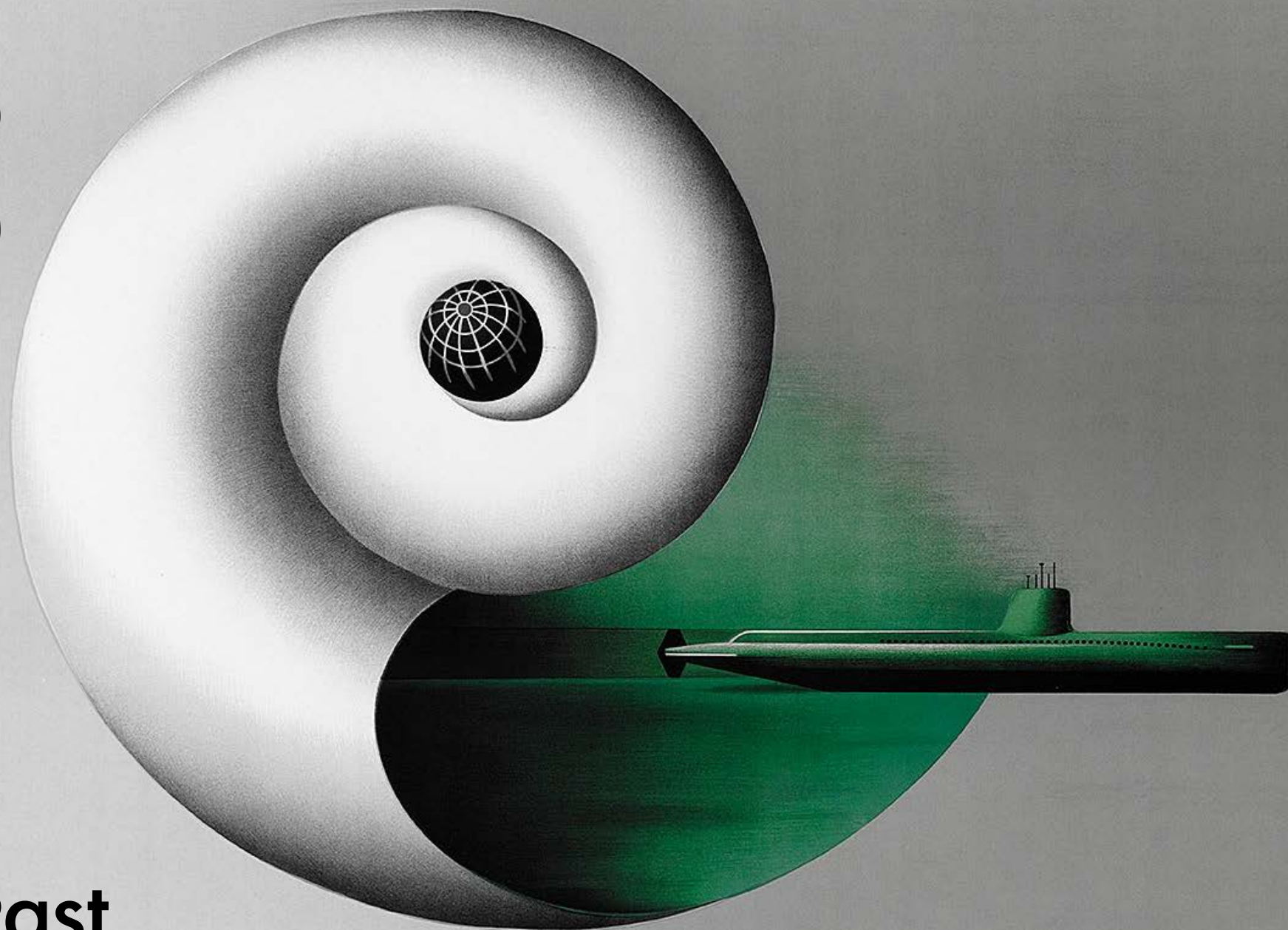


POSTER



HYDRODYNAMICS

Past Exhibition

hydrodynamics

ERIK NITSCHKE

Fallout

Atoms for War & Peace

March 13–September 7, 2025

Shortly before the outbreak of World War II, a scientific paper was published explaining the theoretical process of nuclear fission in which the controlled splitting of an atomic nucleus releases a vast amount of energy.

Over the next decade, scientists around the world would perfect the process of harnessing that energy, developing two of the most significant inventions of the modern era: the nuclear weapon and the nuclear power station.

Unless otherwise noted, all posters on display are part of the Poster House Permanent Collection.

This exhibition is supported by the Simons Foundation.

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Fallout Exhibition Poster

The Bomb & Its Aftermath

On November 1, 1952, the United States detonated the world's first thermonuclear weapon, popularly known as the hydrogen bomb. It was one thousand times more powerful than the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima at the end of World War II, and its development was opposed by prominent figures like American theoretical physicist Robert Oppenheimer, who famously led the Manhattan Project's Los Alamos Laboratory during the creation of the original atomic bomb. He feared that the Soviet Union would soon develop its own hydrogen bomb (as it did less than a year later), and escalate the arms race in a potentially catastrophic fashion.

When Dwight D. Eisenhower became president of the United States a few months later, in January 1953, he was notified a week after his election that the detonation test had taken place. As supreme commander of the Allied forces during World War II, he was intimately acquainted with the horrors of military conflict and was determined to resolve what he called "the fearful atomic dilemma."

As an antidote to what he described as "Atoms for War," Eisenhower promoted the idea of "Atoms for Peace"—the title of his speech on December 8, 1953, at the United Nations. In it, he advocated for what would become the International Atomic Energy Agency; under the auspices of the United Nations, it would (and still does) limit the availability of nuclear weapons and transform the threat of nuclear war into a means of providing inexpensive, reliable energy for all of humanity. The proposal was simple but radical: countries would agree not to pursue atomic weaponry in exchange for receiving technology dedicated to the generation of nuclear power, a relatively self-sustaining, clean energy source that would allow every country to rapidly modernize and bring electricity to all of its citizens. This proposal also opened the door to the privatization of the development of nuclear power, inviting corporations to commercialize that technology.

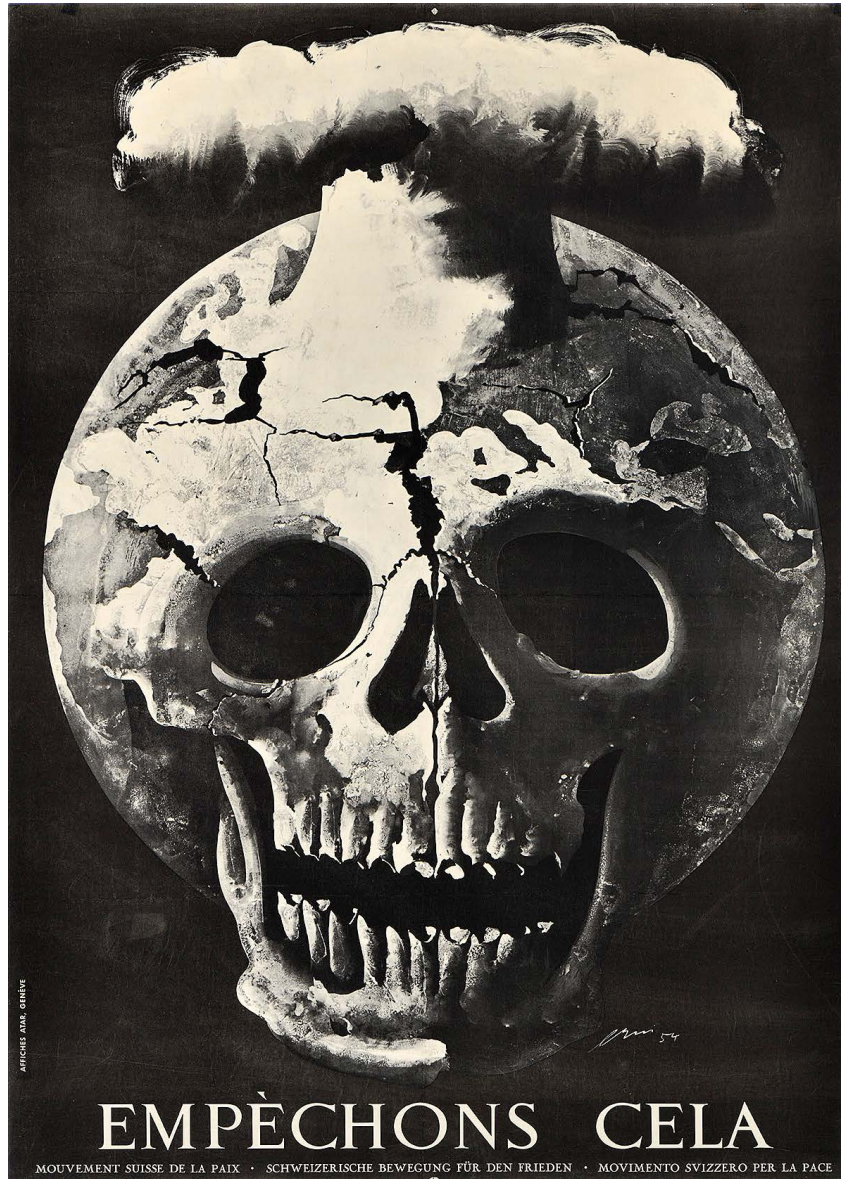


We Must Save Peace, 1948

André Fougeron (1913–98)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- In the aftermath of World War II, Germany was divided into four occupied zones, administered by France, Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union. Berlin, located within Soviet-controlled East Germany, was similarly divided.
- By 1948, these allegiances were breaking down, brought to a head during the Berlin Blockade, in which the Soviet Union prevented the other Allied countries from entering their segments of the capital. Citizens of West Berlin faced starvation. In response, the Western Allies embarked on the largest humanitarian-aid effort in history, air dropping food, fuel, and raw materials on the city.
- This standoff was a pivotal moment of the Cold War, underscoring the ideological differences between East and West, and setting the stage for an arms race over the next 40 years. The political tension would be heightened the following summer, when the Soviet Union successfully detonated its first atomic test bomb in Kazakhstan.
- In this poster, the French Communist Party (which favored the U.S.S.R.) suggests that, by siding with West Germany during the Berlin Blockade, the French government is risking nuclear war with the Soviet Union. Rather than directly criticizing the United States (which was viewed positively by the general French public after World War II), the poster highlights the further death and destruction that will ensue if France should anger the Soviet Union.

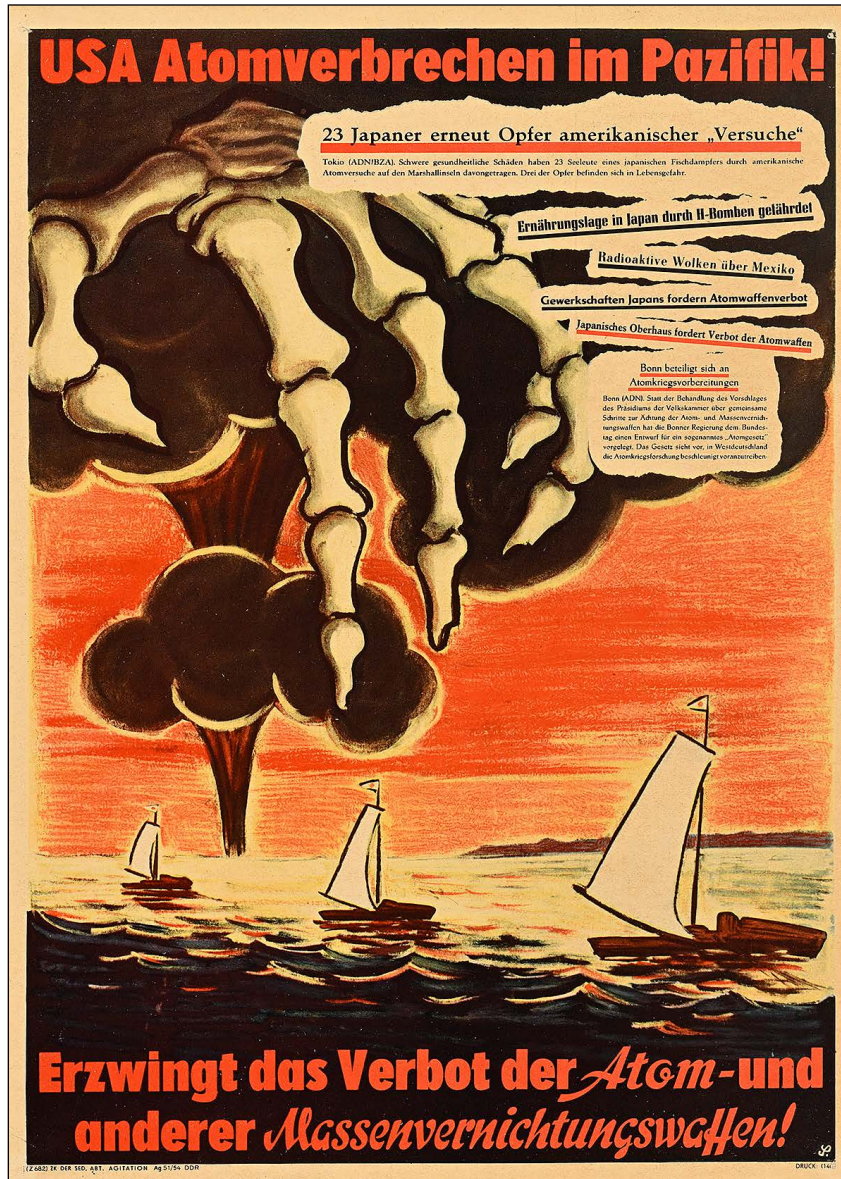


Let's Stop This, 1954

Hans Erni (1909–2015)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Formed in 1949 by an alliance of nine European Communist parties commonly known as Cominform, the World Peace Council (WPC) was a propaganda arm of the Soviet Union that openly promoted disarmament and peace. At the time, the U.S.S.R. was losing the nuclear arms race, so encouraging other countries to curb their own developments in that sphere was to its benefit.
- Commissioned by the Swiss Movement for Peace in honor of the WPC's "Appeal Against the Preparations for Nuclear War," this arresting design was created by one of Switzerland's most important and prolific poster artists, Hans Erni—a lifelong pacifist who often donated his talents to causes he supported.
- The poster was released during the 1954 Geneva Conference that focused on escalating tensions in French Indochina (present-day Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, as well as other Southeast Asian territories) between French forces and local Communist revolutionaries. In the lead-up to the pivotal Battle of Dien Bien Phu, the United States had been negotiating the potential use of the atomic bomb in support of France. This poster was banned within Geneva during those meetings.
- This poster is often heralded as the first to condemn the nuclear arms race, emphasizing its global consequences. It was issued in three of the four official languages of Switzerland: German, Italian, and—as shown here—French.

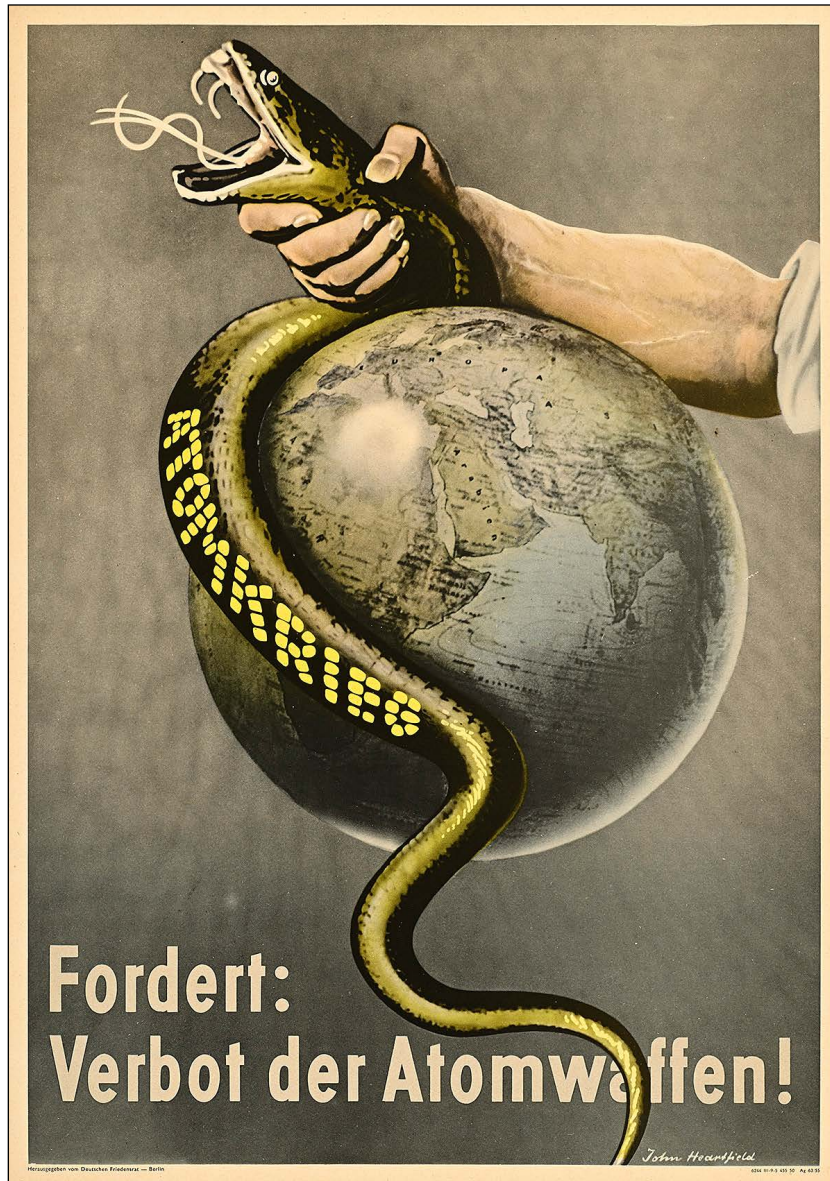


USA Nuclear Crimes in the Pacific!, 1954

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- On March 1, 1954, the United States performed its second hydrogen bomb test (the first was on November 1, 1952) on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands. The weapon was one thousand times more powerful than the atomic bomb that had destroyed Hiroshima.
- While authorities had staked out a danger zone approximately the size of New England, based on the previous test, to ensure safety, the blast was more than twice as powerful as predicted, resulting in unexpected fallout on neighboring islands. Local populations soon developed myriad health problems due to radiation exposure.
- Radioactive ash also fell on the *Lucky Dragon*, a Japanese fishing boat operating outside the demarcated blast zone. By the time the boat reached its home port two weeks later, all 23 crew members were suffering from radiation sickness. American officials publicly noted that the Marshall Islanders were “well and happy” and that the health issues of the Japanese fishermen were not caused by radioactivity but by undefined chemical activity in the coral reefs. While the United States eventually offered a small amount of monetary compensation to the victims, it has never officially taken responsibility for this event.
- This (Communist) East German poster features newspaper clippings that underscore the horrific impact of nuclear testing in the Pacific and note the growing threat of nuclear research in (capitalist) West Germany. In reality, as a result of World War II, both West and East Germany were forbidden to develop nuclear weapons programs.



Demand: Ban Nuclear Weapons!, 1955

John Heartfield (born Helmut Herzfeld, 1891–1968)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- John Heartfield was one of Germany's most biting political satirists, creating numerous posters skewering Fascism and war. While best known as a Dada collage artist, his composition for this poster relies on straightforward illustration to emphasize that only a firm hand can control the snake that is nuclear war.
- Heartfield originally produced this design in 1936 for the Brussels Peace Congress, in which the words on the snake read "Der Krieg" (the war) rather than "Atomkrieg" (nuclear war). His ability to recycle the same image 20 years later testifies to the strength of the design.
- Although Heartfield was an outspoken member of the Communist Party, his extended stay in England during and after World War II made the East German government suspicious of his allegiances. He was repeatedly denied permission to emigrate back to the U.K. or to gain employment in his native Germany.



Atoms for Peace Stamps & Envelopes, 1955

Private Collection, NYC

- The Atoms for Peace stamp was issued by the U.S. Postal Service in support of Eisenhower's policy of the same name. The design shows two halves of the globe joined by the symbol for atomic energy and surrounded by a quote from the president's 1953 speech to the United Nations.
- The decorated envelopes are known as first-day covers and are typically used by collectors to send stamps (often to themselves) on the day they are released. All three of these examples highlight the American enthusiasm for nuclear technology in the 1950s.

General Dynamics & Atoms for Peace

Inspired by Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech, the United Nations formed an advisory committee including representatives from Great Britain, India, the Soviet Union, France, the United States, Brazil, and Canada to create a global conference dedicated to exploring peaceful uses for atomic energy. Held in Geneva from August 8 to 20, 1955, the International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy was not only the most heavily attended event ever hosted by the United Nations, with 1,428 participants representing 38 governments, but also the largest gathering of international scientists in history. It was a pivotal moment, one that re-established connection between researchers who had mostly been unable to communicate since before the war.

Over the course of two weeks, formal papers were presented on global energy requirements; the economic implications of nuclear energy; the building, maintenance, and function of nuclear reactors; how to supply and enrich the necessary uranium; research opportunities; and health and safety concerns. All of this was accompanied by a large technology exhibition showcasing nuclear developments from around the world, the most eye-catching of which was a presentation by General Dynamics displaying the world's first nuclear-powered submarine against a background of highly stylized posters.

Formed in 1952, General Dynamics was a relatively new player within the defense industry, acting as the parent company for a variety of corporations that manufactured everything from motors to supersonic jets. Its president, John Jay Hopkins, had broad ambitions for the organization; he wanted to create a marketing campaign that not only reinforced its role as a leader in the global marketplace but also emphasized its position at the forefront of scientific developments promoting international peace and prosperity. In 1955, a few months before the Geneva Summit, Hopkins poached Swiss designer Erik Nitsche from Gotham Agency, an advertising firm that had worked independently for General Dynamics, making him its in-house art director. Nitsche's first major project for General Dynamics was a six-poster series for the conference that perfectly merged sleek modernism with abstractions reflecting the complexities of science.



Atoms for Peace, 1955

Georges Calame (1930–99)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- While the conference itself was closed to the general public (with the exception of some special-interest evening lectures), an accompanying exhibition was open to all audiences at the nearby Palais des Expositions.
- Both private companies and government agencies participated in the exhibition, which effectively served as soft propaganda. It highlighted industrial developments in the United Kingdom, France, Denmark, Norway, Canada, the Soviet Union, the United States, Belgium, and Sweden that would allow the peaceful application of atomic energy.
- This poster was used to promote the exhibition rather than the conference, and would have been seen throughout Switzerland in the months leading up to the event. Its restrained design, relying primarily on typography, reflects the approach common to much modern advertising in Europe during the 1950s.

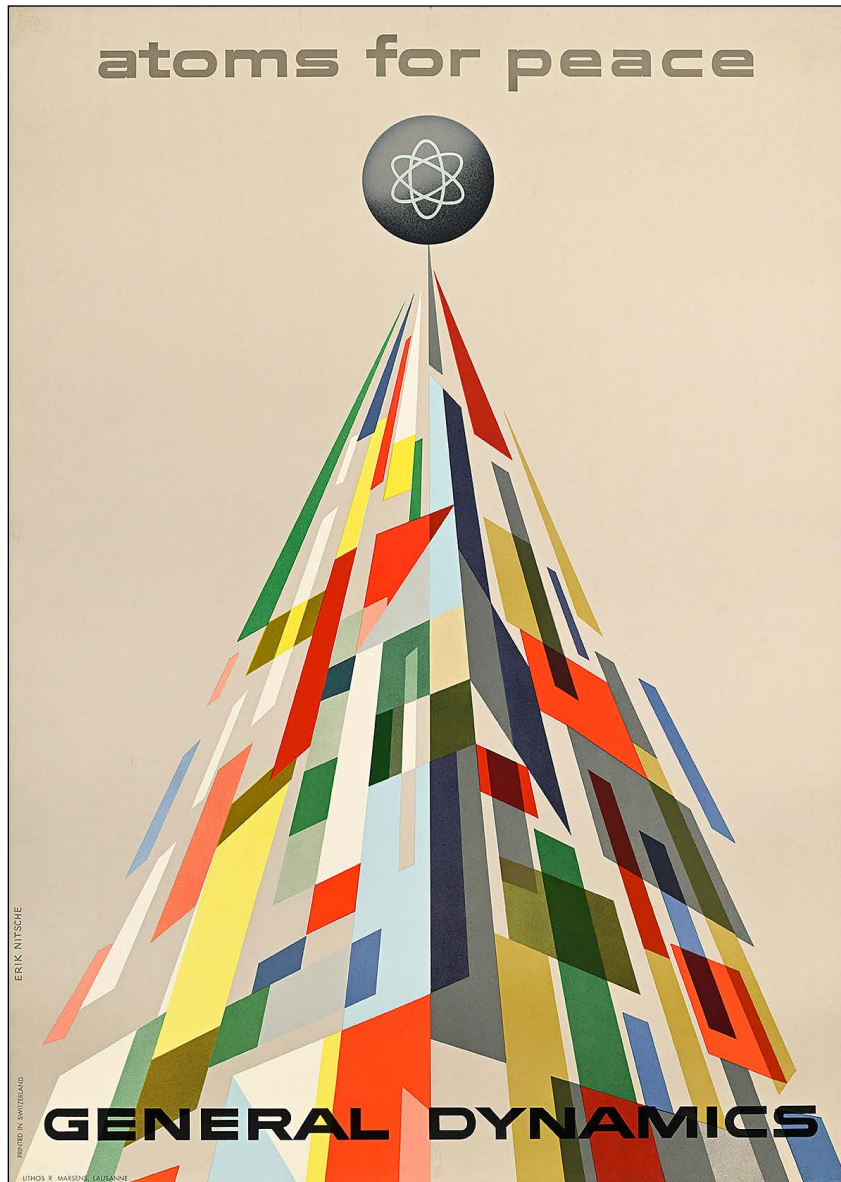


Atoms for Peace, 1955

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- Produced by General Dynamics in both French and English after the conference, this booklet was sent as a corporate gift that presented the company's "philosophy for the atomic age" alongside images of Nitsche's posters.



General Dynamics/Atoms for Peace, 1955

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- Hired by General Dynamics a few months before the posters went to print, Erik Nitsche had very little time to create a cohesive campaign. A relatively unknown designer compared to his counterparts in the United States, he had found his niche working for technical magazines, and his ability to present scientific data in an elegant and meaningful way caught the attention of the company's president, John Jay Hopkins.
- The six posters in this first series all feature the phrase "Atoms for Peace" in the languages of countries pursuing nuclear energy (not nuclear weapons): English, Russian, French, Japanese, Hindi, and German.
- This first poster in the campaign perches the "atomic whirl," commonly used as the international symbol for atomic energy, on top of a pyramid composed of abstract flags. It is meant to emphasize the unified, peaceful approach to atomic research and development presented by the conference.

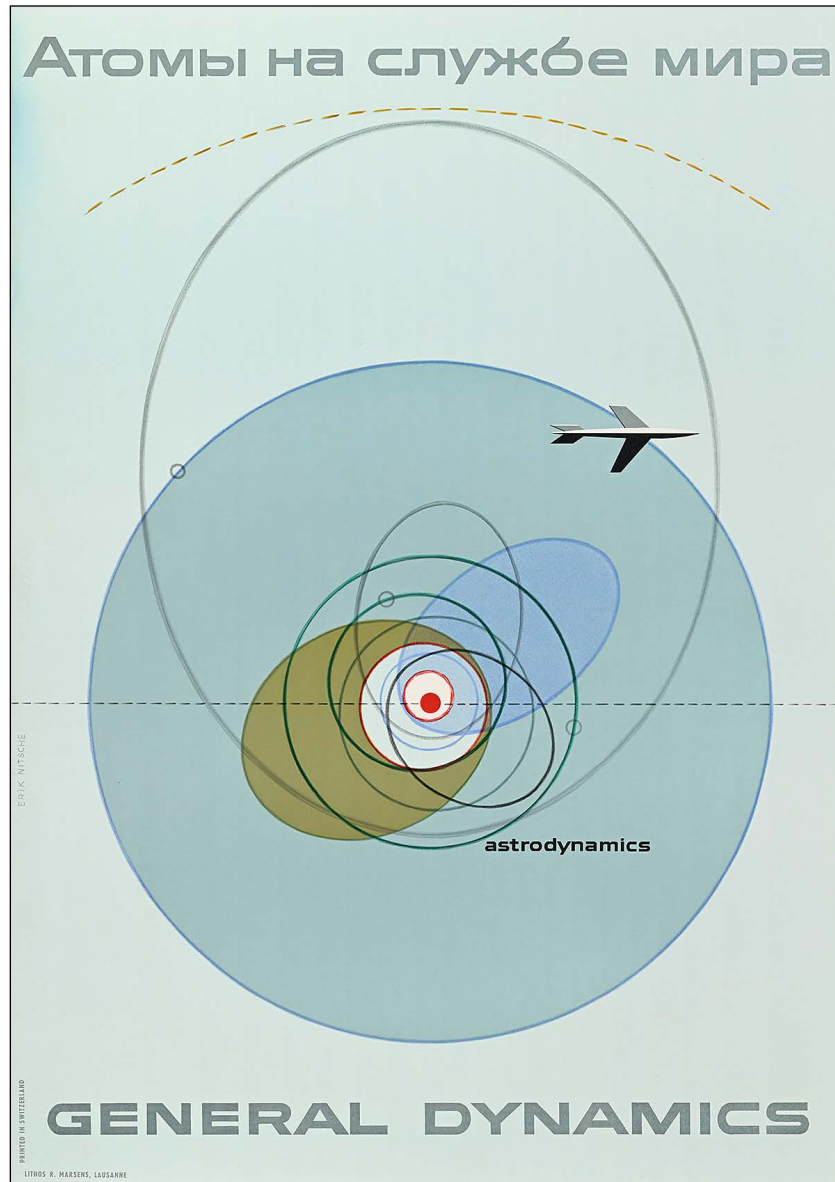


General Dynamics/Hydrodynamics, 1955

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- The most famous of Nitsche's posters in the series, this image depicts the USS *Nautilus*, the first nuclear-powered submarine, emerging from an oversized nautilus shell with a small globe at its center. As this ancient shell has often symbolized the dawn of life on earth, the subtext of the design is that the submarine represents the next evolutionary phase of humanity.
- Built by its Electric Boat Division, the *Nautilus* was the crown jewel of General Dynamics's portfolio, instantly elevating the company to the level of larger American firms like General Electric and Union Carbide. As the intricacies of the submarine were considered top secret, however, General Dynamics could not show a detailed model of it or any other atomic products at the conference.
- While all of these posters were used both at the conference and around Geneva, a variant of this design was printed featuring the name of the vessel at the top in place of the phrase "atoms for peace." It was distributed among U.S. territories as a means of corporate propaganda underlining American advancement in nuclear technology.

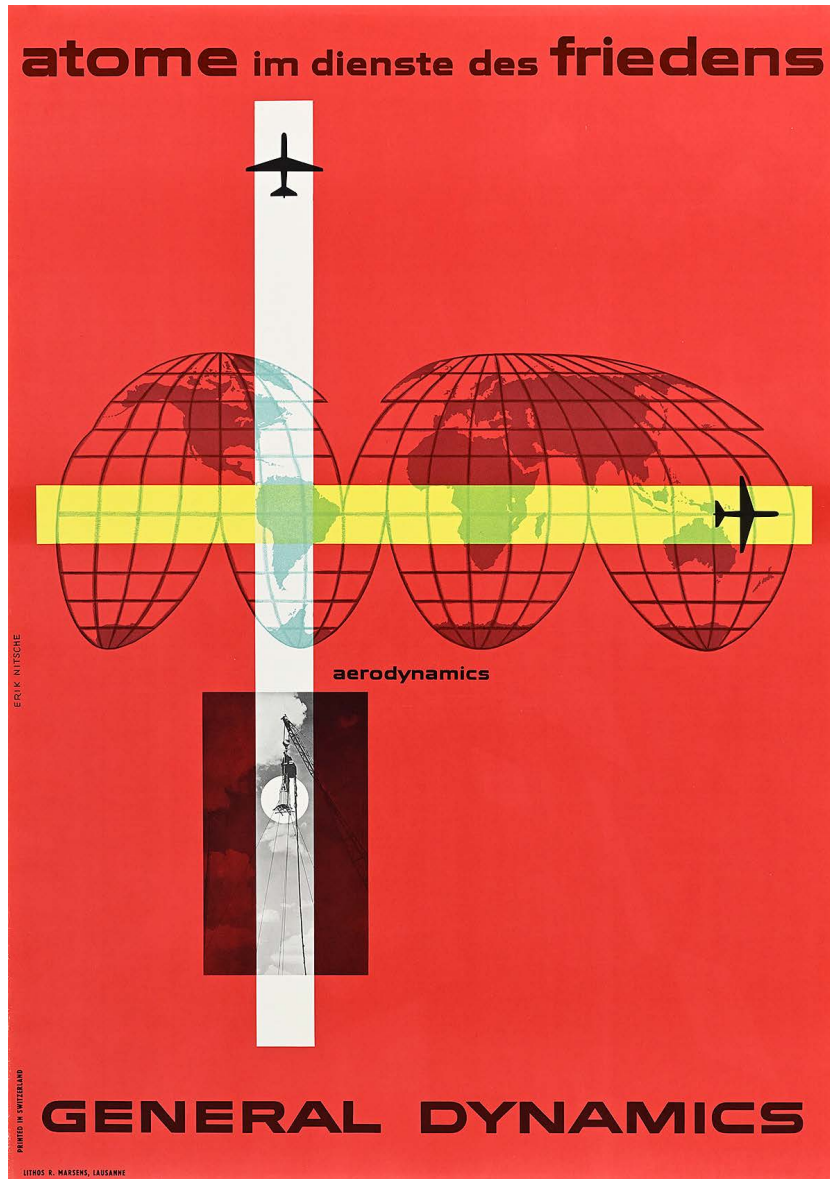


General Dynamics/Astrodynamics, 1955

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- Each of the posters in the series promotes a specific branch of nuclear research within one of the subsidiaries of General Dynamics. Here, the field of astrodynamics—the study of the propulsion of objects like satellites and spacecraft—is highlighted.
- While this is not evident from the design, the science behind the ability to launch objects into orbit relies heavily on the same technology used to launch ballistic missiles. One purpose of the campaign was to convince the public that modern technologies designed for war could just as easily be used for peace.
- In July 1955, just a few weeks before the Geneva conference, the United States announced its intention to launch satellites into space. The Soviet Union responded in kind, initiating what would come to be known as the Space Race.



General Dynamics/Aerodynamics, 1955

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Merrill C. Berman Collection

- Part of Nitsche's exceptional skill as a designer came out of his ability to move beyond the rigidity of the Swiss International Style that dominated the field in the 1950s and '60s, and blend it with a more abstract modernism. This proved to be an ideal means of conveying scientific information, as it made often dry and complex topics visually interesting.
- In the 1940s, Nitsche was the art director of a publishing house specializing in aviation-related magazines, including *Air Tech* and *Air News*. During this time, he developed a reputation for aerial illustrations that caught the attention of the U.S. Army.
- In this poster representing aerodynamics, Nitsche incorporates the silhouette of the Convair B-36 "Peacemaker," an aircraft built by General Dynamics for the U.S. Air Force that served as the primary delivery vehicle for nuclear weapons from the late 1940s through 1955. The yellow band crossing the map references the fact that it could make intercontinental flights without the need to refuel.
- At the time, both the United States and the Soviet Union were researching the creation of a nuclear-powered aircraft that could fly for up to a week at a single stretch. No solution could be found for the need to adequately protect the flight crew from radiation exposure or to prevent catastrophic explosion if the plane should crash.



General Dynamics/Electrodynamics, 1955

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- In this poster for electrodynamics, Nitsche places the symbol for atomic energy at the center of a lightbulb, implying that through nuclear power plants the entire world could be cheaply and easily electrified.
- Part of the Atoms for Peace program proposed that the United States would give countries that promised not to develop nuclear weapons the technology, training, and funding to build nuclear reactors as well as access to the highly regulated uranium supply chains needed to fuel them. While altruistic, this plan was also intended to persuade countries to side with the United States over the Soviet Union during the Cold War.
- Not all countries who made this promise were given the technology to build nuclear reactors, as the United States was wary of sharing information with nonaligned governments or those that might ultimately favor the Soviet Union.
- In 1955, India became the first country to receive nuclear material as part of the Atoms for Peace program, with Canada supplying plutonium and the United States providing the heavy water and training necessary to operate the facility. This would prove complicated in the subsequent decades as, on May 18, 1974, India tested its first nuclear weapon which it made by secretly siphoning off supplies (including enriched uranium) from its reactors. This development set off an arms race between India and neighboring Pakistan, with which it had a complicated and acrimonious history.



The name itself, *Atoms for Peace*, could be considered a kind of preemptive strike aimed at winning hearts and minds before the Soviet Union could introduce a similar program.

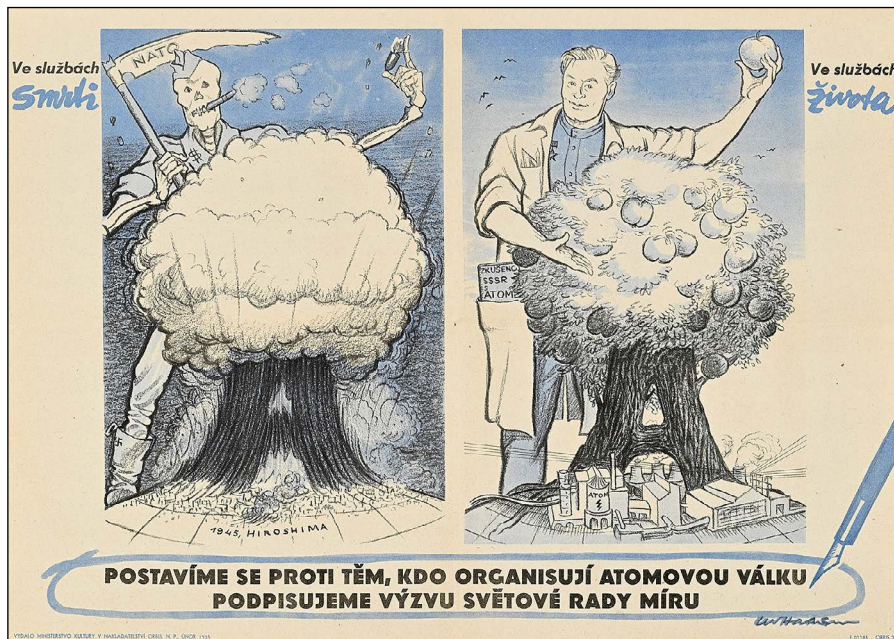
—Jesse Hicks, science writer

General Dynamics/Nucleodynamics, 1955

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- Through an array of colorful squares, Nitsche creates an abstract rendering of radioisotopes (radioactive elements used in medicine to both detect and treat a variety of maladies) that illustrate the potential of nucleodynamics. He includes a photograph of two surgeons at work to underscore the medical benefits of nuclear science.
- While the practice of using small amounts of radiation to produce X-rays dated back decades, the evolving field of nuclear medicine allowed for targeted treatment of a variety of diseases, most especially cancer.
- The nuclear isotopes used in cancer treatment today all derive from Cold War-era stockpiles (e.g., decommissioned nuclear submarines), primarily found in the United States and Russia—and are in extremely short supply. They are among the few materials exempt from sanctions against Russia since its invasion of Ukraine.



We Will Stand Against Those Who Organize Atomic War, 1955

Lev Haas (1901–83)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- In 1948, a coup by the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia led to the country becoming part of the Eastern Bloc, an informal group of Communist countries influenced by the U.S.S.R. but not officially part of it.
- The year this poster was printed, Czechoslovakia (today, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) signed the Warsaw Pact, a mandatory military alliance among Comecon (economically socialist) countries proposed by the Soviet Union in response to the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949. While never engaging in military conflict, these two organizations began a proxy war of ideology, constantly attempting to influence other countries and tip the balance of global power in their favor.
- In this poster, a skeletal American soldier holds a scythe emblazoned with NATO as he stands over a mushroom cloud from an atomic bomb. Meanwhile, a kind-looking Soviet scientist gestures to an abundant apple tree of a similar shape towering over a pristine nuclear power plant.
- The American soldier also has a dollar bill on his collar and a swastika on his boot. At the time, the Eastern Bloc typically conflated Fascism with capitalism, so many posters exist that align Nazi symbolism with the broader West.

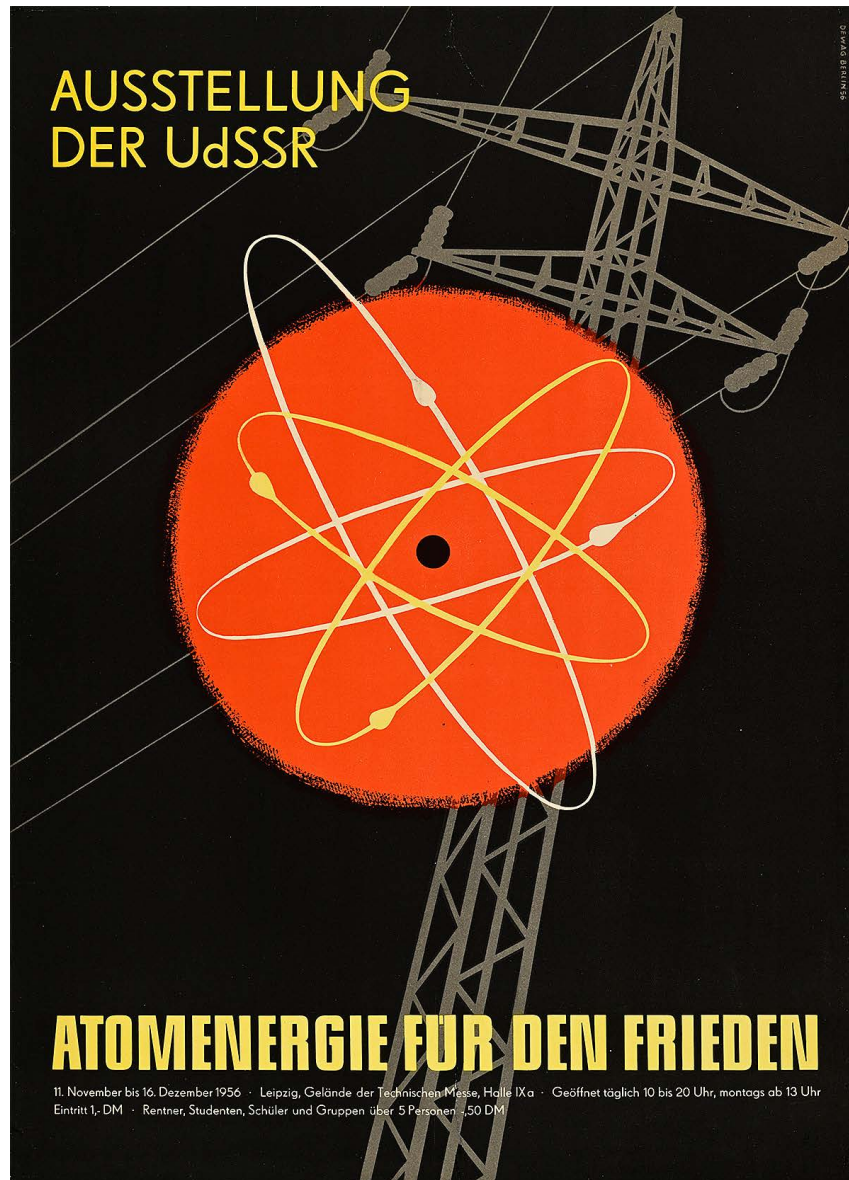


Radioactive Fallout, 1955

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- During the 1950s and '60s, many European countries created information campaigns under the umbrella of Civil Defense to prepare their citizens in the event of nuclear war.
- In the United States, these efforts were disingenuous; terrifying images of cities being obliterated were accompanied by instructions to “duck and cover” or simply run to the nearest fallout shelter—strategies that presume a means of survival where there could be none.
- This poster would have been displayed throughout the United States, directing citizens to seek information from their local Civil Defense director and attend a free course.

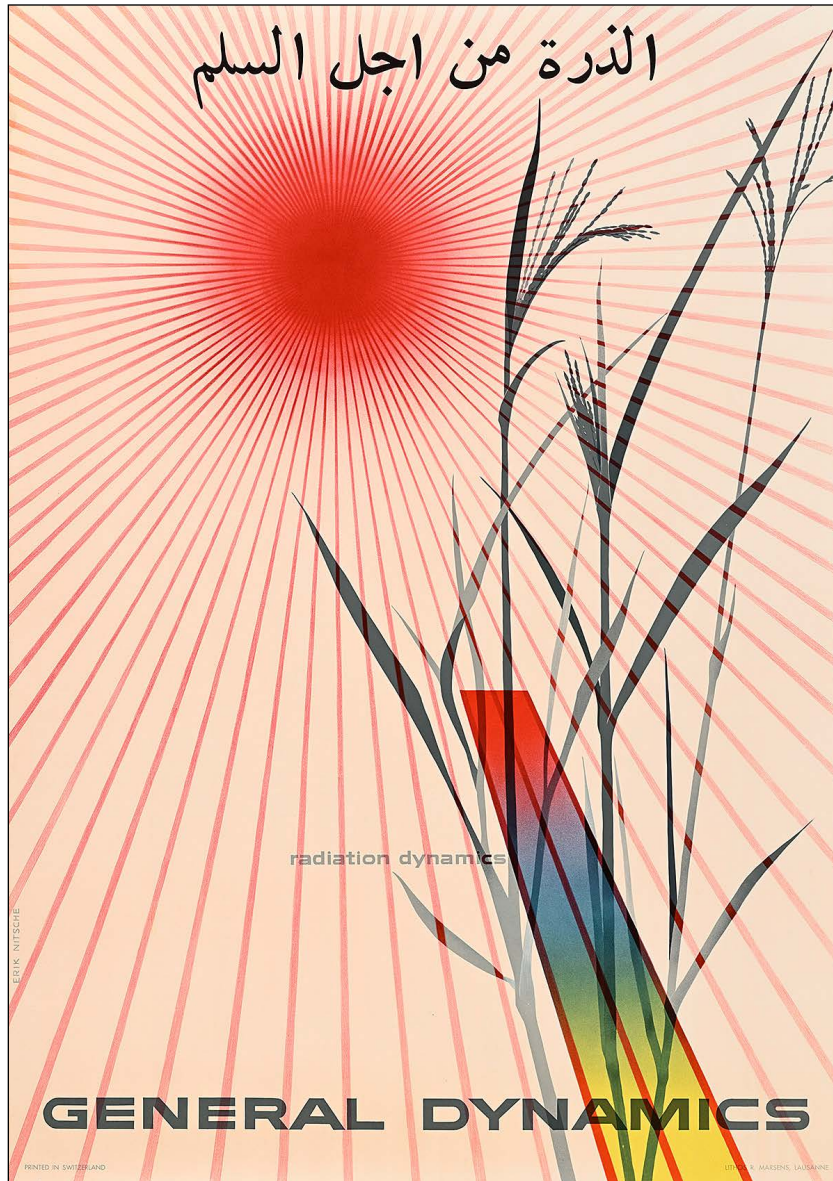


Atomic Energy for Peace, 1956

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- In 1956, the U.S.S.R. held a conference within East Germany promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, specifically in relation to the development of reliable, inexpensive power.
- Created in response to the Atoms for Peace convention in Geneva the previous year, it focused on Soviet developments in nuclear technology. Unlike that conference, however, this one was open to the public (but not free), and was, therefore, less about true scientific exchange and more about convincing citizens of Soviet superiority in the field.



General Dynamics/Radiation Dynamics, 1956

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- The response to the initial set of posters for General Dynamics was so positive that the firm's president, John Jay Hopkins, instructed Nitsche to create another series the following year—this time with the explicit directive to showcase the “spirit of discovery that motivates [General Dynamic’s] diverse developments.”
- While he maintained the original “Atoms for Peace” title, Nitsche changed some of the translations to include Arabic, Spanish, French, Italian, and German, emphasizing the ambitious global reach of the corporation.
- This design represents radiation dynamics, the use of radiation to genetically modify plant matter. Radioisotopes had recently been used as tracers to help scientists understand the chemical process of photosynthesis (how plants convert sunlight into carbohydrates), and research was being done on the possibility of creating artificial carbohydrates that could boost the world’s food supply and end global hunger.

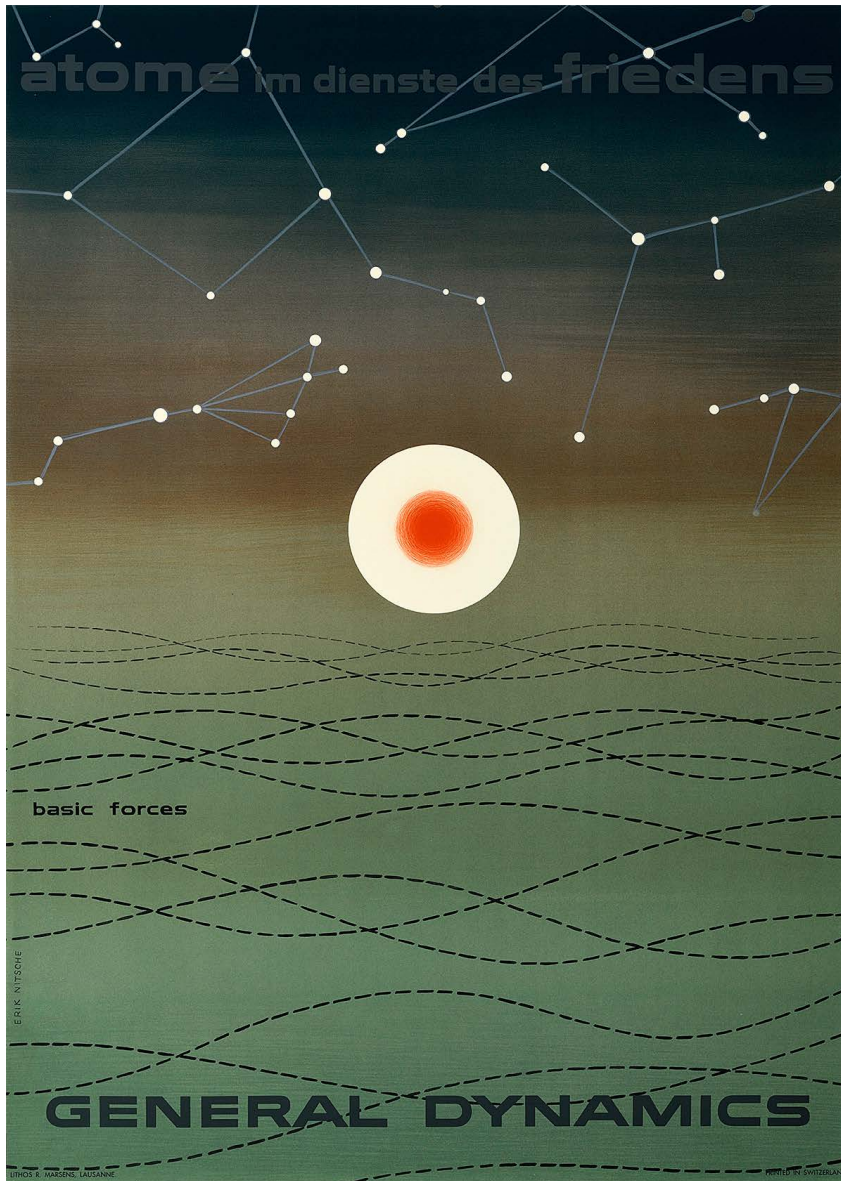


General Dynamics/Solar Dynamics, 1956

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- In 1954, Bell Labs created the first photovoltaic cell (a battery powered by light). These primitive solar panels became essential to space travel since they could produce energy under extreme conditions.
- General Dynamics was hired by NASA to test how exposure to radiation would impact silicon solar panels. Nitsche's interpretation of that process is far cheerier than the reality, presenting a colorful, circular grid radiating across the page.

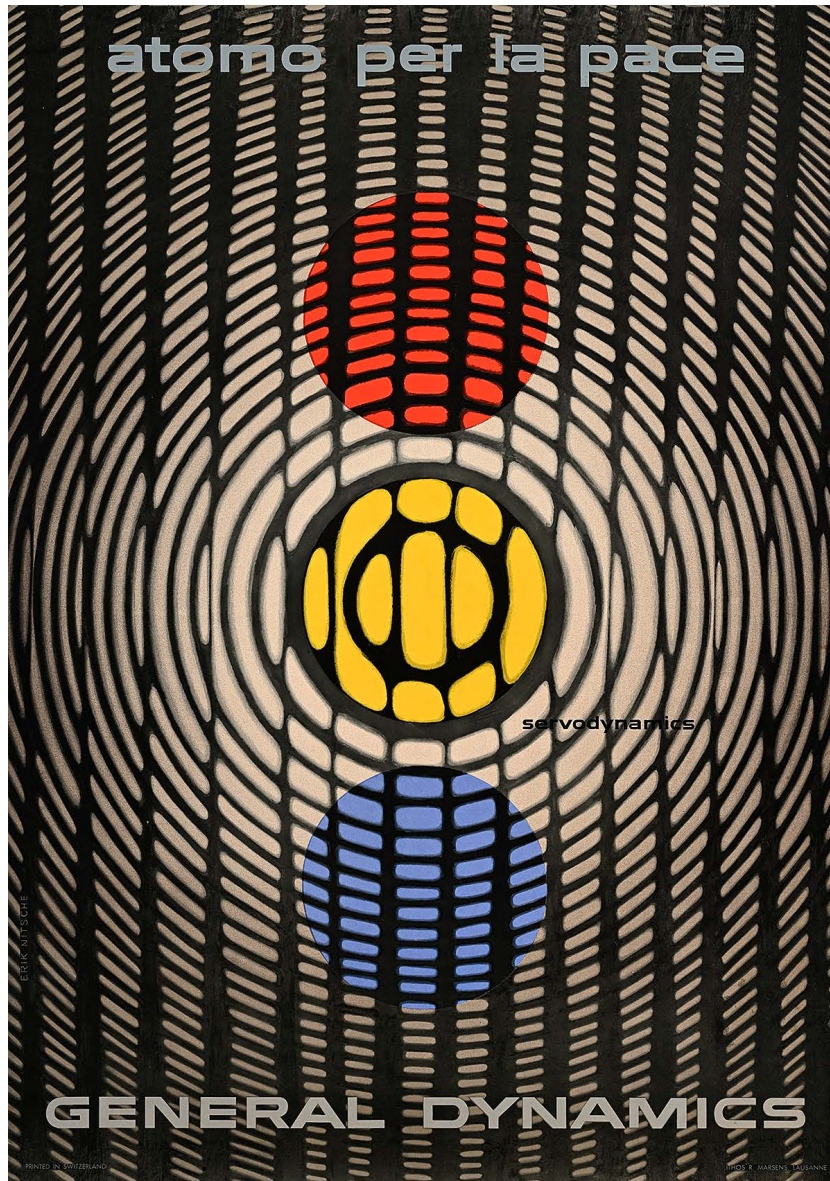


General Dynamics/Basic Forces, 1956

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- In physics, there are four basic or fundamental forces that shape the world: electromagnetism, gravity, and strong and weak nuclear interactions. This poster highlights how all of them, from microwaves to celestial movement, hold sway over matter.
- The central circular motif has been interpreted both as an atom and as a representation of the Big Bang, the scientific event from which the universe was born.

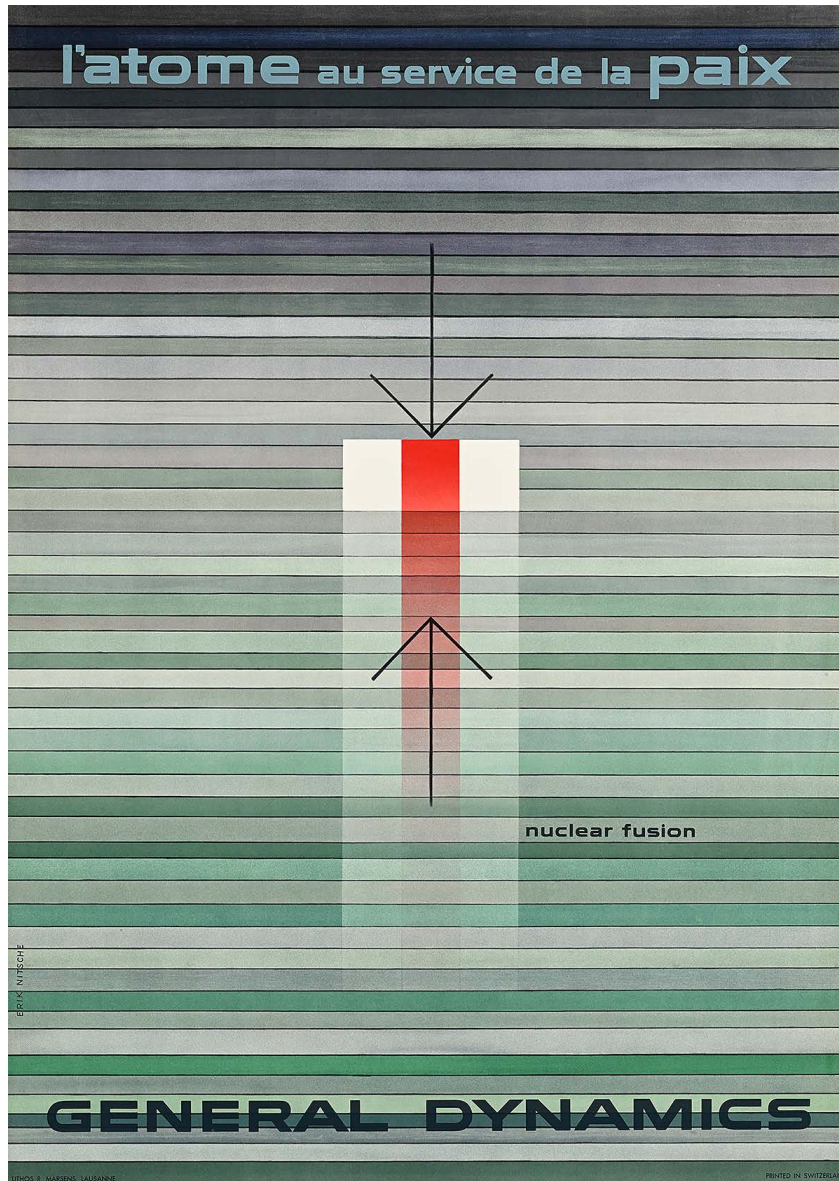


General Dynamics/Servodynamics, 1956

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- Servomechanisms (here, embodied by servodynamics) are systems that allow for real-time feedback to influence their output, typically used to control the movement of an object. They are considered an early form of computing technology.
- Nuclear reactors are highly sensitive and require finely tuned systems that can react quickly to fluctuations in temperature and other potentially devastating issues. General Dynamics's servo division helped engineer such technology to prevent errors in power plants.
- During the Space Race, servomechanisms would also be used to position satellites and spacecraft, as they could operate under harsh conditions of radiation and temperature.

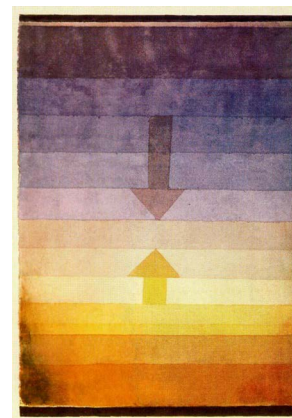


General Dynamics/Nuclear Fusion, 1956

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- In nuclear fusion, two or more atomic nuclei merge to form a single, larger nucleus, simultaneously releasing a vast amount of energy. Unlike the atomic bomb that relied solely on nuclear fission (when atoms split and release energy), the hydrogen bomb harnessed both nuclear fission and fusion to create its larger, more devastating explosion.
- To illustrate nuclear fusion, Nitsche places a red-hot rectangle, potentially representing plutonium, at the center of the composition, with two opposing arrows pushing toward each other. The force of this compression is offset against blue-green bands, possibly referencing heavy water (a dense kind of water used in nuclear experiments).
- Paul Klee, a modern artist who also taught at the Bauhaus, was a close friend of Nitsche's family. Much of Nitsche's art reflects his influence, which is well demonstrated in this design.



Separation in the Evening,
1922, Paul Klee

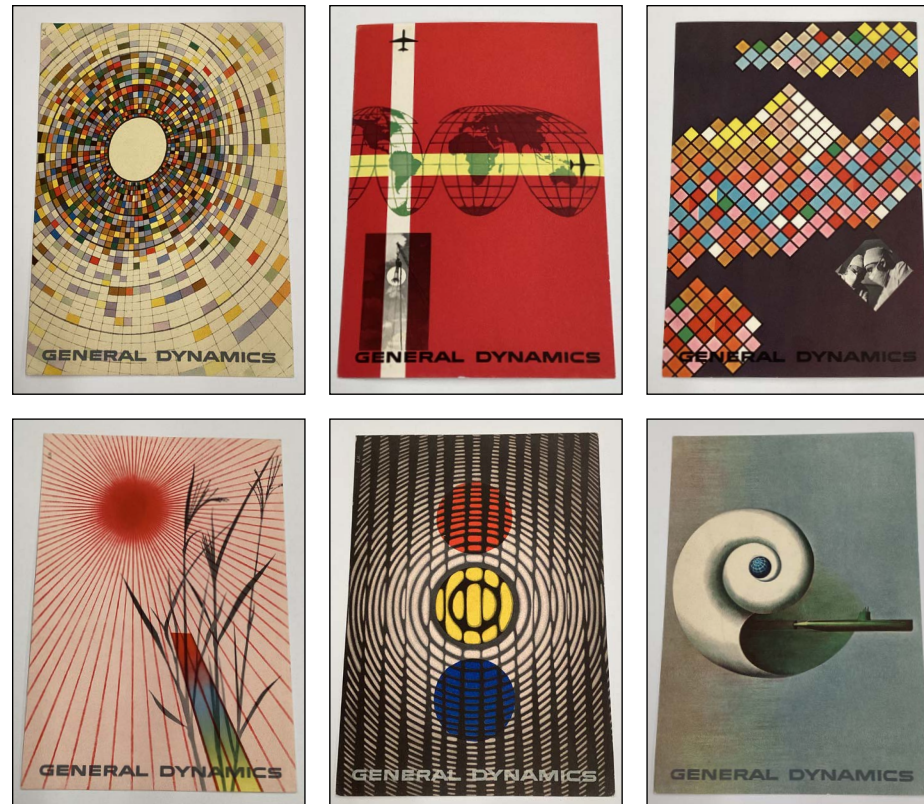


Against Nuclear Death for Peace, 1958

Horst Naumann (1908–90)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- This powerful design promotes a European trade union and workers conference held in East Berlin. Because of its location, only laborers from within the Eastern Bloc would have been in attendance.
- The design is dominated by the oversized red leg of a Communist worker crushing the skeletal form of a Teutonic Knight—a symbol associated with German nationalism and the Nazis—clutching a modern warplane. As in earlier posters in this exhibition, the Communist conflation of Fascism with capitalism often led to Nazi symbols being used interchangeably with those for the West.
- Like other posters produced under Soviet direction, the emphasis here is on the need to curtail the West from further developing nuclear technology rather than heralding the glory of Soviet nuclear research.

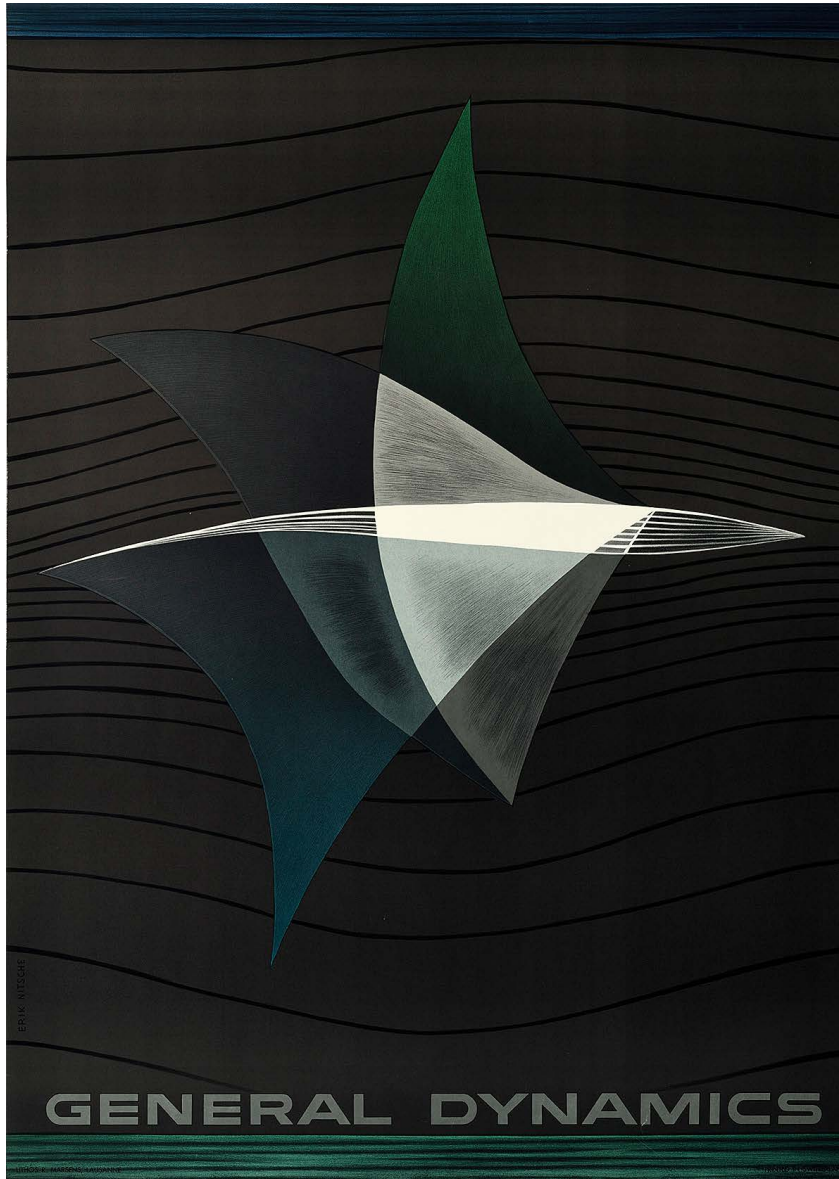


General Dynamics Postcards, c. 1956

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Merrill C. Berman Collection

- General Dynamics recognized the popular appeal of Nitsche's poster designs and issued a set of nine postcards that the public could obtain, free of charge, by writing to its main office on Park Avenue.



General Dynamics/First Step Into Space, 1957

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- In 1957, Nitsche designed a series of seven posters (including reissues with alternative titles of *Basic Forces* and *Nuclear Fusion*) for the Second International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy in Geneva the following year. Rather than retain the title “Atoms for Peace,” this iteration was presented under the headline “Exploring the Universe” and emphasized the company’s expansive research divisions.
- This design is a before-letters proof missing the aforementioned title as well as the tagline “first step into space” that would appear in the lower right.
- The image depicts an aerofoil, a cross-section of the wing of an airplane, being tested in a wind tunnel to determine whether or not it is properly aerodynamic. As General Dynamics owned Canadair and Convair in the 1950s, aviation development was a key component of its business.



General Dynamics/Sub-Atomic Worlds, 1957

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Merrill C. Berman Collection

- Particle accelerators are machines with diverse uses that propel charged particles along beams or pathways. In nuclear physics, this involves examining atomic nuclei that have been stripped of electrons to better understand the origins of the universe.
- This abstract design is actually derived from a magnified image taken through a microscope of the aftermath of high-energy cosmic rays colliding with atoms. In the 1950s, this research was at the cutting edge of science.

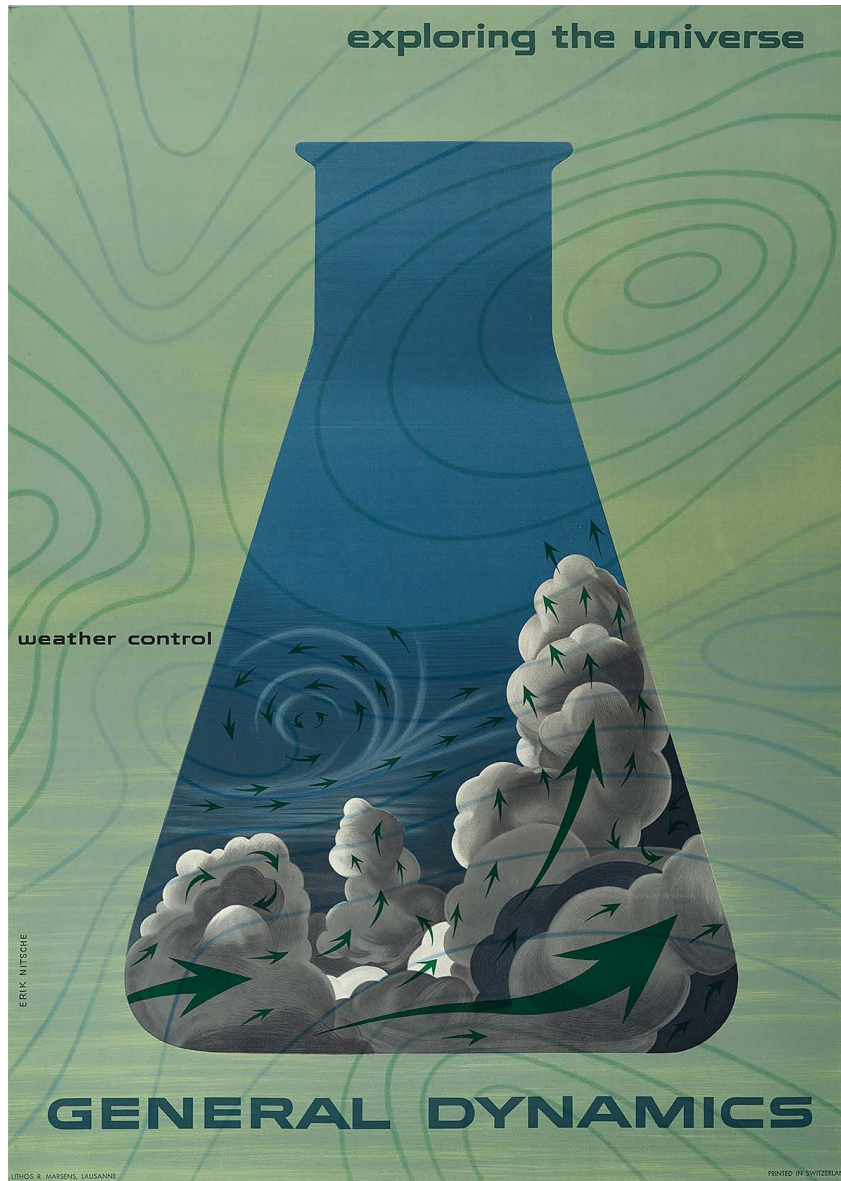


General Dynamics/Worlds Without End, 1957

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- In the 1950s, General Dynamics's Convair Division initiated its Atlas intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) program, a nuclear weapons delivery system capable of hitting a target thousands of miles away. The U.S. military encouraged the development of this technology after the Soviet Union detonated its first thermonuclear weapon in 1953.
- ICBMs were also used during the Space Race as part of numerous launch systems. In this humbling design, a miniscule Atlas rocket skirts by a black hole and several galaxies, underscoring the infinite promise of space exploration—truly “worlds without end.”
- To achieve the intense depth of black in the composition, Nitsche instructed his printer to pass each poster through the press multiple times.

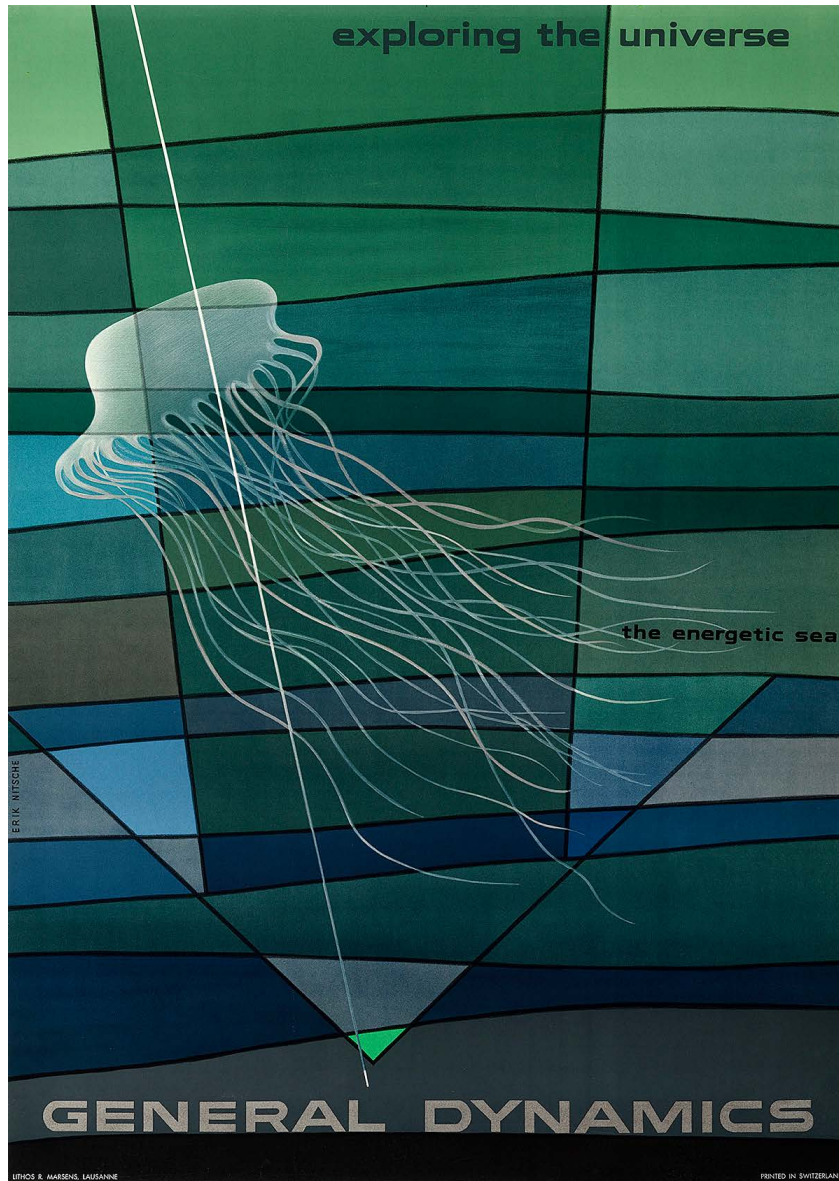


General Dynamics/Weather Control, 1957

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- During the 1950s, General Dynamics and other companies were researching the possibility of controlling the weather through science in order to use it against the Soviet Union. The United States even created a President's Advisory Committee on Weather Control in 1953 to monitor these developments.
- Many of the proposed modifications may sound ridiculous today, including melting the polar ice caps to flood enemy territory and building a nuclear-powered dam across the Bering Straits to redirect the Pacific Ocean and cause a heatwave. Nevertheless, interest in weather control persists today, with initiatives like cloud seeding (introducing chemicals to clouds to produce precipitation) and space mirrors (satellites that reflect solar radiation away from earth) regularly making the news.
- In this design, Nitsche sets a beaker containing a swirl of clouds and weather patterns on top of a topographic map, indicating the hope that research could ultimately allow the harnessing of Mother Nature as a weapon.



General Dynamics/The Energetic Sea, 1958

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- While this poster is often miscategorized as part of Nitsche's third series for General Dynamics, it is actually part of the second "Exploring the Universe" collection, but was printed last. Like his poster for Nuclear Fusion, this design is inspired by the work of Paul Klee.
- Oceanography as a scientific field expanded tremendously during the Cold War, primarily due to military funding. American scientists were at the forefront of marine research, examining ocean tides, salinity, and currents to better understand, among other things, how sound travels underwater. Much of this experimentation involved detonating bombs at various depths.
- This type of data helped create the U.S. Navy's Sound Surveillance System, a global network of underwater sound-detection devices that worked to catalogue Soviet submarines based on their individual sound signatures.



General Atomic/Triga, 1958

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- General Atomic was a research branch within General Dynamics tasked with developing a small nuclear reactor that would be safe from meltdown. It was primarily intended as a teaching tool under Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace initiative. Of the 66 TRIGA (an acronym for Training, Research, Isotopes, General Atomics) reactors that were produced by the company, half went to other countries.
- On May 3, 1958, the TRIGA Mark I reactor was commissioned in San Diego. It was unveiled to the public at the Second International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy the following September.
- The reactor's safety is derived from a balanced system in which, as the core temperature increases, energy is transferred to cooler neutrons, making them less reactive.
- This poster is one of Nitsche's most literal interpretations of a technology, with the composition reflecting the vantage point of a viewer gazing down into the reactor. The blue color derives from what is commonly known as Cherenkov radiation—the phenomenon that occurs when atoms move faster than light.



Atom/The Work of Peace, 1959

Ruben Vasilievich Suryaninov (b. 1930)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Soon after Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace program was unveiled, the Soviet Union launched a similar initiative. Both nations were offering nuclear technological training, supplies, and information that could revolutionize a country's energy supply in exchange for siding with either the West or the East. In that sense, the sharing of nuclear technology was a form of empire building.
- In addition to using this technology for energy, both the United States and the U.S.S.R. had additional programs exploring non-combat uses for nuclear explosions. Known as Project Plowshare in the U.S. and Nuclear Explosions for the National Economy in the Soviet Union, each involved detonating dozens of nuclear weapons to test their efficiency as a means of geological research and construction.
- In this poster, a Soviet scientist observes the trajectory of subatomic particles on film while vignettes of various possibilities for nuclear technology fill the background. Images like this would have been common throughout the U.S.S.R. and Comecon countries, implying the benevolence of the Soviet Union as it sought to improve the lives of all people.



Your One Defense Against Fallout, 1959

Lee (Dates Unknown)

*Gift of Lucinda and David Pollack,
Poster House Permanent Collection*

- Fallout shelters were frequently promoted in the United States as a necessary investment to protect one's family in the event of a nuclear attack. In reality, these small bunkers would not have provided significant protection in a blast zone, nor would people have time to get to one in most scenarios.
- By the 1960s, the U.S. government was making fewer efforts to promote fallout shelters or mass evacuation as knowledge around the impact of nuclear warfare indicated that most people would die anyway. Alternatively, its attention shifted to plans that allowed for key government figures to seek safety in remote locations.



Join Civil Defense, 1951

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Founded in 1950 by President Harry Truman, the Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA) enabled the federal government to assist states and cities in the event of a national emergency (namely, if the Soviet Union were to attack the United States).
- Early messaging by the FCDA embraced the traditional American values of self-help and civic duty, suggesting that through them, citizens could survive a nuclear holocaust.
- Although the organization requested a budget of \$535 million from Congress in 1951, it only received \$65 million, forcing it to seek private corporate support from firms like those listed on the bottom of this poster. This led to an awkward marriage between companies and government propaganda, in which businesses promoted their services as a means of surviving a nuclear attack. This is perhaps no better exemplified than through the public service announcement co-produced by the FCDA and the National Paint, Varnish, and Lacquer Association, advising the public that a well-painted home will not burn in an atomic blast.

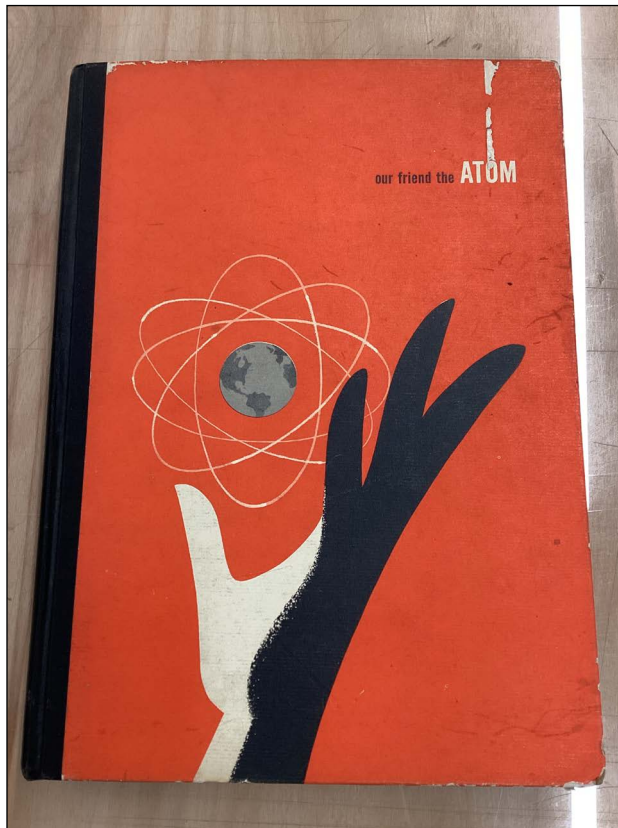


Radioactive Fallout Can Reach Your Farm, 1960

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

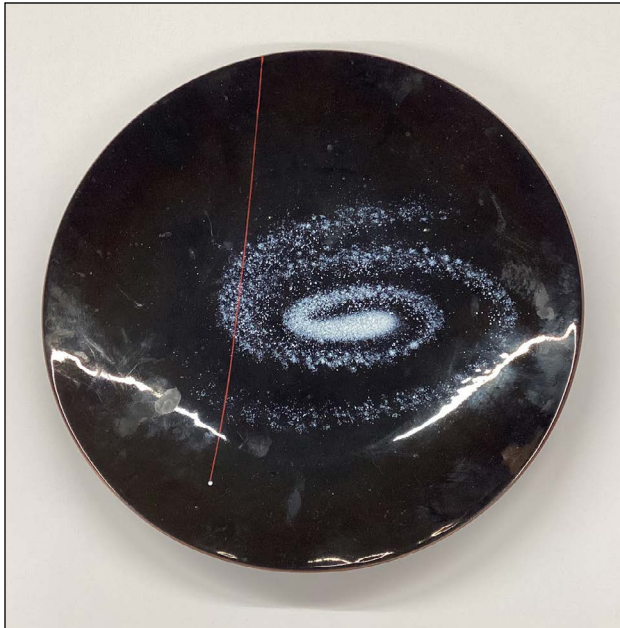
- In the aftermath of World War II, both the United States and the Soviet Union developed arsenals of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) that could be fired from the heartlands of their respective countries, targeting major cities and military bases on enemy territory.
- These missiles had average ranges of up to 8,700 miles and could be quickly deployed from underground silos in rural locations, reaching their targets within 35 minutes. Such sites still exist in the United States in Wyoming, Montana, and North Dakota.
- This Civil Defense poster reminds rural citizens that even though they live outside of major cities, they are still in danger from nuclear fallout. While ICBMs were capable of destroying everything within a 50-mile radius of their targets, areas hundreds of miles away from a blast zone would experience secondary effects, including firestorms and elevated neutron and gamma rays that would poison the atmosphere and kill all forms of life.



Our Friend the Atom, 1959

Private Collection, NYC

- In the 1950s, the U.S. government enlisted Disney to create children's programming that underscored the message of the Atoms for Peace campaign, promoting the civilian use of nuclear power.
- Disney hired German scientist Heinz Haber to develop a television series on the topic. Haber had been taken out of Germany as part of Operation Paperclip at the end of World War II, with the goal of keeping German scientific knowledge, particularly as it pertained to nuclear development, out of the hands of the Soviet Union.
- General Dynamics sponsored both the episode and the accompanying book *Our Friend the Atom* that explains the process of nuclear fission and fusion through whimsical illustration and simple text. It also paid for the Submarine Voyage ride in Disneyland's Tomorrowland.



General Dynamics/Convair Plate, c. 1960

Lily Alexander (Dates Unknown)

Private Collection, NYC

- This plate was created for the Convair Division of General Dynamics to commemorate the Atlas, the first intercontinental ballistic missile. The artist clearly draws from some of the features in Nitsche's poster for *Worlds Without End*. "The heavens are not too high" is engraved on the verso.



Atoms for Peace Pendant, c. 1960

Private Collection, NYC

- Three years after the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Japan, Pope Pius XII stated that it was “the most terrible weapon that the human mind has ever conceived.” A few years later, in his 1955 Christmas message, he noted that even testing nuclear bombs posed a threat to humanity and was therefore immoral.
- This medallion features the Virgin Mary standing atop a mushroom cloud rising from the globe, with the word “Pax” (Peace) written across it. The phrase “Atoms for Peace” is written along the upper edge. On the verso, Saint Michael, patron saint of the armed forces, is depicted slaying Satan.
- Given the Church’s official stance on nuclear development, even for peaceful purposes, this pendant features an unusual combination of iconography, and is most likely a work of American propaganda in favor of a presidential policy. It would not have been authorized by the Vatican, the governing body of the Catholic Church.



General Dynamics/Convair 880, 1959

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- While General Dynamics was ultimately unable to produce a nuclear-powered airplane, it briefly attempted to compete with rivals Boeing and Douglas in commercial air travel. The result was the Convair 880 that debuted in January 1959, and was advertised as the “world’s fastest jetliner.” Despite this achievement, the plane was not popular with carriers and production was discontinued within a few years.
- After it was taken out of commercial service, one example of the 880 was purchased by the U.S. Navy and modified for military use throughout the 1980s and ’90s. It was destroyed in 1995 during a Tomahawk cruise missile test.
- This design was part of the third series of posters that Nitsche created for General Dynamics, running from 1958 to 1960. Each highlighted the company’s individual divisions, focusing on energy, transportation, and industrial products.



Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

- Founded in 1899, Electric Boat was the original company from which General Dynamics was born when it merged with Canadair Ltd in 1952. It had provided the U.S. Navy with its first submarine in 1900—54 years before it launched the first nuclear-powered submarine as its inaugural project within General Dynamics.
- A *Scientific American* advertisement featuring this same design noted that the company’s nuclear-powered submarines could be used to discover “a limitless wealth of minerals, metals, foods and energy.”
- The phrase “undersea frontiers” is vague enough that it could be referring to General Dynamics’s nautical-research efforts or its uses by the U.S. military during the Cold War. At the time, science was primarily funded in the interest of national security, irrevocably linking them.
- After the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik I* in October 1957, President Eisenhower ordered an equally impressive feat of engineering from the U.S. Navy so as not to appear technologically inferior. On April 25, 1958, the USS *Nautilus* embarked on Operation Sunshine, completing the first successful submarine voyage under the North Pole.



General Dynamics/ Electronic Intelligence, 1960

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- In 1955, General Dynamics purchased the prominent telecommunications and electronics manufacturing company Stromberg-Carlson.
- To represent electronic intelligence, Nitsche presents abstracted radio or radar waves traversing a topographic map. An accompanying magazine advertisement featuring the same design noted that this technology could act like an “electronic sentinel,” serving to “enhance man’s dominion over his environment...and help preserve him from his follies.”
- While this poster emphasizes the use of electronic intelligence for national defense, one of the more important functions of Stromberg-Carlson for General Dynamics was the development and manufacturing of control systems for nuclear reactors. Designed for civilian use, they were advertised as so fail-safe that there was no need for specialized technicians to operate them.

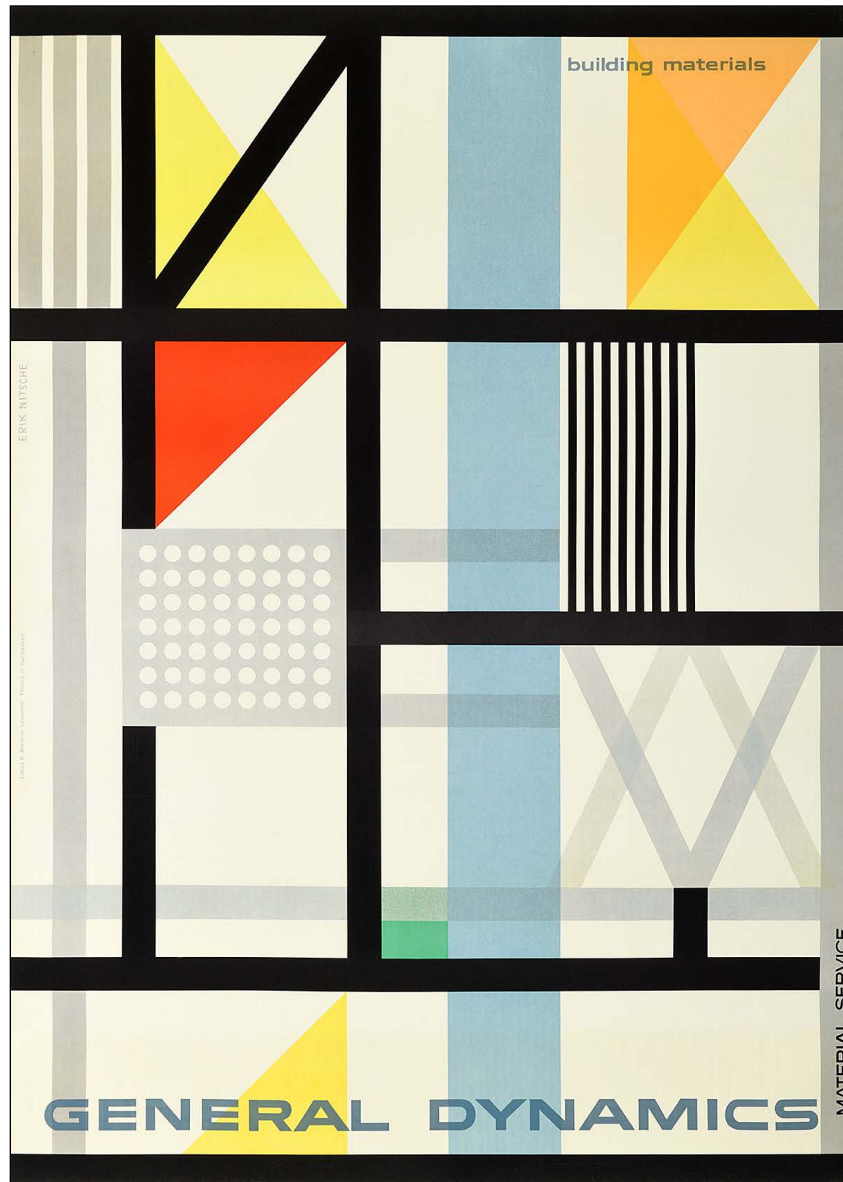


General Dynamics/Energetic Earth, 1960

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- Despite being the largest defense contractor in America, after the commercial failure of the Convair 880, General Dynamics's finances were in trouble. In 1959, as part of an ongoing venture to diversify its holdings outside of the defense sector, it merged with Material Service Corporation, a Chicago-based company specializing in raw materials like coal, limestone, and concrete.
- Through this merger, General Dynamics became the fifth-largest producer of coal in America, creating for itself a reliable revenue stream that included both private and public contracts in the steel, power, and construction industries. According to its own corporate publication, this acquisition allowed it to “operate in the more exotic areas” of nuclear research.
- While Nitsche's poster for energetic earth has been interpreted as anticipating the idea of geothermal energy, the arrow becoming “hotter” as it drills into the bedrock, it is more likely a representation of coal mining.



General Dynamics/Building Materials, 1960

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Poster House Permanent Collection

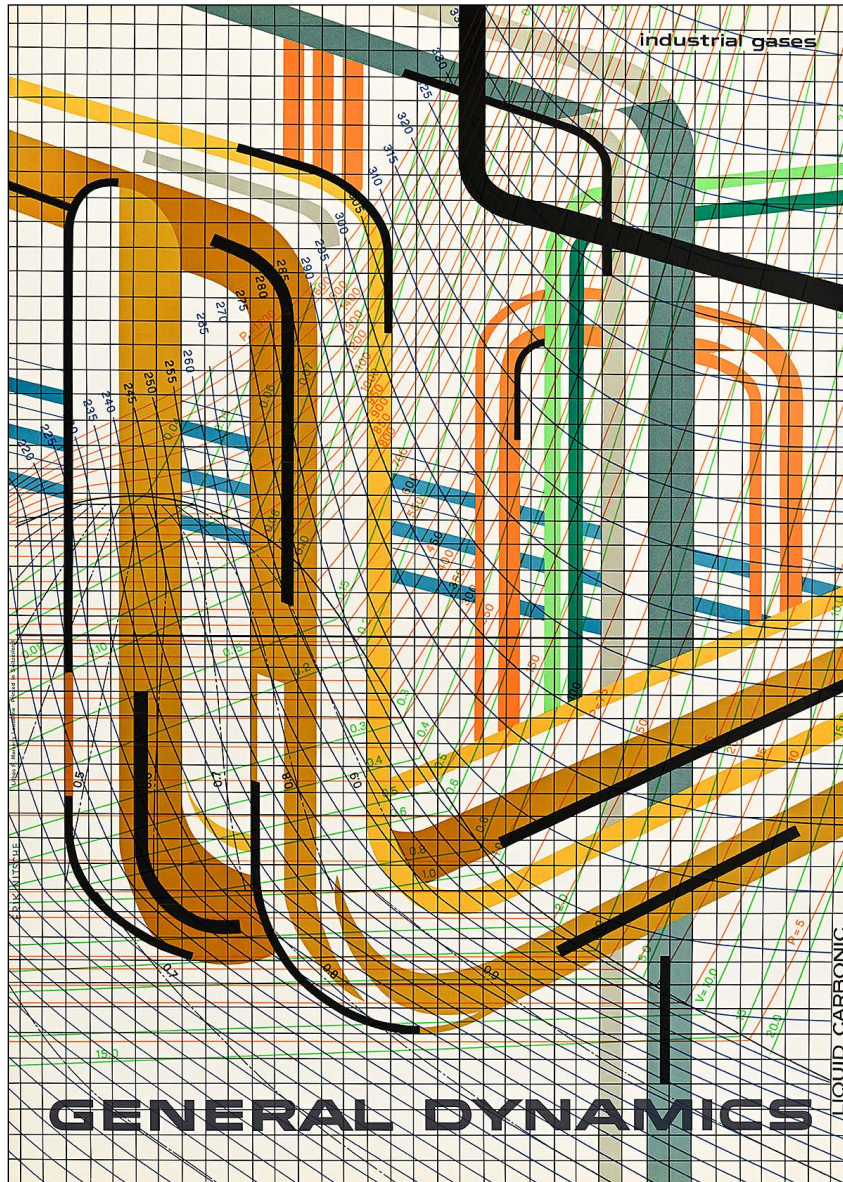
- This composition, inspired by Piet Mondrian, also promotes General Dynamics's recent merger with Material Service Corporation, presenting an abstracted and colorful scaffolding associated with construction sites.
- An advertisement in *Scientific American* featuring the same design promotes the company's ability to produce modular concrete slabs on an assembly line, allowing for faster urban development.
- The need for General Dynamics to acquire companies that diversified its portfolio outside of the defense sector points to an interesting financial distinction between the East and West. In the Soviet Union, the government funded nuclear research while in the United States, the government subcontracted private companies to perform the same services. These efforts were so expensive that corporations needed additional forms of revenue to stay afloat.



General Dynamics/Medical Gases, 1960

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

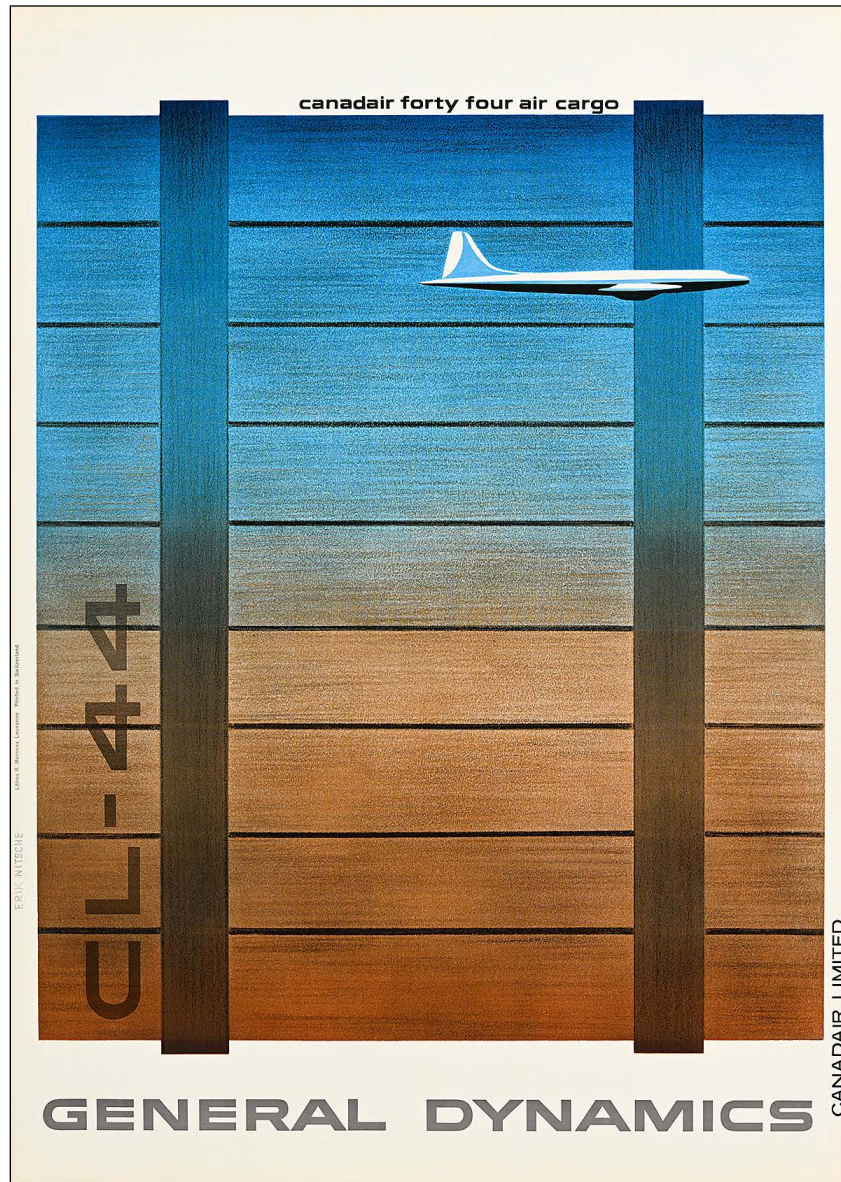


General Dynamics/Industrial Gases, 1960

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- The same year that General Dynamics merged with Material Service Corporation, it also merged with Liquid Carbonic, an industrial-gas company that dealt in, among other things, liquid oxygen for the medical field and carbon dioxide used in the production of soda. This acquisition made General Dynamics one of the 20 largest industrial corporations in the country.
- While most nuclear power plants relied on heavy water to cool their reactors, research was being conducted by General Atomic on the possibility of a gas-cooled reactor using helium or carbon dioxide. This would allow countries to use natural uranium rather than seeking enriched uranium through the Soviet Union or the United States while also transferring the control of nuclear reactors entirely to the private sector.



General Dynamics/Canadair Limited, 1960

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

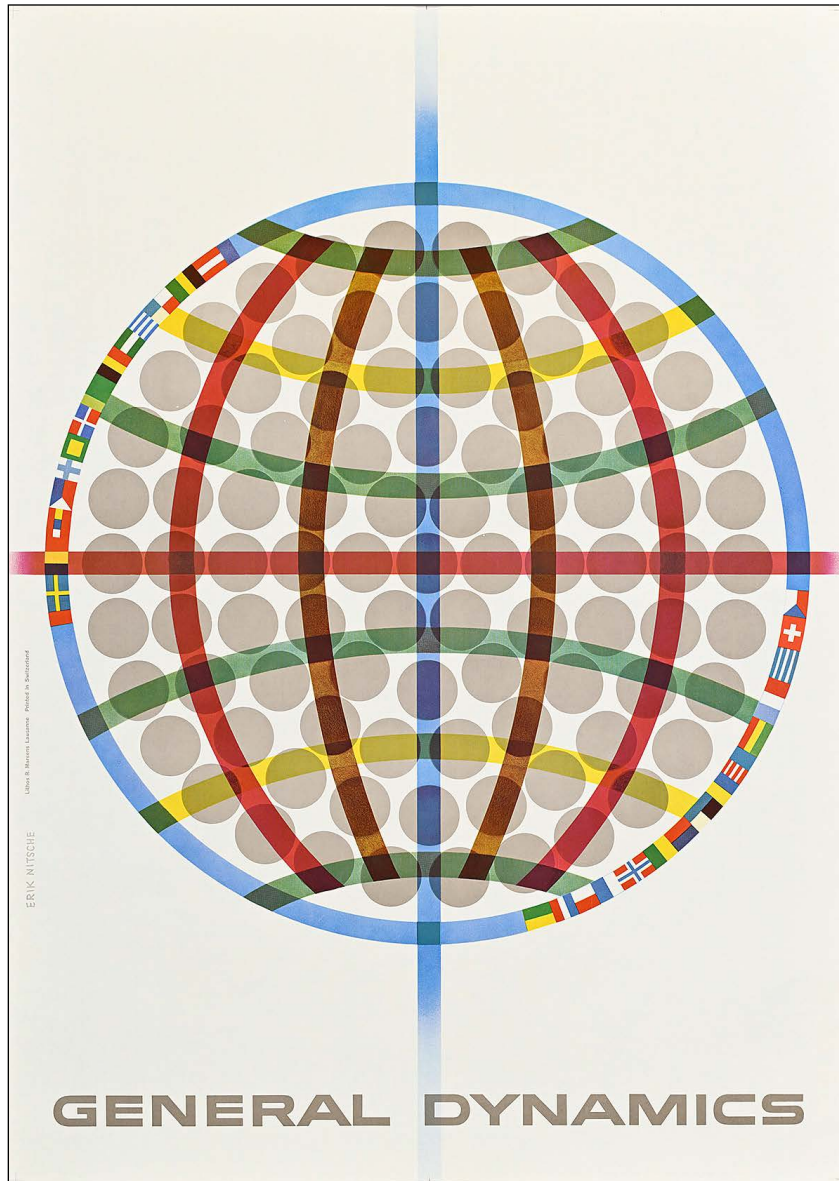
- When General Dynamics was founded in 1952, the Electric Boat Company had already acquired a controlling interest in Canadair, a Canadian military and commercial aircraft manufacturer. Once it acquired Convair a few years later, Canadair became the Canadian subsidiary of Convair.
- This poster promotes Canadair's CL-44, a cargo plane produced during the 1950s and '60s for both global commercial use as well as for the Royal Canadian Air Force. Its construction allowed for two bomb bays in addition to a hinged tail section that could be opened like a door, exposing the entire rear of the plane to quickly load freight or passengers.



General Dynamics/Convair, 1960

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Merrill C. Berman Collection

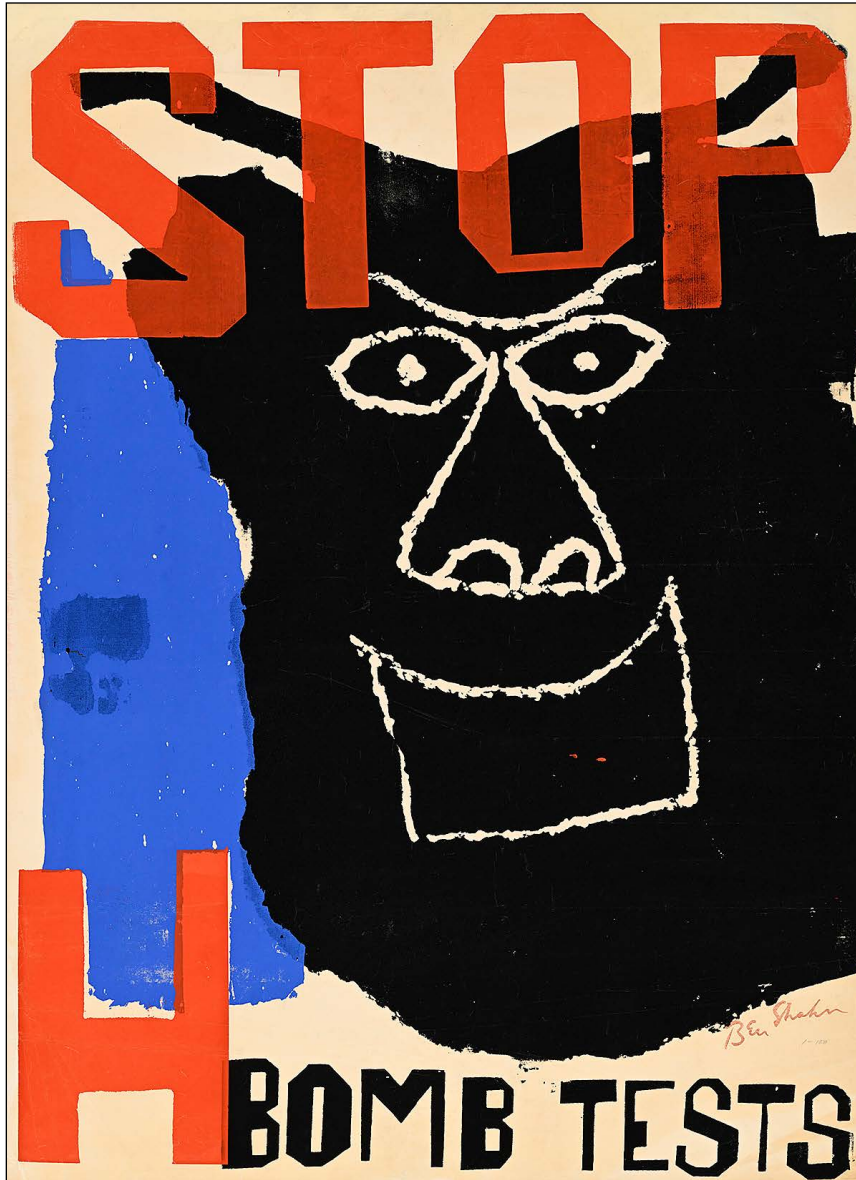


General Dynamics, 1960

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Merrill C. Berman Collection

- In two far more simplified designs than those of his previous posters for General Dynamics, Nitsche graphically projects the company's desired impact on the world.
- In the poster for Convair, the 880 plane is shown traversing the globe, multicolored lines indicating the many places it will serve. Meanwhile, the companion design uses gray circles to indicate the 24 TRIGA nuclear reactors that have been placed on five continents around the world, fulfilling the Atoms for Peace initiative by bringing energy to more countries (represented through their flags along the border).



Stop H Bomb Tests, 1960

Ben Shahn (1898–1969)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Known today as Peace Action, the National Committee for a SANE Nuclear Policy was founded in November 1957 to educate Americans on the dangers of nuclear weapons testing and amplify their concerns. Within six months, it had more than 130 chapters and 25,000 members.
- By May 1960, the group was the largest peace-focused organization in the United States, with numerous prominent advocates, including Bertrand Russell and Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Ben Shahn, one of the most notable American artists of the time, created this silkscreen poster as both a limited-edition print to raise funds for SANE and as part of a guerilla propaganda campaign (this example is the latter variant).
- The State Department's dismissive response to SANE's advertising campaign was that it was "really inviting us to a strategic surrender which would lead to the U.S. being colonized by the population hordes of China."

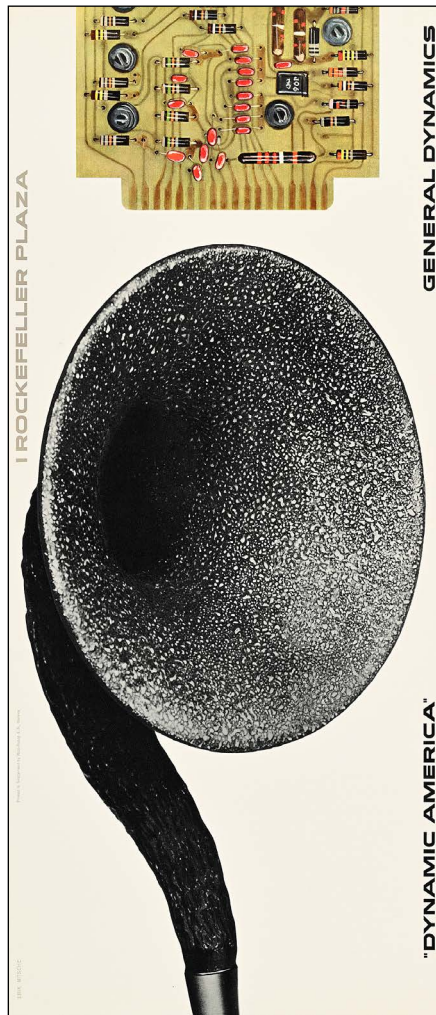


The Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons, c. 1960

Arne Ungermann (1902–81)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- During World War II, Denmark had been occupied by Germany for five years. That presence made the country wary of rising Soviet expansion, especially with so many annexed countries just across the Baltic Sea on its eastern border.
- Fear of a Soviet invasion led to Denmark becoming a founding member of NATO in 1949, abandoning a pronounced history of neutrality. The Danish government introduced firm conditions for NATO members, however, insisting that there would be no nuclear bases or weapons within Denmark and no Allied military presence.
- This poster reflects popular public opinion within Denmark on nuclear weapons, grimly emphasizing their inherent danger. Despite this, and the government's official anti-nuclear stance, evidence has since surfaced that the United States routinely used airspace over Greenland and the Faroe Islands (both Danish territories) as well as Danish ports to transport nuclear weapons throughout the Cold War without the Danish government's knowledge.

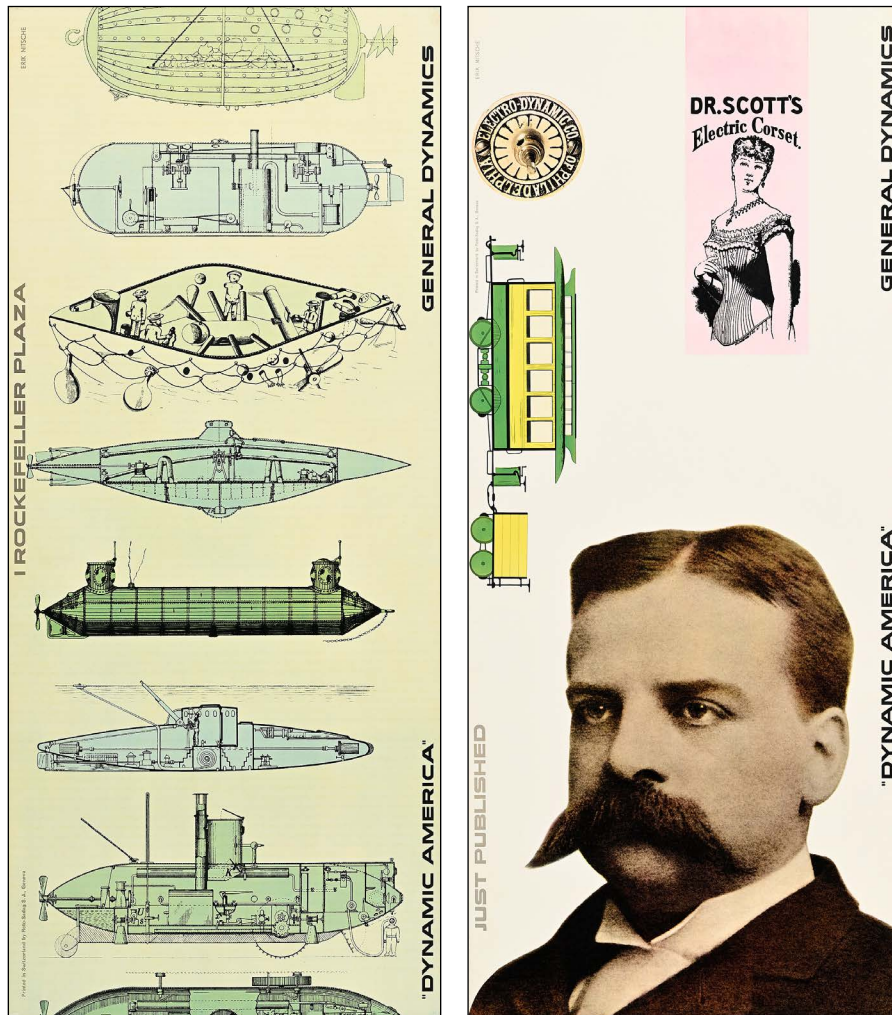


General Dynamics/"Dynamic America," 1961

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Collection Galerie 1 2 3 - Geneva Switzerland

- To celebrate the renaming of the Time-Life Building in Rockefeller Center as the General Dynamics Building in 1961, the company hosted *Dynamic America*, an exhibition that addressed its history and myriad scientific achievements.
- Nitsche created a series of six posters to promote the show, each focusing on a division within General Dynamics. The designs juxtapose vintage photographs and illustrations with symbols of modernity, all of which feature in his corresponding corporate history, also called *Dynamic America*.
- These two posters represent Stromberg-Carlson, a telecommunications company dating back to 1894 that General Dynamics had acquired in 1955, and show radio speakers, electronic transistor switches, and early examples of the telephone.

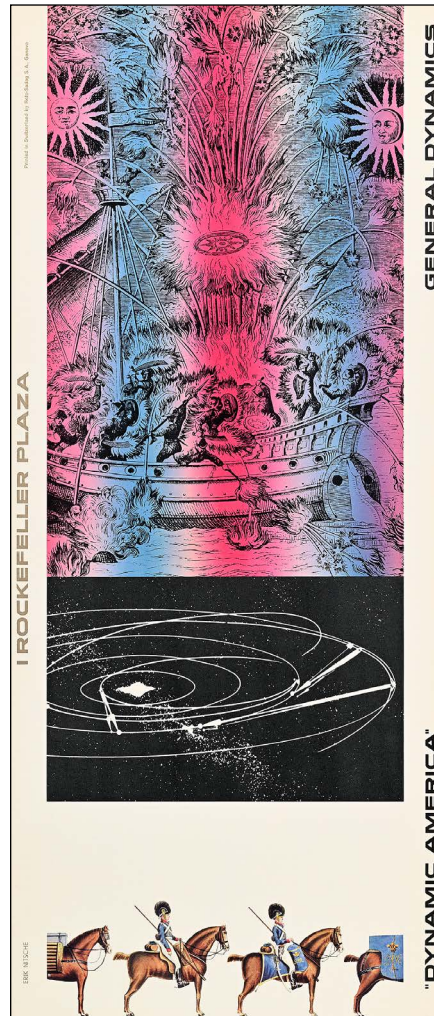
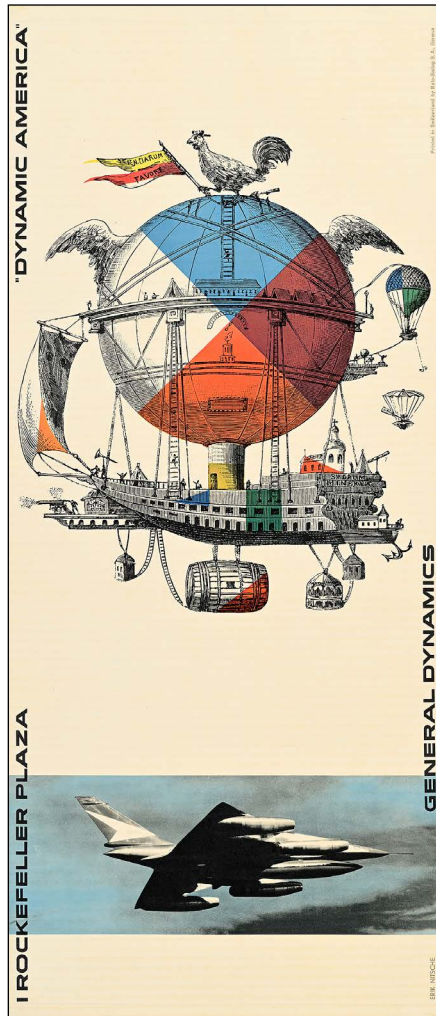


General Dynamics/"Dynamic America," 1961

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Collection Galerie 1 2 3 - Geneva Switzerland

- Photographs indicate that these posters were displayed throughout the exhibition, in addition to probably being used as advertising near Rockefeller Center.
- These two designs focus on Electric Boat, one of the founding organizations from which General Dynamics emerged. The nautical renderings are all imaginary submarines drawn between 1850 and 1896—fantastical precursors to the company's landmark USS *Nautilus* submarine. Meanwhile, the other design features a photograph of William Woodnut Griscom, founder of Electric Boat, alongside his two most famous scientific developments: the electric tramway and the electric corset.

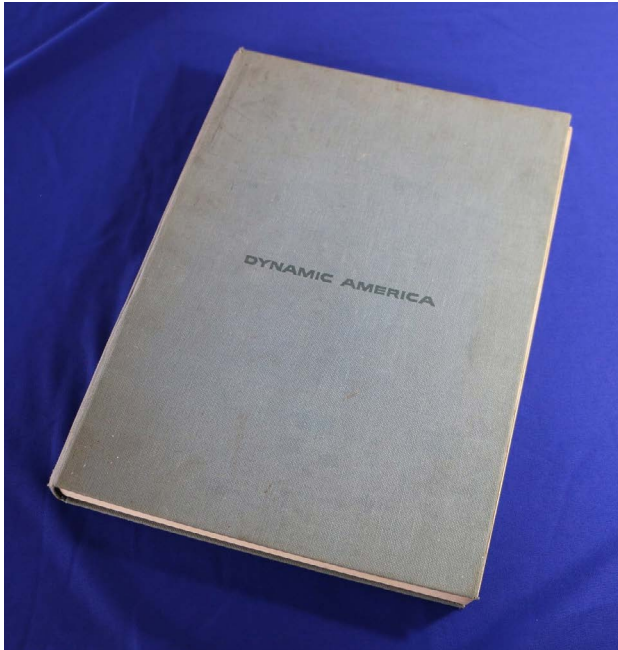


General Dynamics/"Dynamic America," 1961

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Collection Galerie 1 2 3 - Geneva Switzerland

- These final two designs focus on the future of the company as emerging inevitably from the developments of the past.
- On the left, the Convair B-58 Hustler, the first bomber capable of flying at Mach 2 speeds (two times the speed of sound), is shown below a fantastical rendering of the French Minerva airship from 1803. This fanciful and ambitious airship served as a symbol of scientific optimism.
- On the right, the uncharted cosmos is juxtaposed with soldiers on horseback and a 1630 etching of an imaginary naval combat, suggesting that space is the new battlefield.
- Nitsche would reuse many of the motifs in this series in *The New Illustrated Library of Science and Invention*, a 12-volume set designed to introduce scientific history to a general audience.



Dynamic America, 1961

Erik Nitsche (1908–98)

Private Collection, NYC

- Nitsche also designed the corporate history that accompanied the exhibition, generally considered to be one of the most ambitious and impressively orchestrated books of its kind.
- The project took Nitsche three years to produce. The resulting book radically altered the way other artists conceptualized corporate design. Designers as diverse in outlook as Seymour Chwast and Walter Bernard cite it as an inspiration, often referencing Nitsche's “cinematic pacing” within his layouts.

The Road to Disarmament

When Dwight D. Eisenhower became president in 1953, the United States had one thousand nuclear warheads. When he left office in 1961, it had twenty-three thousand. Military might had become big business—and Eisenhower warned about the consequences of this in his final address to the American public:

“In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machine of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together. Disarmament, with mutual honor and confidence is a continuing imperative. As one who has witnessed the horror and lingering sadness of war—as one who knows that another war could utterly destroy this civilization—I wish I could say tonight that a lasting peace is in sight.”

Over the next 30 years, the presence of this “alert and knowledgeable citizenry” was hardly consistent, with protests around the proliferation of nuclear weapons waxing and waning in popularity. The first wave of major public activism began with the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, when the United States discovered that the Soviet Union was building nuclear missile sites on Cuba. The resulting confrontation between the two nations brought the world to the edge of a nuclear holocaust. The next major upsurge in demonstrations came with the elections of Margaret Thatcher in England in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the United States in 1980, as both leaders believed in increasing their nation’s stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the name of national security.

When Mikhail Gorbachev became general secretary of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union in 1985, he noted that the survival of mankind would depend on a rethinking of this kind of escalating defense strategy. Influenced by scientists and antiwar organizations, as well as the collapsing Soviet economy, he began to reduce the Soviet arsenal and suggested that the United States do the same. While President Reagan was initially hesitant, his gradual reevaluation of the realities of nuclear war, combined with his awareness of Gorbachev's popularity in the United Kingdom and West Germany on issues of arms control, persuaded him to sign the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in December 1987, reducing the quantity of nuclear weapons in both the United States and the U.S.S.R. A year later, South Africa divested its nuclear arsenal. Further disarmament milestones were reached in 1990, when the Soviet Union conducted its final nuclear test in an underground facility near the Matorokin Strait; the United States's final test took place underground in Nevada in September 1992—its 1,032nd test since 1945. That same year, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was presented to the United Nations General Assembly, asking all countries to ban nuclear testing. While it was adopted by the U.N. in September 1996, little progress has been made since then, with only 178 nations ratifying it.

In a nuclear war in Europe, at least 100 million people would die. If the USA and the USSR were engaged in a full-scale nuclear war, at least 200 million people would perish.

—Peter Kennard, designer



Stop Nuclear Suicide, 1963

Frederick Henri Kay Henrion (né Henrich Kohn, 1914–90)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Born in Germany, Frederick Henrion lived in Paris before moving to England in 1936. Although he was interned there as an enemy alien during World War II, he managed to produce propaganda posters for both the British and the American governments. After the war, he became a pioneer in the emerging field of corporate-identity design.
- This poster is for the West Midlands branch of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, a British organization dedicated to fighting nuclear proliferation. Its logo at the lower left (popularly known today as the peace sign) was designed in 1958 by Gerald Holtom at the time of the first Aldermaston march, one of a series of antinuclear demonstrations in the U.K. at the site of its Atomic Weapons Research Establishment.
- Holtom explained the genesis of the peace sign: “I drew myself: the representative of an individual in despair, with hands outwards and downwards in the manner of Goya’s peasant before the firing squad. I formalized the drawing into a line and drew a circle around it.” The symbol also incorporates the semaphore for N(uclear) and D(isarmament), and was deliberately never trademarked, allowing it to gain global recognition during the subsequent decades.



Not This! But Disarmament, 1963

Jaroslav Veverka (Dates Unknown)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Founded in Prague in 1946, the International Union of Students (IUS) sought to create a global alliance of student organizations focusing on issues of human rights, access to education, and the defense of peace. While originally nonpolitical, the organization was quickly dominated by Communist student groups in governing positions, leading to the withdrawal of groups from Western Europe.
- This poster, published by the IUS, was issued in English, Spanish, and French, and distributed to Communist-aligned student groups around the world. It is one of many antinuclear designs produced by the IUS between the 1960s and the 1980s.
- Regardless of political affiliation or country of origin, young people who grew up in the 1950s and '60s all lived under the daily threat of nuclear holocaust. It was common for them to experience drills at school in which they were instructed to “duck and cover” under their desks for protection. In some parts of the United States, children were given dog tags so that, in the event of a nuclear attack, their parents could identify their bodies.



Nuclear Energy, 1964

Bernard Villemot (1911–89)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- After the outbreak of World War II, French scientists began working on the country's nuclear program—not with the explicit intention of developing a bomb, but rather to allow France to become self-sufficient and supply its own energy.
- While this program was suspended during the German occupation, in October 1945, General Charles de Gaulle created the Atomic Energy Commission (CAE), a governing body supporting nuclear research in the medical, industrial, and defense fields.
- In 1956, the CAE opened the Marcoule Nuclear Site, the country's first active power plant. Three years later, France would successfully test its first nuclear bomb in Algeria.
- Here, one of France's most famous poster artists, Bernard Villemot, presents a futuristic design in which man harnesses the wonders of atomic energy in his hands, emphasizing the advancement of French nuclear science. The design would be reissued in 1971 to promote an exhibition of atomic energy in Paris.



Neutron Bomb/No Business Damage, 1977

Joke Ziegelaar (1943–2019)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- While the development of the neutron bomb dates back to 1958, it was not until 1977 that the United States announced its plans to produce it for deployment. Scientifically known as enhanced radiation weapons (ERWs), these bombs were more targeted than their predecessors, creating a smaller blast but releasing a more direct amount of lethal radiation.
- At the time of this development, the Soviet Union had a larger stockpile of conventional weapons than countries belonging to NATO. As such, military planners believed that in any conflict, Western Europe could easily be overrun. Building up an arsenal of neutron bombs would allow short-range missiles in the area to incapacitate Soviet forces by penetrating tanks and other heavy military equipment with massive doses of radiation.
- Although NATO officials were in favor of producing the neutron bomb, protest groups focused on the concept that it was a particularly capitalist weapon in that it would kill people but leave property intact—thus the tagline in this Dutch poster, “no business damage.”
- While neutron bombs were built and tested by multiple countries, the public’s strong resistance to their large-scale development led to European governments backpedaling on their deployment. In 1978, the Carter administration in the United States also canceled plans for using them.

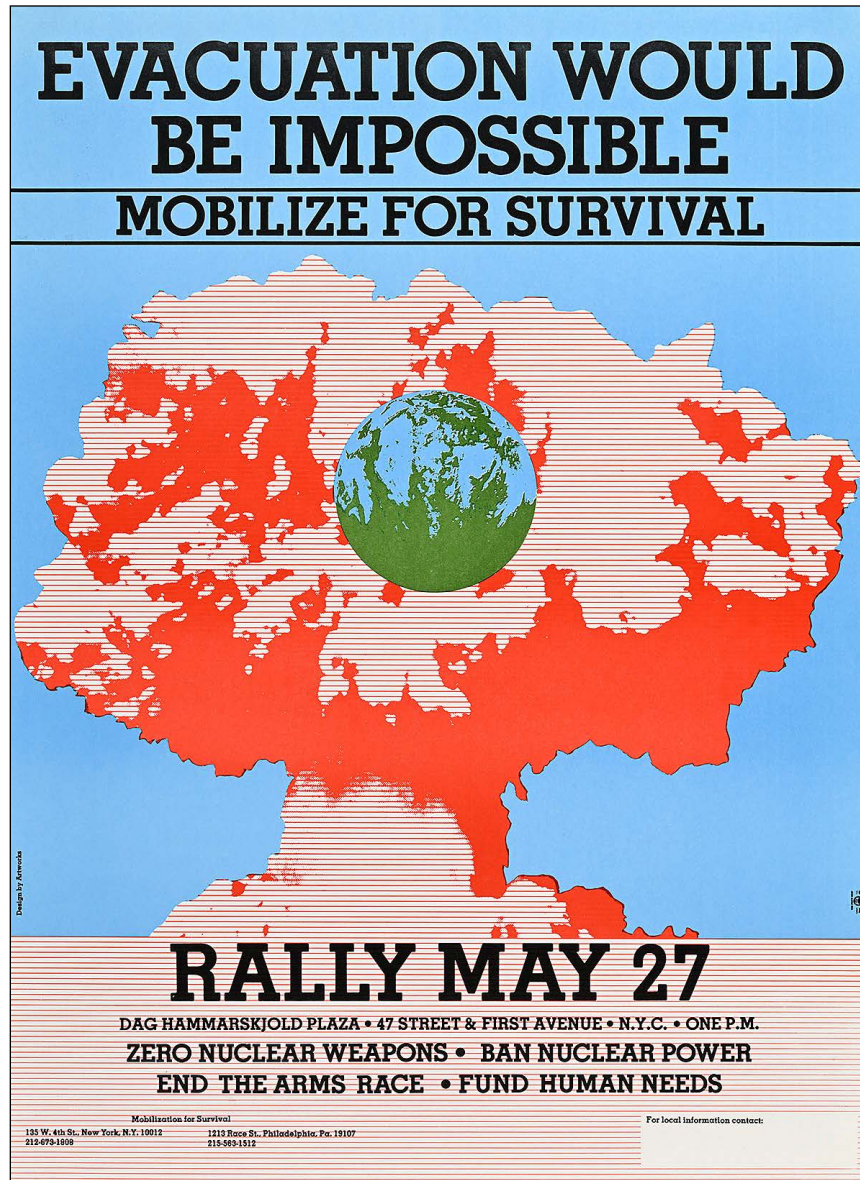


Seabrook Occupation & Restoration, 1978

Bonnie Acker (b. 1948)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- The Clamshell Alliance was founded in New Hampshire in 1976 specifically to oppose the construction of the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant. This was one of many sites included in Richard Nixon's Project Independence that aimed to build one thousand nuclear power plants by the year 2000.
- In April 1977, thousands of activists occupied the construction site. More than 1,400 protestors were arrested—one of the largest mass arrests in U.S. history. Many of those taken into custody refused to pay bail, spending weeks in jail before they were released because the cost of their extended imprisonment was draining tens of thousands of dollars from the state.
- This poster publicizes a contentious decision within the Clamshell Alliance that ultimately caused it to split into two factions. Without obtaining consensus from the larger group, the Coordinating Committee accepted the New Hampshire government's offer that it host a solar-panel festival on the planned site in exchange for calling off a large demonstration (and thereby saving the county money that would have gone toward arresting them again).
- Construction of the power plant was completed in 1990, and it still operates today.

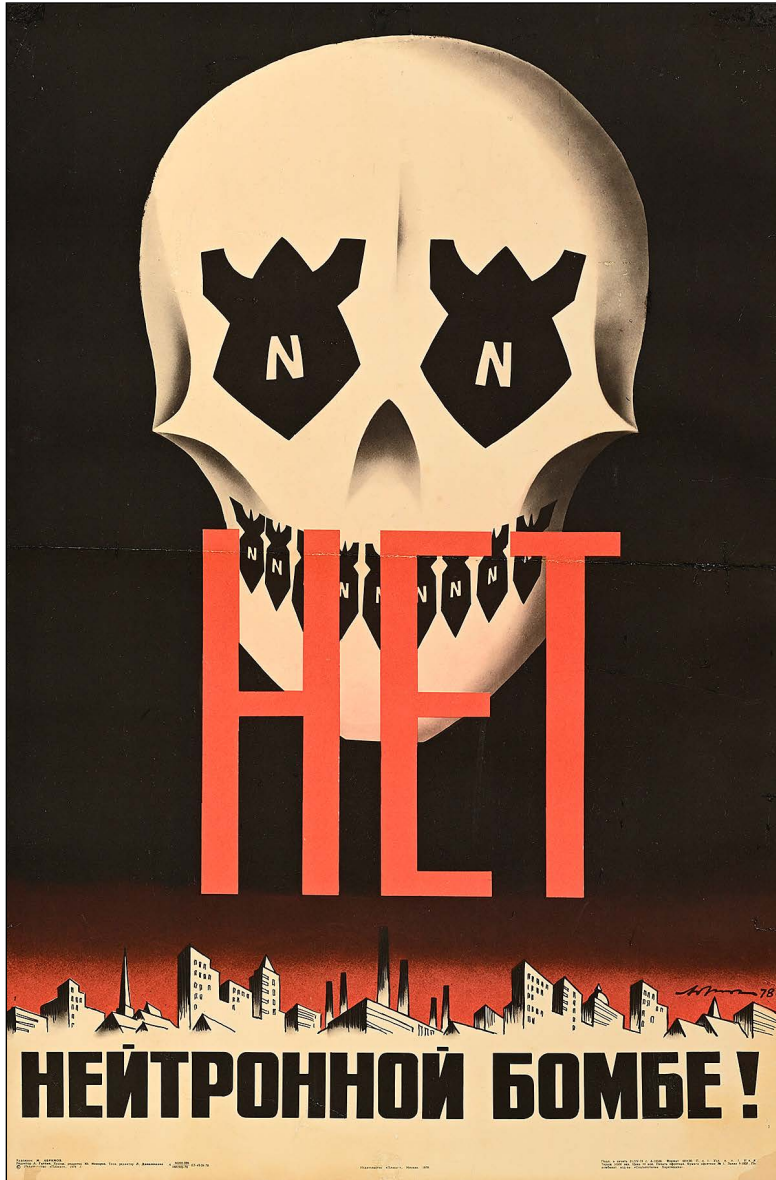


Mobilize for Survival, 1978

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Founded in early 1977, Mobilization for Survival (MFS) had four official goals: the disarmament of all nuclear weapons, a ban on nuclear power plants, an end to the arms race, and a redirection of these funds to better serve human needs. By December 1977, it had 330 affiliate groups from across the United States, many of which represented different audiences but shared a common concern over the threat of nuclear war.
- By the late 1970s, the general public had a much more realistic concept of what would happen in the event of nuclear war—that, as this poster notes, “evacuation would be impossible” and most people would die, either in the initial blast or, agonizingly, over time due to radiation exposure.
- This poster promotes a march and rally that MFS organized to take place at the same time as the United Nations Special Session for Disarmament. It drew more than twenty thousand people, making it the largest disarmament demonstration in U.S. history.

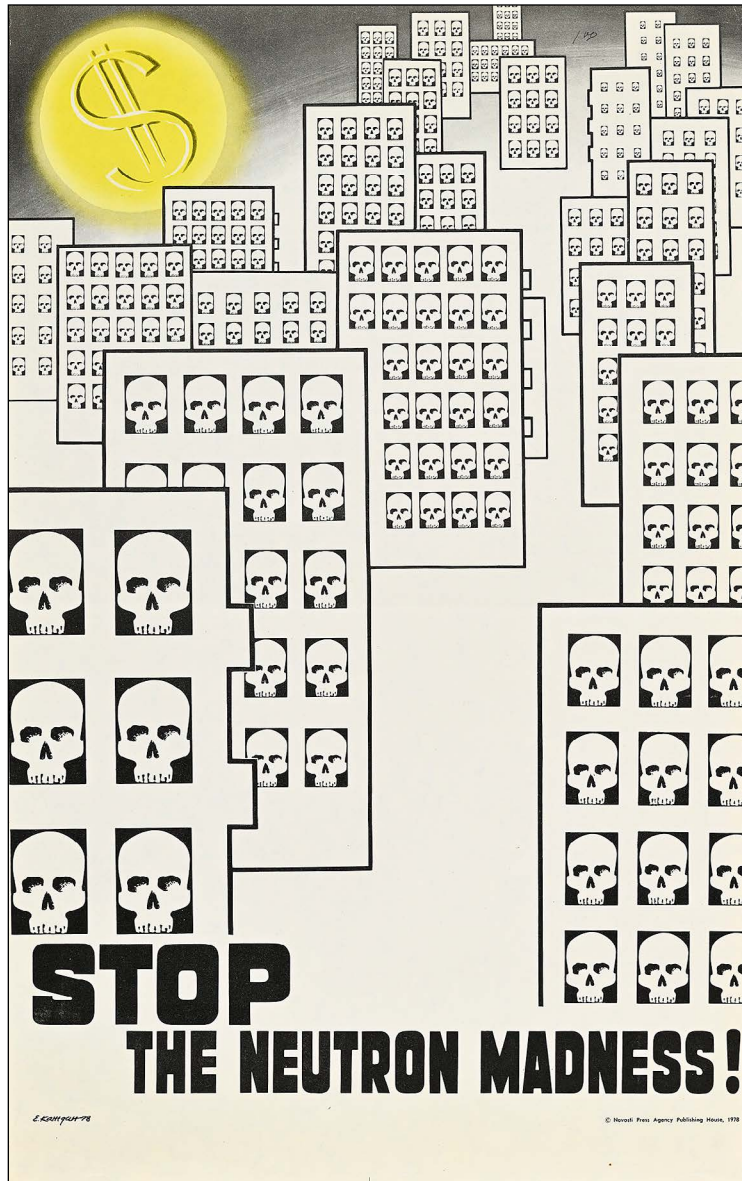


No to Neutron Bomb!, 1978

Mark Aleksandrovich Abramov (1913–94)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- As the Soviet Union did not possess the technology to create the neutron bomb, it created an aggressive propaganda campaign against its development in the West, both at home and abroad.
- Images like this would have been seen throughout the U.S.S.R. and Comecon countries in an effort to warn citizens of the pending Western threat. According to the printing information in the bottom margin, thirty thousand copies of this poster were printed for distribution.

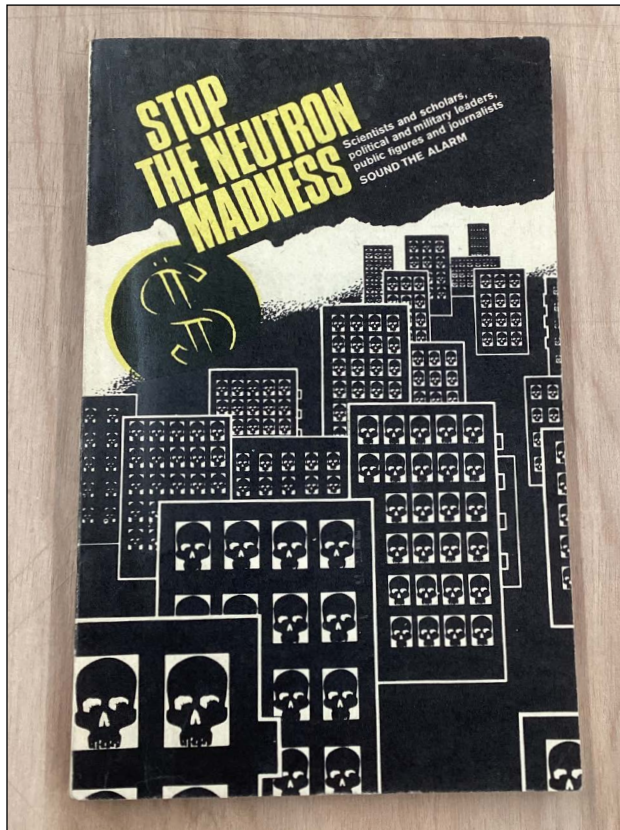


Stop the Neutron Madness!, 1978

Evgeniy Abramovich Kazhdan (1922–84)

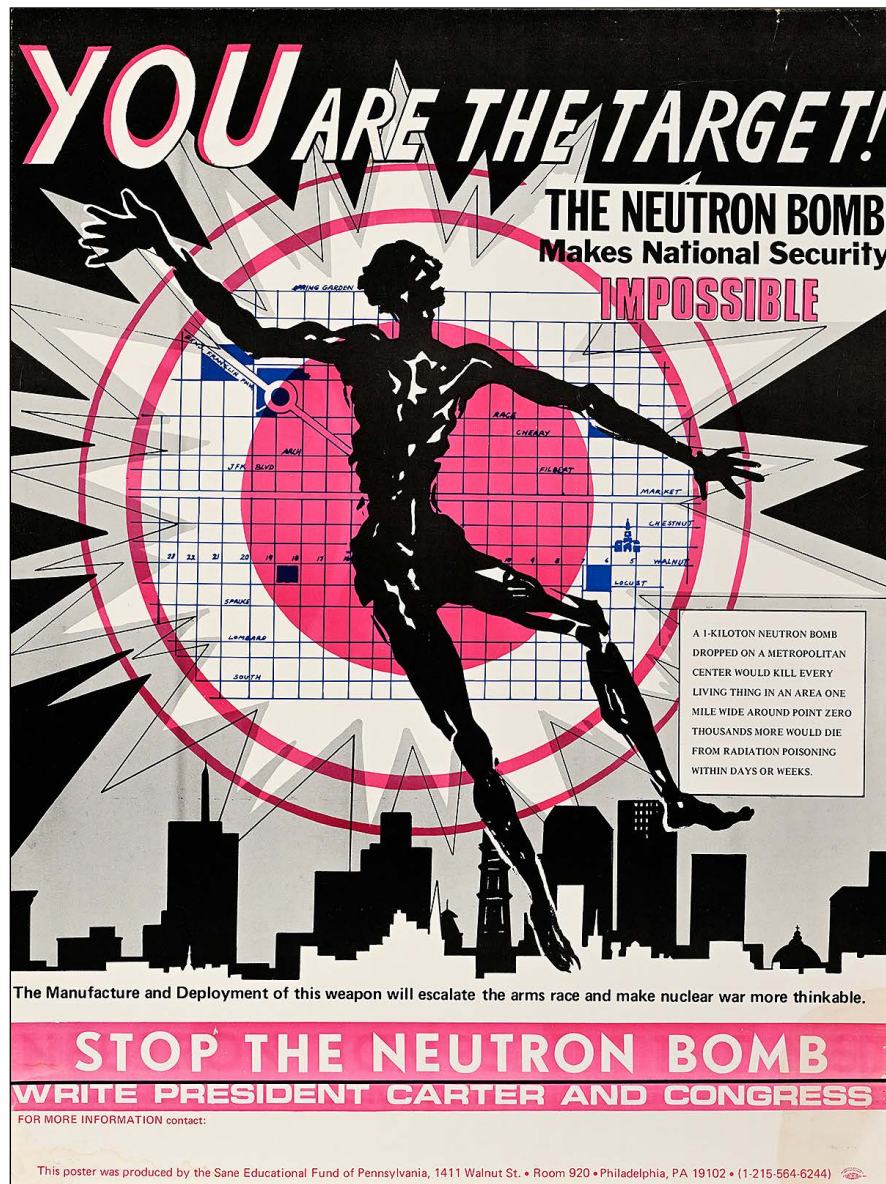
Poster House Permanent Collection

- Established in 1961, the Novosti Press Agency was a state-owned organization tasked by the Soviet government with producing and distributing information to foreign countries. At its height, it controlled more than 1,171 newspapers, 523 magazines, and 18 radio stations in 23 countries.
- This poster was distributed in the United States by the Novosti Press Agency, and reflects the argument that the neutron bomb is a capitalist tool that would kill humans through intense radiation while leaving buildings and other property unharmed. It was accompanied by a book of the same name that featured similar cover artwork, asking readers to “sound the alarm.”
- Initially, the United States had planned to house neutron bombs in West Germany so that they could be used as a bargaining chip with the Soviet Union. The goal was supposed to be a limited deployment of neutron bombs in exchange for the U.S.S.R. agreeing to reduce its tank forces near the borders of Western European countries.



Stop the Neutron Madness, 1978

Private Collection, NYC



Stop the Neutron Bomb, c. 1978

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- The Sane Educational Fund of Pennsylvania was an offshoot of a larger peace organization that disbanded soon after the end of the Vietnam War. This smaller group refocused its efforts on nuclear disarmament.
- While the intended use of the neutron bomb was as a wartime defense mechanism, particularly targeting Soviet tanks, popular antinuclear campaigns, many of which were influenced by Soviet propaganda, highlighted the weapon as a domestic civilian threat. This sentiment had spread from Europe to the United States, and by 1978, polls indicated that 75 percent of the American population favored a comprehensive test-ban treaty on nuclear weapons.
- Although this poster encourages viewers to write to the president and Congress about the neutron bomb, eight religious protestors in nearby King of Prussia, Pennsylvania entered a General Electric weapons plant and, following the biblical directive to “beat their swords into plowshares,” pummeled nuclear-missile cones into an unusable state. Subsequently known as the Plowshares Eight, they each received three-to-ten-year prison sentences for their actions.

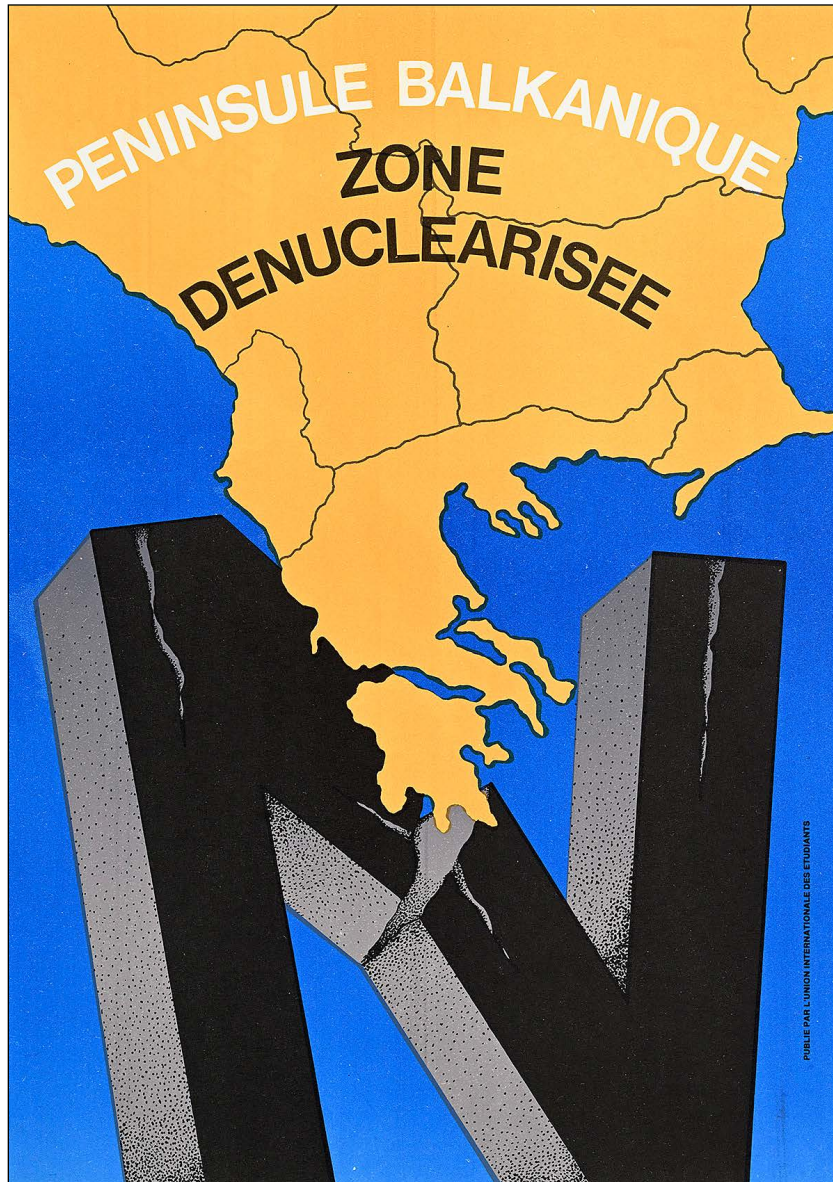


International Day Against Nuclear War, c. 1978

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- This Spanish-language poster featuring an image that can be read as a human skull or as a mushroom cloud was published by the International Union of Students (IUS).
- By the height of the Cold War, the IUS was focused on attracting students from nonaligned countries, especially those in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. To support these efforts, much of its literature and printed materials were issued in the languages of targeted countries and then sent to student member groups all over the world.
- Similar to posters produced by the Cuban-based political organization OSPAAAL, this design highlights a specific day of international recognition. In this case, August 6 commemorates the anniversary of the day the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan.



Balkan Peninsula/Nuclear-Free Zone, c. 1978

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- The concept of the Balkan Peninsula first emerged in the early 19th century to address the strategic region of south-eastern Europe. While its borders have historically been disputed, at the time this poster was printed by the International Union of Students it included what was then Yugoslavia (now six separate countries), Romania, Albania, and parts of Greece and Turkey.
- Starting in the 1960s, Romania, Yugoslavia, and other Comecon countries proposed that both the Soviet Union and the United States remove their military presence from the region, making it a nuclear-free zone.
- While both governments had influence in the Balkans, U.S. bases with nuclear weapons, most especially in Turkey and Greece, presented an extreme threat to the Soviet Union. Since it had the upper hand, the United States routinely rejected requests for demilitarization.



Stop Diablo Canyon, 1979

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Construction for the Diablo Canyon Power Plant in California began in 1968. Around the time of its completion in 1973, experts discovered that the Hosgri Fault was less than two and a half miles offshore, putting the integrity of the plant at risk in the event of an earthquake.
- This discovery put the plant's operations on hold from 1973 to 1985 as Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) navigated numerous licensing hearings, safety checks, and construction modifications. This poster promotes one of many protests that occurred during that period, organized by the Abalone Alliance, a civil-disobedience group founded specifically to protest the presence of this power plant.
- Each year, the protests grew in size, attracting thousands of civilians as well as celebrity guests. The year this poster was issued, musician Bonnie Raitt and the activist Ralph Nader were featured. Nonetheless, the plant was put into operation in 1985 as the state's largest power plant. Recent legislation, however, has forced PG&E to announce its anticipated closure in 2030.



Safe Energy Now, 1979

Milton Glaser (1929–2020)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- A nuclear meltdown occurs when a nuclear reactor overheats, causing its core to melt and potentially release radioactive material. In March 1979, the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station in Pennsylvania experienced a partial meltdown in one of its two reactors. While the accident was ultimately contained, the fear of an explosion at the plant resulted in a proliferation of antinuclear activism around the world.
- Musicians United for Safe Energy (MUSE) was formed shortly after the Three Mile Island incident with the goal of raising funds in favor of a nonnuclear future.
- This poster advertises one from a series of five sequential concerts held at Madison Square Garden in support of the cause, featuring such notable musicians as Bruce Springsteen; Crosby, Stills & Nash; Carly Simon; James Taylor; Jackson Browne; Chaka Khan; and Tom Petty.
- The damaged reactor at Three Mile Island was closed and entombed in concrete; the other unit continued to produce power until 2019. While site cleanup and demolition was scheduled to continue through 2052, it was announced in September 2024 that the plant will reopen in 2028 to power Microsoft's cloud and AI services.



Shut Down New York's Nuclear Reactors, 1979

Ben Hillman (Dates Unknown)

Gift of Ben Hillman, Poster House Permanent Collection

- After the partial meltdown at Three Mile Island, antinuclear demonstrations became more frequent throughout the United States. This poster promotes two protests at Indian Point Energy Center near Peekskill, New York. They were timed to coincide with the anniversaries of the U.S. bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- The poster's headline underscores the fact that many activists did not draw a distinction between typical nuclear weapons and nuclear power: they viewed both as a threat to human life. At the bottom, the text notes that a study indicates that 27,000 people would die in the event of a major meltdown at Indian Point, while the image implies that New York City would be directly impacted.
- While the protests drew more than four thousand demonstrators, the power plant remained active until 2021. After it closed, three new power plants fueled by natural gas took its place, only intensifying the contentious debate over which form of energy is less damaging to the environment.



Remember Hiroshima, 1979

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Held in Melbourne, Australia, the day before the actual anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, this poster announces a rally focused on the banning of both nuclear weapons and uranium mining.
- Australia is home to the world's largest resource of uranium, a fundamental component of all nuclear technology. Up through the 1970s, it primarily supplied the weapons programs of the United States and the United Kingdom. As the country does not have nuclear energy or weapons, its production of uranium is entirely for export.
- The photograph of a young girl was taken by Yōsuke Yamahata the day after the bombing of Nagasaki. He took more than one hundred exposures of the aftermath of the event; it is the only extensive photographic record of either nuclear attack.

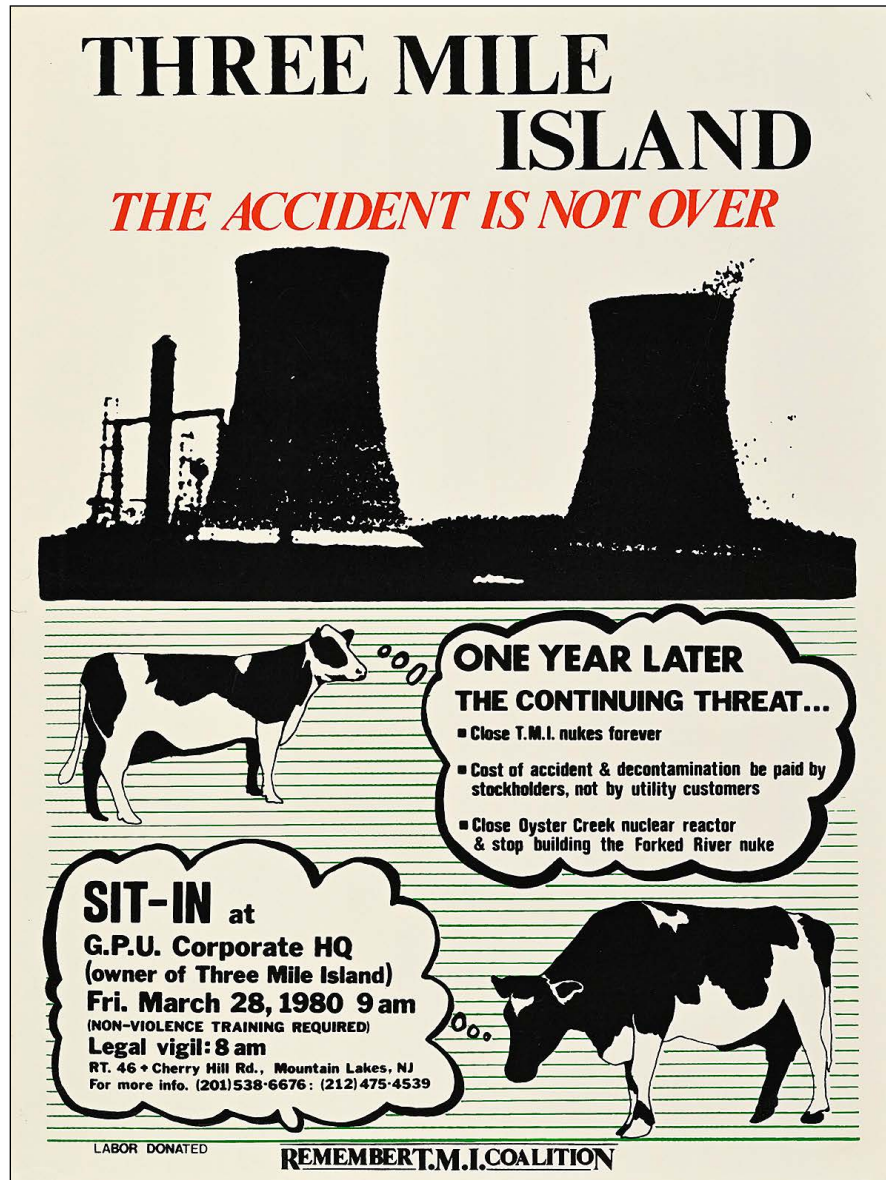


No to New US Missiles in Europe, c. 1980

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- While the neutron bomb was never deployed thanks to the efforts of activists around the world, their fears were soon redirected toward the threat of intermediate-range missiles being housed on U.S. military bases throughout Europe.
- In 1976, the Soviet Union introduced the SS-20 Saber, a highly mobile nuclear missile capable of hitting any target in Western Europe from within the U.S.S.R. At the time, NATO had no comparable weapon, and therefore would need to rely on the United States for support in any conflict.
- In December 1979, the NATO Double-Track Decision was adopted, favoring negotiation between conflicting powers but allowing the United States to place weapons comparable to the SS-20 Saber as a backup line of defense. This British poster protests that decision.

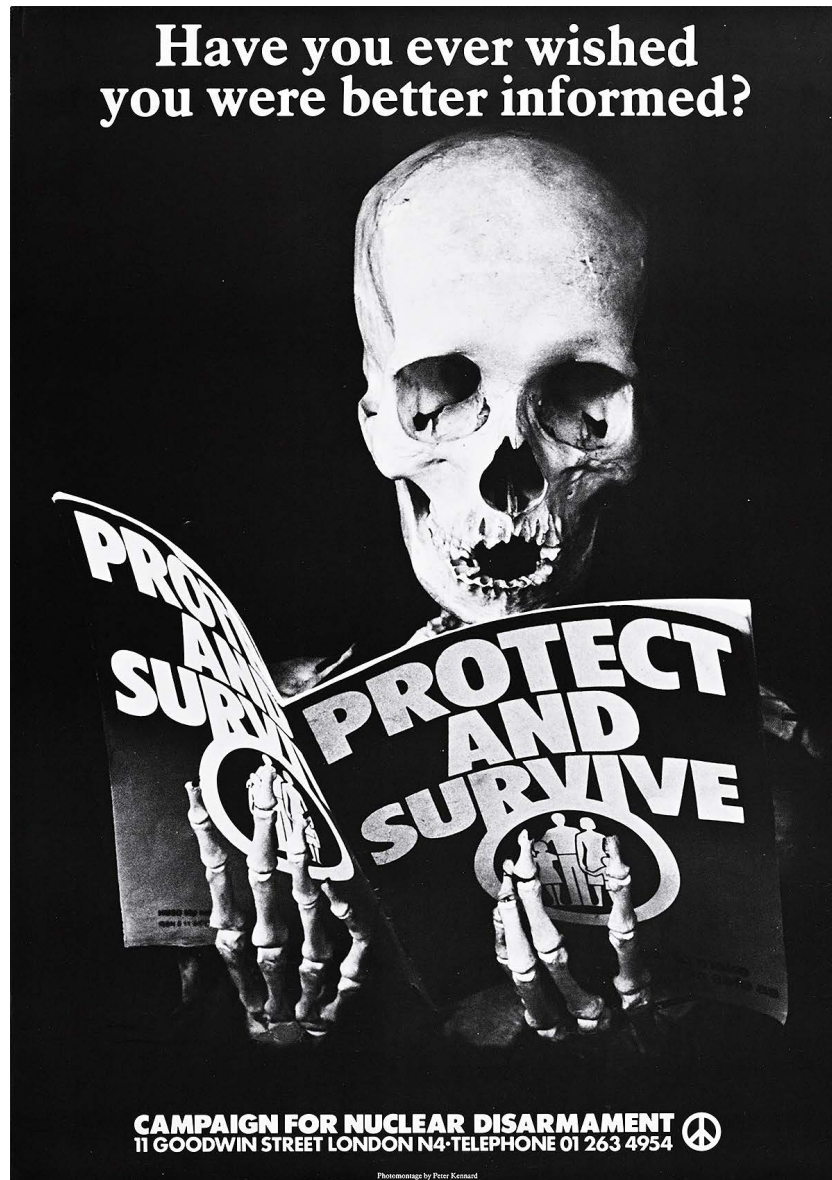


Three Mile Island/ The Accident is Not Over, 1980

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- After the Three Mile Island meltdown, public scrutiny of nuclear power plants increased, resulting in numerous protests over many years.
- The United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC) thoroughly investigated the accident, taking thousands of environmental samples of air, water, milk from local cows, vegetation, soil, and foodstuffs. Universities also conducted independent studies to determine health risks as a result of the meltdown. Despite serious damage to the reactor, the evidence ultimately indicated that the events had a negligible impact on individuals and the surrounding environment.
- In addition to demanding the closure of Three Mile Island's reactors, this poster calls for the closure of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station in New Jersey and a stop to the building of the nearby Forked River Nuclear Power Plant. While Oyster Creek remained active until 2018, the plans for Forked River were ultimately canceled in 1980 due to financial concerns and the public outcry over the Three Mile Island accident.



Protect and Survive, 1980

Peter Kennard (b. 1949)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Intended only for use during an actual emergency, Protect and Survive was a civil-defense campaign orchestrated by the British government to inform citizens about what to do during a nuclear attack. It consisted of television broadcasts, short-wave radio announcements, pamphlets, and newspaper advertisements.
- Public interest in the campaign resulted in parts of it being released early, with excerpts broadcast by the BBC on *Panorama*, its current-affairs program. Rather than reassuring people, however, the campaign demonstrated the potential horrors of any nuclear conflict. The resulting cultural impact cannot be overstated: the campaign was subsequently referenced in countless films, songs, and television programs, and became a general touchstone of the era.
- Throughout the 1970s and '80s, Peter Kennard created numerous posters for activist groups like the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. In this design, he uses satire to indicate that the Protect and Survive campaign could not possibly fulfill any of its promised aims. The tagline at the top of the poster was appropriated from advertisements for the *London Times*.

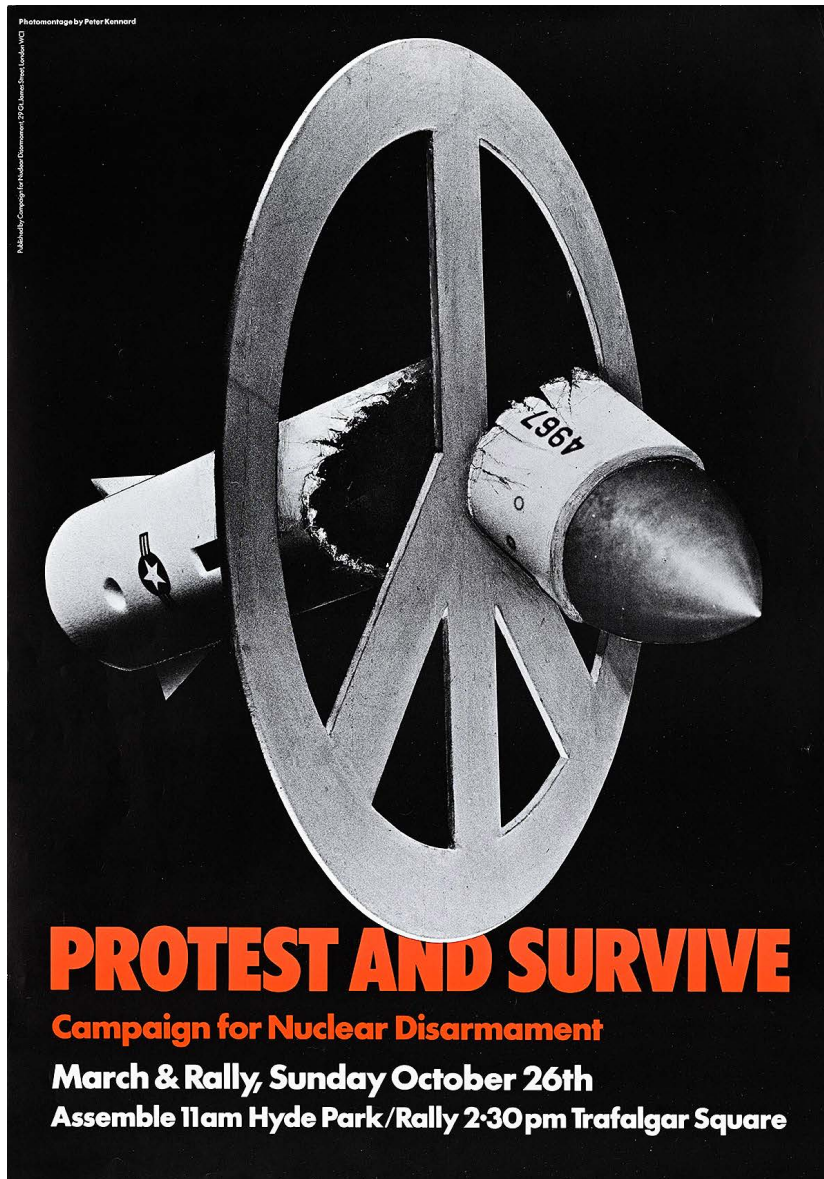


No Nuclear Weapons, 1980

Peter Kennard (b. 1949)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- This is the most famous image created by Peter Kennard for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). Multiple variants were published by the Greater London Council as well as by the Labour Party between 1980 and 1983. The original version was issued in color without the accompanying text, focusing solely on John Constable's 1821 painting *The Hay Wain*, adapted by Kennard to include a battery of cruise missiles delicately placed along the River Stour in Suffolk, England.
- Kennard used to mix postcards of his version of the painting into the stack of those of the original painting on sale at the National Gallery in London, with the idea that his protest art might be mailed around the world.
- The composition specifically references the rural location of Royal Air Force Lakenheath in Suffolk that is actually used as a U.S. Air Force base. In addition to the variety of American fighter squadrons stationed there, it housed at its peak 110 U.S. nuclear bombs. According to the CND, the U.S. is currently assessing whether or not it should place nuclear devices back on the base.

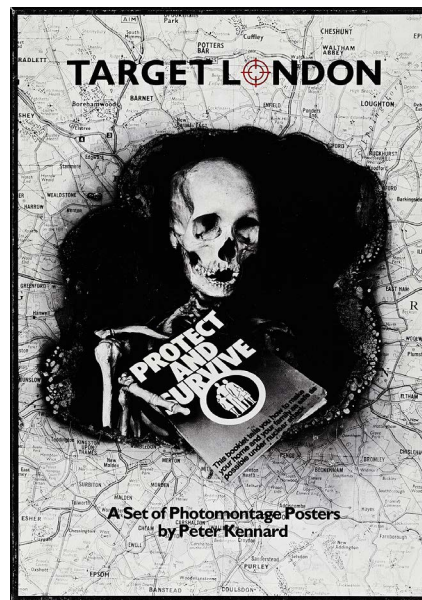
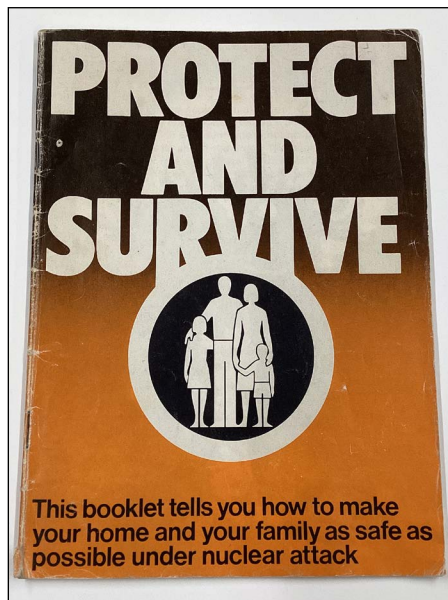


Protest and Survive, 1980

Peter Kennard (b. 1949)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Soon after the Protect and Survive campaign was released, the historian E. P. Thompson published a parody pamphlet, *Protest and Survive*, skewering the government's proposed plan.
- On October 26, 1980, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) hosted a march and rally, taking its name from Thompson's publication. It was the largest protest of its kind in the United Kingdom, with more than eighty thousand participants. Leading Labour Party politicians spoke alongside a performance by the punk band Killing Joke. In 1983, a similar march attracted four hundred thousand protestors, demonstrating the extent of public opposition to government policy.
- While Peter Kennard often lifted images of weapons of war from official manufacturing catalogs, in this instance he purchased a toy nuclear missile from the children's store Hamleys, smashed it with a hammer, and photographed it around a hand-cut cardboard peace sign (the symbol of the CND).



Protect and Survive, 1980

Private Collection, NYC

Target London, 1985

Peter Kennard (b. 1949)

Private Collection



March for Peace & Justice, 1982

Seymour Chwast (b. 1931)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Organized around the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament held in New York in 1982, the March for Peace and Justice was the largest antinuclear event in U.S. history, attracting approximately one million protestors.
- This poster reflects Push Pin founder Seymour Chwast's classic blending of humor with serious intent. A white peace dove rests on top of five different human legs, representing the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of the city.
- The U.N. has held three special sessions on nuclear disarmament: 1978, 1982, and 1988. It has been calling for a fourth session since 1995.

BLOCKADE THE BOMBMAKERS

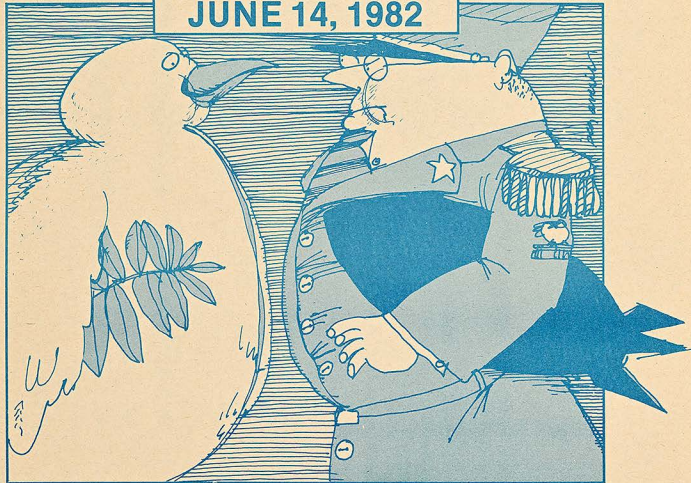
Join in a nonviolent civil disobedience action* to
blockade the five major nuclear powers at their

Missions to the United Nations:

- United States
- Soviet Union
- China
- Britain
- France

*Nonviolence training required

JUNE 14, 1982



During the United Nations Special Session on
Disarmament join us in New York City at:

- A March and Rally—Saturday, June 12
- The Disarmament Blockades—
Monday, June 14

For more information, contact
Civil Disobedience Campaign, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y. 10012
(212) 777-4737

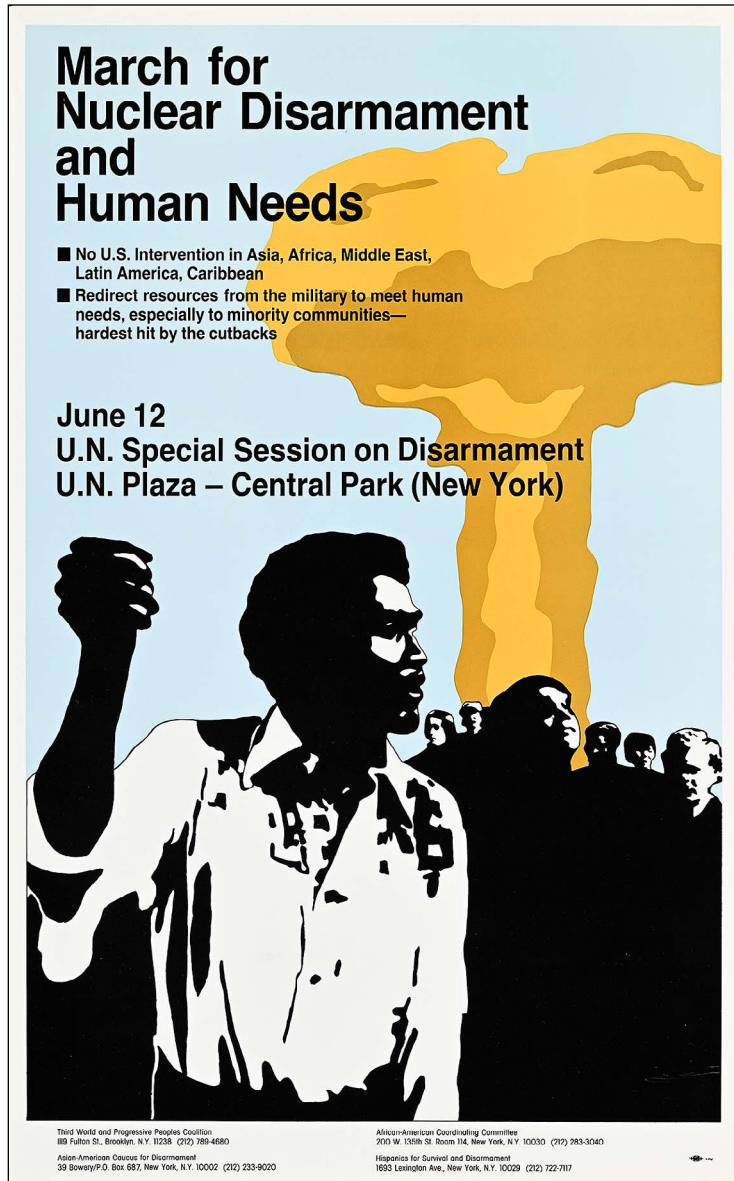
Coordinated by the War Resisters League in cooperation with Catholic Peace Fellowship, Clergy & Laity Concerned, Columbia Pax Christi, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Friends Peace Committee, Kaons Community, Mobilization for Survival, N.J. Sea Alliance, Peacemith House, SHAD Alliance, Wascoaster Peoples' Action Coalition. Endorsed by Atlantic Life Community, Boston Mobilization for Survival, Diablo Canyon Task Force, Knolls Action Project, LEPOCO, Socialist Party, Students Against Militarism, Syracuse Peace Council, Washington Peace Center.

Blockade the Bombmakers, 1982

Peg Averill (1949–93)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Created for the same event as the previous poster, this design highlights a slightly different perspective on the rally, not only focusing on the June 12 march but also on a proposed blockade of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council two days later.
- The blockade was organized by the War Resisters League (the oldest secular pacifist organization in the United States, founded in 1923) in conjunction with a variety of other groups listed at the bottom of the poster.
- As with many posters for similar events, it notes that nonviolence training is required to participate—a key component of much activist work dating back to the civil rights movement.



March for Nuclear Disarmament and Human Needs, 1982

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- This third design for the March for Nuclear Disarmament shows yet another perspective on the purpose of the event, emphasizing a desire for the United States to remove itself from political intervention in non-Western countries and to redirect military funds toward assisting marginalized communities in the United States.
- The rally committee took great pains to ensure that the protest would be as inclusive as possible, involving prominent figures like the LGBT rights activist Leslie Cagan and the civil rights campaigner Jack O'Dell.
- The protest ultimately incorporated more than a million participants because so many different organizations joined together for a single cause, many of which are noted along the lower margin of this poster.



Bread Not Bombs/March & Rally, 1982

Giancarlo Impiglia (b. 1940)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- The June 12, 1982, March for Nuclear Disarmament brought together a variety of independent groups, all of which banded together for a common cause. This is also reflected in the diversity of expression within the posters. Some are merely asking for an end to nuclear proliferation, while others, like the one here, are demanding that more attention be given to wider issues of food insecurity or social justice.
- Italian artist Giancarlo Impiglia is best known for his Deco-inspired paintings as well as for his participation in the wildly successful Absolut Vodka campaign of the 1980s. This is the only protest poster he created in his career, potentially indicating the personal importance of the issue.



The Arms Race or the Human Race?, 1982

Patti Eslinger (Dates Unknown)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Issued in both English and Spanish, this poster suggests that the continuation of the human race is in direct conflict with worldwide nuclear proliferation. Asking which is more important, the artist gradually morphs the silhouette of an atomic missile into that of a person.
- As in the design by political illustrator Peg Averill, the lower margin of this poster lists the many national and local organizations that came together for this rally, including the Catholic Peace Fellowship, N.J. Sea Alliance, Diablo Canyon Task Force, the Socialist Party, and Students Against Militarism.
- One year after the March for Nuclear Disarmament, a similar civic action took place throughout Europe when an estimated three million people protested against the arms race.

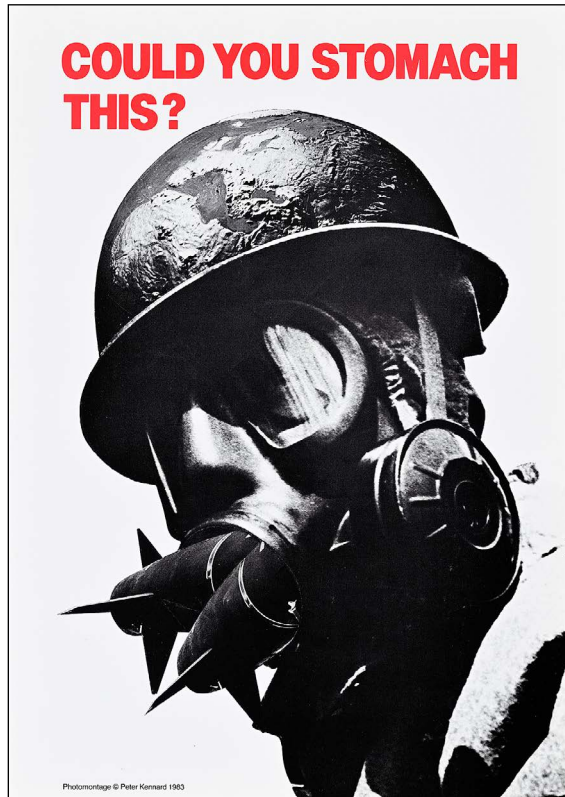


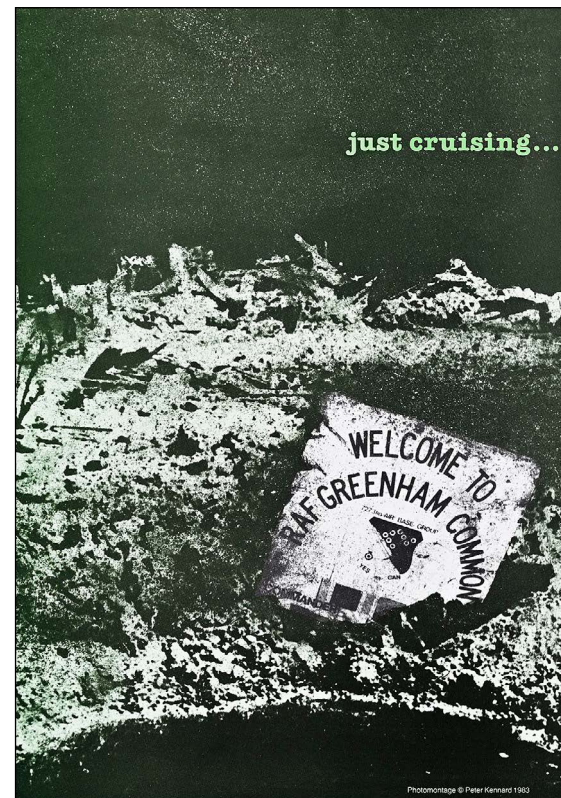
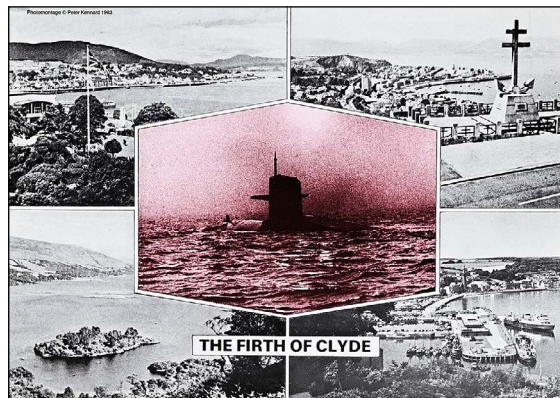
Halt It!, c. 1983

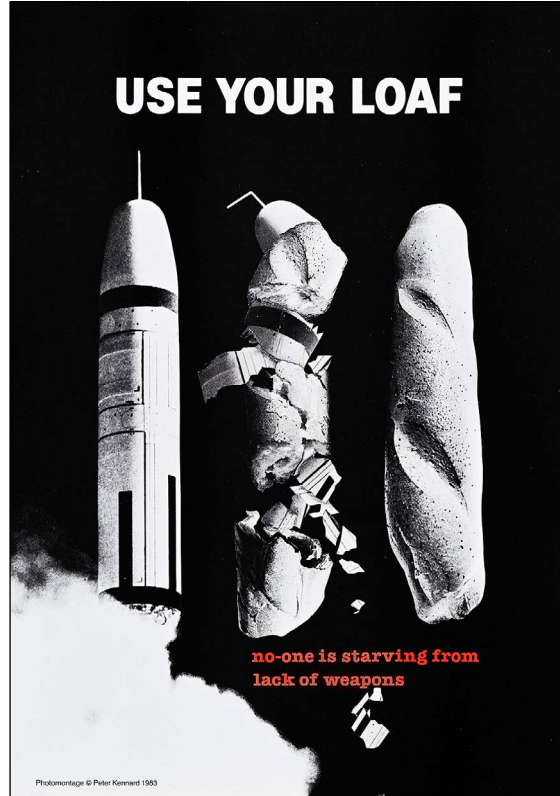
Designer Unknown

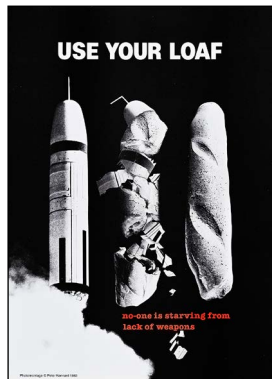
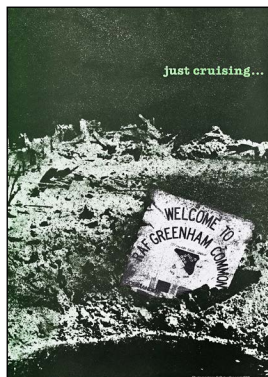
Poster House Permanent Collection

- Founded in 1945 by Albert Einstein and various scientists involved in the Manhattan Project, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists is a nonprofit group dedicated to monitoring technology that could have dire consequences for the human race. In 1947, the organization created the Doomsday Clock, a symbol that metaphorically indicates how close humanity is to self-annihilation.
- Recalibrated each January, the clock posits midnight as global catastrophe, and currently takes into account not only nuclear threat but also issues around climate change, viruses, and other disruptive technologies. When it was originally released, the time read as seven minutes to midnight; in January 2024, this had shifted to 90 seconds to midnight.
- In 1991, with the perceived end of the Cold War and the signing of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union, the clock was set at its most optimistic time: 17 minutes to midnight.







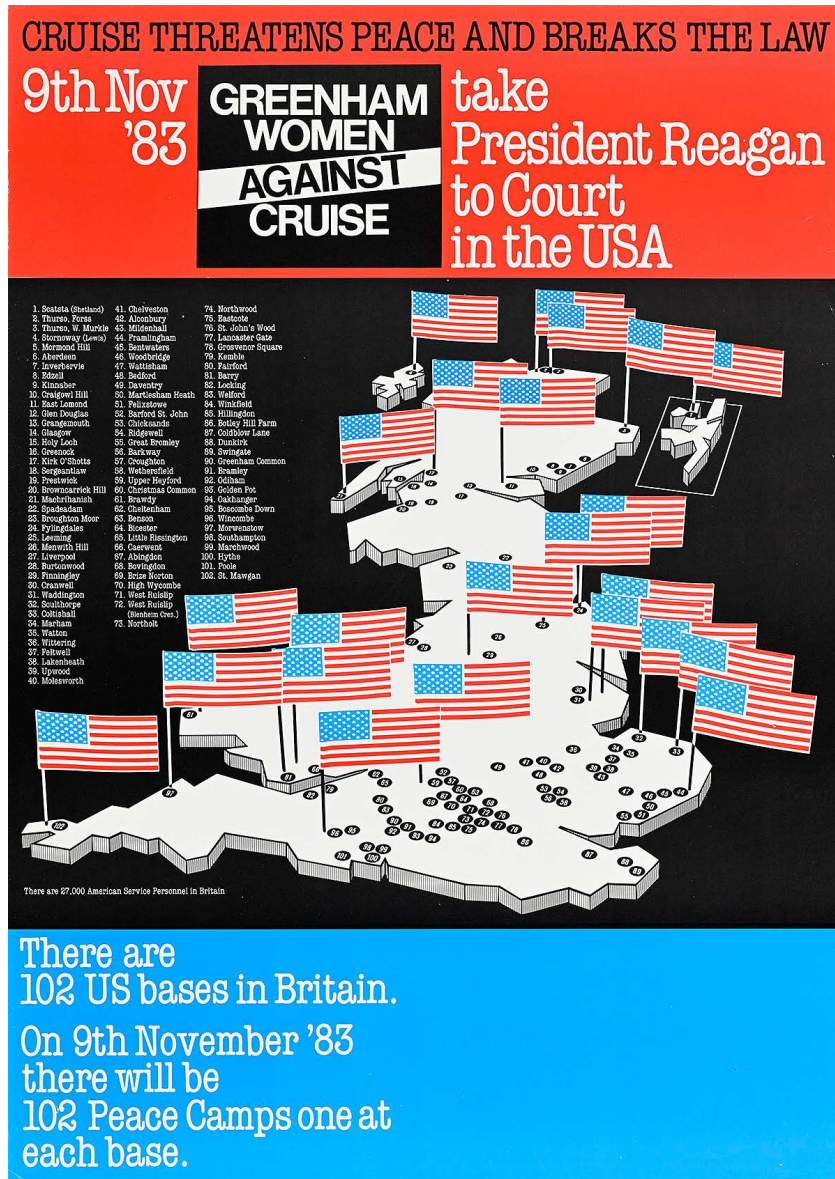


GLC Peace Posters/Keep London Out of the Killing Ground, 1983

Peter Kennard (b. 1949)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Between 1965 and 1986, the Greater London Council was the main government body within London. It declared that 1983 would be its “peace year,” an initiative aimed at highlighting the city as a nuclear-free zone through a range of cultural projects, including concerts, public art, exhibitions, and posters. These efforts openly opposed the policies of the British government.
- Peter Kennard competed with a number of major PR firms to secure the commission for part of the official campaign. His 18 posters were issued in a portfolio that was distributed to schools, trade unions, city-owned laundromats, and even the United Nations. Some of the imagery had appeared in earlier posters by the designer, while others proved so powerful that they were reissued over the subsequent decades.
- Many of these posters incorporate subject matter or phrases specific to the United Kingdom. The Firth of Clyde in Scotland was home to Europe’s largest nuclear arsenal, including 18 submarines with combined firepower greater than that of both atomic bombs used against Japan in World War II; the phrase “use your loaf” is similar to the American phrase “use your head” (i.e., “think”). Meanwhile, “just cruising” refers to the cruise missiles stationed in Greenham Common, and the famous portrait of Queen Victoria has been altered to include Margaret Thatcher’s face while she holds a missile instead of a fan (referencing the prime minister’s desire to return to “Victorian values”).

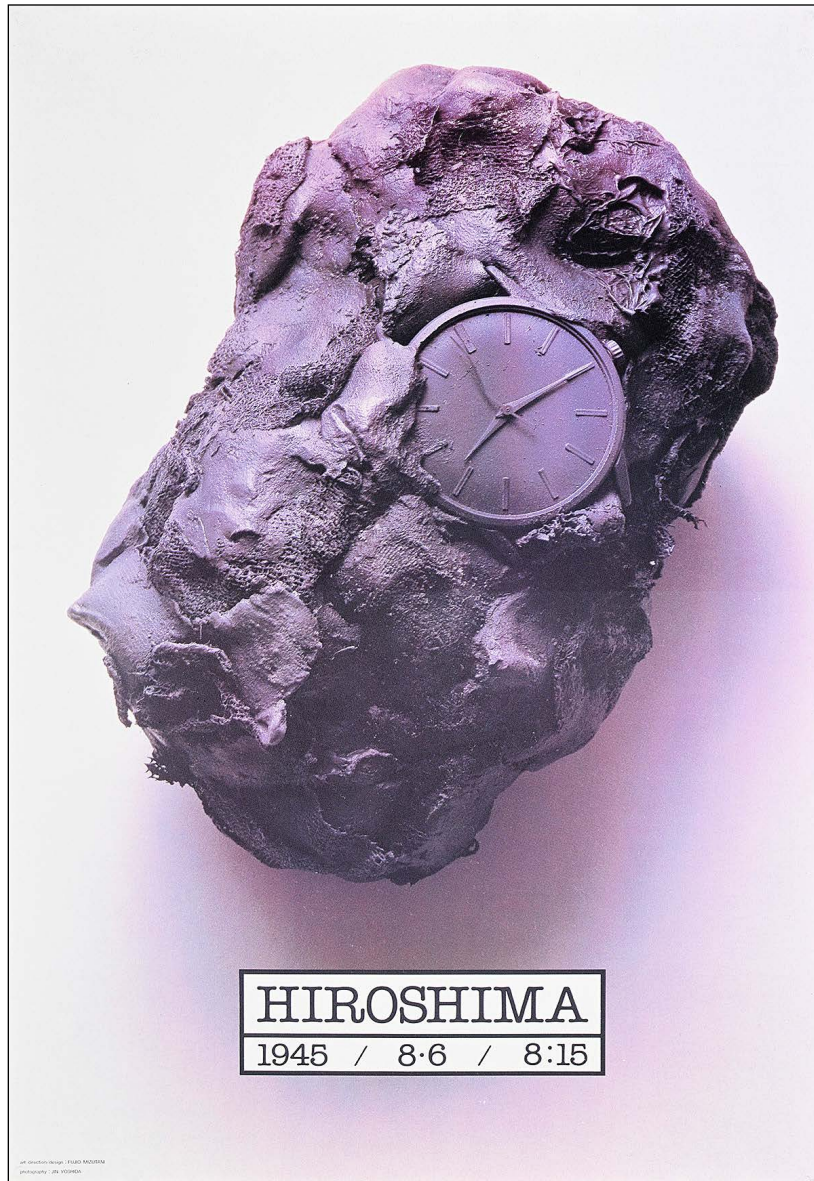


Greenham Women Against Cruise, 1983

Designer Unknown

Poster House Permanent Collection

- The Greenham Common protests started in September 1981 when a group of women staged a march against the plan to place American nuclear cruise missiles at this Royal Air Force base. Realizing that this approach was not going to be effective, and insisting on a women-only initiative, the activists began an encampment in 1982. That December, thirty thousand women formed a human chain around the base, occasionally breaking into the site to cause chaos or to vandalize U.S. warplanes with graffiti.
- This poster encourages other women to form similar encampments on each of the 102 American military bases within the United Kingdom (both those with and without nuclear weapons).
- On November 9, 1983 (the same day as the protest promoted in this poster), the group filed a lawsuit in the United States against the U.S. government, arguing against its right to place nuclear missiles on foreign soil. These efforts drew the attention of the American public to the outrage that many European citizens felt about the surrender of their sovereignty to the United States in the name of international security.
- In 1991, four years after the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty was signed by Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan, nuclear missiles were removed from the Greenham Common base. The camp remained in operation as a monument until 2000.



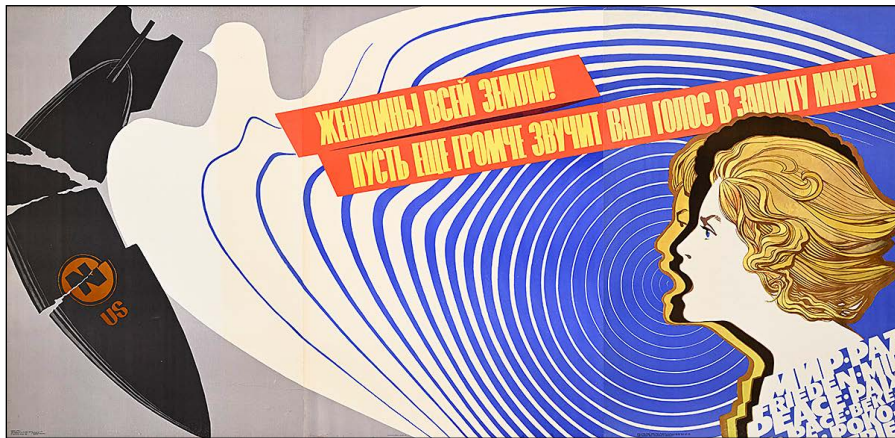
Hiroshima, 1983

Design: Fujio Mizutani (b. 1951)

Photography: Jin Yoshida (Dates Unknown)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- This poster was created as part of a Japanese Peace Posters series, a counterpart to the American Images for Survival campaign that included 126 posters by the most prominent graphic designers in the United States. Meant to encourage peace in the prolonged aftermath of the nuclear attacks against Japan, they were displayed in the Hiroshima Museum of Art alongside designs like this one, with simultaneous exhibitions held in Washington, D.C. and New York City.
- The poignant composition focuses on a wristwatch fused into its surroundings on August 6, 1945, at 8:15am by the heat of a nuclear blast. It is the only trace left of its owner, who was presumably vaporized by the bomb.
- In October 2024, Nihon Hidankyo (the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organization) won the Nobel Peace Prize for its nearly seven-decade record of activism against the use of nuclear weapons. Known as *hibakusha*, those who survived have faced discrimination and numerous health problems attributed to radiation exposure.

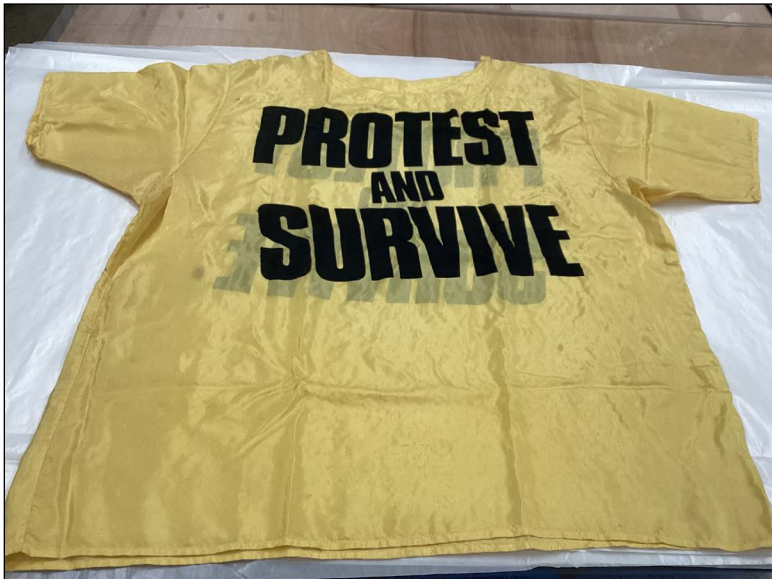


Women of the Earth Call for Peace, 1984

Semyon Borisovich Raev (1932–2001)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Throughout history, women have often taken strong antiwar positions, frequently participating in protests that fight for the preservation of human life. As a counterpoint to the efforts of the Greenham Women, this triptych shows the faces of three ethnically diverse Soviet women using their combined voices to eradicate U.S. nuclear weapons through a symbol of peace.
- At this time in the 1980s, the Soviet Union had more nuclear warheads than the United States. American inventory of these types of weapons peaked in the mid-1960s at just over 31,000. By the 1980s, through denuclearization efforts, this number was reduced by approximately 10,000 warheads. Meanwhile, the Soviet arsenal overtook that of the United States in 1978, reaching its apex in the mid-1980s at more than 40,000 nuclear bombs. Currently, it is estimated that Russia has approximately 5,500 warheads, while the United States has around 5,000.



Shirts, 1985 and c. 2000

Katharine Hamnett (b. 1947)

Private Collection, NYC

- In 1983, fashion designer Katharine Hamnett launched her now-iconic line of shirts featuring block-lettered political statements. While her work foregrounded numerous causes, she is perhaps best known for T-shirts decorated with antinuclear slogans inspired by the women of Greenham Common. Her "Choose Life" T-shirts were later made famous by the band Wham!, who wore them in the 1984 music video for the song "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go," appropriating the phrase to reference the AIDS epidemic.
- In 1984, during the inaugural year of London Fashion Week, she wore an oversized sweatshirt with the phrase "58% Don't Want Pershing" written across the torso to a reception at the home of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. The politician was known for her aggressive pronuclear policies; however, when she saw Hamnett in her outfit during a photo opportunity, she appeared bemused and exclaimed "oh at last, a true original!"
- With prototypes created as early as 1958, Pershing missiles were a type of short-range ballistic weapon developed by the United States designed to attack nations that were part of the Warsaw Pact from U.S. military bases in NATO-aligned countries. The shirt emphasizes that 58 percent of the British population did not want the United States to be allowed to house such weapons within the United Kingdom.

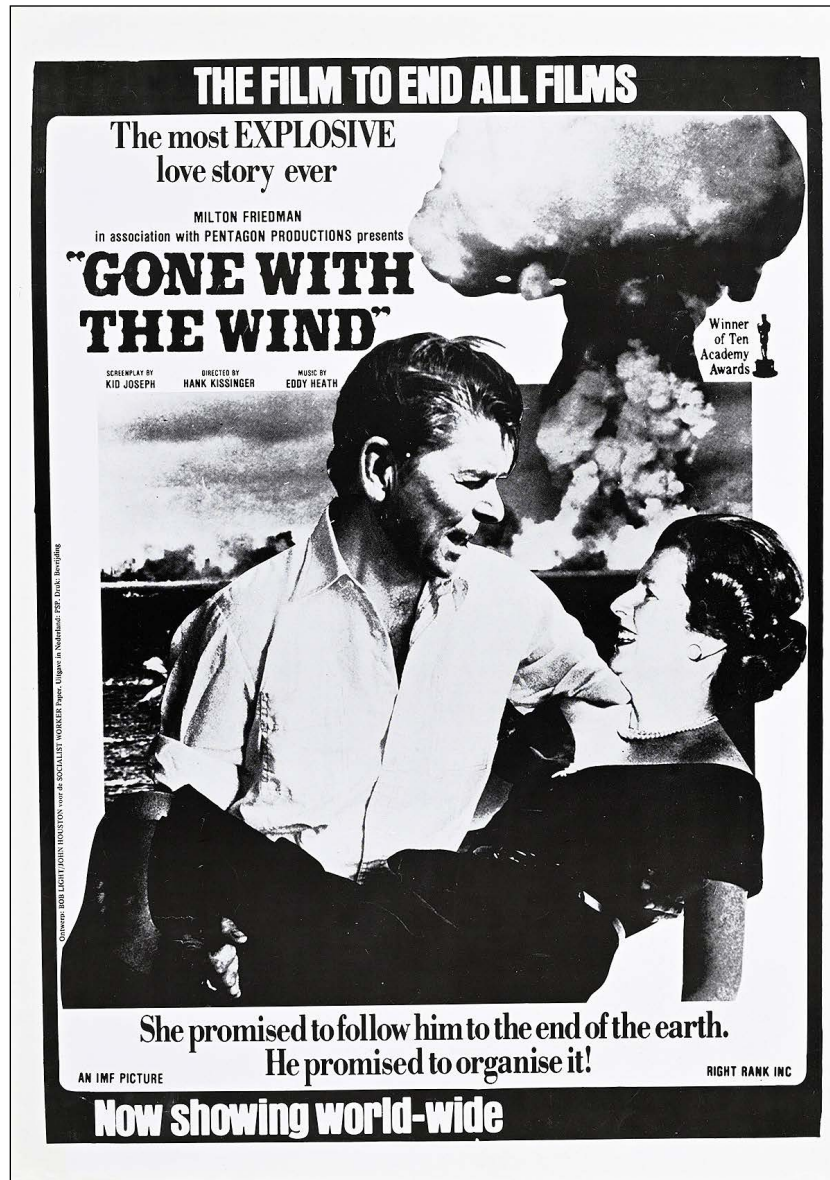


When the Wind Blows, 1985

Raymond Briggs (1934–2022)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- *When the Wind Blows* is a 1982 graphic novel by Raymond Briggs, famous for his beloved children's book and subsequent film *The Snowman*. It was turned into a full-length animated film in 1986, featuring music by David Bowie and Pink Floyd's Roger Waters.
- After watching the *Panorama* program on Protect and Survive, Briggs created the characters of Jim and Hilda Bloggs, a retired couple who attempt to cope with a nuclear winter by following government guidelines in the aftermath of a bombing. It is a heartbreaking story in which they soon realize the futility of their efforts and succumb to radiation sickness.
- This poster is for a play based on the graphic novel held at Liverpool's celebrated Everyman Theatre.

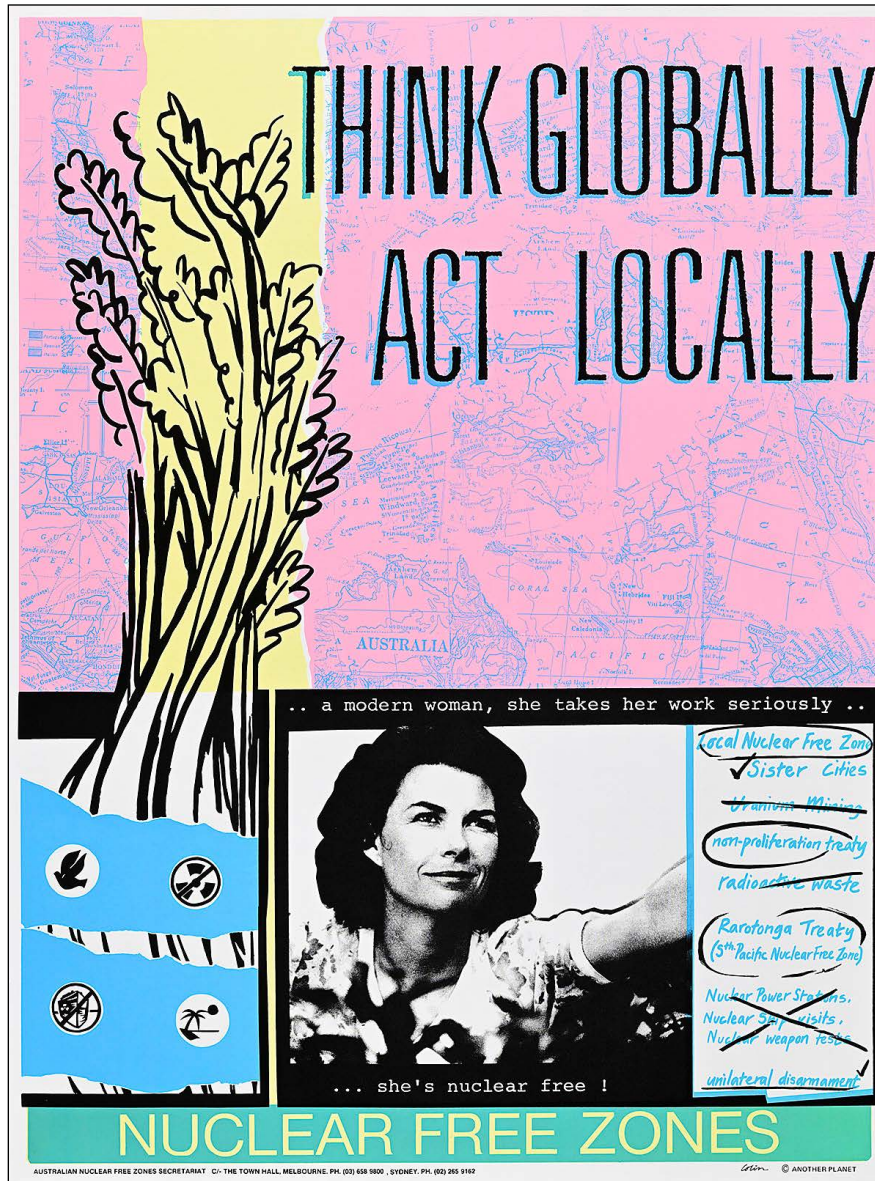


Gone with the Wind, 1985

Bob Light (Dates Unknown) &
John Houston (Dates Unknown)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- This satirical poster features U.S. President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the respective roles of Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara in a parody of *Gone with the Wind*. It is meant to reflect their aggressive policies on the stockpiling of nuclear weapons.
- Films often played a major role in educating the general public about the horrors of nuclear warfare, especially as governments typically had their own agendas when presenting information on their defense strategies. In 1965, the BBC was pressured by the British government not to air *The War Game*, a film it had produced on the realities of nuclear war. Despite this suppression within its home country, the film went on to win a special prize at the Venice Film Festival as well as an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.
- In November 1983, ABC aired the made-for-TV movie *The Day After*, a film depicting the aftermath of nuclear conflict in the heartland of the United States. It deliberately did not indicate who started the events, but simply focused on the fact that no place in the world would be safe if tensions ever escalated to that level. It remains the highest-rated television film production in U.S. history.



Think Globally Act Locally/ Nuclear Free Zones, 1986

Colin Russell (b. 1958)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Produced by the Australian Nuclear Free Zones Secretariat, this poster underscores Australia's many goals and achievements on issues of nuclear power. Among those listed are the establishment of nuclear-free zones within the country, the ending of nuclear weapons testing, and the ratification of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1973.
- The poster also mentions the Treaty of Rarotonga, legislation declaring the entire South Pacific a nuclear-free zone that was established the year this poster was produced.
- The phrase "Think Globally, Act Locally" originated in Scotland in the early 20th century in relation to issues around urban planning. Since then, it has been co-opted by many activist movements to encourage worldwide acceptance of their causes.

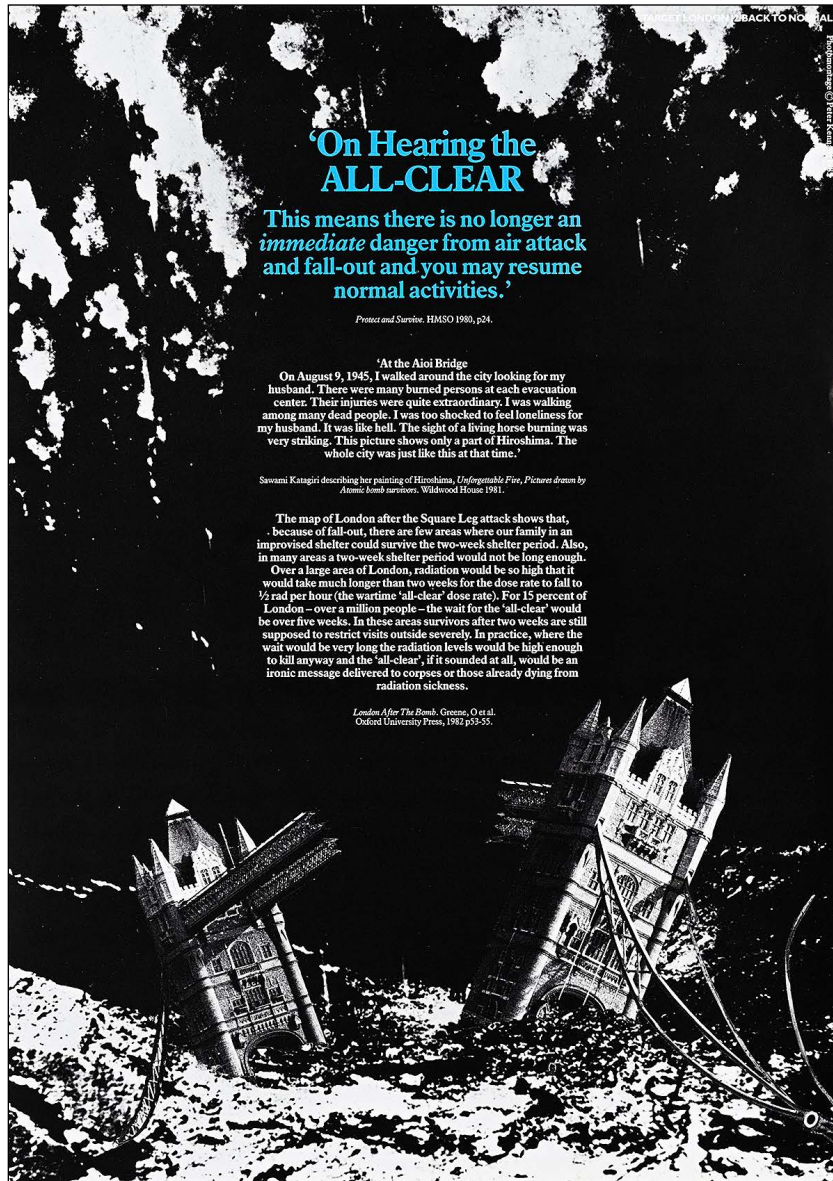


Remove Net Curtains, 1985

Peter Kennard (b. 1949)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- In 1985, Kennard designed a second portfolio of 18 posters for the Greater London Council (GLC) that were displayed throughout the city. To avoid accusations of producing “lefty propaganda,” most of the quoted text was pulled from official sources, including the Royal College of Nursing, the British Medical Association, and the original *Protect and Survive* pamphlet.
- Here, two excerpts from *Protect and Survive* instruct civilians on what to do in their homes in the event of a nuclear blast: remove net curtains from windows as they could be fire hazards and do not shelter above the third floor in an apartment block. As a nuclear blast can produce temperatures of 100 million degrees celsius at its center (four times that of the center of the sun), these instructions are clearly inadequate.



On Hearing the All-Clear, 1985

Peter Kennard (b. 1949)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Also part of the second portfolio created for the GLC, this poster juxtaposes an image of a destroyed Tower Bridge and a vaporized River Thames against the final instructions in the *Protect and Survive* pamphlet: that one can “resume normal activities” once the government deems the area safe after a nuclear blast and sounds the “all-clear.”
- The final quote references Square Leg, a 1980 government exercise simulating a nuclear attack on Great Britain. While the details were heavily criticized for being overly conservative in both scope and scale, even these unrealistic situations indicated fallout levels that were not survivable by the majority of the country.
- A 1982 study conducted by the World Health Organization on the aftermath of nuclear war concluded that 1.1 billion people would die in the attacks, mainly in the United States, the Soviet Union, Europe, China, and Japan, while an equal number would slowly perish from radiation poisoning and other injuries. As such, the notion of an “all-clear” is meaningless.

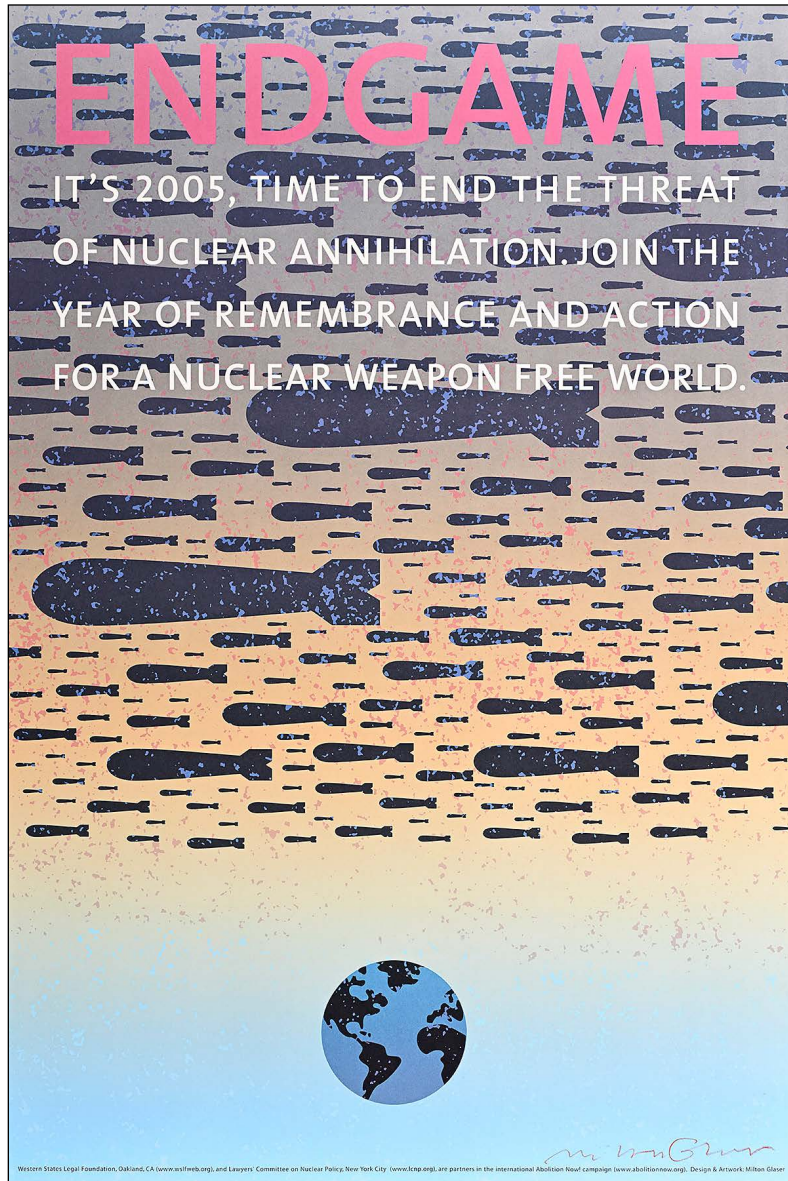


Chernobyl Year Two/Never Again, 1988

Béné (Dates Unknown)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- On April 26, 1986, one of the four reactors at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine suffered a meltdown and exploded. It is one of only two Level Seven (the most serious) nuclear accidents in history, resulting in more than seven hundred billion dollars worth of damage and loss over the subsequent years.
- By December, the impacted reactor was entombed in a steel-and-concrete sarcophagus to contain further nuclear fallout. More recently, a new structure was placed on top of the original one to confine the radioactive remains for another hundred years.
- This poster was created two years after the meltdown at a time when many surrounding European countries were still concerned about its impact. It shows a cobweb-laden robot hesitating to press a button marked “only in case of danger.” Meanwhile, the text announces a rally within Switzerland to protest a nuclear conference in Geneva.



Endgame, 2005

Milton Glaser (1929–2020)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- While the “alert and knowledgeable citizenry” that Eisenhower called for in 1961 as a counterweight to the inclination of many governments to arm themselves with an abundance of nuclear weapons has undoubtedly played a role in gradual disarmament, a larger nuclear threat, as indicated by this poster, still exists.
- Despite having the ability to annihilate the world, international superpowers have always stopped short of actually initiating that cataclysm. In many instances, nuclear powers have avoided using their weapons against nonnuclear countries, occasionally suffering defeat rather than start a nuclear war.
- Antinuclear activism is not currently a major cultural force, despite the fact that the United States and Russia both withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in August 2019, after mutual allegations of noncompliance over the previous five years. Since then, as part of his attempted full-scale invasion of Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin has increasingly used the threat of Russia’s nuclear arsenal to pressure his opponents and his allies, moving nuclear missiles into Belarus, a location hundreds of miles closer to numerous European capitals. Additionally, China has recently stated that it intends to triple its nuclear arsenal from 500 to 1,500 warheads by 2035. Even the New START Treaty established in 2011 to reduce and limit nuclear arms in the United States and the Russian Federation is set to expire in 2026.
- Today, there are more than 12,100 known nuclear warheads in existence, all of which are held by the United States, Russia, France, China, the United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea.





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