

DIARY

Duncan Campbell

Narita airport, Tokyo, is guarded more tightly than Greenham Common. Encircling the airport is a floodlit barrier of fencing, close-spaced watchtowers, searchlights, and a 'no go' zone laced with electronic detectors. The intense security is an apparently permanent result of the 1970s environmental battles about Narita — site of the third Tokyo airport. An unlikely radical-student/farmer-landowner alliance has survived as a violent direct action movement, which succeeds in occasional explosive attacks against minor airfield installations. To western radical eyes, the issue now seems rather dated.

Of course, this attitude may have something to do with my position as an incoming airline passenger, placed *de facto* on the side of the status quo. More alarming was the inbound route we followed to Narita, now one of the world's most notorious air corridors — Red 20 from Anchorage, Alaska. Just over 18 months ago, the ill-fated Korean Air Lines flight 007 flew this way. Having observed one of Korean Air's surviving 747s taking off from Anchorage just ahead of our flight, the passage gives a slight *frisson* of being in the battle zone. Next year the Soviet Union is due to licence a much faster direct air route from Europe to Japan, crossing Soviet territory much of the way. What western intelligence agencies and the buffoons in the Soviet military may yet combine to achieve then, I shudder to think.

I was in Japan for a peace research conference on the theme of Strategic De-alignment and Autonomy in the Asia-Pacific Region. The obscurity of the title was deliberate — to safeguard participants from some south Asian countries, where the secret police do not understand political concepts written in polysyllables. It is appropriate to discuss these problems in Japan because the major problem in creating a de-aligned, non-nuclear Pacific is Japan — and to a lesser extent, the People's Republic of China. With Japan and China in the lead, there could be a strong, and globally important movement, for a nuclear-free and unaligned west Pacific region. But Japan is now even further embedded into the US military camp. Prime Minister Yashiro Nakasone's call two years ago for Japan to be the US's 'unsinkable aircraft carrier' in the Pacific still echoes loudly. China's position is, if anything, worse. It is now five years since the United States set up two secret electronic intelligence bases in north-western China.

Hiroshima seems at first an outright disappointment. Arriving by bullet train, going by taxi to a western-style 12-storey hotel, built

just 400 yards from where the atom bomb was detonated, I was not prepared for the lack of desolation I saw. An advertisement for a neighbouring luxury hotel, even closer to Ground Zero, completed a bizarre picture, soliciting visitors to travel to its 22nd floor and 'enjoy soft live music as you look down upon the twinkling night lights of Hiroshima'.

Soon after the war, Hiroshima's people created a Peace Park and Museum in the centre of their devastated city. Inside the Museum, there are many artifacts from 6 August 1945 — a watch which stopped at the time of the explosion, jars of hideous, preserved scar tissue and a few physical objects microscopically manifest what took place. Some, like mangled bridge girders, are physically large enough to be touched, like a holy relic. But even a large table-model of Hiroshima after the bombing reminds one only of the pitiful inadequacy of words and direct representation to convey such experiences. The often crude and simple paintings by A-bomb survivors are far more evocative, leaving more to the imagination.

Of course, Hiroshima had to be rebuilt as a bustling modern Japanese city! But finally, beside the one remaining preserved ruin, the famous 'atomic dome', quietness can be found on the banks of the river in which, as contemporary accounts vividly describe, so many hideously burnt victims of the atom bomb

ROGER WODDIS

Howe human

*'Sir Geoffrey has sounded the first note on the trumpet.'
— The Times on the Foreign Secretary's call for human rights during his Eastern European tour.*

How boldly rang his trumpet!
How human and how right!
How luminous the halo
That bathes his head in light!

He laid it on the Germans,
He laid it on the Poles,
He told the Czechs their charter
Brought hope to simple souls.

Their fundamental freedoms
Lay closest to his heart;
He put his tongue to humbug
And raised it to an art.

How noble were his motives,
How high his moral tone,
While leaving tortured Turkey
And Latin lands alone.

He is no tinkling cymbal
Or thing of sounding brass,
But blows a braver music,
The clarion of his class.

O, hear the brazen trumpet
Of good Sir Geoffrey Howe,
Wind instrument of freedom
And holier than thou!



saw out their short lives seeking relief from their pain. 2,000 feet below the centre of the explosion, the old image of Hiroshima returns, powerfully and angrily. The new buildings of Hiroshima don't matter. I didn't come for the buildings, neither glittering new ones nor flattened old ones. I came for the people who were here. Hiroshima's dead were less than one per cent of the slaughter created between 1939 and 1945. But their importance is to the future, not the past. The memorial that many of us leave in the Peace Museum's visitors' book is short, apt and faithful: Never again Hiroshima!

Returning to Britain, I face an old, but manifestly grave threat to civil liberty. According to leaked standing orders issued by the Home Office's Immigration Service I am registered in their Suspect Index or 'Black Book', held by every passport checker. Passport officers encountering me should carry out Action A — tell MI5; Action S — tell the Special Branch and Action Q — find out exactly where I am going — all without alerting my suspicion, of course. Now, on my 18th trip since becoming official Suspect No 49940, I fear that, for the 36th time, passport officials will once again fail properly to respect my status as a registered subversive — and MI5 will be left again in ignorance of where I have been. My patriotic duty is clear; I have to warn these dilatory Immigration Service wallies that I am no mere traveller, but one of the select few in the special Blue Pages at the back of their Black Book. We are, after all, a very distinguished company — Tariq Ali, Vanessa Redgrave, Robert Mugabe, Kim Philby, me and only a few more.

But recognition have I none. Each time, as I hand over my passport, adding with assurance 'I'm in the book, you know', a knowing, thin smile crosses the passport wally's face: 'Oh we're in the book are we sir, you and how many other jokers just come staggering off the last jumbo going to tell me that? Enjoy our trip abroad, I hope we did sir, and welcome to Britain'. I sigh. Try as I and MI5 may, these unsung heroes of civil liberty, the anonymous grey men and women of the Immigration Service, are clearly striving with equal diligence to undermine all MI5's best efforts. Welcome back to Britain, sir.