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CHAIRS FOR PEACE

No 21

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TELFORD ANTI-NUCLEAR GROUP

Hard Rock Held Back

On July 14th Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary announced that the civil defence exercise Hard Rock was to be postponed indefinitely. Speaking to the annual conference of Emergency Planning Officers he reported that only 34 out of 54 local authorities had agreed to take part. Because of this, and inadequate preparation, it was felt that to go ahead with the exercise now would do more harm than good. He intended therefore to change the law first, so that local authorities would have to be more involved in civil defence.

Clearly the postponements of Hard Rock is an important victory for the peace movement. It is the first time we have actually made this Government change its plans. But the change of plan is far from being wholly favourable to us. If the Government manages to alter the regulations about local authorities involvement in civil defence so that they have to take part in exercises, train volunteers and equip war headquarters, the 'Nuclear-Free' councils might have to choose between breaking the law and the hypocrisy of declaring for peace while preparing for war. At present if a local authority refuses to fulfill its fairly minimal civil defence obligations the secretary of state can appoint commissioners to do the work, and make the authority pay the cost.

It does seem a little odd that Mr. Whitelaw took so long to realise that there were nuclear-free councils which would not be willing to help make Hard Rock a success. But perhaps the Government felt that making civil defence compulsory and holding Hard Rock ought to be delayed until 1983, to divert C.N.D. s attention from Cruise Missiles.

T.A.N.G.'s campaign against civil defence is going ahead as scheduled. We will be showing the War Game on September 15th

16th and 17th at venues to be announced. On September 2nd Pat Arrowsmith will give a talk, in Dawley about civil disobedience. An exhibition and leaflets on civil defence and shropshire will be available after August 20th. Anyone interested in staging the exhibition or having leaflets should phone Mark Stokes, Telford 503100

M. Davies

"5 weeks Nearer
to Holocaust"

That was the Newspaper heading after the complete failure of the recent United Nations Disarmament Conference. This was so despite all the hard work put in by many people -including the Wrekin petition collectors who obtained 5,267 signatures, and the 2½ million National signatures. It turned out to be the worst time to hold a discussion on disarmament with so many wars going on and belligerent Nationalistic statements by many government leaders. So internationally speaking its back to square one. Indeed, the U.N. Secretary-General is so worried that he is calling together the Heads of Government of the U.N.'s permanent security council to see what else can be done.

In Britain, however it most certainly is not back to the start. Indeed, all the preparatory work put into the Conference has had an effect on peoples' awareness of disarmament. The fact that our government was one that turned this concern down flat will only cause more questions to be asked. Doubt will be cast on the sincerity of the government's statements on 'arms control'

Its a quandry well worth bringing up in a conversation on the issue.

P. Niao.

Soviet Peace Group

A Group for establishing trust between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. has been formed in Moscow its formation was announced on June 4th. at an unofficial press Conference.

The Group has a founding body of 11 members and its aim is to remain independent of Government control as are groups in the U.S. and Western Europe. The spokesman for the Group 25 year old Sergei Batrovin had spent many years in the United States with his father who was the Soviet diplomat serving at the U.N. and the Soviet Embassy in Washington.

Their initial approach to policy is non Confrontational.

"We do not want to be a Counter-weight to the authorities but to work along side us. If they understand us correctly they will not apply repressive measures to U.S." Our press says that everyone should take part in the peace movement and we see no contradiction between that and what we are doing".

On Saturday June 14th Batrovin and Vladimir Ostrovsky were detained for four hours by the police and were told that their group was "provocative and Anti-Social" the same day his phone was disconnected after he had received messages of support from the friends in the U.S.

Information is now coming out that another Group has started in Lithuania which publicly proclaims the need to make the Baltic Sea area a Nuclear Free Zone.

Under the Soviet Constitution, Soviet Law and in particular Articles 190/3 of the penal Code independent activity is indictable as 'anti-state' but all that is in the balance. The Soviet Government, Party, World Peace Council and peace Committee make continual pronouncements about their commitment to peace and make much of the Western peace movements, so that given publicity in the West it will be difficult for them to retain their credibility if they punish peace people at home. (standard punishment is up to three years in Jail)

So as Cadogan of the East West Peace People has said the authenticity of the peace movement depends upon the success of an autonomous movement in the Soviet Union so our support is vital.

Some examples of what can be done
1. That all peace movement visitors to Moscow ask to meet the new group and to make it a condition of their visit that they do so.

2. That Continual Statements of interest and Solidarity emanate from the West.

3. That this summers peace marches and conferences make a feature of this and other comparable developments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe
Autonomy relates equally to freedom and to Peace.

M. Stokes

Did you know ??

Did you know???... that even if the now distant SALT II limitation agreement had been ratified by the U.S.A. it would have only limited the increase in NUCLEAR WEAPONS for the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. to a mere 50% over the next five years! This 'limitation' was the lowest that both countries could agree upon at the time.

At present there is no limit. P. Nias

NO MORE HIROSHIMAS

It is generally believed that the bombing of Hiroshima ended the war & that therefore horrible though it was, it saved lives.

This does not tie in with the known facts. Harry Hopkinson, who was President Roosevelt's assistant recorded in his memoirs that the USA had broken the Japanese secret code and intercepted a message to the Japanese embassy in Moscow (this was before Russia came into the Pacific war) asking them to contact Stalin and get him to negotiate peace. That was in February 45.

More or less at the same time the Japanese Generals, Admirals and other senior men of the armed forces contacted Gen. MacArthur & asked that they be allowed to surrender. They convinced the General that they could enforce the surrender if it met any civilian opposition. Gen. MacArthur in his memoirs says that he recommended to Roosevelt that the offer be accepted. This is also confirmed by Hopkinson ("Harry the Hop") who says that Roosevelt commented that MacArthur is our best general but worst politician.

cont....

The Potsdam and Yalta agreements in which were enshrined the slogan of "unconditional surrender" had specifically stated that one exception would be allowed. The allies would not insist on trying the Japanese emperor for war crimes, nor demand his abdication. (Perhaps they thought they would want him after the war). So the fact that those surrender offers asked to keep the Emperor did not infringe the agreements.

Both the BBC & The Times (& no doubt other papers) reported in June a change of government in Japan and the broadcast to the world by Japanese radio that the sole reason for the change was so that this new government might be able to surrender, (the Allies having refused to talk to members of the previous administration).

During the last ten days of July the Times carried further articles on this, as once again the Japanese changed their government to remove others to whom allies were thought to object.

The BBC midday news on August 5th reported that on the previous day the Vatican Radio had broadcast that the Pope had received a request from the Japanese asking him to intervene that they might surrender.

Hiroshima happened on the 6th. On the 8th the Times reported that yet a new offer had been received with no conditions whatsoever. On the 9th Nagasaki was bombed & on the 10th the allies accepted the offer made on the 8th but the terms of earlier offers since the Emperor was not tried or forced to abdicate.

Hiroshima was the site of the largest POW camp in Japan, and Nagasaki was a more or less pacifist town - the centre of Japanese Christianity - that had been punished for its opposition to the war.

It used to be widely believed among nuclear scientists that the war was deliberately prolonged in order to allow the bomb to be tested on humans. Certainly the Okinawa landings and other dangerous battles happened after MacArthur had been approached by the Japanese leaders wanting to surrender.

Organisation for the future.

When T.A.N.G. was set up nearly two years ago, it was a small local group in the Malinslee estate. At the same time in Telford, there were attempts to set up other local groups in Madeley and Wellington.

Many people thought that the best way to organise would be around such local groups instead of having one central group for all Telford. Some of us have always believed that the best way to get people involved, is through localised and specialised groups that people can feel part of. The reason that this hasn't already been done is that it was just a lot easier to organise one group than a lot of groups.

As well as local groups covering small areas, there could be specialised groups for people with different interests. Around the country there are a lot of these groups such as Christian C.N.D. which tries to get support within the church. There are also women's C.N.D. groups, Youth C.N.D., Schools against the bomb, Trade Union C.N.D. and others.

The advantage of all these groups is that they identify directly with specific groups of people so that peacemaking becomes a part of people's everyday lives. Without this, C.N.D. appears as something distant and remote.

People may disagree, but I think we should now start thinking of setting up smaller groups on our housing estates, in our churches in our workplaces in our schools. This doesn't mean that we would break up T.A.N.G., but eventually the role of the group would obviously change.

We are now setting up a Youth C.N.D. in Telford, but there could be a number of these groups. I hope people will start thinking about setting up other smaller groups to take the issue directly to people.

D Smith.

Peace Tax Campaign meeting
August 26th, college hill House, College
hill Shrewsbury. 7.30 p.m.

Alternative Education

Education towards alternatives to Nuclear Power is an important factor that we as anti-nukes can contribute to the community. In some way it could be viewed as a hopeless and thankless task. I do not hold to that. For that reason, I am writing to share an idea that has come my way.

As a member of the Phoenix management committee, I was approached by Derek Osborn, the centre's manager, with reference to creating a workshop for alternative technology. This could be a workshop housing the present Railway Club and also making resources and material available for making small workable models, such as windmills, solar panels for the greenhouse and maybe a simulated tide-power model.

This is only an idea at the moment, but anybody interested in this field could be of practical help to the centre, either by way of ideas or other contacts to be approached.

Anybody who is interested can contact any of the following people:-

Derek Osborn, Centre Manager The Phoenix Centre, Webb Crescent, Dawley. 591531

Dick Neil, Headmaster The Phoenix School. Manor Rd., Dawley. 591531

Graham Bould, Wrekin District Councillor, Dawley Mag na, 9 Telford Rd. Dawley.

Home 506840 Work 506165

G. Bould.

Diary

6th August .. Hiroshima Day.

2th August.. Thursday 7.30
TANG business meeting
at Dawley Info Centre.

26th August.. Thursday 7.30
Chain Reaction meeting.
Dawley Info Centre.

30th August . Monday .
Broseley Carnival ..

15th 16th and 17th September

The War Game is coming!!

JOIN CND NOW!

DID YOU KNOW!

THAT BRITAIN'S proposed new Trident nuclear missile system will cost about the same as building *half a million* new homes or increasing the state pension to £560 per week for everyone or giving every man, woman and child in the country a tax free £120 bonus or more than doubling the number of hospitals or electrifying all of British Rail's track eight times over.

The upkeep of Britain's *Polaris* missiles costs as much as building 10,000 new homes a year or running five large general hospitals.

Just one new rifle for the army costs as much as textbooks for 75 school students for a year and just one new F2 Tornado nuclear bomber costs as much as the Government subsidy for running schools and colleges in a medium sized city.

These comparisons are based on figures that appear in the September issue of the Labour Research Bulletin. All figures approximate.

Sanity.

Points of Contact

Paul Wolfe - Tel: 501218

Barbara Lamplugh
Tel: 882225

Mark Stokes Tel: 503100

~~Pat Arrowsmith . Sept. 2nd
Dawley Info Centre~~