

AGRICULTURE AFTER THE BOMB

"Probably the most momentous scientific meeting I have ever attended" was how one eminent British professor described last autumn's Washington conference on The World After Nuclear War. Its findings, after long international scrutiny, were of such a new order that they change the whole basis of the nuclear debate.

The implications in particular for agriculture and food supply are enormous: and for this reason, the Defence Research Trust, a non-political charity whose purpose is to work out truly effective minimum-risk defence policies, is sponsoring a major public conference at the Randolph Hotel in Oxford on Monday, March 19, to review the situation. The conference will be strictly balanced, scientific and non-polemical: and open to farmers and anyone else with a serious interest in the human environment. This will be the first public presentation in this country of the Washington findings.

The conference organisers have extended an invitation to Minister of Agriculture Michael Jopling to attend and present a paper, in consultation with his Home Office and Defence Ministry colleagues, on the government's position on farming and food supply in the context of nuclear war or accident.

Also taking part will be Professor Ian Percival, of Queen Mary College, London, who has studied in depth the findings of last autumn's top-level Washington conference on the World After Nuclear War; and done parallel work of his own on the effects on climate.

His presentation on the physical effects will be followed up by Dr Norman Myers, an expert on the biology of the environment, who took part in the Washington conference; and George Crossley of Bradford University, who has recently completed a PhD on civil defence with special reference to agriculture, described by one agriculture college lecturer as "conservative in its assumptions."

The morning session of the conference will be chaired by Sir Richard Doll, Kt, OBE, FRS, and the afternoon session by distinguished broadcaster and President of the Guild of Agricultural Journalists Mary Cherry. Concessionary rail fares from all parts of the country are being negotiated.

The fee for the full day, including coffee, lunch and tea, will be £15. Bookings are being handled via:

Room 1209
Surrey House
1 Throwley Way
SUTTON;
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Cheques should be made payable to "Defence Research Trust".

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