

SPEAKING OUR PEACE



*A film about
women, peace and power*

WITH ROSALIE BERTELL, MARION DEWAR, MURIEL DUCKWORTH, URSULA M. FRANKLIN,
DARLENE KEJU, MARGARET LAURENCE, SOLANGES VINCENT, KATHLEEN WALLACE-DEERING

DIRECTED BY BONNIE SHERR KLEIN AND TERRI NASH. EDITED BY JANICE BROWN.

NARRATED BY MARGOT KIDDER. PRODUCED BY STUDIO D, NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA.



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SPEAKING

"I consider militarism a symptom of a much larger form of social organization that to me signifies the 'threat system.' Militarism, when you forget about the hardware, is a way of saying 'Do what I say or else.' And to me, the essence of feminism and women's experience is that (it) integrates diversity, enhances cooperation, and respects differences."

— Dr. Ursula M. Franklin

Speaking Our Peace is based on the conviction that women's skills and experience as peacemakers within families and communities must be applied to the global social and political forum if we are to achieve lasting peace.

Filmed in Canada, Britain and the U.S.S.R., this one-hour documentary explores the concept of peace as much more than the absence of war. It presents the perspectives of women passionately committed both in their personal and professional lives to attaining social justice and permanent world peace. Featured in the film are Dr. Rosalie Bertell, Marion Dewar, Muriel Duckworth, Dr. Ursula M. Franklin, Darlene Keju, Margaret Laurence, Solanges Vincent, and Kathleen Wallace-Deering.

In **Speaking Our Peace**, these and other women analyze the many complex issues of our current global crisis, including the connections between the arms race and poverty and repression in the Third World. They insist that there will be no true peace until we learn to nurture the earth instead of polluting it, find non-violent ways of resolving our differences, and establish a global economy based on human rather than military needs.

Archival and contemporary footage reinforce the points they make. Conversations with Soviet women, Moscow street scenes, and footage of the siege of Leningrad during World War II provide Westerners insight into the views of Soviet citizens. We also learn about Canada's uranium mining and nuclear industry, and about the concerns of ordinary citizens who live with the problems of the nuclear age — a Scarborough family whose backyard is contaminated by radioactive waste; a Port Hope resident whose livelihood hinges on the nuclear industry; and inhabitants of South Pacific islands who are now experiencing severe health problems because of nuclear weapons testing 30 years ago.

In **Speaking Our Peace**, we see women on the job, in their communities, in other countries — linking the issues, raising public awareness, working together to bring about social and political change. Some, like Ottawa mayor Marion Dewar, choose to work in the political domain. Others voice

their opposition to militarism and the arms race through public protests. The film includes scenes of women participating in mass demonstrations — at Litton Systems Canada in Toronto, where they challenge Canada's complicity in nuclear weapons production and call for economic conversion of the arms industry, and at Greenham Common in England, where 30 000 women encircle the Air Force Base housing Cruise missiles.

Worried by the prospect of nuclear war, many of us feel overwhelmed and powerless. The women in this film however have not lost faith, despite the many obstacles to peace and the fact that throughout history women's views on peace have been largely ignored. By changing the status quo through resourcefulness and the constructive use of power, they provide us with the courage to act. They challenge us to imagine a world without violence, invite us to embrace their vision of peace, and urge us to work for a new social order where we will live in harmony with each other and with the planet.

About the Filmmakers

Both Terri Nash and Bonnie Sherr Klein work with Studio D of the National Film Board of Canada. Studio D was founded in 1974 to produce films by and

for women, to train women filmmakers, and to bring women's perspectives to all social issues through the medium of film.

Speaking Our Peace reflects Studio D's desire to address the real needs and concerns of women. The film is also a progression of ideas explored in the co-directors' earlier works.

Terri Nash, who has a doctorate in communications and has researched images of women in cinema, is best known as the director of the 1983 Academy Award winner *If You Love This Planet*, a 25-minute documentary featuring a compelling call for disarmament by Dr. Helen Caldicott.

Long interested in film and video as tools for social change, Bonnie Sherr Klein has produced and directed films and television programs on community movements and women's role in society. Her NFB directing credits include the five-part series *The Alinsky Approach: Organizing for Power*; *Patricia's Moving Picture*, about one woman's mid-life crisis; and *Not a Love Story: A Film about Pornography*, the internationally acclaimed documentary that examines pornography from the point of view of women.



NFB co-directors Terri Nash, left, and Bonnie Sherr Klein.

Photo: Martin Franklin

OUR PEACE

"Women have a long history of protest against war and a strong dedication to peace. Women do not wage war but pay the wages of war. We once had to struggle just to get the vote; the struggle now is to bring our concern for peace and justice to influence national and international decisions."

— Excerpt from the commentary of **Speaking Our Peace**

MARGARET LAURENCE



Photo: D.W. Bouff

Acclaimed author, winner of the Governor General's award for fiction and literature, member of the Order of Canada, outspoken member of Artists for Peace.

On new concepts of peace and power: *"If peace is subversive, in God's name, what is war? Now is the time to speak out in terms of peace. The concept of power I would like to have and to wield is (the ability) to solve interpersonal and international situations of tension in ways that deal with communication and not violence."*

MURIEL DUCKWORTH



Founding member of the Voice of Women (VOW) and CRIAW, member of the Order of Canada, active in Halifax peace, education, and women's groups.

On the role of ordinary citizens: *"The more decision-making is made around our dining room tables or in our kitchens or in our town councils, the better it is. It's the people with no extraordinary power who will reconstitute the world, if it is going to be saved."*

DARLENE KEJU



A public health researcher from Micronesia, a group of islands in the South Pacific where, between 1946 and 1958, sixty-six nuclear bombs were tested.

On the continuing effects of nuclear testing: *"Children are being born and we are calling them jellyfish babies. They have no eyes, no legs, no nose. I don't think you need any more evidence to see what happen(s) when nuclear (bombs are) exploded, so I would like to bring my issues and link (them) with your issues."*

MARION DEWAR



Mayor of Ottawa and vice-president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, sponsored the first Canadian municipal referendum on global disarmament.

On women's role in achieving peace: *"I do think there are issues that we as women have to focus on. If we don't, the rest of the world isn't going to and, God knows, the rest of our country isn't going to. An awful lot is up to us. That responsibility is there for us."*

KATHLEEN WALLACE-DEERING



Public education staff-person with the Vancouver branch of Project Ploughshares, a Canadian peace and development organization.

In discussion with a Soviet official: *"I don't want to get into who has more missiles, but ... both sides (the Warsaw Pact and NATO) are building up armaments on the grounds that we need them for defense; yet what we've seen throughout history is that whenever there (is) military buildup, it ends in war."*

DR. ROSALIE BERTELL



Roman Catholic nun and world-renowned expert on low-level radiation, director of the International Institute of Concern for Public Health, in Toronto.

On how World War III has already begun: *"You can't destroy the land and the air and the water at the same time as you damage the gene pool. That's a death process and if we don't begin now to deal with it as a death process, it's going to be so far advanced that we'll be unable to stop it."*

DR. URSULA M. FRANKLIN



Photo: Martin Franklin

Physicist, founding member of VOW, officer of the Order of Canada, and member of Science for Peace, first woman appointed university professor at U. of T.

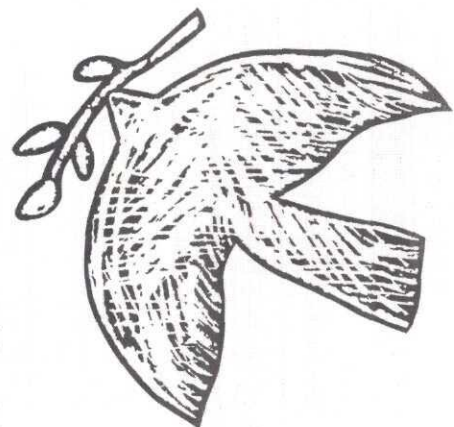
On peace as a way of life: *"There's a long road ahead for us to re-establish the dream of justice and peace. It's a lifetime commitment. (As) A.J. Muste (said), 'There is no way to peace, peace is the way,' and it's neither painless, nor is it cheap, nor is it fast, but it's the only thing we have."*

SOLANGES VINCENT



Political and economic analyst, Montreal author, long-time activist in La Voix des Femmes, researcher and workshop leader with Action Travail des Femmes du Québec.

On the need for a new economic order: *"The survival of the planet depends on a new sharing of power and a new form of international co-operation. Without a more equal sharing of resources, there will be no peace — no matter how much we protest against the Cruise or the MX (missiles)."*



Questions for Thought and Discussion

- Is violence inherent in human nature? Are women less violent than men? If so, is women's perspective on peace and power different from men's because of genetic makeup or traditional roles? What part do toys, games, advertising and television play in perpetuating role stereotyping among men and women?
- What is the relation between women's struggle for rights and women's widespread opposition to all forms of militarism? What is the relation between private and domestic violence toward women (rape, pornography and battering) and public, global violence (war, poverty, and repression)?
- Why are there more women than men in peace groups and more men than women in politics? (N.B.: According to U.N. figures, women make up over 70% of peace and social justice movements.) What would happen if political leaders, both women and men, adopted the feminist life-sustaining values described by some of the women in this film? How can we ensure these values have an impact on political, economic and social policies, and on peace strategies?

What You Can Do

Each of us can work for peace wherever we are, using whatever skills and contacts we have. We need not be experts. The first step is to break the silence, and then invent new strategies for peace.

- **Spread the word.** Discuss what you can do with your friends and family. Make peace and justice a priority in the groups to which you belong (e.g.: school, work, neighborhood, religious and women's organizations). By bringing the issues into mainstream groups, you will raise public awareness and contribute to social change.
- **Use your democracy.** Let candidates and elected officials at all levels of government know your concerns. Find out where they stand on issues. Write letters, attend public meetings, support or oppose political decisions, run for office.
- **Continue to learn.** Read books and periodicals. Attend lectures. Invite local resource people to address your groups.

Peace Organizations

To find out about peace activities throughout Canada, contact:

Project Ploughshares, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6. Tel.: (519) 888-6541. Offices also in Ottawa and Vancouver.

Operation Dismantle, P.O. Box 3887, Station C, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4M5. Tel.: (613) 722-6001. Quarterly newsletter: *The Dismantler*.

The Survival Committee of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, 40 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 306, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M9. Tel.: (416) 922-3246. Monthly newsletter, *MEMO*, available to NAC member organizations.

Voice of Women, 175 Carlton Street, Toronto, Ontario M5A 2K3. Tel.: (416) 922-2997. *VOW National Quarterly Newsletter*.

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Recommended Reading

Books

Available from your public library, through inter-library loans, or order from your local bookstore.

Bertell, Rosalie. *No Immediate Danger? Prognosis for a Radioactive Earth*. London: The Women's Press, 1985. Order from Women's Press, Toronto.

Caldicott, Helen. *Missile Envy: Helen Caldicott Speaks Out*. New York: William Morrow & Co. Inc., 1984.

Cambridge Women's Peace Collective. *My Country Is the Whole World: An Anthology of Women's Work on Peace and War*. Boston: Pandora Press, 1984.

Cook, Alice and Kirk, Gwyn. *Greenham Women Everywhere: Dreams, Ideas and Actions from the Women's Peace Movement*. London, England: Pluto Press, 1983.

Easlea, Brian. *Fathering the Unthinkable: Masculinity, Scientists, and the Nuclear Arms Race*. London, England: Pluto Press, 1983.

Gerzon, Mark. *A Choice of Heroes: The Changing Faces of American Manhood*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1984.

Giangrande, Carole. *The Nuclear North: The People, the Regions and the Arms Race*. Toronto: Anansi Press, 1983.

Gray, Elizabeth Dodson. *Patriarchy as a Conceptual Trap*. Wellesley, Mass: Roundtable Press, 1982.

Jones, Lynne, editor. *Keeping the Peace: A Women's Peace Handbook I*. London, England: The Women's Press, 1983.

Macy, Joanna Rogers. *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age*. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1983.

McAllister, Pam, editor. *Reweaving the Web of Life! Feminism and Non-violence*. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1982.

Myrdal, Alva Reimer. *The Game of Disarmament*. (Revised and updated.) New York: Pantheon Books, 1982.

Regeher, Ernie and Rosenblum, Simon. *Canada and the Nuclear Arms Race*. Toronto: James Lorimer and Co., 1983.

Sanger, Clyde. *Safe and Sound: Disarmament and Development in the Eighties*. Ottawa: Deneau Publishers, 1982.

Savard, Ruth Leger. *Women: A World Survey*. Washington: World Priorities, 1985. Available in Canada from: Match International Center, 171 Nepean Street, Suite 401, Ottawa K2P 0B4.

Woolf, Virginia. *Three Guineas*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich Inc., 1963.

Pamphlets and Periodicals

The Facts. Vol. 6, No. 4, May 1984, Special issue on peace. 52 pp. Order from: Canadian Union of Public Employees, Public Relations Department, 21 Florence Street, Ottawa K2P 0W6. Free, but supplies limited.

Peace Magazine. CANDIS, 10 Trinity Square, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1B1. Annual subscription rate (10 issues): \$12.

The Ploughshares Monitor. A Quarterly newsletter. See address under peace organizations. Minimum annual associate membership fee: \$20.

Women, Peace and Power. 1981 Rachel Cadbury Lecture by Jo Vellacott. 17 pp. Fifty cents. Order from: Canadian Quaker Pamphlets, Argenta Friends Press, Argenta, B.C. V0G 1B0.

Soon to Be Released

**A series of short films
expanding upon
the views of women
who appear in
Speaking Our Peace.**