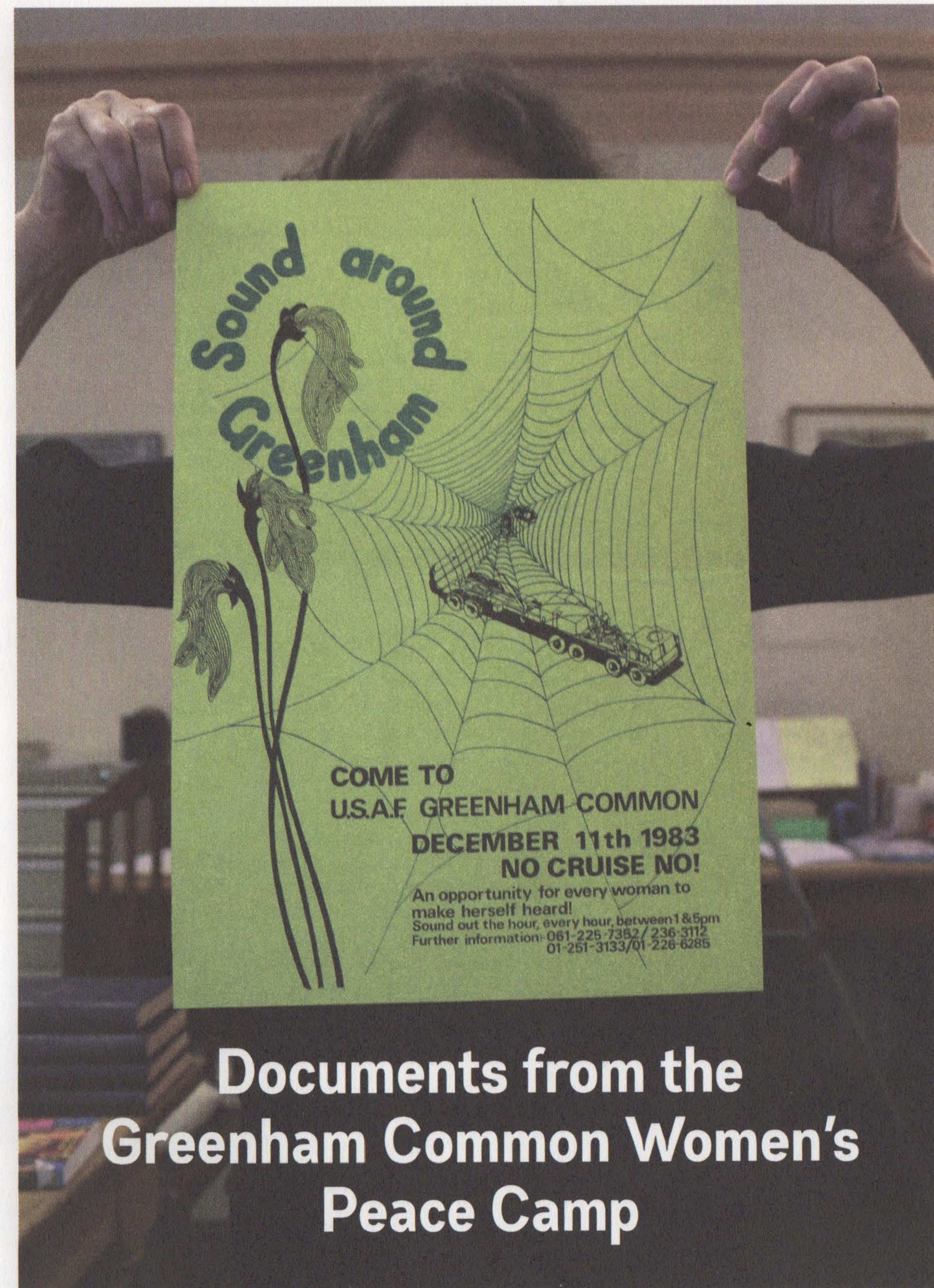
In keeping with the spirit of Greenham Common, we also wish to thank the following wide web of people: Iain Boal, Kaucyila Brooke, Rob Cox, Naomi Jahoda, Stephen Korn, Rachel Mattson, Josh MacPhee, Greg Mihalko, Blithe Riley and Ian Ross.

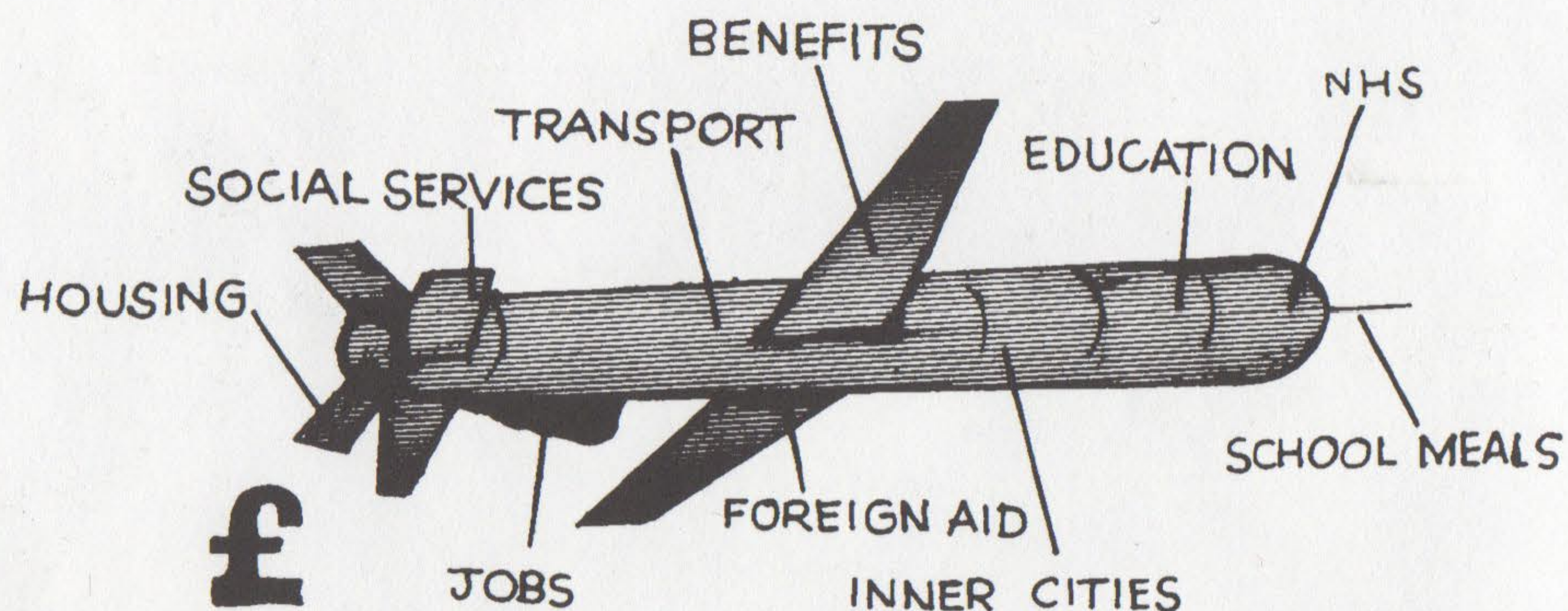
### Contributing Archives:

**Theresa Carr Papers**, New Haven, Connecticut  
**Sophia Smith Collection**, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts  
**W.E.B. Dubois Special Collections**, University of MA, Amherst, Massachusetts  
**Interference Archive**, Brooklyn, New York  
**Mayday Rooms**, London, United Kingdom  
**Rae Street**, Littleborough, United Kingdom  
**Elizabeth Tebbs**, Manchester, United Kingdom  
**The Working Class Movement Library**, Salford, United Kingdom

All color photographs by Susan Kleckner, Greenham Common, C-prints, 1984-1986. Courtesy of Susan Kleckner Archive, Special Collections and University Archives, W.E.B. DuBois Library, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Cover Image: Emma Jahoda-Brown, Susan Jahoda holding poster at The working Class Movement Library, August, 2014





The Greenham Factor, Courtesy of Susan Kleckner Archive, Special Collections and University Archives, W.E.B. DuBois Library, University of Massachusetts Amherst

**Documents from the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp** is a mother and daughter collaboration that assembles accounts of the comings and goings and daily lives of a diverse group of women at Greenham over a nine year period. Photographs, film, artifacts and sound are brought together to reveal a complex view of a largely invisible history.

This project honors the visual work of our friend Susan Kleckner and the extraordinary women of Greenham Common who transformed a space -- otherwise claimed for militarism and colonialism -- into a place of protest, agency, and exploration of feminist politics. Over a nineteen-year period, women from all over the world traveled to Berkshire County, England and supported the movement from their own geographic regions, marking it as the largest women's campaign since the early twentieth century struggle for suffrage. **Documents from the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp** also pays tribute to the many mothers who brought their daughters to Greenham Common, demonstrating strength, persistence, and resourcefulness, and how creative praxis manifests in dissent.

On August 27, 1981, "Women for Life on Earth" began a week long march from Cardiff, Wales to arrive at what had become a US Air Force Base on common land loaned by the British Government in late 1943 and never returned to the people. As a group representing the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), they were there to oppose the housing of 100 US cruise missiles in accordance with a NATO decision taken in December 1979. The conservative government of Margaret Thatcher had allocated the current equivalent of 154 million dollars and 220 personnel to guard the bases at both Greenham Common and another base, Molesworth, in Cambridgeshire.

There are many perspectives from which one can analyze the women's occupation at Greenham. As an entry point, it is worth noting a 1980 United Nations report concluding that women made up half the world's population and did two-thirds of its work while receiving only one-tenth of its income and less than one-hundredth of its assets. Given their lack of economic power and social equality, the armaments budget, and the unhindered piling up of nuclear weapons over a forty-year period, the

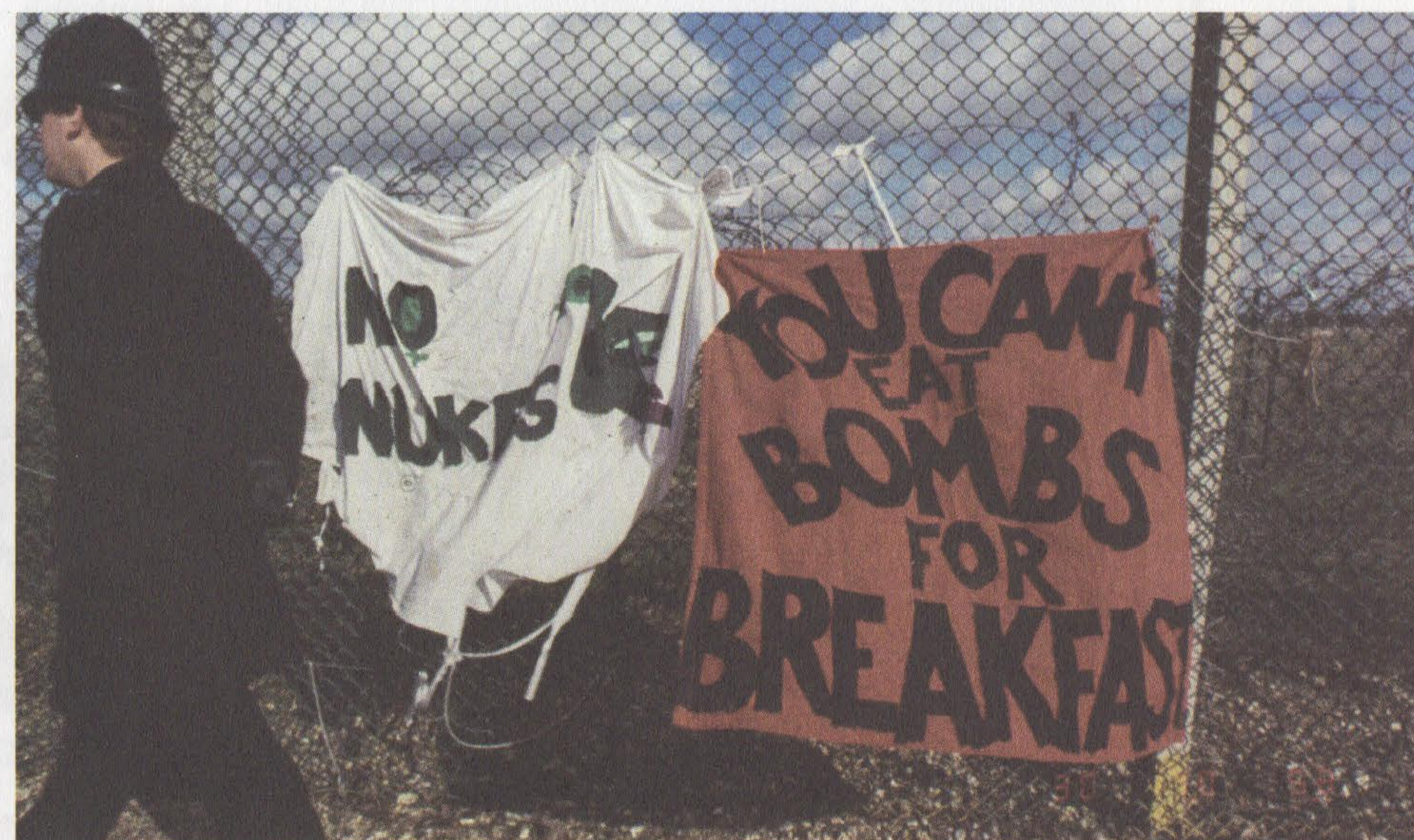
women who gathered at Greenham recognized their collective responsibility for action.

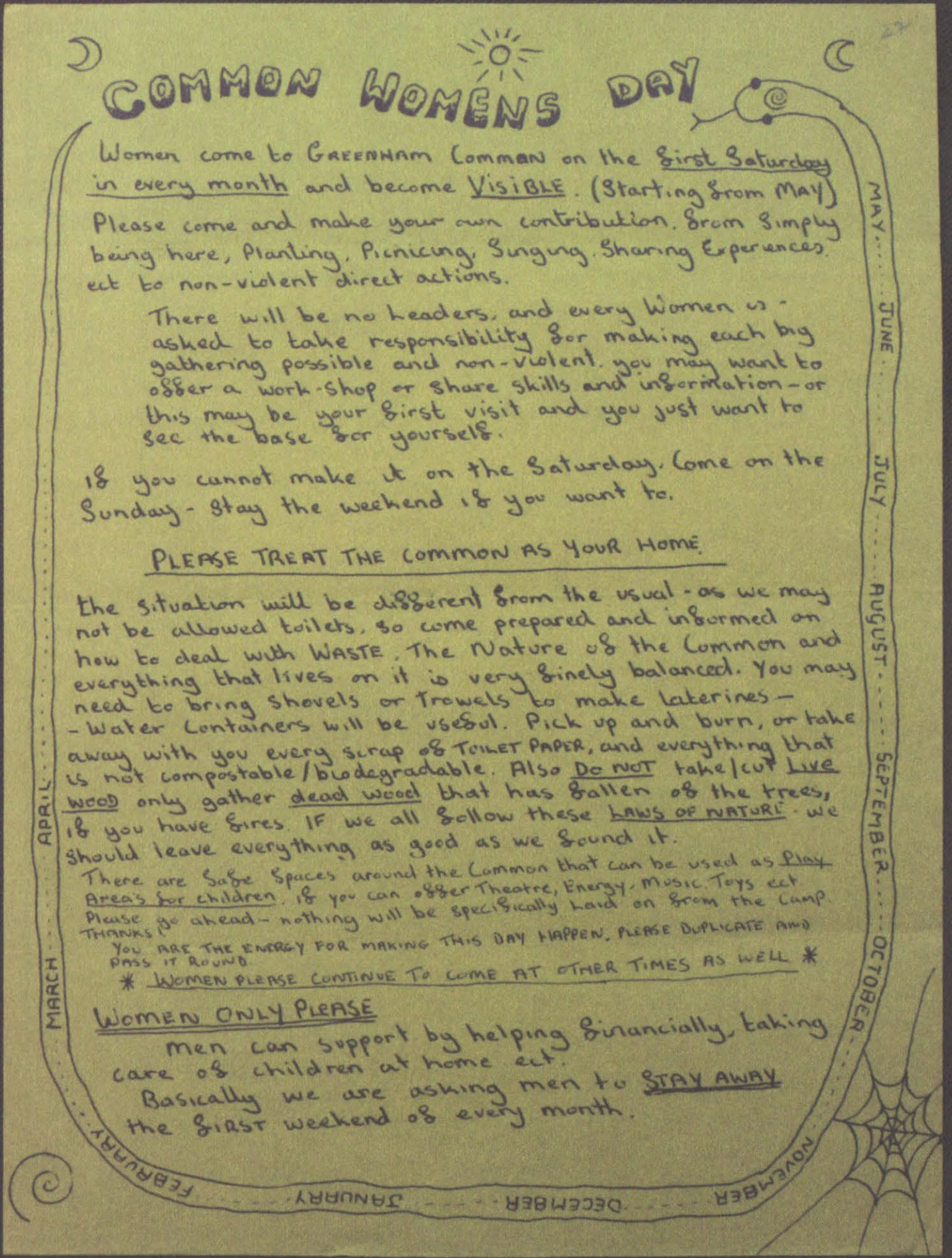
Nine camps, all but one identified by a color, were established around the nine-mile fenced perimeter of the base, each corresponding to an entrance. The first camp was Yellow Gate, established the month after the Women for Peace on Earth march reached the airbase. The others, Turquoise, Blue, Pedestrian, Indigo, Violet, Red, and Orange were created between 1981 and 1983 and had their own organizational structure, creative logic, and orientation. Green Gate, although nearest to the missile silos, was the furthest from the road and therefore considered to be safest for children. It was also the only exclusively women's camp, as the others accepted male visitors during the day.

Enacting a prefigurative politics from close to the beginning of the occupation, a decision was made to disallow men from living at Greenham. Having left their homes for peace instead of war, women were not willing

to become domestic keepers of the space while enabling men to take on leadership roles and become the voices of the movement. Additionally, there was a concern that men would be unable to sustain a long-term occupation without resorting to violence when provoked by the military and police presence. Although there was general consensus about who could live at Greenham and a common belief that nuclear weapons were a threat to future life on the planet, it is important to acknowledge the multiple feminisms that were in play there, with some forms appearing more strident and radical than others. To essentialize gender in this context is to do a disservice to the complex and sometimes messy struggles that characterized this extraordinary protest.

The densest occupation of Greenham was from 1982-91. One particular action "embrace the base" came about in response to a chain letter sent out during the autumn of 1982. This brought 30,000 women to Greenham who, hand in hand, formed a human





# COMMON WOMENS DAY

Women come to GREENHAM Common on the first Saturday in every month and become VISIBLE. (Starting from MAY)

Please come and make your own contribution. From simply being here, Planting, Picnicing, Singing, Sharing Experiences, ect to non-violent direct actions.

There will be no leaders, and every Women is asked to take responsibility for making each big gathering possible and non-violent. you may want to offer a work-shop or share skills and information - or this may be your first visit and you just want to see the base for yourself.

if you cannot make it on the Saturday, come on the Sunday - stay the weekend if you want to.

## PLEASE TREAT THE COMMON AS YOUR HOME

The situation will be different from the usual - as we may not be allowed toilets, so come prepared and informed on how to deal with WASTE. The Nature of the Common and everything that lives on it is very finely balanced. You may need to bring shovels or trowels to make latrines - Water Containers will be useful. Pick up and burn, or take away with you every scrap of TOILET PAPER, and everything that is not compostable/biodegradable. Also Do NOT take/cut LIVE WOOD only gather dead wood that has fallen of the trees, if you have fires. IF we all follow these LAWS OF NATURE we should leave everything as good as we found it.

There are safe spaces around the Common that can be used as play Areas for children. if you can offer Theatre, Energy, Music, Toys ect. Please go ahead - nothing will be specifically laid on from the camp. THANKS!  
 YOU ARE THE ENERGY FOR MAKING THIS DAY HAPPEN. PLEASE DUPLICATE AND PASS IT ROUND.  
 \* WOMEN PLEASE CONTINUE TO COME AT OTHER TIMES AS WELL \*

## WOMEN ONLY PLEASE

men can support by helping financially, taking care of children at home ect.  
 Basically we are asking men to STAY AWAY the first weekend of every month.

chain around the base. The departure of the cruise missiles and the subsequent closure of the base by the British Ministry of Defense occurred in 1993, but it took until 2000 for the land to be fully restored as a commons. The last woman occupier left Greenham's Yellow Gate that same year.

Susan Kleckner visited Greenham three times between the years 1984-86, creating a rich archive of film and still photographs of many actions and life at the different gates. She passed away in 2010, and the following year, in the midst of national and international occupations and evictions, a group of her friends prepared her archive for receipt by the W.E.B. Dubois Library at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. **Susan Kleckner and Documents from the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp (September 1984-March 1986)** was exhibited at the University's Herter Art Gallery in September 2013, and continuing interest in both Susan's work and the Greenham occupation led to this current iteration.

For Interference Archive we have interviewed women who visited and lived at Greenham Common for extended and shorter stays, and explored libraries, collections, and archives in the UK and USA. Our experiences with these distributed archives -- some on route from private attics and living rooms to public and private institutions -- remind us that there is no seamless narrative describing the occupation.

What is common to these archives is the iconic symbol of the web. It is found in the graphics, publications, banners, and action announcements, and the relationships and collaborative strategies of the women participants and their communities up to the present day. As mother and daughter, co-curators, and activists of different generations, we continue to experience many of the same struggles and productive contradictions as the women of the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, and we are grateful for their example and for this opportunity to share it with a wider audience.

Susan Jahoda and Emma Jahoda-Brown



Common Women's Day, Courtesy of Mayday Rooms, London, United Kingdom

## 1981

Group called "Women for Life on Earth" march from Cardiff to Greenham, and four women chain themselves to fence demanding a televised debate on nuclear weapons. Peace camp starts a week later.

## 1982

Peace camp becomes exclusively for women and children at night. Tents and caravans are set up near main gate, and return after evictions. Other camps, named after colors of the rainbow, develop around the fence. Blockades, vigils, arrests and the "Embrace the Base" action attract worldwide attention.

## 1983

Women break into base to dance on unfinished missile silos. More actions, including 14-mile human chain, as well as the birth of a baby, keep Greenham Common in the news. Conservatives win General Election. Local discontent with peace camps increases, but anti-peace women rallies in Newbury fail to attract large numbers. Vigilante actions prevalent. Newbury District Council draws up new by-laws. Sixteen cruise missiles arrive and another large demonstration leads to the fence being pulled down in several places.

## 1984

RAGE (Ratepayers Against Greenham Encampments) is formed. First cruise convoy testing, major eviction of tents at the main gate. "10 Million Women, 10 Days" protest. More cruise weapons come to the Greenham Common.

## 1985

Right of Greenham women to vote is challenged, but later reinstated.

## 1986

GAMA completed with six flights of Ground Launched Cruise Missiles. Dwindling numbers at the various peace camps, frequent bailiff evictions and complaints of bullying.

## 1987

Split between Yellow Gate and Blue Gate women. Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev sign INF (Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces) treaty to rid Europe of cruise.

## 1988

Revelation that commoners' rights may make building on the base illegal. Russians come to inspect Greenham's missiles under treaty terms. Ministry of Defence attempts to pay Greenham women to give up their commoners' rights.

## 1989

First cruise missiles are destroyed. A Greenham woman

is killed in a traffic accident outside the main gate. Small group of women refuse to give up their commoners' rights.

## 1990

Group 'Commons Again' pressures for the return of common land. House of Lords enforces Ministry of Defence by-laws that prohibit trespassing on base.

## 1991

Cruise missiles are removed from Greenham Common for destruction.

## 1992

USAF leaves Greenham Common in a low-key ceremony.

## 1993

Ministry of Defense puts airbase up for sale. Newbury District Council draws up future plans. A trust and management company, as a public-private partnership, is propose to manage Greenham Common.

## 1994

Blue Gate peace camp disbands. Government agency designates part the Commons as a "Site of Special Scientific Interest." Ministry of Defence decides to return land to people of Newbury. First businesses move into New Greenham Park, the built-up area of the base.

## 1995

Runway begins to be removed.

## 1996

Radiation scare over 1958 accident leads to scientific survey of land - no evidence of raised radioactivity at Greenham Common.

## 1997

A deal with the Ministry of Defence allows the Greenham Common Trust to purchase the airbase for £7 million and Newbury District Council to buy back the open common land for £1. The first piece of the fence is removed.

## 1999

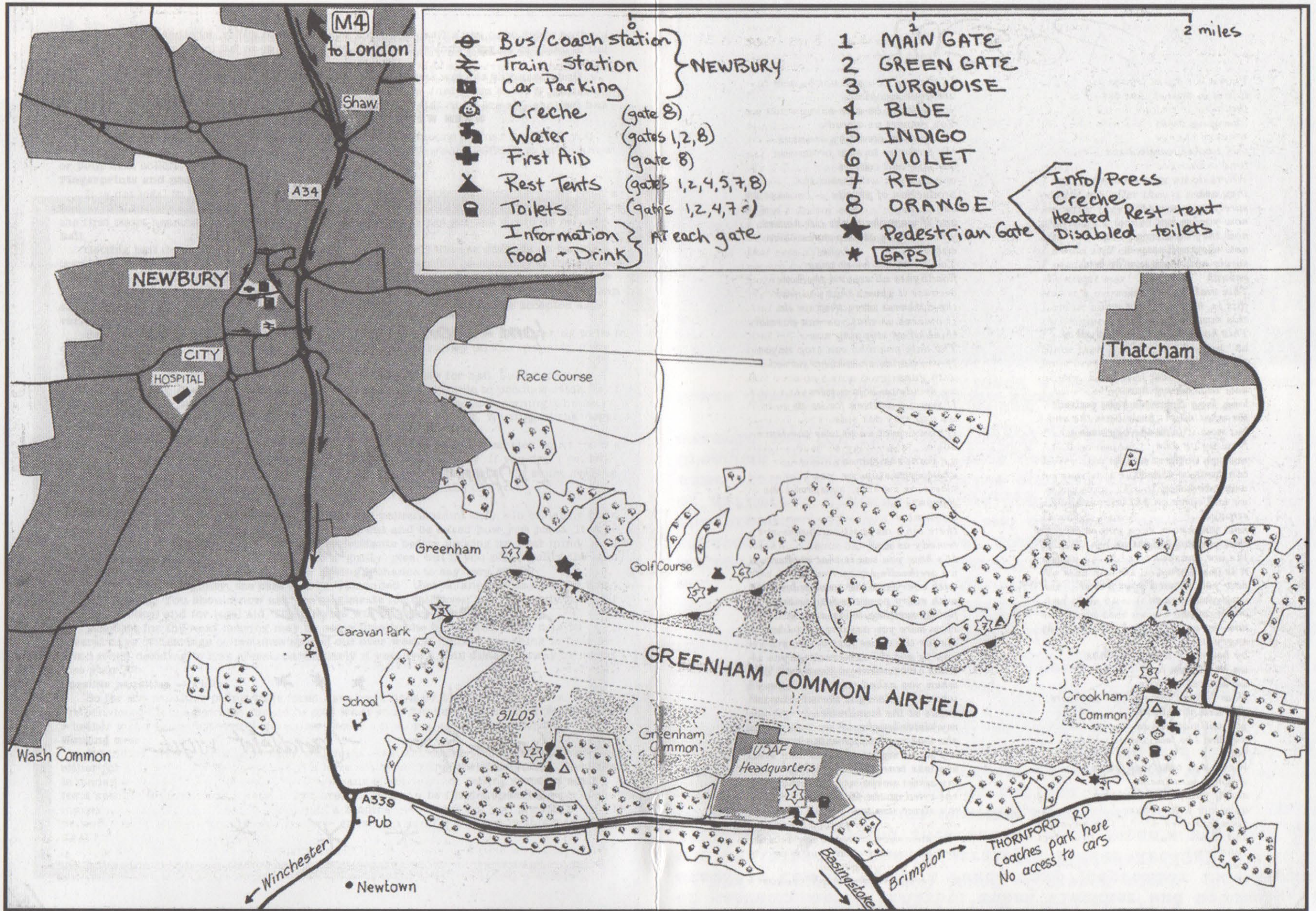
Greenham and Crookham Commons Bill is passed in Houses of Parliament to restore land to West Berkshire Council as common land open to the public.

## 2000

Commons officially open to the public except for areas covered by INF treaty. Last surviving peace camp at Yellow Gate disbands on 19th anniversary of first protest.

## 2001

Stock fencing erected around 380 hectares of Greenham and Crookham Common. Commoners' livestock once again graze the heaths and grasslands.



"Greenham Women Against Cruise Missiles, Center for Constitutional Rights, Legal Education Pamphlet", Courtesy of Mayday Rooms, London, United Kingdom