

11/19/79

EVIDENCE MOUNTS FOR A NUCLEAR WAR

Nov 19, 1979

Since our last leaflet to Draper employees, we have continued our weekly vigil to remind ourselves and you of the peril with which we face a world moving daily closer to nuclear annihilation. We ask you, once again, to consider the implications of Draper's work in making such a catastrophe possible.

1. A FALSE ALERT ON Nov. 9, 1979--(NYT, 11/10) a Norrad computer tape "simulated a missile attack on North America, and by mechanical error" went into "'live' launch," leading to "six minutes, during which the nation was in a low-level state of 'nuclear war' alert, ... Pentagon officials said there had been several false alarms of this sort over the years. ..."

Daily operations at laboratories like Draper, Livermore and Rockwell, make these chilling scenarios of holocaust by miscalculation almost inevitable.

2. The New Military Budget: (NYT, 11/9/79) ... "127 billion to 145 billion would include new conventional and nuclear weapons for U.S. forces in Europe and funds for the new MX... and other strategic weapons."

YET--"1 of 100 workers in America is Pentagon-dependent. Over half the American scientific force is engaged in military R and D; while 2/3 of the nation's top 100 firms are heavily involved in the military market which now exceeds \$42 billion annually in procurement for new weapons at 15-20% profit rates." (Peacework, AFSC, 1/79)

3. Economic Implications of such a budget? (Time, 10/29/79)

1. 2-3 billion for one nuclear carrier could support 1000 N.Y. schools for one year.
2. 4.3 billion for 860 miles of track for the MX missile could finance all of the nation's mass transit systems for 2 years.
3. 60 million for one C-5 transport could feed 12,00 families of four for a year.
4. 25 million American citizens are living below the poverty line.

4. Nuclear Proliferation: America's technology has made possible 1000 nuclear power plants abroad by the year 1990. Many of these plants will be used for making weapons' grade plutonium. The breeder reactor, capable of producing bomb-grade plutonium directly, has passed a hurdle in the House, making its use by other nations an uncontrollable certainty. (NYT, 11/10/79 and 10/31/79).

Speculation mounts that S. Africa tested a nuclear bomb last month and "If Pakistan attains nuclear capability, it could prompt India to revive its nuclear weapons' program...." (NYT, 8/15/79)

As we have vigiled weekly, Draper employees have asked us: "What about the Russians?" some of you calling us "Commies," or asking us to "Remember Pearl Harbor." Instead of reacting to over-used '50's fears and propaganda, we must consider the realities: "While the USSR spends a greater percent of its GNP on defense, its GNP is half the size of the US."

"When the Pentagon calculates the military expenditures of the S.U., it calculates in dollars, i.e., what it would cost the US for an equivalent military establishment. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies in their 1977 report, 'The Military Balance', 90% of the increasing Soviet military budget 'stems from inefficiency.' The analysis shows not that we are two times as threatened, but that the Soviet economy is twice as inefficient as the US originally thought." ("The 'Soviet Threat'", Peacework, Marta Daniels).

We urge with Pope John Paul II, "Let the weapons fall from our hands." Whichever side is planning, whichever statistics are winning, the fact remains, in the words of Bertrand Russell, "universal extermination --is a horror and an abomination."

Ailanthus: A Non-violent Witness for Peace

6 Chestnut St.
Boston, Ma.