

Anti-nukes fall out

The attempted occupation at the Seabrook nuclear plant this fall may have created more fallout for the anti-nuclear movement than bother for the authorities... so far.

In a departure from the established anti-nuke practices of civil disobedience which had aimed at drawing public attention to the dangers of nuclear power, the Coalition for Direct Action at Seabrook now called for a "direct action occupation" that would physically shut down all construction at the site.

As CDAS put it: "Our aim is to non-violently enter the Seabrook nuclear site and to prevent construction by staying there... The goal of this action is not to provoke a fight, nor is it to be arrested. Rather, our vision is to collectively create, in conjunction with local residents, an anti-nuclear community of people building, gardening and living on the site, in a model of the successful European nuclear site occupations."

On Oct. 6-9, 3,000 people carrying shovels, wirecutters and ladders, and organized into affinity groups of ten to 20 people, launched their assault on the Seabrook site. But unlike the West German no nuke occupation at Wyhl in 1975 where 20,000 militants participated (see OR #2), the Seabrook invasion force was insufficient to effectively occupy the site and had to be content with trying to tear down the protective fence around the plant.

The occupiers' attempts at non-violent direct action were met by the welcoming committee violence of 500 police and National Guards who attacked them with mace, teargas, clubs and firehoses. Some people were severely beaten by the police, but it seems that the forces of law and order were interested in

keeping their response as low key as possible. Only 24 people were arrested.

The new strategy for Seabrook, described by CDAS as a "departure from civil disobedience" came under fire from some long-time anti-nuke activists as soon as it was proposed. Some said the local Seabrook community was not ready to support a direct action occupation yet, while others were unsure of the organizers' commitment to non-violence and feared the action would lead to violent confrontations with the authorities.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

CDAS organizers had argued that the time was ripe for such an action and they worked hard to pull people together to prove it, but it seems they overestimated the active popular support the occupation proposal could generate, even in the wake of the Harrisburg near-disaster. The occupation attempt, though, did display a highly disciplined non-violent approach.

In some ways, the widespread controversy surrounding the "direct action" proposal sprang from the CDAC's own attempt at a distinction between "direct action" and "civil disobedience," confusing civil disobedience with purely symbolic protest.

CDAS organizers said that these differences lay between consciousness raising and an actual closing of the plant, or as they put it:

"At Seabrook, every legal device, every symbolic action and every civil disobedience hasn't stopped the plant... Prior civil disobedience demonstrations at Seabrook had as their purpose to raise the nuclear issue in the minds of the public... Our success will



"This is the way we went to jail, went to jail, went to jail." Some no nuke activists are aiming for something more.

not be measured in terms of symbolic value, nor media impact, nor numbers arrested. Our success depends on our effectiveness in directly blocking further construction and our ability to do so in a collective and non-violent way."

Aside from the debate over the direct action/civil disobedience issue, other sympathetic critics have traced the failure of the October occupation to a lack of preparation and foresight, saying that three months of intensive organizing still wasn't enough to ensure a victory.

Supporters of CDAS maintain that the direct action strategy is viable and necessary if the anti-nuke forces are going to win against the huge financial and political resources of the pro-nuke powers.

Seabrook wasn't the only recent major anti-nuke activity: In Bangor, Washington, 2,000 rallied at the Trident base Oct. 28. The following day, 107 people crossed the barbed wire and were arrested and charged with trespass. On Wall Street in New York City, the no nuke movement showed the links between capitalism and nuclear

power when 1,045 people were arrested for civil disobedience as they tried to shut down the Stock Exchange. And in the largest no nuke demo in West Germany to date, 100,000-150,000 protesters

converged on Bonn Oct. 14 demanding an end to the German nuclear energy program.

More info on the Seabrook action from the CDAS, c/o Boston Clamshell, 595 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA., 02139, or check out WIN Magazine, 503 Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11217 for ongoing anti-nuke news.

Nazi law revived

Under an old Nazi law about to be revived in West Germany, imprisoned Red Army Faction militant Siegfried Haag could be the first of hundreds of modern day political activists locked up for life without a trial.

All the State needs before it applies the 1933 "security detention" law are a conviction for a minor offence and the go-ahead from a psychiatric exam that finds a prisoner like Haag "dangerous to the public." A life sentence in either a prison or a mental institution would then be handed down.

Haag was found guilty last summer of "terrorist association," theft, car theft and possession of illegal arms and sentenced to 14 years after being charged along with two other RAF militants, Roland Mayer and Sabine Schmitz. Now, in the second part of his trial, he's charged with participating in the attack on the German Embassy in Stockholm in April 1975.

TEST CASE

According to the pre-conditions required for applying security detention, a prisoner must have been convicted of at least three major offences or sentenced to at least three years in prison for three pre-meditated lesser offences. Observers view Haag's trial as a "test" case set up by the judiciary enable them to request security detention for the first time since 1945. Haag now faces a compulsory psychiatric exam that could wrap up his case and clear the way for systematically applying the law to all West German political prisoners.

The harsh law is the latest piece of "anti-terrorist" legal weaponry the German State is trying to use in

its unending campaign to quash its militant opposition (See OR #10, #7, #5, etc.). Even behind bars, imprisoned activists have continued to resist, engaging in hunger and thirst strikes to protest murderous prison conditions.

After years of harassment, isolation, sensory deprivation and countless other tortures have failed to destroy the resistance of political prisoners, and intimidate their supporters, it is feared that under this Nazi law, the State could now effectively erase all political opposition. Appeals have come from still active West German militants for international protests to denounce its implementation.

Meanwhile, the German State is continuing to attack alternative print shops (see OR #7) and human rights groups in an attempt to criminalize anyone who it claims has declared solidarity with the guerilla movement by publicizing the terrorism of the State against political prisoners.

Three members from the Fantasia Printing Collective in Stuttgart (Doris Braune, Barbara Mayer-Schlage and Herbert Schlage) plus two people from the International Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners in Western Europe (Dorit Brucher and Birgid Rauth) were recently charged with crimes against the State because they dared to publish and circulate statements from imprisoned guerillas. The statements described the intolerable prison conditions and torture and discussed the guerillas' continuing analysis of the German situation.

More info from Fantasia Druck, Schlosserstr. 28a, 7 stuttgart 1, W. Germany.

CNT fireworks

There's going to be a lot of fireworks Dec. 8 at the first national congress since 1936 for Spain's 300,000 strong anarcho-sindicalist trade union federation, the National Confederation of Labour (CNT).

Not only will the representatives of the world's largest anarcho-sindicalist organization face the ongoing questions of labour strategy and tactics, but also, the CNT will try to resolve some serious internal conflicts that have appeared since it resurfaced in March 1977 after 40 years of Francoist repression.

CONFRONTATIONS

Most contentious perhaps will be the questions surrounding the recent expulsions of groups of active union militants from CNT locals. The individuals involved were charged with being members of "anarcho-sindicalist affinity groups" which, according to CNT sources, were setting up affiliated groups in local unions across Spain. They were described as Trotskyists and left communists and were accused of setting up "parallel" organizations within the CNT presumably to take over the leadership.

Also, how can the CNT bridge that gap between the older generation of Civil War militants and the new majority of younger



Can the Idea bridge the gap?

workers on questions raised by the Spanish counter culture, the feminist movement, and environmental groups?

Another debate is whether the CNT should concentrate on organizing unions or emphasizing that Workers' Assemblies or Councils be the sole vehicle for workers' decisions.

Another disagreement: should the organization sign union contracts with employers? Some anarcho-sindicalists have forced their way into negotiations and

participated in writing and signing contracts with Socialists and Communists who were elected representatives in the shops. Other CNT militants are opposed to all union agreements with employers as compromises with capitalism.

Watch the next issue of the Open Road for a full report on the congress. (This article was adapted from material in the Vol.3 #3 issue of News from Libertarian Spain, Box 733, Cooper Station, New York, NY, 10003. An excellent news source for \$5 per year.)