

... world leaders and public figures



Deirdre Rhys-Thomas and family.

Letter-writer and author of a new book.

have not quelled her fears. "I've seen these so-called important people play-acting, pampering their own self esteem in that rarified atmosphere. They are not thinking about their constituents, they are removed from ordinary people and ordinary fears."

She feels that her own activity in demanding some answers has helped her own sons cope with the nuclear threat. There have been a few independent reports over the last few years recording that the majority of children are distressed by the nuclear question and that only sympathetic discussion and advice can help.

Deirdre admits that "I had to desperately try to be balanced about the whole issue so that the boys would not get over-anxious."

Theo, who is now 18 and hoping to study philosophy at Warwick University, says that he would have felt even more desperate about the world if he hadn't known that his mother was trying to do something about it, and had been able to talk about the whole thing openly. Some of his friends have parents who do not face up to it and the children suffer."

Letters for My Children by Deirdre Rhys-Thomas. £3.95: Ringdore.

Arbroath Museum.

He appealed for a court-ide, on October 6 last year.

What the famous have to say . . .

A selection from the unique collection of letters, spanning four years from the first Greenham Common demonstration to Chernobyl 1986.

"THE most corrosive effect is that we humans are gradually losing our ability to look to the future with optimism for a better tomorrow . . . the very threat of countries having nuclear arsenals erodes our children's serenity, their basic trust that the world will protect their tender lives . . ." **DR HENRY COPPOLILLO**, head of child psychiatry, University of Colorado, March, 1985.

"TO cancel our plans now, simply because the Soviet Union has walked out on talks and made a variety of threatening noises as a result of their failure to dictate a settlement on their terms would simply reward the Soviets for bullying and aggressive behaviour . . ." **MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**, Whitehall, London, May 1984.

"I THINK the colour scheme for your nuclear shelter should be white with details painted bright yellow — for optimism!" **TERENCE CONRAN**, May 1983.

"I WISH to enter the following record for the Guinness Book of Records: THE MOST RADIOACTIVE SEA IN THE WORLD — THE IRISH SEA." **DEIRDRE RHYS-THOMAS**, April 1983.

"YOU were right in saying that in spite of sophisticated communications nations are becoming more insular in their outlook. The advanced ones want to use their technological supremacy to dominate others." **INDIRA GHANDI**, July 1983.

"I THINK your son is realistic in being frightened of nuclear war — I certainly am. You're kind enough to refer to my understanding of children. This aspect leads me to believe that to lie to a child only makes it more complicated." **DR HUGH JOLLY**, department of paediatrics, Charing Cross Medical School, April 1983.

"PERHAPS the best thing that we as parents can do for our children is to educate them to take a keen and responsible interest in political debates so that more voices of sanity and expertise are raised against those who advocate crude and simplistic solutions to our difficulties from both sides of politics." **ROBERT O'NEILL**, director, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, May 1985.

"MY answer to children's questions about nuclear annihilation would be: 'It could happen but it doesn't have to if we all vote, write, lobby.' The parents can tell what she or he is doing, and suggest that the child write a letter to the Prime Minister, President or MP." **BENJAMIN SPOCK**, MD, Arkansas, August, 1985.

"WE need people from each side whose aim is to ensure life, liberty and happiness for their own children and grandchildren. The right people would meet before lunch, talk about arms reduction, and wonder what they could do with their time after lunch and all would have been agreed by then." **MR JOHN TAYLOR**, editor, *Jane's All The World's Aircraft*, Surrey, 1984.

policy committee has over-
turned a decision to send
an official to