SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES - Jean Holloday

Early morning October 1, five of us passed through the fence at Electric Boat in Quonset Pt., RI where Trident parts are made. The lights were bright, missile tubes in plain view - laid out in neat rows, and much larger than expected. Closeness came suddenly. As I splased blood high onto the cylinder, I remember wondering - can this be real?

Luckily, the hammers and chisels made alot of very real noise. We had almost 15 minutes before a security guard came. By then banners, a pumpkin and paint were in place, and we were hammering once more. We were ordered to lie down. I lay on my back, arms length from the missile tubes, arms reach to my brothers, looking up at the stars. We prayed the Lord's Prayer. Never before had the words "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven" carried such an intense yearning.

Police and EB cars began arriving, walkie-talkies sputtering, workers wandering over. Even all the cars and people seemed dwarfed by the size of the tubes. Yet the blood and banners and letters were very visible (I'm afraid the pumpkin was on too small a scale). One tube had written on it "160 Hiroshimas" and "Honor the Earth". The banners "Harvest of Hope-Swords Into Plowshares" with a Trident reshaped into a cornucopia of human services: and "Harvest of Death=Trident".

Probable much of the bustle was directed toward getting the place back to "normal"- blood washed; paint scrubbed; banners, pumpkin and protesters removed. I hope it is harder to erase the marks of disarmament - may those tubes never return to being "normal" nuclear swords.

When we were brought to court there was mention made of "extensive damage to six missile tubes". We will surely try to show at trial that concern for "extensive damage to life" should rather be the court's responsibility. The charges include "intent to commit burglary" and "Possession of burglary tools". Hard to take them too seriously compared to Trident - and the guilt of possession of an intended tool for mass murder.

I'm writing this now in the day-room at the A.C.I. women's awaiting trial unit. There are 14 of us and 2 male officers. There can be a sense of topsy-turvy here, as in the court. This small group of women - guarded, counted, locked away - is the potential for violence our problem? And the weapons - also guarded, counted and locked away - protected so that violence may occur.

Being close to the missile tubes and coming here are an initial shock and chill. But despair and fear have lightened - the words "Harvest of Hope" become an experience. Quonset Pt. and jail are places where one is very aware of smallness and vulnerability- yet they release us more into community. Now we depend on each other for mutual care. The continued witness and love of the community outside is a gift beyond measure. Sharing days with women here keeps the focus on the importance of quiet acts of kindness as a response to injustice. I was talking to my roomate, from Columbia, about the administrations astonishing range of rules, and remarked "ellos trenen el poder" (they have all the power). She immediately replied "No Dios tiene el poder" (God has the power).

"If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist, the wicked word,
if you give your bread to the hungry and relief to the oppressed
your light will rise in darkness, and your shadows become like noon.
Yahweh will always guide you, giving you relief in desert places.
Yahweh will give strength to your bones and you shall be like a
watered garden
Like a spring of water whose waters never run dry"

Isaiah 58: 9-11

CALENDAR

ONGOING

Leafletting on the 1st and the 15th of each month at Electric Boat in Quonset Pt. in R.I. Gate One 6:15 am. For more information, contact Kate Champa at (401) 351-1683

Leafletting on every Tuesday at the main gate of Electric Boat in Groton, CT. For more information, contact Peter or Michelle at (203) 776-7503

October 27. Harvest of Life or Harvest of Shame - Nonviolent march to the E.B. shipyard in Groton, Ct. Gather at Fort Griswold Park at 1:00 pm. Meeting of the Coalition to Stop Trident to follow immediately after march. For info, call (203) 787-2664, 776-7503, 488-8364 or in RI (401) 421-8612

November 5. Trident II Plowshares arraignment. Vigil begins outside the courthouse at 9:00 am. Washington County Courthouse on Rte. 138 in West Kingston RI. Contact: Plowshares Support/RI (401) 421-8612. Hospitality available.

November 7. A Festival of Hope on the Day After. Trial of 4 people arrested on Aug. 3rd for praying at GTE Westborough. Worcester District Court on 50 Harvard St. 9:00 am.

November 10 10/40 party for Mike and Bina Hanson, war tax resisters. Potluck and community fundraiser. St. Michaels on Oxford St. in Providence. Call the R.I. Alternative Fund at 751-4488 (401). 6:00 pm.

November 11-12 Meeting of long term prison support committee. Gathering in New Haven,Connecticut. Hospitality available. Formed to serve as a "safety-net for long term prisoner needs and to augment local support work. For info, call Katie Despot (203) 562-0270 or Tom Lewis (617) 757-4293.

Dec. 26-31. Feast of the Holy Innocents - Washington, D.C. Week of actions at the Pentagon and White House. Contact Jonah House at (301) 669-6265

Members of the Trident II Plowshares are available to speak to groups large or small, secular or religious. If you are interested in booking a speaker, please contact the support group at (401) 421-8612. Please leave a message. or write: Plowshares Support/RI
Box 3291 Wayland Square
Providence, RI 02906