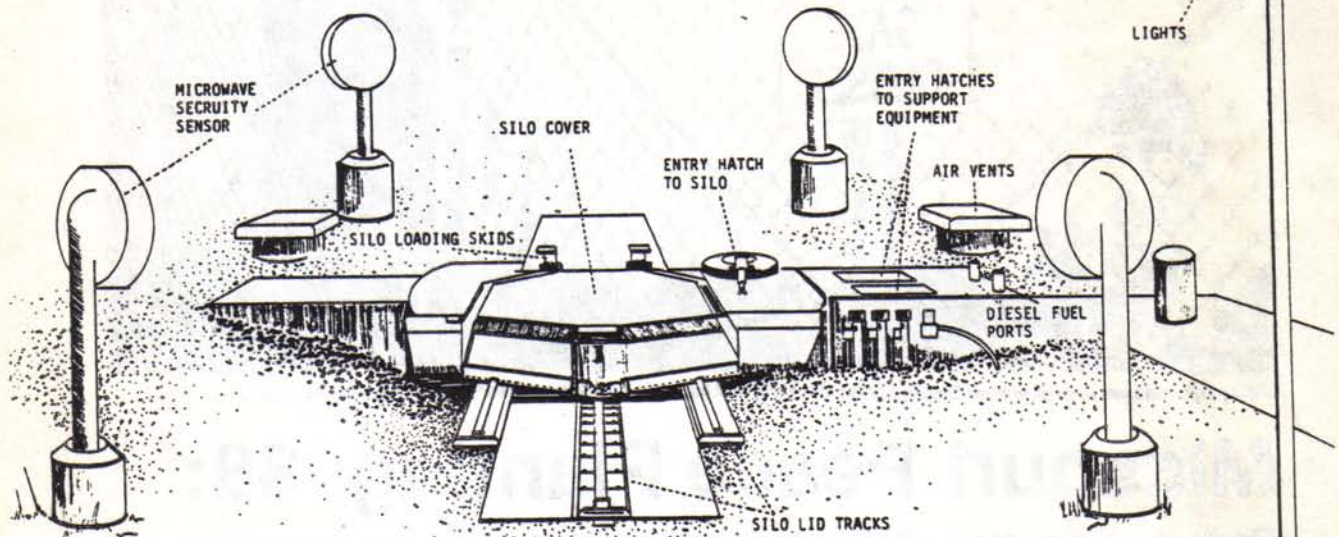
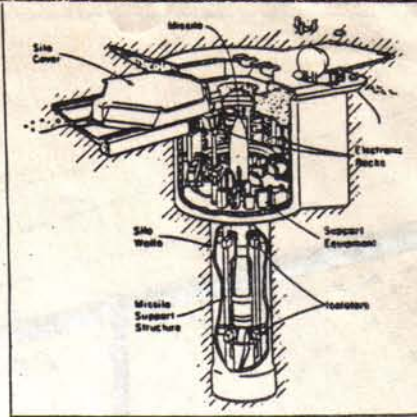


There are 150 Minuteman II missile silos in western Missouri, scattered across 13,000 square miles of farmland. They are controlled by Whiteman Air Force Base.

Each missile carries a 1.2 megaton thermonuclear warhead which is one hundred times more powerful than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima that killed an estimated 150,000 people.



Local parishioners support activists

"I have had a little bit of trouble understanding what good it does for good people to go to jail."

KANSAS CITY — That's how Jean Huebner began the conversation when she was asked to explain her support of anti-nuclear activists arrested in the Missouri missile silo fields last week.

Huebner, a retired TWA flight attendant and parishioner of St. James Parish in Kansas City, continued, "Then this last week by getting to know the people involved, I can begin to understand some of their reasons," Huebner said. "I consider them as modern day prophets."

"They have the same kind of worries and fears about jail that I have, but

after long soul-searching, they have made these decisions," Huebner said. "I consider them very spiritual, deep people."

Connie Dover, a parishioner of St. Patrick Parish in Kansas City, had never even seen a missile silo until the day she went to watch Betty Lewis, a grandmother from Chicago, climb a fence and seat herself on the lid of Minuteman II missile silo.

It was a "David and Goliath" experience Dover, 29, said. "One small 61 year-old lady was placing her body up against the amassed wealth and power of the military and that weapon."

"If you don't see it, if you go to work everyday, filled with your own concerns, you don't really understand"

what the activists were trying to accomplish, she said.

Cecilia Wagner also watched Lewis trespass on the missile site and agreed with Dover. "The greatest crime in America today is apathy. These people have no apathy," she said. "They are articulate, caring people."

"I've got a brand new granddaughter, so I'm very interested in the world being a better place for all my grandchildren. That's why I support these people," Wagner, a St. James parishioner, said.

"We have a responsibility now," Dover said, quoting a banner Lewis hung inside the missile site, "We cannot say we did not know."

— DC

Imaginations strain

to comprehend the toll in human life and suffering from one Minuteman II missile

Sisters adopt missile silo site

KANSAS CITY — On June 26 Benedictine Sisters Grace Malaney and Barbara Mayer became adoptive parents of F-11, a missile silo site seven miles south of Harrisonville on Highway 71.

The missile silo contains a United States Air Force Minuteman II nuclear missile and is just one of 150 such sites in western Missouri.

They renamed F-11, Jessica, a name that means "God saves." Sister Malaney said, "There are a lot of positive vibes you can get from adopting a missile silo."

The adoption is "kind of a hopeful thing," Sr. Malaney said. She has participated in many anti-nuclear protests before this, but the adoption idea is different.

"It's not like you have to be against something," she explained, "It's a positive thing." She adopted the missile silo so that she could "visit the site and pray. That's all I want to do."

At the site the women's prayer list is long. They pray the missile will never be used. They pray people will become more aware of their responsibility to do something to assure the weapon is dismantled. They pray for

military personnel who service the site.

"We pray for the people passing by on the road that they become aware they are driving around in a mine field," Sr. Malaney said.

Their first encounter with the missile silo was frightening, Sr. Malaney said. "Every once in a while we would be just kind of overwhelmed with the amount of destruction this particular thing encloses, and if it is ever let loose, it's going to kill people just like you and me."

She added, "You see the missile site. You realize here's the missile. It's all put together. It's targeted. It's aimed at somebody. There's somebody responsible for releasing it ... It was such a sense of the presence of evil that I have never experienced before."

Sr. Malaney and Sr. Mayer are Benedictines from Atchison, Kan. Sr. Malaney teaches mathematics at Donnelly College, Kansas City, Kan., and Sr. Mayer has just recently moved to St. Louis after completing 14 years on the staff of *The Leaven*, diocesan newspaper for the Kansas City, Kan., archdiocese.

— DC

Readers surveyed about nuclear weapons

CHICAGO — Could there ever be a moral use of nuclear weapons? Never, say 82 percent of *U.S. Catholic* readers surveyed in "Bombs away: what *U.S. Catholic* readers think about nuclear weapons." In fact, 62 percent would rather lose their freedom than protect it by firing a nuclear assault.

Readers are not rosary-packing Rambos, but they're not pacifists, either, writes Tim Unsworth in a summary of the survey in the August issue of *U.S. Catholic*, published by the Claretians. But, he adds, "It's safe to say that readers surveyed feel as strongly about nuclear arms as they do about abortion. Both represent an unwarranted taking of human life. Both involve the killing of defenseless and innocent people. Both are threads in the seamless garment of gospel teaching."

One reader from Alabama is even more emphatic: "If we could stir up the same moral outrage over nuclear arms as we have over abortion, oh, what a mighty force for change that would be! All human life, present and future, is precious in God's eyes."

A staggering 97 percent of the readers

polled believe that no one would win a nuclear war. A reader from St. Cloud, Minnesota writes: "I was born in 1909 and have seen many wars. People will not learn that there is no winner in a war or that history repeats itself. How stupid to start a war!"

Sixty-one percent of the respondents do not agree that America's best peace is a strong defense, but they're not ready to dismantle all weapons just yet: only 20 percent of the readers surveyed favor unilateral disarmament.

But 94 percent favor some sort of gradual disarmament or bilateral freeze of nuclear weapons, and more than two thirds of the respondents see no need for the U.S. to build even one more nuclear weapon.

The specter of nuclear war gives only 5 percent of readers insomnia, but they're generally not an overly optimistic crowd. In fact, 63 percent can't imagine a time of total world peace, and 30 percent expect a nuclear war to happen in their lifetime.

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