



# **TONY SMYTHE ARCHIVE**

**(SMYTHE)**

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**SMYTHE**

**Tony Smythe Archive**

**1957-2003**

**Name of Creator:** Clifford Anthony ('Tony') Smythe (1938-2004) activist and campaigner

**Extent:** 4 Boxes

**Administrative/Biographical History:** Educated at University College School, in 1958 Tony Smythe was called up for military service and imprisoned for three months as a conscientious objector, refusing not only military service but also alternative civilian service. After prison he joined the staff of the London-based War Resisters International, playing a major role in organising its triennial conference in India in 1960. Smythe was also a key organiser of the conference in Beirut in January 1962 to establish a world peace brigade, with the aim of engaging in non-violent intervention in areas of crisis and conflict. His anti-war campaigning in Britain led him to become a founder member of the Committee of 100, launched in 1960 on the initiative of the philosopher Bertrand Russell and the anti-apartheid and anti-nuclear campaigner the Rev Michael Scott.

From 1966 until 1971 Smythe was head of the National Council of Civil Liberties (NCCL, now known as Liberty). He encouraged a wider scope for its activities, including monitoring the conduct of the police and participants at major demonstrations, raised the NCCL's profile and helped expand its membership. Smythe was also for a time vice-president of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality.

In 1971 Smythe left the NCCL, and after a spell in New York with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) he returned to the UK to join MIND, the campaign to advance the views, needs and ambitions of people with mental health problems. As with the NCCL, he transformed what had been a little-known campaign into one with public prominence.

Along with James Loring, Tony Smythe was a powerful impetus for the foundation of the Disability Alliance in 1973. The Alliance quickly gathered together scores of representative groups, and Smythe played an important part in shaping the collective leadership to include both those with and without disabilities. This in turn helped to encourage the 1974-79 Labour government to introduce a range of new disability benefits. In 1979 Tony, along with his partner Jeanne Smythe, contributed to founding the Markfield Project in Haringey, an innovative, inclusive family resource, play and community centre.

Tony Smythe continued to be involved in anti-nuclear and other anti-war activities, and during the 1980s helped to bring into being, and became director of, MEDACT (the Medical Campaign for Global Security). In the last few years of his life, Smythe became active in the Haringey Solidarity Group (HSG), campaigning against changes that affected benefits claimants, helping to write leaflets and actively protesting outside job centres, informing both

claimants and staff of their rights. Tony and his partner Jeanne Smythe were life-long anarchists and pacifists.

**Custodial History:** Deposited with Bishopsgate Institute by Simon Lynn and Quita Smythe, 10 February 2020.

**Scope and Content:** Papers of campaigner and activist Tony Smythe, including; papers relating to the Committee of 100 anti-war group, 1960-1962; flyers, leaflets, press clippings, notices and other papers regarding the CND's General Election Committee, 1964; papers, correspondence regarding Tony Smythe's National Service duty, gaol sentences and fines, 1957-1963; reports, correspondence, bulletins and other papers of the human rights organisation NCCL (later known as Liberty), 1971-1975; papers from the National Council for Civil Liberties' Workshop on the Data Bank Society, 1970; transcript of Smythe's testimony to the Bloody Sunday Inquiry and a history of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), 2002-2003; papers regarding involvement with War Resisters' International, 1964-1972; papers of various international peace organisations, including the United Towns Organisation, Eglise Bouddhique Unifiee du Vietnam, the Peace Action Centre and Action Civique Non-Violente, 1964-1966; papers of co-operative housing organisations including the National Federation of Housing Societies, 1961-1965; press releases, photocopied press clippings and correspondence with the press during Smythe's tenure as Director of MIND, 1973-1981.

**System of Arrangement:**

No further arrangement required.

**Language/scripts of material:**

English

**Access conditions:**

OPEN

**Copying conditions:**

Photocopying, scanning and digital photography (without flash) is permitted for research purposes on completion of the Library's Copyright Declaration form and with respect to current UK copyright law.

**Finding Aids:**

Copy of handlist available in researcher's area.

**Rules and Conventions:**

Compiled in compliance with General International Standard Archival Description, ISAD(G), second edition, 2000; National Council on Archives Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names, 1997.

<b>SMYTHE/1</b>	<b>Committee of 100</b>	<b>1960-1962</b>
	<p>Papers of the Committee of 100 anti-war group, [1960-1962]  Includes:  - draft policy statement  - meeting minutes  - information sheets  - Charter on Civil Disobedience and Nuclear Warfare  - draft proposals for the Committee of 100's constitution  <b>OPEN</b></p>	
<b>SMYTHE/2</b>	<b>Photographs</b>	<b>1961-1964</b>
	<p>Thirty black-and-white photographs, chiefly images of anti-nuclear protests, [1961-1964]  <b>OPEN</b></p>	
<b>SMYTHE/3</b>	<b>Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament</b>	<b>1964</b>
	<p>Flyers, leaflets, press clippings, notices and other papers regarding the CND's General Election Committee, [1964]  Includes:  - CND Supporter's card  - minutes of the General Election planning group  - The Month (journal) nos 6 (May 1964) and 9 (August 1964)  <b>OPEN</b></p>	
<b>SMYTHE/4</b>	<b>National Service</b>	<b>1957-1963</b>
	<p>Papers, correspondence regarding Tony Smythe's National Service duty, gaol sentences and fines, [1957-1963]  Includes:  - Notice of Appeal against Decision of a Local Tribunal, regarding Smythe's refusal to do military service (March 1958)  <b>OPEN</b></p>	
<b>SMYTHE/5</b>	<b>National Council for Civil Liberties</b>	<b>1971-1975</b>
	<p>Reports, correspondence, bulletins and other papers of the human rights organisation NCCL (later known as Liberty), [1971-1975]  <b>OPEN</b></p>	

<b>SMYTHE/6</b>	<b>NCCL/Workshop on the Data Bank Society</b>	<b>1970-1971</b>
	<p>Papers from the National Council for Civil Liberties' Workshop on the Data Bank Society, (18-19 November 1970), with publications and reports regarding issues including immigration, the rights of children, academic freedom, privacy and the Census, human rights at work, the recruitment of teenage service personnel, [1970-1971]</p> <p><b>OPEN</b></p>	
<b>SMYTHE/7</b>	<b>Bloody Sunday Inquiry</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>
	<p>Transcript of Tony Smythe's testimony and a history of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), [2002-2003]</p> <p><b>OPEN</b></p>	
<b>SMYTHE/8</b>	<b>War Resisters' International</b>	<b>1964-1972</b>
	<p>Papers of War Resisters' International, [1964-1972]</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- War Resistance: Journal of the WRI</li> <li>- Manifesto for Non-violent Revolution</li> <li>- correspondence with Devi Prasad</li> </ul> <p><b>OPEN</b></p>	
<b>SMYTHE/9</b>	<b>Peace activism</b>	<b>1964-1966</b>
	<p>Papers of various international peace organisations, including the United Towns Organisation, Eglise Bouddhique Unifiee du Vietnam, the Peace Action Centre and Action Civique Non-Violente, [1964-1966]</p> <p><b>OPEN</b></p>	
<b>SMYTHE/10</b>	<b>Co-operative Housing</b>	<b>1961-1965</b>
	<p>Papers of co-operative housing organisations including the National Federation of Housing Societies, [1961-1965]</p> <p><b>OPEN</b></p>	

**SMYTHE/11 MIND**

**1973-1981**

Press releases, photocopied press clippings and correspondence with the press during Smythe's tenure as Director of MIND, [1973-1981]  
**OPEN**