

CND call to lobby against WINTEX nuclear exercise

03/02

WINTEX '87 (March 4-17) is part of a NATO wartime command and control exercise involving military, police and civilian top brass.

The aim is to exercise all the "hot seat" procedures necessary for a transition to war which could also be activated in a "national crisis."

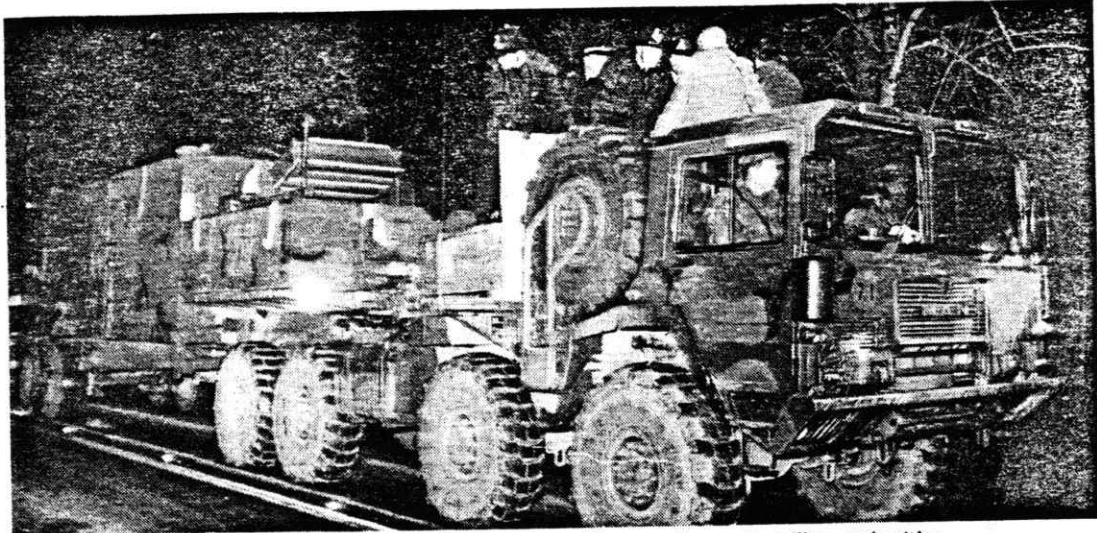
In Wales it will involve senior staff of the Armed Forces HQ (Brecon), the police and the key government departments including members of the Regional Emergency Committee.

The REC is a quango based at the Welsh Office whose task would be to take over the running of Wales from central government "in the national interest" — using emergency powers enforced by the army and police.

The government has already confirmed that a "nuclear phase" is included in WINTEX. Although there will be no troop movements, the Royal Observer Corps in Wales is expected to activate its two Group Controls at Carmarthen and Wrexham as well as its 60 local monitoring posts — probably on the weekend of March 14-15.

Little was known of WINTEX arrangements in Wales until CND Cymru exposed details of the Wales Regional Emergency Committee in 1985.

Despite Welsh Office dismissals it was learned that Welsh



NATO'S WINTEX exercise will involve military, police and civilian authorities.

Office officials, the army and members of the Dyfed, Powys and South Wales police had taken part.

Police authorities were not informed or consulted. A meeting with army officials had also taken place during the miners' strike in November 1984.

The chairman of the REC was John Lloyd, Senior Establishment Officer at the Welsh Office.

The powers given to WINTEX officials are extensive

—including rationing, control of transport, labour requirements and security. This covers alleged subversives, so-called dissidents and saboteurs.

Some of the procedures were practised in Exercise Vireg, a regional civil defence exercise last November in South-East England.

WINTEX is seen as an essential part of the government's nuclear weapons policy in NATO, and Mrs. Thatcher is thought to take an active part.

CND Cymru says it is a further example of the nuclear state preparing for what it seems to think is now conceivable.

Along with the new Public Order Act — which would inhibit demonstrations against WINTEX — it is also an erosion of civil liberties.

There will be a lobby of the Welsh Office on Friday, February 13, when a strong letter of protest will be handed in there and later at the main police station at Cathays Park.

Local groups are asked to join in and to phone the Welsh Office, Army HQ (Brecon), Royal Observer Corps — at Carmarthen and Wrexham — and to picket ROC monitoring posts.

It is not known if the regional seat of government at Brackla bunker will be in use.

TONY SIMPSON
(Vice-chair, CND Cymru).

Nuclear power stations exposed in time of war

THERE are 38 nuclear power stations in Britain, and there is much speculation as to their safety if they do not come up to a certain standard.

The Chernobyl disaster caused great concern in this country about radiation.

There is a lesson to be learned from this disaster about the undefended gap in our defences. Most nuclear power stations are built on or near the coastline, and there is nothing to stop hostile aircraft from bombing them.

The result would be panic and confusion in the 15-mile area round the damaged station as there are no provisions made for the safety of the population.

There are also no arrangements made for emergency food supplies, as water, vegetables, and food exposed to the atmosphere would be subject to radiation and rendered useless.

I live overlooking the River Crouch Valley and have seen aircraft flying below the radar screen that is situated on the other side of the river.

Terrorism is our biggest threat today and it is quite a simple matter for a private airplane or a crop-spraying aircraft to drop explosives on one of these power stations.

If hostilities were to break out with a foreign power it would automatically become a nuclear war, without using nuclear weapons, by these power stations being damaged and radiation drift being caused.

There is only one answer to this problem and that is to construct nuclear power stations beneath the earth's surface, similar to underground tube stations out of harm's way, or alternatively to scrap them.

JACK CARTER
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