

(Jan. '80)

Defence of the Community

The people of Possil, like most local communities, don't have any way of defending themselves against foreign threats. Instead the government in London organises "defence" for the whole of Britain. And local areas are not really consulted about what kind of "defence" they want. In fact, British governments for a long time have been tied to a "defence" plan ^{centred} ~~on~~ on nuclear weapons, which are not community-based at all.

From a community point of view, nuclear weapons are a disgrace, and in this part of the country we have more than 1000 nuclear warheads, both American ones and British. So if we accept the job of being hosts to these huge nuclear forces, we are threatening to kill millions of strangers at a time, whole communities of ordinary people like ourselves. And in our turn, we become one big living target when there is a nuclear war, sooner or later.

The Horror

It's hard to imagine the full horror of these weapons. Just one of them, even a small H-bomb, could easily ~~kill~~ kill every single reader of the "Possil Post", — with the blast effect alone. And ~~there~~ there's the firestorm, there's radiation all around at the time of the explosion, and there's radioactive fallout later on. Nuclear weapons mean the murder of a whole community. The lucky people are those who die quickly.

Just now, Possil's only "protection" against nuclear war is the blind hope that it'll never happen. How long does "never" have to be? Until they manage to get nuclear disarmament, until they ban the bomb. And there's no sign of that just now.

Of course, there's no such thing anyway as protection against the blast or the firestorm of H-bombs. But we could have fallout shelters to protect us from the killer dust afterwards.

So even if we were very lucky, and there was no explosion directly on or above Possil or Glasgow, we would not be able to hide from the fallout after.

But somewhere in Strathclyde Region there's a secret shelter; maybe more than one, for Top People to hide in, and keep some sort of government going by military dictatorship. And somewhere near Possil there's a special observer post to measure ~~the~~ how much fallout there is, and decide which districts are fairly "clean" and worth organising, ^{or} ~~whether~~ whether they might as well forget about Possil, and stop people trying to get out of it. Governments in Britain have scrapped the plans they used to have for getting people out of the cities before a nuclear attack. The famous film "The War Game" showed how hopeless that idea was.

All the same, the government has started up new "civil emergency" plans, which pretend that community life can be kept going after a nuclear attack on Britain. It's hard to picture, with all the big cities, all the ~~army~~, navy and air-force targets flattened and poisoned with radiation, and fallout covering most of our small country. Maybe some shepherds or villages somewhere could survive, but Possil, ^{will} ~~will~~ stand no chance, being part of a big-city target like Glasgow, and so near the nuclear bases on the Clyde.

The Stupidity

It's strange that every country's afraid afraid of other people's nuclear weapons, and yet not afraid of its own. No country seems to be able to see that having nuclear weapons makes you a target of other nuclear weapons.

Just imagine how Possil would feel about this idea: Partick says that it's afraid of Balornock, so it's going to put Partick troops and weapons into Possil. Then if there's a battle, Possil will be ~~the~~ ruined first, instead

of Partick! And Possil says that's fine? And it's going to help too, by spending a lot of its community funds on its own extra weapons, to make sure Possil does get involved in the fighting.

It sounds stupid, but this is what has happened to Possil, and Britain already. The Americans have decided to fight a nuclear war, "if necessary", limited if possible to Europe, Britain and Possil. This is actual N.A.T.O. policy and the British government not only agrees to this, but also wastes our money on extra nuclear weapons for Britain itself, to make sure we ~~we~~ do get caught up in the massacre.

The Waste

The other disgrace in having nuclear weapons (or too much war preparations of any kind) is the waste of money, materials and people's skills. We need these badly for improving the life of our communities, as well as bringing our industry up to date. The money thrown away on war preparations, just in Britain alone, is now over £8,500,000,000 (8½ thousand million pounds). This is £3 a week for every person (of any age) in Britain.

On nuclear weapons only, we spend enough to build 7,000 good houses. And that's just the running costs of the nuclear weapons, after they've been built and paid for. Now the government is threatening to buy new Trident nuclear weapons. These are huge H-bomb rockets carried in giant submarines, and they'll cost £7,260,000,000 ~~£7,260,000,000~~ (7¼ thousand million pounds), — enough to build more than 60 good general hospitals and pay all the staff.

It's not as if we can't think of plenty of things that Possil needs more than nuclear weapons. Everywhere we look, the cuts in public spending have started to bite. Community life and spirit are being weakened by shortage of cash, poorer services, unemployment, family hardship and worry.

Some of the money spent on nuclear weapons, especially new ones, should be used instead for a quick and direct rescue of our community centres, schools, bus services, health, benefits and so on. And some of the military cash should be invested in industry, to create new jobs, to make peaceful and useful goods, and to earn the money we need for improving community life again in the future.

Either Way, You Lose

Nuclear weapons are supposed to protect the people of Possil and their way of life. But the spending on nuclear weapons is helping to ruin the quality of life, and the weapons are threatening the lives of the people in Possil and everywhere else, especially in any country stupid enough to be involved in nuclear weapons just to seem tough.

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