

# campaign WALES



CND Cymru Members Newsletter

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20p

## COLD WAR RELIC

The alarming news that a high-security £1,000 million radar system is to be built at Brawdy can only be cause for concern to the people of Wales.

RAF Brawdy, nestling on the west coast of Wales, is well known to us in the peace movement as a United States submarine tracking station. It is now to be home to a radar system that, as the Independent stated (23.3.90) "is specially designed to provide early warning of cruise missile attacks at a time when the Soviet armed forces... are not looking nearly as aggressive as they were seven years ago."

Not only is it a dangerous, expensive relic from the pre-INF treaty days, but as revealed in Wales on Sunday (1.4.90), it poses a considerable threat to people's health: "Hazards allegedly include leukaemia, bowel and skin cancer, impaired vision and poor memory." It added that "A study of Polish military personnel revealed that exposure to radar increased the risk of cancer three-fold".

As we go to press, a campaign to stop the development is being formed. CND Cymru, who have been in the forefront of protests at Brawdy in recent years, urges all its supporters in the area to be involved, for, as our Chair, Rhodri Glyn Thomas says: "This base is a throwback to the days of cruise missiles and we must expose this folly as unnecessary and unwanted, and tell the USA and the British Government that the people of Wales did not vote for it, we do not want it and we will oppose it."



"For the last time, sir, I'm telling you our jets don't fly *that* low"

## ABOVE OUR HEADS — JUST!

**Twenty-four military planes have crashed in Wales over the last 10 years. As the number of flights increases, so does the risk of a disaster.**

They are NOT practising to fight off an attacker. To do that, they would have to fly as fast and as high as possible. They are rehearsing long-range bombing attacks, flying low to escape radar detection.

Almost all these planes can carry nuclear bombs. And a new generation of air-launched nuclear missiles is being developed.

CND Cymru launched a new national campaign against low-flying at the annual conference in Aberystwyth on 21 April. A bilingual leaflet outlining the case against low flying is available from Bob Cole, Bryn Eltyd, Tanygrisiau, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd LL41 3TW. (Tel. 0766 831356).

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INSIDE: CND CYMRU'S NEW SUMMER CATALOGUE

# “No end to low flying”

## The Ministry of Defence visits Machynlleth

130 people came to a public meeting, organised by Machynlleth Town Council, to hear Air Marshall Brian Cable say that the Air Force has absolutely no intention of changing its policy on 'low flying'.

He explained that the main purpose of these exercises is to train pilots to fly in such a way that they cannot be picked up by enemy radar.

Until 1979 low flying was restricted to definite routes. New arrangements in that year meant that pilots were given instructions to avoid built-up areas, airfields and nuclear installations, but gave them much more freedom and flexibility. In recent years this has resulted in 100,000 flights by planes and 40,000 by helicopters. He stated that it was unusual for planes to fly at under 250 feet.

An officer from the Ministry of Defence said that the number of complaints from the public had risen considerably since the introduction of the Tornado aircraft. Last year there were 8,000 complaints and about £40,000 was paid in compensation.

A local councillor asked him why they flew over the town when they were supposed to avoid schools and hospitals. The answer was that the pilots did their best to avoid areas such as Machynlleth, but that it was not always possible!

Martin Ashby (CND Cymru) expressed grave concern that the strategies of the Armed Forces had altered little since 1945, despite the great changes in Eastern Europe. Air Marshall Cable replied that in his opinion there had not been significant changes and he had instructions to carry on as before.

Bill Pritchard, from Barmouth, who has been researching into low flying, maintained that one object of these flights is for an unexpected nuclear attack on Russia. He went on to explain that he had recently learnt that the Swedish Air Force is taking steps to prevent an attack of this sort, by British planes, taking place through the narrow valleys of Norway and



Military aircraft accidents in Wales since 1980

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Swansea 1980       | 14. Anglesey 1984     |
| 2. Lampeter 1980      | 15. Claerwen 1986     |
| 3. RAF Valley 1980    | 16. Valley 1986       |
| 4. RAF Brawdy 1981    | 17. Brawdy 1986       |
| 5. Corwen 1982        | 18. Builth Wells 1987 |
| 6. Nant-y-Moch 1982   | 19. Aberystwyth 1987  |
| 7. Claerwen 1982      | 20. Brawdy 1988       |
| 8. Valley 1982        | 21. Ponthenri 1989    |
| 9. Carmarthen 1982    | 22. Machynlleth 1989  |
| 10. Brawdy 1982       | 23. Brawdy 1989       |
| 11. Llanberis 1983    | 24. Capel-y-Ffin 1990 |
| 12. Brawdy 1983       |                       |
| 13. Cardigan Bay 1984 |                       |

Source: Wales on Sunday

Sweden. The Air Marshall seemed at a loss to give an adequate reply.

The Ministry of Defence should face the reality of the situation, according to Dr Dafydd Elis Thomas MP. When people see the armed forces of Russia being pulled out of Eastern Europe, was there any justification for continuing with the old strategies of NATO and what need could there be for low flying?

At the end of the meeting a petition against low flying signed by 1,015 local people was presented by Mr Ithel Rowlands of Machynlleth.

What became clear during the evening was that the speakers had come to explain the reasons for low flying, but not to discuss any changes in policy.

Eastern Europe is changing; armies and 2 conventional weapons are being cut; but NATO nuclear policy continues as before.

## Navy larks

Another full West Glamorgan County Council meeting has gone, still without West Glamorgan making a policy decision on whether to take part in the Navy's "safety" plan for their proposed nuclear-powered submarine berth (Z-berth) in Swansea docks.

This time, however, there was at least some discussion of the proposal – with most speakers being strongly opposed to the plan – which was then referred back to a Working Group. (This Working Group was originally a Sub-Committee, but its status underwent a swift change when it was discovered that Sub-Committees are open to the public, whereas Working Groups are not!).

However, there are encouraging indications of movement within the ruling Labour group towards rejecting the Navy's plan, but not yet to the extent of actually challenging and defeating the pro-nuclear submarine elements of the council and council officers.

The 'Stop the Subs' campaign organised a mass balloon release from a park near the proposed Z-berth site, on Chernobyl Day, April 26th. The balloons had tags attached, explaining to the finder that if there were an accident on board a nuclear-powered submarine in Swansea docks, this would be an (invisible) piece of radiation that they would have found, not a balloon! We are asking all balloon finders to return the tags to us, stating where they were found, so that we can gain a picture of how the radiation would spread. This information can then be released to the press and councillors.

The 'Stop the Subs' group always needs good ideas, money and people's time – if you can spare any (or all!) of these, please contact us at 72 Gwyn Street, Yr Alltwen, Pontardawe, Abertawe SA8 3AN (cheques payable to 'Stop the Subs Campaign' please). Our video and speakers on the issue are also available to any interested group.



'Shut Trident Out' protest at AWE Cardiff on March 31

# Nuclear Hypocrites

**The discovery that nuclear triggers were being smuggled through Heathrow Airport, on their way to Iraq, can only cause alarm to the peace movement.**

The hypocrisy of some of our political leaders, when commenting on this smuggling, can only cause anger.

At a time when Britain, France and China are increasing their nuclear weapons, what right have we to criticise other countries for trying to emulate us and to become nuclear powers.

Article Six of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to which Britain is a signatory, calls on those countries with nuclear weapons to actively seek nuclear disarmament, while committing those without nuclear weapons not to develop or obtain them.

In August, the Non-Proliferation Treaty comes up for review and we must press our government to end Britain's involvement in the nuclear arms race. A decision to cancel Trident and support a comprehensive test ban treaty would be a major step forward for the world.

CND Cymru will be playing its part when, under the slogan "Wales says NO to Nuclear Weapons", the 'Giant Ribbon' peace petition is launched at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Gwynedd at the end of May.

Peace groups will then be encouraged to use it to collect as many signatures as possible, before it goes to the National Eisteddfod in the Rhymney Valley during the first week of August.

As well as campaigning there will be a fund-raising aspect to this all-Wales project, with waged people paying £1 and children and the unwaged 50p to sign it.

After the National Eisteddfod, the ribbon will link up with Bruce Kent on his walk to Geneva and hopefully it will surround the building in Geneva where the Non-Proliferation Treaty review will be taking place. This is an opportunity for every county, city, town or village to express its opposition to nuclear weapons and to show the world that Wales cares.

For more information, please contact: Bob Cole, Bryn Ellytyd, Tanygrisiau, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd. (0766) 831356

## Death on delivery

The London government promotes the arms trade to an extent not enjoyed by any other exporters. Through the Defence Export Services Organisation, with a budget of £10 million and a staff of 240, it organizes the Arms Fairs – the British Army Equipment Exhibition at Aldershot, alternating annually with the Royal Navy Equipment Exhibition at Portsmouth.

Apart from guns, planes and tanks, repressive equipment, from leg irons to sophisticated riot control vehicles, are on offer. 'Dual use' equipment, such as landrovers, radar and computers which can have civilian or military use, are traded.

Sixty countries and over 300 British arms manufacturers attended the Portsmouth Fair last year. Military attaches in British embassies do the follow up.

It is all shrouded in secrecy. The guest list to the Arms Fair is kept secret, although details often leak out or are 'discovered'. This has Civil Liberties implications.

The government claims that it does not supply repressive regimes or countries at war, but British arms still found their way into the Iran-Iraq war, to Chile, and sophisticated radar has been sold to South Africa.

The Campaign against the Arms Trade was set up in 1974 by a number of organisations which realised the the significance of the arms trade. It is still partly funded by Plaid Cymru, Friends of the Earth, Quaker Peace and Service and sixteen other groups.

Amongst other material it produces a bimonthly newsletter, lists of arms manufacturers (including one for Wales) as well as leaflets and briefing papers. "Death on Delivery", recently published by CAAT, is a book about the impact of this trade on the Third World.

There are 100,000 people employed in the arms trade, so we know that we must seek conversion rather than closure.

This year we are campaigning on waste – the squandering of resources, human and material, that the arms trade engenders. We are calling for the closure of the Defence Export Services Organisation and have a bilingual petition, which will be presented to the government as the culmination of a week of action – 'WEEK AGAINST WASTE' – September 22nd-30th.

For more information contact CAAT, 11 Goodwin St., London N4 3HO.

