Disarmament/Peace Movement

After the development of atomic bombs, many people became concerned by the environmental damage caused by tests and the possibility of a nuclear war. This led to the formation of the Disarmament movement, which later expanded to the Peace movement. These movements were formed because:

- Conscription to Vietnam unpopular
- Many other forms of civil protest popular (Women’s Lib/Civil Rights)
- Students felt alienated by Cold War mentality of parents and wanted to express their more liberal views through protest

The movements were supported by similar groups of people and many people supported both. They did, however, have separate characteristics:

Disarmament:

- CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) formed in Britain in 1958 formed in Britain to protest against development of nuclear weaponry – dangerous (war), bad for environment
- ‘Peace logo’ developed in disarmament/ban the bomb movement became symbol used throughout the world to represent peace
- Held annual protest rallies to Aldermaston (weapons research)
- Adopted peace symbol as logo
- Anti-nuclear protests around world – switched to anti-Vietnam protests
- UN treaty on limits to nuclear weapons (1968) - victory

Peace Movement:

- Increasing number of US casualties in Vietnam, but US seemed unable to win the expensive war, media coverage showed damaging impact of war
- Anti-war rallies (1969 – Massive demonstration in DC)
- Draft dodgers – opposed conscription
- Veterans also protests (publicly discarded medals)
- Nationwide strikes – shooting of protesters at university in Ohio (1970), 400 universities closed, 2 million students on strike
- Linked to Civil Rights movement – also against Vietnam war
- Anti-war demonstrations in other countries too

These movements had many significances, some of which are still very relevant today:

- Links to students movement – youth earned new, more powerful position in society
- Successful with respects to slowing nuclear development
- Concern for the environment grown increasingly since then
- Showed the power of popular protest to bring change
- Many generations of youth succeeding the youth of the 60s have been called comparatively apathetic (particularly today)