

campaign WALES



CND Cymru Members Newsletter

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20p

Success and hope

The success of PAWB's campaign and the hopes for disarmament in Europe will be celebrated at the Nuclear Free Wales Festival in Bangor this month (Feb).

The festival will be a day out for all the family – with a creche for babies, a special children's festival and music, poetry, discussions and an exhibition for the adults. The organisers promise the best wholefood in north Wales!

The venue is Saffle'r Fenai, Coleg Normal on the road from Bangor to Holyhead and the festival will run from 11.30 to 5 on Saturday 24 February. Admission is £1.50, 75p (unwaged) and free for children.

Among the guest performers are Bob Delyn from Wales, protest singer Maria Tolly from England, the Peacemakers from Merseyside and Irish band Giro City. Ian Saville, the 'Socialist Conjuror' is an act not

to be missed!

Meg Beresford, general secretary of CND, will take part in a discussion on the environment and development. Other topics will be: Wales in the 'Common European Home'; Celtic Sea – nuclear-free? and the future of CND Cymru in the 1990s.

Welsh and English poets will be reading their work in a session organised by Steve Eaves. The world-renowned printmaker Paul Peter Piech – who lives in south Wales – will be exhibiting a selection of his posters on peace and development.

You can buy a programme to guarantee admission from the Greenhouse, 1 Trevelyan Terrace, Bangor (£1.50 or 75p each). Please send a large s.a.e. For more information please phone CND Cymru (0766) 831356.



Peter Burt

SEA ACTION – peace campaigners took to the boats when the frigate HMS Jupiter, which can carry nuclear weapons, visited Cardiff in January. They got close to the ship as it rounded Penarth head. See page 2

BUNKER PLAN FOR N-WAR

The 'nuclear-free' county of Mid Glamorgan has fallen in line with Government plans for nuclear war, by agreeing to build an emergency control bunker costing more than £1,000,000.

The bunker will be a purpose-built addition to a new magistrates court at Llwynypia in the Rhondda, with room for 110 officials who are supposed to run Mid Glamorgan before and after a nuclear attack.

The county council's decision to build the control centre came eight years after peace campaigners took direct action to stop work on a bunker at Bridgend. Mid Glamorgan CND launched a campaign against the bunker as soon as news of the plan leaked out early in December.

Home Office regulations make it quite clear that 'emergency control centres' are intended for use in nuclear war. The Rhondda building is designed to operate for two weeks without mains power or water and provide protection against radioactive fall-out.

Labour councillors who voted for the scheme say they are under pressure from the Home Office and claim they could be personally penalised if they refuse to co-operate.

Councillor Terry Mahoney, Labour group leader, told the Western Mail that councillors 'faced surcharge and losing their homes and businesses if they did not build the emergency control centre'.

In a top-level meeting with Mid Glamorgan CND, council leaders found other ways of justifying their collaboration with the Government's war plans. County Clerk Hugh Thomas claimed they were doing the 'minimum' necessary to remain

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COME TO THE FESTIVAL IN BANGOR ON 24 FEBRUARY

NUCLEAR-FREE SEAS

STOP THE SUBS

You know how difficult it can be to organise the family get-together over Christmas? Well, imagine trying to organise a public meeting, print leaflets, arrange delivery, produce a video, set up two street events, write and finance a sponsored advert in the local evening paper, get enough people to pack out a council meeting on a workday morning and keep the media informed of all these activities!

These were the rather ambitious plans that Swansea 'Stop the Subs' group had set itself when we learnt just before Christmas that West Glamorgan County Council would vote on the nuclear submarine dock (Z-berth) proposal on January 12.

We wanted to mobilise public opposition to the Navy's plan in order to influence the council vote. As it happened, on December 29, we learnt the vote had (again) been postponed. This is one of our major problems – we will never know for certain when the Council will vote on the Z-berth proposal.

Most of the events carried on as planned. The sponsored advert attracted considerable attention and undoubtedly contributed to the very well attended public meeting. Damian Durrant of Greenpeace gave us a very well argued case against the Z-berth, and this event (and all the others) received very good media coverage.

Where does the campaign go from here? West Glamorgan County Council has an unassailable Labour majority; the Council as a whole, and (almost all) the Labour councillors, are publicly opposed to the Z-berth. Yet, all Labour party members and councillors involved in the 'Stop the Subs' campaign believe the Labour group will do nothing to prevent nuclear submarines coming.

This widespread belief, combined with secrecy and the suspicion that high-ranking Council officials are actively undermining the Council's stated opposition produces a situation where it's very hard to know what's actually going on.

I believe we must operate more visibly outside the Council structure, to complement our work within it. We intend to produce car stickers followed by T-shirts and badges, to enable ordinary people to show their opposition; and we also hope to stage some high visibility stunts, to keep the issue in the press.

Inside the Council, we must continue to support those councillors we can rely on

SEA ACTION

The warship HMS Jupiter met with a concerted anti-nuclear demonstration when she visited Cardiff in January. Disarm the Seas campaigners greeted the frigate with a giant CND symbol suspended from cliffs at Penarth and a huge banner with the message 'Nuclear-free Seas'.

As well as the shoreline protest, the frigate was met by campaigners in inflatable boats who escorted her through Cardiff Bay. The boats were crewed by a mixture of local activists and members of the Sea Action group based in Brighton, who travelled to south Wales especially to take part in the protest.

In the week preceding the frigate's visit, campaigners mounted a picket of the Army, Navy and Air Force recruiting office in Cardiff and handed out leaflets to passers-by, drawing attention to the waste of resources required to build and run a warship such as HMS Jupiter.

The ship is a Leander class frigate built at the end of the 1960s. According to Naval experts, this type of vessel was long outdated by the time HMS Jupiter entered service, and in 1983 the ship underwent a massive £70m conversion to bring her up to date with the latest weapons systems.

The Royal Navy refused to confirm or deny that HMS Jupiter was carrying nuclear weapons during her visit to Cardiff. However, the ship carries a Lynx helicopter which can be used in anti-submarine warfare to drop nuclear depth bombs.

Peter Burt

and we must organise effective lobbying of the rest. I hope the video produced by some of the 'Stop the Subs' activists will provide an effective way into Labour ward meetings, as well as other groups throughout the county.

Finally, we must realise that although the County Council has some power in this situation, it is ultimately the Navy whom we must persuade not to bring nuclear submarines to Swansea. West Glamorgan County Council can help or hinder us, but if we can show the Navy the strength of the local opposition, nuclear submarine visits will not become a regular feature of Swansea life.

Brian Jones
Swansea CND

Editorial

The first issue of Campaign Wales for the 1990s brings greetings and best wishes to all members of CND Cymru. Probably we are still feeling somewhat stunned by the events and pace of change in central Europe and wondering about the prospects for a more peaceful world.

Some may even question whether CND is still relevant, or how our relevance compares to the days of the mass demonstrations at Greenham Common and in western capitals in the early 80s.

The menace of war in Europe has receded, but while nuclear weapons remain, the whole world is threatened by them. No real progress towards stability can be made until military spending is very substantially cut. Developing countries cannot prosper while spending on weapons of mass destruction and the arms trade swallow up so much of the world's resources.

The 1990s will be crucial in these respects and as a nation-wide peace movement we should be urgently considering how we can 'update' ourselves and play our part in the disarmament process.

At the British CND conference in November, the first paragraphs of the aims and policy of CND were altered with a view to making them reflect present thinking within the movement.

'CND believes that British "independent" nuclear weapons and American nuclear bases and weapons in Britain do nothing to increase the security of Britain or the world and should be unilaterally and unconditionally rejected and removed.'

In 1982 Wales declared herself nuclear weapon-free by the democratic decision of all eight county councils. This was a historic declaration of intent and as yet none of the counties has reversed it.

Every year since then we have celebrated Nuclear-Free Wales with a festival.

This year it will be held at Coleg Normal in Bangor on 24 February. Try to come, but if this is not possible, please be sure to continue your support for CND Cymru in 1990.

Rhoda Jones

CND Cymru diary dates for 1990

Sat 10 February – meeting of the Cyngor at Brynafen, Rhayader, Powys

Sat 24 February – Nuclear Free Wales Festival, Coleg Normal, Bangor

Sat 21 April – Annual Conference, Old College, Aberystwyth

Sat 9 June – meeting of the Cyngor at Brynafen, Rhayader, Powys

Sat 15 September – meeting of the Cyngor at Brynafen, Rhayader, Powys

Sat 1 December – meeting of the Cyngor at Brynafen, Rhayader, Powys

* Brynafen Country House is on the A470, just south of Rhayader. Individual members and representatives of affiliated bodies are very welcome at all these events.

For more information about any of these dates, please contact Bob Cole, Brynellttyd, Tanygrisiau, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd LL41 3TW (0766 831356).

Lies and waste – the nuclear con



NO BUNKERS! Demonstration against the Carmarthen bunker in March 1986

Why does CND Cymru make such a fuss about bunkers? This is a question which was asked in Carmarthen, is asked in the Rhondda and presumably will be asked in Dinefwr and the Vale of Glamorgan.

The immediate answer is that they are a waste of taxpayers' and ratepayers' money. The response one gets is that councils are notorious for wasting money; some would say it is the only thing they are any good at!

So, why do we make such a fuss about bunkers? Quite simply, they are part of the government's package on defence.

The official propaganda tells us that nuclear weapons are a deterrent. They will never be used. They do not represent a danger to ourselves or others. They are nice, clean and safe.

Just in case the enemy were to attack us, we must be in a position to care for the public, and that is why we need bunkers. They are centres for the co-ordination of emergency services if there were a nuclear emergency. They would look after us and ensure that we came to no harm. They are there for our safety.

Bunkers are an integral part of the government's lie on defence. People do suffer as a result of nuclear weapons. Millions of people die in the developing countries because affluent states such as Britain do not offer sufficient aid to them. People are suffering and dying in these islands because the government does not spend enough money on services.

Why, one may ask, does this occur?

Because we spend so much money on weapons. During the present financial year, £21,000 million will be spent on 'defence'. How many hospitals or schools would that build and equip? How many houses could be built or renovated? How many people could be taken off hospital or council house waiting lists? How many unnecessary deaths could be avoided in the developing countries?

If a nuclear disaster ever occurred in Britain, there would be devastation on a scale never before envisaged and these underground emergency control centres would be totally irrelevant. The people of Carmarthen could have found a better use for the £400,000 spent on their bunker, as can the people of Mid-Glamorgan for the £1.5 million which will be spent digging a hole in the Rhondda.

We make a fuss because they represent a lie, which causes death and suffering. In fact, we need to make more of a fuss. We didn't vote for bunkers in Wales, we never have done. We want our money spent on enriching the quality of life of our own people and the people of other nations who need and deserve our support.

We will continue to make a fuss, and we want to know whether those councillors whom we thought of as our allies are with us or against us on the issue of bunkers. We want to know whose interests they really represent – the people of Wales or Thatcher?

Rhodri Glyn Thomas
Chair, CND Cymru

BUNKER

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within the law and said the bunker would provide the council with a peacetime emergency centre on the cheap.

Three quarters of the cost will be paid by the Home Office, with the rest split between the Rhondda and Mid Glamorgan councils, who will be allowed to borrow extra in order to pay the bill. But CND Cymru have insisted that there are hundreds of better ways to spend £1 million in the valleys – wherever the money comes from.

At the meeting in January, CND argued that the council should follow the advice of the Manchester-based steering committee of Nuclear-Free authorities and do as little as possible, while staying within the law.

CND Cymru do not believe that the Home Office would be willing to take legal action to force Mid Glamorgan to build a £1 million bunker when there are so many better ways of spending that sum in the valleys.

The council are reluctant to face up to the truth of what they are doing. When the CND delegation referred to the 'bunker' or mentioned plans for burying victims of a nuclear attack, they were accused of using 'emotive language'.

But Mid Glamorgan CND – with support from CND Cymru – will continue to highlight the stark truth that nuclear bunkers are part of the Government's attempt to con the public into believing that nuclear war is a possibility.

As the pacifist scientist Alex Comfort said: 'No government will go to war if it can't rely on the support of its public.' The farce of 'civil defence' is an attempt to win public support for the nuclear option by creating the illusion that – with bunkers and plans – we can all 'pull through'.

Mid Glamorgan County Council are obviously aware that they do not have public support for their bunker plan. Their nervousness was shown by the line-up at January's meeting with CND, where the chairman of the council was joined by the leader and deputy leader, the chair and vice chair of finance, the chair and vice-chair of public protection, the county clerk, the emergency planning officer and the county architect.

As County Clerk Hugh Thomas made quite clear, they are desperate to win CND to their way of thinking and deflect criticism onto the Home Office. But peace campaigners cannot lose sight of the fact that the council are actively collaborating with the Government's war plans.

Feeling against the bunker is already running high in Rhondda. If Mid Glamorgan – and Wales – say 'No' to this bunker, it could mark the end for the Cold War 'Civil Defence' con trick.

James Stewart

INSIDE FOR PEACE

Christmas was coming and once again Bob Cole looked destined to spend it at Her Majesty's expense. The slow bureaucracy of the legal system was the cause.

On 4 August 1989, Bob and Rod Stallard had boarded a train at Llandudno Junction station which was carrying a nuclear flask from Wylfa to Sellafield. It was some while before they were noticed, despite chaining themselves to it and painting slogans. In the subsequent news coverage and court case this lack of security was highlighted.

They appeared in court in Llandudno in October and a humourless, unsympathetic bench fined them for criminal damage, which with costs totalled £239 each.

Bob had no intention of paying and at Blaenau Ffestiniog, an altogether more sympathetic bench sent him down for fourteen days on December 12.

There was wide media coverage, live TV reporting from Blaenau, and even an inch or two in the Guardian. The movement's support demonstrated to magistrates and prison authorities the strength of feeling and commitment to disarmament that exists and enabled Bob to redecorate his cell walls, using the cards he received.

And finally, the good news was that he behaved himself and was home before Christmas.



UNDER ARREST – Bob Cole (right) and Rod Stallard are taken away by police in Llandudno

People to People

Rae Street, who contributed so much to CND Cymru's Conference in Aberystwyth last year, spent two months last autumn travelling around the USA. In case we should begin to feel complacent about the superpower disarmament process, we publish these extracts from her report.

One appalling fact stands out in the USA. Over half the national budget in the world's richest country goes to the military. Yet in every town and city – and in the countryside – there is widespread poverty. Nothing makes this 'come home' more vividly than the homeless.

In Concord I took part in a Food Arsenal where cans of food had been collected from all over the state to be given to the poor and homeless. A direct link was made between the poverty and money for weapons.

In Savannah I went to the black church where the preacher made it clear that the blacks suffer poverty and racism still and the contrast was outlined with the gross resource for the military. All the money and resources are directed under the guise of 'security', but whose security?

It is no use the Bush administration

proclaiming good intentions on disarmament when so many weapons systems are being retained and developed. This is particularly true in the building of the arsenal at sea. Is it thought that it will be out of sight, out of mind?

The US Navy plans to have over 700 sea-launched Cruise missiles which will not be included in the START talks. As in Europe, campaigns against weapons at sea are strengthening. In Maine, a state referendum was held on 7 November to halt the testing of sea-launched Cruise missiles off their coast. The referendum was carried by over 52 per cent. This is a non-binding referendum but shows the direction of popular opinion.

Now the campaigners are determined to further their initiative. The Governor is writing to the Congressional delegation to press for a ban on the testing of sea-launched Cruise and to press the Bush administration to begin talks with the USSR to ban all sea-launched Cruise missiles. Verification is now possible.

President Bush may be talking 'Peace', but what is the reality?

American Friends

An article in last winter's Campaign Wales encouraged readers to break the 'Dallas' stereotype and reach out across the Atlantic. I'm going to have a try at that.

There has been some agitation here, among North Americans of Welsh ancestry, who are not just content to sing hymns, eat Welshcakes and ruminate over fantasies of Wales in the 'good old days'.

In fact, there are enough of us sufficiently concerned about present-day problems in Wales to support a new Welsh-North American publication dealing with such problems. It is called 'Cyngor', and I contribute regular articles on peace and nuclear issues in Wales.

I get information for my articles from 'Campaign Wales', 'Radioactive Times' and letters from people such as Veronica Wood.

When the editor and regular contributors to 'Cyngor' get together, we often find ourselves coming back to one nagging question: 'What can we do to encourage and support the language, culture and people of Wales?'

From reading 'Campaign Wales' I get the impression that some of the best things we could do are to stop electing people like Reagan and Bush, end the arms race and get our cruise missiles and military bases out of Britain.

Some Americans might be surprised to hear that, but they'd be a lot more likely to believe it if they heard it from you instead of me.

Are there other things about which you would like us to write to our government representatives?

- What about the US (not NATO) submarine tracking base at Brawdy?

- Are 160 US military facilities in Britain too many?

- Do you worry about the US weapons and explosives stored at Caerwent?

- Does the US respect Wales as a nuclear-free zone?

- How do you feel about the US buying Namibian uranium enriched at Capenhurst, just a few miles east of your border with England?

I really do need your help. If I tell Americans these things they're likely just to yawn and think. 'Oh, another peace activist' and continue watching 'Dallas'. If I'm quoting letters from you, though, they might listen.

Please feel welcome to write to Cyngor. The address is: Cyngor, Griff Williams, Editor, 15524 81st Ave. N.E. Bothwell, Wa. 98011. USA

Carole Woods

Back in the U.S.S.R.?

As a member of the 1989 delegation to Latvia, I was very interested to read in the last issue of Campaign Wales that two letters had been received which were critical of the time that the Peace delegation spent discussing the internal political situation in Latvia and Wales.

We were warmly welcomed, very generously treated and had a full and varied programme. However, at the end of the week, I had not really seen the real Latvia at grass roots level. When I expressed to Zane, our very able interpreter and guide, a desire to come back at some later date, she immediately gave me a personal invitation to stay with her and her two daughters at any time I wished.

With the help of the Latvian peace Committee, Zane was instrumental in enabling me to get a visa to visit from October 31 to November 30.

Flowers, flowers and still more flowers. Queues, queues and still more queues. This is present-day Latvia. The flowers express

the hopes and aspirations of the Latvian people for freedom to live their own lives the way they want – free from Soviet domination – while the queues are the reality of the present situation, as one of the fifteen Soviet republics.

Although Latvia is approximately the same size as Wales, with which it is twinned in the peace movement, the situation for the Latvian people is very different from those of us who live in Wales.

I quickly learned that foreign visitors needed permission from the registration office in Riga to travel around Latvia. On the first day, Zane took me to the office to register my presence in the country, accept responsibility for my good behaviour and for me to be informed of areas I could and could not visit.

The Red Army bases have a 10 km exclusion zone around them – entry is banned to everyone without a special permit. As far as I could find out there are no nuclear bases in Latvia. I believe that

there were some SS20s, but these, I understand, have been removed.

I went with Zane to visit the chairperson and the secretary of the Latvian peace Committee. We discussed the forthcoming visit of six members of Latvia's peace movement to CND Cymru's Conference in April. We also talked about an International Peace March through Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, which will take place next August.

The Latvian people with whom I was able to discuss issues of peace saw the nuclear issue as part of the larger issue of the political situation as it affected them, and tied in with this was always the ecology of the country and especially the question of pollution.

Nuclear and disarmament questions are not, to them, separate issues to be considered in isolation from the whole political situation.

Bruce Watkins

Hungary for change

The people of Hungary want change. They want a change from the one party state. They do not want Communism. But they do not know what should replace it!

There appears to be a danger of a capitalist take-over with the resultant repression of the less well-off members of society. One politician stated that for years the threat from the west was not a military threat but an economic one. Will this threat now become a reality?

I visited Hungary as the CND Cymru representative on a delegation from CND Britain. We were there at the invitation of the Hungarian Peace Council, an independent organisation which had arranged meetings with politicians and peace groups. I set out to seek people's reactions to what I thought would be some major issues.

Nuclear Weapons: Generally nuclear weapons were seen to be dangerous and unnecessary. Since there are no nuclear weapons in Hungary, the people did not consider them to be an important issue. However, they would resist their introduction into the country and would support their abolition.

NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation: Some spokespersons stated that membership of the Warsaw Pact was necessary to control Romania. This threat has now probably gone!

Others considered that the ideal would be a neutral Hungary with some Soviet support, as in Finland. It was, however, generally agreed that the disbandment of

both military blocs by negotiation, was desirable.

Nuclear Power: This was the topic that created most discussion. Many people thought that, in order to meet the country's energy needs, nuclear power was the only alternative to the recently cancelled hydro-electric project on the Danube. There was no thought of conservation of energy or of alternative renewable resources.

The lack of information and apparent misinformation on this subject was frightening. The single nuclear power station in Hungary, with its five reactors, was accepted with little thought about the problems which we in Britain have become aware of over the last 30 years.

However, it was generally considered that Hungary could not afford further nuclear power plants. They had not considered capitalist interest in unloading what has become an unacceptable technology in the west onto the emerging Eastern European countries.

The meetings with the Peace Groups gave me considerable hope. Their perception of peace is, as we have stated, not solely the absence of war. They perceive it as a harmonic balance of human relations, not only globally but also within the community and the family.

Their objectives are to bring to the public an awareness of the dangers threatening human life – especially the dangers to the environment, of the weapons of mass destruction.

Rod Stallard
vice chair CND Cymru

ONE WORLD

It seemed a big leap for a small group to organise a big festival, but the community was ready for it. The day-long event in Rhuthun Town Hall on 28 October last year attracted more than 400 people.

One child announced with outstretched arms that it was the happiest day of his life, and that atmosphere of happiness is what lingers in people's memories.

The festival provided a focal point for local concern about the environment – the theme was 'Think Globally, Act Locally'. But, more importantly, it gave the community an opportunity to come together and celebrate its togetherness and its creative potential.

Stereotypes about 'peace people' were broken down, because 'everyone' was there. Every effort was made for the event to be bilingual, and support was equally Welsh and English, in the realisation that issues of peace, justice and the environment are issues we have in common, and need to work on together.

People were helped to make the connections between what sometimes seem to be separate concerns. Hopefully they left more aware of the interdependence and interconnectedness of all things: peace, justice and all of creation.

We are left with the need – and the responsibility – to build on this awareness, and by the sense of community we experienced.

Mary Johnson & Gaynor Morgan
Rhuthun Peace Group

