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Chain Reaction

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TELFORD ANTI - NUCLEAR GROUP

Easter Rallies - A Huge Success

On Easter Monday, a coachload of people from Telford including members of the Telford Anti Nuclear Group, joined 8,000 demonstrators in Rugby to show the strength of their feelings against nuclear weapons. The five mile colourful march converged on a huge field next to the radio masts which are the polaris tracking station, and which would transmit the signal to launch a nuclear attack from Britain.

During the afternoon at the rally the crowd were entertained to excellent music and songs, finishing with an exciting set from 'the Beat'. Between the music we heard inspiring speeches from some of the leading C.N.D. figures, including Bruce Kent, who paid tribute to the one person, who perhaps more than anyone has helped the phenomenal recent growth of C.N.D. He referred of course to 'our leader', who with her warlike pose and speeches has made the prospect of nuclear war a reality. "Thank-you Maggie." We have asked John Knott, the Defence Minister to debate the government position with C.N.D. in public", he told us, "but the government refuse to come out and play." Instead the government have earmarked £45million to oil their propaganda machine, to try and con us that we can not only live with the threat of the bomb, but that we could actually survive and win a nuclear war that would kill 12million people in this country!!

It was a great rally and the atmosphere of hope and solidarity which arises on occasions like this helps to strengthen those fighting for freedom and peace when they return to their smaller local groups.

However when we did return and read our papers and watched T.V., we found that the march was "disappointing" and a "bit of a flop". Sure we expected more, but 8,000 is fantastic, and it was just one of many rallies around the country on that day; 10,000 in London, 9,000 in East Anglia, 500 marched for 3 days across the Pennines to join 10,000 in Manchester, and thousands more were at smaller rallies. In Brussels 10,000 people from all over Europe protested for a nuclear free Europe, for it is here that the war will be fought!

A disturbing feature on these rallies for peace, is the massive police presence and growing amount of harassment. For instance the coach from Bishops Castle with some Telford people on board got bogged down in police beaurocracy and demonstrators were almost prevented from getting off the coach and joining the rally. Other coaches were diverted to the far side of the town, and throughout the afternoon, police helicopter droned overhead. A massive police presence at massive cost. The march and rally for peace were entirely trouble free.

All in all it was a good day, but the struggle needs more people.

DIARY

- JUNE 2nd Czech cartoon film 'The Red Stain' 7.30 pm. plus a monthly social evening - Elephant & Castle pub, Dawley.
- JUNE 6th & 7th National C.N.D rally 2 day march Holy Loch Polaris base to Glasgow city centre. final leg of 6 miles on the 7th. coaches from the West Midlands.
- Every Thursday - 7.30 pm. TANG meeting at 126 Withywood Drive, Malinslee. Current projects are a poster display and outdoor theatre show.
- JULY 4th Shrewsbury Peace Group Day of Action. Theatre, stalls and events in the square at Shrewsbury.

Councillors Reply

The questionnaire which the Telford Anti-Nuclear Group sent to candidates in the local elections met with a rather disappointing response. About 47% of candidates failed to reply. Those who did reply tended to do so along party lines, with the Conservatives predictably opposed to Unilateral disarmament. Several explained the reasons for their viewpoint at length, and with fervour. The Labour party candidates who replied were all in favour of Unilateral disarmament, as were the three Communist candidates who all replied. The failure of so many candidates to respond might be attributed to the continuing debate on Nuclear weapons within the Labour and Liberal parties (only 3 of the 7 Liberal candidates replied). However we hope that the Labour candidates who now constitute the largest group within Shropshire feel mandated to do all they can to block civil defence preparations and withhold their co-operation from government exercises like operation square-leg which are trial runs for Doomsday.

Footnote:

John Knight the newly elected County Councillor for the Hollinswood Residents Association, stated in his reply to TANG's questionnaire on nuclear weapons that he "would be willing to have the most terrible nuclear weapon in his own back garden to prevent Hollinswood from becoming a Soviet satellite."

Protect and Survive!!

The nuclear strategists tell us that survival of a nuclear exchange is possible yet they fail to tell us of the more subtle long term effects of nuclear war. Our world is a living organism that depends on all its constituent parts for its survival. Man is a part of that ecological pyramid that could come crashing down if interfered with. Nuclear war is the ultimate threat to that balance, if we destroy that balance, then major upheavals will have disastrous effect on such things as the weather and in turn with agriculture. The ozone layer within the atmosphere will be seriously damaged thus allowing vast amounts of ultra violet radiation to enter and cause skin cancers. Micro-organisms will be killed and thus leaving the more damaged organisms to live on. The whole food chain for man and animals will end and resulting in starvation and disease. So this is Survival?

World Disarmament Campaign.

The launching meeting of the petition on 24th April was attended by 45 people. The visiting speakers said: "The greatest dilemma facing the world today is one of arms and disarmament." So far 115 people have agreed to help collect the petition, but people in Newport, Shifnal and the rural parts of the constituency are urgently needed.

Interested? Please contact:

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In order to share the work around the group, the names on this list will change from time to time.