

Thinking The

Unthinkable

SHREWSBURY CHRONICLE

8 June 1984

Sir,
Loppington village proposes to make its own civil defence plans.

Before they do this I advise them to read the British Medical Association's report of the Effects of a Nuclear War which states that the entire health service could not cope with the aftermath of the detonation of a single nuclear bomb over a city. It also quotes a report of

an international team of scientists which states that the survival of the human race is in question after even a limited nuclear war.

The people of Loppington are thinking the unthinkable. It must never be contemplated that nuclear weapons can be used or can be survived.
Poor Loppington!
Imagine sitting in your

bunker thinking of your friends, sons and daughters, grandchildren, elsewhere in Britain. Are they 'safe' in their bunker?

Then you emerge from the hole days, weeks or months later. The landscape is dead. Bleached grain fields; rotting cattle, sheep and chickens; dead trees, birch and flowers.
PAUL V. HORSMAN

I would support W. A. Westall's views (Star Mail, January 23) as to the madness of the nuclear arms race, and the absurdity of the whole concept of nuclear war.

The presidents are not gods, and viewing from this higher level neither they nor their respective supporters have the right to terminate the existence of the human race for the sake of our puny 20th Century political doctrines. Mankind may be capable of millions more years on earth, and of infinitely greater things.

The war game, however, is played on a lower stage and I, too, fear that it is the lunatic few on both sides who provide the music to which the presidents must dance. It is these few who shout loudest and are heard most, because they present themselves as the champions of their nations. It

has been so since tribal times, only now it's 'writ big'.

This was all very well in the age of the bow and arrow, and even in the era of the gun and the so-called conventional bomb it was still acceptable because not everyone would perish in those wars, and the world would not be irreparably damaged.

However, in our brave new nuclear world, it's a different ball game, a moment of truth for humanity, for we have created something bigger than ourselves, which, great it, if we use it, will defeat the objective.

The ingredients for war are still with us. Greed, intolerance and tribal jingoism, but if we unleash the nuclear monster in their honour, we must realise that they will be the only victors.

For those reasons nuclear weapons may so far have prevented a major world con-

flict, but to the politically ambitious, who may some day be prepared to risk all or nothing, they may be considered of less importance than the need for a war.

This is a risk the world cannot afford to take, but those who think that if we abandoned nuclear weapons we could then go back to fighting conventional wars, I would say that this would be rather like putting the needle back a few grooves on a long-playing record.

All the signs now point to the only alternative for mankind which is, to strive to abolish the causes of war, and to sue our neighbours for peace on the grounds that we are first and foremost people of earth, rather than national entities.

A. ROLSTON

Dallamoor,
Hollinswood,
Telford.

Survive nuclear war, should make a point of reading a series of booklets produced by 'Farmers for a Nuclear Free Future.'

The farmers assert that there is a mistaken belief that the countryside may be safe, and that farming may survive. They point out that in a nuclear war, blast and burns casualties will be followed by climatic changes and an environment in which the survival of all living things will be threatened by starvation, disease, freezing temperatures and contamination from radio-activity.

The question is not whether rural areas will survive but whether the human race will survive.

Lord Mountbatten and many other eminent men, have declared that the nuclear arms race is insane, and every additional weapon adds to the peril we are in.

Robert McNamara, when U.S. Secretary of State, suggested that 600 nuclear weapons was all that was needed to destroy every large Soviet city.

America now has 25,000 nuclear warheads, and she intends to add another 6,000. The Soviet Union is also adding more weapons to its huge stockpile.

We should forget 'civil defence' and the illusions of safety it fosters. Both sides are well aware that they have many thousands of nuclear weapons more than is necessary for their defence, but they are locked into an arms race in which so-called 'balance' is tied with national prestige.

Public support should be given to an imaginative idea that has been put forward: that the USA stops adding to its nuclear weapons and starts to reduce them. America is not less safe with 24,900 war-

heads. After a reduction has been carried out, the Soviet Union, with the attention of the rest of the world turned on it, will be invited to do the same.

If Russia follows suit, America will carry out a further reduction. Is there anything to lose?
W. A. WESTALL
10 Kingswood Road,
Shrewsbury.

Nuclear war at parish council level

11/5/84

Your report that parish councillors are being urged to pick buildings in local villages to be used as control centres in the event of nuclear war, could be regarded as another venture into the Alice in Wonderland world of civil defence planners.

But I read recently that the Americans are to build a network of 15 hospitals in Britain, for the use of U.S. military personnel in the event of a European war.

Perhaps the fact that disarmament talks broke down after the installation of the American Cruise missiles means that preparations for nuclear war are entering a new stage.

In which case, even the entry of the parish councillors upon the nuclear scene, doesn't fill me with any confidence for the future.
J. EVANS

Cosmetic nature of CD

Sir,
Full marks to all those following up your report on Condover's nuclear war preparations (Chronicle, March 30).

Judging by the reaction, most people would rather be offered a peaceful future than the promise of a post-nuclear can of beans.

Councillor Everson is puzzled by this "lack of enthusiasm", however. He shouldn't be.

The cosmetic nature of civil defence is clear to see.

The British Medical Association has shown that there can be no effective medical response to nuclear war. Such plans as do exist are inadequate and deceptive.

They have little to do with providing succour for the weak and dying.

People living in known target areas will be told to "stay put", while refugees blocking roads essential for the mobilisation of government and the armed forces would risk being shot.

In the official civil defence document Training Manual for Scientific Advisers, it is not Russian aggression but "adverse public reaction to government policies" which tops the list of potential threats.

Given that the primary role of most civil defence measures appears to be civilian control, it is hardly surprising that Condover's plans were not better received.

KEVIN R. LEWIS

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