

Workplace Groups For CND

be in a position to deal with them. The Square Leg Briefing anticipates a large exodus to the country, despite government pronouncements that no part of the country will be safer than any other. Police road-blocks would stop civilian traffic on all main roads in the country. There would be no arrangements to feed these people and local controllers would have requisitioned all food stocks.

The first task of the military and the police would be to control "selfish and disgruntled minorities" i.e. those who survive. An earlier exercise, 1978's "Scrum Half" envisaged that within three days every police and army unit involved would have to be issued with massive supplies of C.S. gas. Reporters at Basingstoke sub-regional H.Q. during "Square Leg" heard an army Brigadier describing rounding up 'undesirable elements' to 'Deal with the difficult chaps! round up and put them away' — he did not deny that putting them away may be done with bullets. The Medical Campaign against Nuclear Weapons recently stated that 'In the chaotic conditions of the immediate aftermath people in authority would have to be prepared to kill'. They also do not mince words in regard to the type of medical facilities we might expect, 'if there were a nuclear attack on a big city like London the best the injured could hope for in medical care would be the sort that would have been available on a medieval battlefield — and only a few could expect that.' After its first meeting in 1981, the International Physicians for the prevention of Nuclear War concluded that 'civil defence would be unable to alter the extent of death and devastation to any appreciable extent'.

Civil defence must be recognised for the sham that it is.

In the months running up to "Hard Rock", trade unionists can also consider the effects that the governments war game will have on their normal working conditions and how far these will be changed or altered. Extra duties might have to be taken on and workers might be asked to actively take part in special training. These are the kind of things that can actively be campaigned around at grass roots level at the same time holding up for ridicule such plans as involving environmental health people in the skinning and treating of household pets for human consumption.

The Chief Executive is the lynchpin for the civil side of the Governments civil defence plans. In the event of a nuclear attack he/she will have complete local control. The Home Office was concerned that County Councils taken over by Labour in May 1981 elections would refuse to take part in civil defence exercises — many councils had declared themselves

nuclear free zones and had announced their unwillingness to be involved in civil defence. Only two days after the May county council elections were known, a senior Home Office Official, Alan Howard, was in touch with all Chief Officers of Police and Fire. His letter asked eleven chief executives to commit their authorities to take part in the next major civil defence exercises planned for October 1982. The Chief executives, who become county controllers in the event of a nuclear alert, were given only a fortnight to reply, thereby ruling out the possibility of finding out the views of newly elected councillors. In fact, councillors would have found out about these exercises after the decision to be involved has been taken.

Local government trade union branches can find out if the Executive has committed councils to "Hard Rock". Similar enquiries can be made by FBU branches and from hospital workers to their regional authorities. Don't expect the whole truth! Furthermore, pressure should be put on councillors, especially in the lead up to local elections. Councillors can be put on the spot by asking them to commit themselves in advance to refuse to carry out civil defence responsibilities. This kind of activity can be a useful focus for campaigning. Local government workers are also in a good position to find out about the developments and costs of civil defence locally.

Only a few trade unionists have been noted here. However, we should all be aware that trade unionists in the building, communication, road haulage industries and obviously the civil service etc, will also be drawn into these war planning exercises and utmost involvement and cooperation is needed to effectively sabotage the governments plans.

Due to lack of information on "Hard Rock" at present all trade unionists could benefit by each others experiences. Therefore information about the building of new shelters, new communications lines, diversion of public monies on civil defence, new courses or conferences etc., should be sent to Trade Union C.N.D., to be published for all Trade Union C.N.D. members. Appeals for information can be made through your union magazines or by printing newsheets etc.

Nobody believes, least of all the Government, that civil defence can do anything significant to protect the people against a war that the governments of the World are pushing us towards. Civil defence has only two purposes. Firstly to involve us in preparations for war rather than in the campaign to end war and secondly to prepare local authorities to deal with civil emergencies.

Trade unionists are the only people who are in a position to stifle the Governments plans.



Make sure that the motion is debated and does not go through on the nod — this will give the opportunity to gain support and identify the opposition. Even if the motion is defeated there will be a number of people from the meeting willing to join the group.

Most union branches have an Annual General Meeting prior to their national conferences. It is here that policy for the coming year is decided. Put forward motions calling for the national union to affiliate to CND, if it is not already, and for the union to take action around specific issues e.g. blacking "Operation Hard Rock"* and getting their views known to the public. A number of model resolutions are included in this action pack.

During the time that the group is getting off the ground there may be a lot of dependence on the neighbourhood group for material and activities. Try to get your union branch to send the union banner to any activities the group may organise as it adds weight and credibility.

The workplace group is in a unique position for gathering information on the nuclear weapons industry. Without breaking the Official Secrets Act it should be possible to find out what connections your industry or enterprise has with nuclear weapons or civil defence. Find out what the consequences of taking any form of action in specific places might be and find out if the support for taking action against the bomb exists in the majority of the workforce.

Funds

Every organisation needs funds. For leaflets, hire of films, speakers expenses, hire of rooms etc. etc. etc. The first way of getting funds is to charge a membership fee — £1 per annum, 25p per month, it is up to you. It will be necessary to open a bank account to keep the money in. To do this the branch will need a constitution or a model set of rules to present to the bank. [These can be obtained from CND.] You should have two cheque signatories out of 5 possibles, usually the officers of the group.

Finally, please let CND know when you have set up a group and what you are doing. If you need any assistance ring either the Groups Organiser or Trade Union Organiser at CND on 01-263 4954/8546,

The TUC also has a regional structure based on Regional Councils. The addresses of the secretaries are as follows:—

1 Northern
Mr B Haward
TUC Northern Regional Office
3rd Floor
Scottish Provident House
31 Mosley Street
Newcastle on Tyne
Telephone 0632-616934

2 Yorkshire and Humberside
Mrs B Huffinley
Leeds Trades Council Club
Savile Mount, Leeds 7
Telephone 0532-620629

3 North West
Secretary: Mr C Barnett
Research and Administrative Officer: Mr A Manning
222 Stamford Street, Ashton under Lyne, Lancs
OL6 7YZ
Telephone 061-308 2821

4 West Midlands
Sir David Perris
191 Corporation Street, Birmingham B4 6LJ
Telephone 021-236 1240

5 East Midlands
Mr J M Hardy
13 Delaware Road, Leicester LE5 6LJ
Telephone 0533-415437

6 East Anglia
Mr I A H Jordan
119 Newmarket Road, Cambridge CB5 8HA
Telephone 0223-67691

7 South East
Secretary: Mr J Dromey
Research and Administrative Officer: Mr N Sharman
Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS
Telephone 01-636 4030 ext 122

8 South West
Mr B Bailey
16 The Crescent, Taunton, Somerset
Telephone Taunton (0823) 88031

9 Wales Trades Union Council
Secretary: Mr G Wright
Telephone 0222-394521
Research and Administrative Officer: Mr D Jenkins
Transport House, 1 Cathedral Road, Cardiff
Telephone 0222-371495

*see separate item

Workplace groups

The Experience so Far

This is the experience of just four of the many workplace groups, in four very different workplaces: a shipyard, a town hall, a hospital and Fleet Street.

1 Yarrows Shipyard, Glasgow

Yarrows employs about 5,000 workers on naval contracts. The CND group was set up two months ago and has about 40 active members from a cross section of the 15 unions in the yard. The group has members from the Boilermakers, AUEW, ETU, UCATT, GMWU etc.

The group's first big activity was to hold a factory gate meeting chaired by the Convenor of the yard's shop stewards committee, with a speaker from CND. This was followed up by selling CND badges throughout the yard. About 400 badges were sold and are worn on overalls by workers everywhere to the obvious consternation of visiting Navy officers. A showing of the War Game was held. Other local factories were contacted for support and some 200 people attended.

Out of the film show and talk, a YCND group involving Yarrow apprentices and local kids was set up. There were some initial problems with a group of skinheads who wanted to "bomb the pakis", but these problems were overcome and there is hope of winning some of these kids over.

The next planned activity of the group is to issue a leaflet inside the yard answering the accusations of hypocrisy against members of YCND at Yarrows for continuing to work at the yard.

The group membership fee is 25p. Meetings are held weekly and last half an hour in the lunch break. Funds are raised by the sale of badges and by using Football cards (instant lottery type cards). Money has been given by the Yarrow shop stewards committee and by the shop stewards committee at The Albion (a British Leyland factory). The group has not put much effort into getting support from higher union bodies as they consider shop stewards committees to be more important.

Problems and needs:

The group feels the need for more activities to mobilise for. Particularly, the young people are more interested in action than in talk. They think there is a need for more CND leaflets and posters linking CND with the shop floor concern about jobs. The Albion factory faces possible closure — a lot might be achieved by local CND groups leafletting the factory on the issue of "Jobs not Bombs". The group is always short of cash for producing its own publicity material.

2 Camden Council Workers CND

This group was set up last May after some activists at Camden had heard about Fleet Street CND. The

group started off with a showing of the War Game. There was a substantial contingent on the big October demo. The group now has about 100 members, mostly NALGO members, though the group is making efforts to get members in other unions. Members pay £1 per year. Business meetings are held fortnightly and there are open discussion meetings about once a month.

The group has so far organised 8 showings of the War Game in different Camden Council buildings. The group ran a successful campaign to re-affiliate the NALGO branch to CND which a right wing executive had disaffiliated the previous year.

The group has held discussions with Labour councillors and is trying to put teeth into the Council's nuclear free zone policy, by drawing up a code of practice.

Talks have been held with local ASLEF and TSSA branch secretaries about nuclear waste transport through the borough. Attempts at getting support from manual council workers have been more successful at the committee level than in getting through to the rank and file.

Future activities planned include a leafletting campaign across the entire council and a public debate with a local Tory defence spokesman. After the local elections in May there is a possibility that Camden will no longer be "nuclear free". This will mean that a bigger struggle over "Operation Hard Rock" will be needed.

Problems and needs

New members are much more interested in activity than meetings. There has been a lack of suitable publicity materials. The group feels it needs more national and regional actions to mobilise around.

3 Northwick Park Hospital

This is a hospital and medical research centre with a workforce of around 3,000. The CND group has been going for about a year. The group started with a public meeting on the medical effects of Nuclear War. This drew an audience of 250 people. About 30 people were mobilised for the 1981 October demo. A film show drew 150 people.

The group has around 50 members paying £1.50 per year and a circulation list of around 100. The group has regular monthly lunchtime meetings, which are mainly organisational and also has sub groups working on areas such as meetings, external actions and propaganda and literature.

The group has organised trips to Greenham Common and Molesworth Peace Camps. ASTMS and COHSE branches have affiliated to the group and NALGO is sympathetic. This has proved useful as it has been possible to book rooms in the hospital under the name of the unions.

CND has always recognised the importance of winning support from trade unions and their members for nuclear disarmament. The aim of this pack is to help CND supporters in the unions to build support by setting up CND workplace groups in local factories and offices.

Workplace groups can extend CND activity beyond formal union structures to win the widest possible support for disarmament among ordinary trade union members. They also have the opportunity to bring together people from different unions at the same workplace to campaign together for CND policies.

Workplace Groups in the CND structure

Workplace groups are an integral part of CND. They should be closely linked to their local neighbourhood CND groups to encourage joint activities inside and outside of the workplace. Once a new group is set up it should contact CND national office at 11 Goodwin St, London N4 asking to be registered as a CND group. It will be asked whether it has contacted its local CND groups to agree defined areas of work and to ask for their support. The formal requirements for a CND group are: that the Chairperson and Secretary should be members of National CND; that the group should hold an AGM annually; that it should have a minimum of 10 supporters; that it should accept the policies of CND and pay a yearly contribution to CND (currently £25).

Once a group has registered it receives regular copies of "Campaign" and "Sanity" and has the right to send delegates to CND's Annual Conference and to meetings of the relevant CND region. The registered group can also buy materials from CND at a 20% discount. CND regional and area committees can often give support to new groups — maintaining literature banks; in some cases having their own film and projector to loan out; loaning exhibitions and publicising events to other groups.

Trade Union CND

Trade Union CND, established in 1975, holds its own AGM for delegates from affiliated trade unions (national, regional or branch). This AGM elects the Executive Committee. Some CND Regions also have Trade Union sub-committees and so do a few local CND groups. Trade Union CND has sponsored a number of publications — the latest being "The Arms Drain" by Tim Webb, an ASTMS National Officer.

Local groups who organise workplace groups should not see them as a substitute for links with official union bodies, which they should encourage to affiliate to CND. The official support of a trade union branch can be useful in supporting a group in its initial stages by providing facilities and publicity for meetings. Workplace groups are principally concerned with working with the grass roots membership and should not be solely used as a caucus for lobbying individual unions who may be hostile. Workplace groups can be a major bonus to the campaign but when they make approaches they should make it clear that they are CND groups, not trade union branches and they they will not be used to undermine official union branches but to cooperate with them.

Why workplace groups

Most of us lucky enough to have jobs spend up to a third of our lives in the workplace. We all have friends and colleagues with whom we work, talk and relax with. We may share common interests outside work, we may be in the same union, we may just have lunch together in the canteen. Building a Group in the workplace will act as a focus for discussion, will recruit many new people to the Campaign and will bring pressure on the trade union movement to take up the issue of unilateral nuclear disarmament in a firm and positive way. Building a group in your factory or office can bring together people from different unions, with different skills and ideas to pursue the campaign for peace. An effective workplace group can link up the workplace with the community by working closely with the local CND group in their activities.

How to go about it . . .

There is no one particular way to go about building any sort of CND group — people approach the problem in a variety of ways, all equally valid. Some useful ideas are contained in the booklet *What do we do after we've shown the War-Game* by Dan Plesch.

Most of the existing workplace groups have been set up on the initiative of groups of concerned workers in particular industries. However, there is no reason why local CND groups should not identify likely areas to build in (especially where they already have members) and give assistance from the outside. It is extremely important that individuals attempting to set up workplace groups in their factory or office are given a lot of support by the local CND group — it can be a daunting task if someone feels alone at the outset of such a task. Equally, groups inside a workplace should make early attempts to contact their local geographical group and explain what they are doing.

For someone attempting to build a group the first step is:—

Wear your badge. There is almost bound to be at least one sympathiser at your workplace who will mention it or someone who will start a discussion about it. Make contact and try to involve them in setting up a group.

Take round a petition. Many, many people are willing to sign a CND petition (your local group can give you copies). They can also be approached to help form a group. It is also a good opportunity to help you develop your arguments with your workmates and to find out what people actually think about the issue. Don't be afraid to argue or to admit that you don't know something if you don't. You can always find out from others and take the information

back. Don't be shy of asking people if they want to get involved with setting up a group. Set a definite time and place for an organising meeting, preferably somewhere on the site or in the office, and invite everyone who has shown an interest. Be realistic about what you want to achieve and make sure that everyone has a task, however small, to perform before the next meeting.

What tasks?

The organising meeting could look at three areas of work — building membership and affiliation to national CND, getting the local trade union branches to affiliate to CND (and from there, their national unions) and working with the local CND group.

Building a workplace group is probably best done by holding an open meeting and inviting your colleagues and friends to hear a speaker, a debate, or see a film such as *The War Game*. Enclosed is a list of films and projection equipment available for such meetings. Approach both your union and management for support — the union to publicise the event with posters and leaflets and management to provide a room or suitable place for the meeting, or perhaps even a film or slide projector.

If this is refused inform the union but book a room in a local hall or pub. Ask your local group to give assistance with producing a leaflet advertising the event. Your local group can also give you a list of speakers to invite and may be able to provide you with a bookstall to set up at the event.

At the meeting appoint a chairperson and plan the amount of time available for questions and discussion after the film/speaker has ended. Circulate an attendance sheet and appeal for people to join the group. Announce the date and time of the next meeting (but repeat the same process of leafletting before it).

It is also extremely important to try and get the support and active participation of your local union branch. If you are not already active in your union start going to the meetings and taking an interest in the issues that concern the union. It is often possible to link up issues of concern with expenditure on nuclear weapons, especially in this period of economic crisis. Find out if the branch and/or the national union are affiliated to CND and what their policy on unilateral disarmament is. If the branch is not affiliated find out what procedure exists for introducing motions to a meeting and submit a motion on the following lines to the next general meeting:

"This branch of agrees to affiliate to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and calls for the national union to do likewise. This branch also supports setting up a CND group encompassing all workers in this workplace."

Problems and Needs

The biggest problem is "What to do next?" — the need for activities to mobilise around to sustain interest in the group. There is a feeling that the group cannot afford to stand still if it is to keep going.

4 Fleet Street CND

This group started about a year ago, when a number of activists in Fleet Street got together at a lunchtime meeting to set up a CND group for people working in the Fleet Street area.

The first public activity was a showing of the *War Game* which attracted 150 people. Subsequent activities have been another film show, fundraising socials (which have been very popular) and street leafletting. A successful national leafletting campaign was mounted to defend NATSOPA's unilateralist policy in a right wing inspired national secret ballot of NATSOPA members.

A number of chapel affiliations and branch meeting resolutions have been successfully moved by group members. We have persuaded the NGA London Region to officially circulate some CND material.

The group was able to mobilise a large contingent from Fleet Street for the October demo, with a good showing of "radiation suits" organised by the group.

The group has 140 members who pay £1 per year. There are members in NATSOPA, NGA, ETU, NUJ, AUEW etc. 30% of the group members are manual workers. The meetings are fortnightly at lunchtimes and last just under an hour. Alternate meetings are for business and for discussion, usually with an invited speaker. Lively and controversial discussions have been popular.

Evening meetings have been a flop. Members work in Fleet Street, but live all over the Home Counties. The only successful evening activities have been socials and film shows.

Problems and needs:

Members are interested in two things — action and controversy. It has been easier to get members out at 7.30 in the morning to give out leaflets than to get them to an evening meeting to hear the case against the bomb (again).

The experience so far — conclusions

All of these groups have shown that building a workplace group can be a very effective way of spreading the CND message.

The experience shows that workplace organisation can be a major growth area for CND and that all local groups should take up the issue. The Yarrow shipyard group particularly made the point that local CND groups should not be frightened of going to workplaces from the outside if necessary. The right approach and contact is not as difficult to find as we've tried to show in the Broadsheet.

Operation Hard Rock 1982

29 September to 5 October

In the coming year the Government will be holding a major civil defence exercise. Set out below is a brief description which we hope groups will use when organising workplace Branches.

"Hard Rock" is a war planning exercise that forms part of the biennial N.A.T.O. exercises which will take place between October 1st and 4th 1982.

At present the full details of "Hard Rock" are not known, however this time around, according to press releases, the Government is planning to test and encourage local and voluntary involvement in 'civil defence'. The Government wants to discover what response there will be for this from all levels of local authorities and local voluntary organisations (womens institute, St. Johns Ambulance etc.). Local bunkers from the seventeen sub-regions will be manned.

To gain some idea of the extent of the attack the planners assume let us look back to "Square Leg". "Square Leg" was a part of an exercise that took place throughout Western Europe in September 1980.

The official briefing was that 125 nuclear bombs would hit Britain, 54 bursts in the air, 57 on the ground in England and Wales and the remainder in Scotland. They would come in two waves separated by about three hours and they would hit every major populated area in the country. The bombs would vary from half a megaton to three megatons, and their combined power would be more than two hundred megatons, equivalent to 13,000 Hiroshima bombs. This was envisaged as a fairly "moderate" attack and no allowances were made for a second or third attack.

This then will be the type of scenario for "Hard Rock" with the added push to involve large numbers of the civilian population. What can we as trade unionists do to sabotage the governments plans to involve us in this large scale farce of civil defence?

Firstly, we have to convince our workmates that civil defence is no defence. This can be especially difficult in such areas as the Health Service and Environmental Health. Workers in areas such as these could feel criminally negligent if they failed to carry out their duties. However, the FBU has had a policy against war-planning since 1964 when their conference declared it a waste of money. The Green Goddesses (remember the strike?) purchased in the 1950's were to be used as mobile columns in the event of a war. The FBU has banned peace time drills for Civil Defence. Basically only the Chief Officers of any brigade are involved. The FBU showed the *War Game* at last year's conference and at their national school in September.

Some relevant information is available for arguing the case. To begin with, the amount of money being spent on the civilian side, so-called civil defence, is negligible, and virtually all of this is used to build up the network of control. If the Government wanted to increase our chances of survival it should invest in the health services, not cut them.

If by some remote chance significant numbers of the population did survive the government would not