

REPORTS

DEMONSTRATIONS:

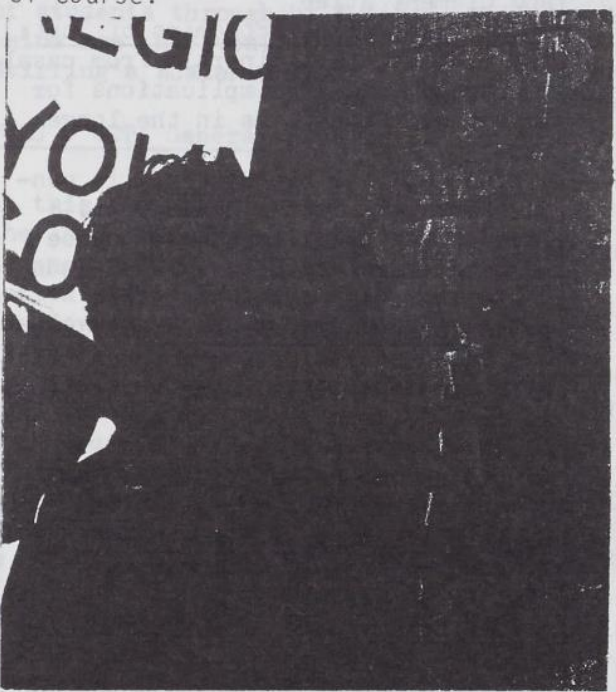
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ANTI-APARTHEID RALLY
OCTOBER 5th 1985.



My alarm went off at 8.30 a.m., and for once it was effective. Taking care not to step on the inert body in a sleeping-bag on the floor, I headed for the shower.

What could possibly motivate a Stirling student to rise at such an obscene hour on a Saturday morning after a particularly energetic night at the Grange? Why, the Central Region Anti-Apartheid demonstration on the 5th of October, of course!



GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

As soon as I got on the bus at campus, I could see that it wouldn't be the kind of day to encourage demonstrators.

in Scotland at least. The elements were fighting it out amongst themselves and sure enough it was a small, dedicated and virtuous-feeling group that met in Queen's Court at 10.20. When we reached Ranloch Community Centre, we found the Students' Association banner already there for us to rally around. Gradually people began to swell the numbers, including the wet body in the sleeping-bag which by now had metamorphosed into Richard Bent. By about 11 a.m., we were ready to move off.

Having attended one of the Central Region Anti-Apartheid group's inaugural meetings and later a picket of Tesco's at the start of the summer, I wanted to see how the first major event would go. And things in South-Africa hadn't got any better: Over one thousand people killed by the security forces and over one thousand schoolchildren arrested. What kind of day would this turn out to be -- here, and in South-Africa?

As we started, I walked up and down the length of the march. There were about three hundred people -- a good many students or ex-students -- and about forty banners from COHSE to NUPE, from Stirling Liberals to every revolutionary party you've never heard of, they were all there. The most heartening moment of the entire march, was just before the Clock Tower roundabout, when two men walked into the demonstration and unfurled a banner saying 'Dundee Anti-Apartheid Movement for freedom in South-Africa'. A long way to come to add only two bodies to the crowd, but the gesture was magnificent. Laughter and jokes mingled with the slogans of 'Sanctions now' and 'Smash apartheid'. As we reached the centre of the town, the sun came out. The effectiveness of the demonstration was out of all proportion to the num-

bers taking place: most shoppers stopped and stared, and many took leaflets urging them to boycott South-African goods. For many people, this was the first time they had been confronted with any reaction to events in South-Africa, and I think it brought home the reality of what they had seen on television.



ZOLA ZEMBA

Walking out of the centre of the town and back through King's Park past the Conservative Party offices (yes, your M.P. is a director of a security firm operating in South-Africa), we made our way to the Albert Hall, scene of the rally. As we came in, someone's ghetto-blaster played 'How we gonna make the black nation bon'. We've got to educate, agitate and organise! Great stuff. There were six speakers in all, and again and again they all rammed home the point that apartheid only survives with international support, active or passive. Alec Porter from Central Region Anti-Apar-

HOME AND AWAY

theid emphasised the need for mass action against Botha. Jim Tierney, a sacked miner from Castlehill Colliery spoke on the importance of Workers' solidarity. Sandra Walsh, the Scottish organiser for S.W.A.P.O., pointed out the illegal occupation of Namibia. And Zola Zemba, European representative of the South-African congress of Trades Unions, told us how he couldn't even organise Trades' Unionists without going in fear of his life, so many others had been tortured, murdered or imprisoned.

Apartheid isn't going to go away -- we have to make it do so. The rally on the fifth of October was a good start. Let's build on it.

IAN ROBERTSON

away

C.N.D. RALLY
OCTOBER 26th 1985.



HUMAN RACE OR NUCLEAR RACE?

Human Race or Nuclear Race was the motto for this year's C.N.D. rally on October 26th in London. Whether there were 100,000 or 99,874 pacifists did not really matter; they were all wanting to make a difference. Among them, Stirling University C.N.D. together with town C.N.D. did not shrink from undertaking the torturous coach-trip down to the capital. Having spent hours trying to stretch our legs, we finally hit the metropolis around 7am. Some of us tried to get a decent (or any) cup of coffee, but everything looked sleepy.

However, in the early afternoon, old and young had assembled in Hyde Park. The

information sheet said, 'It's your demo, so have fun!! And that is what it was. The plan aimed at encircling both the American and Soviet embassies. Activities en route consisted of a four-minute die-in at exactly 1.00pm, a sit-down at 2.00pm and a huge human chain to be formed during the standstill at three o'clock. It was cold, but then it didn't rain. One was glad to relax during the die-in, since the walk was a bit tiring.

Everything was carried out, if you'll pardon the expression, with military precision. We were advised not to trust our watches, but listen for the sirens and horns which would announce the various breaks. It was stressed that all the activities had been agreed with the police. They passed a quiet afternoon.



Thanks to their massive presence, only ten people were arrested, charged with drug offences, by the end of the day. After that one could call it a day. The highlight of Saturday was when we

entered Hyde Park, marching straight into a C.N.D. symbol 100 metres wide. ITV and the BBC and C.N.D. had helicopters up to film and photograph the badge of peace. It will, hopefully, be made into a poster. You should watch out for it as I suspect it may outmatch the popularity of the 'Why?' poster of the sixties...

At 3.15pm, it was time for the speakers. They included Chairperson Joan Ruddock, Felicity Spector (C.N.D. Youth) and Lorna Henry, representing the Greenham Common protest group. The main points were the bilateral condemnation of nuclear weapons, the Strategic Defence Initiative, indignation over the sinking of the Greenpeace ship, The Rainbow Warrior.

'If it's so safe, why don't they test it in Paris?' they said. Geldof's peace mission for the Third World was also talked about.

The main stage had been designed by Gerald Scarfe, who did the paraphernalia for Pink Floyd's and Alan Parker's 'The Wall'. It was the picture of planet earth on a tiny rope in between two missiles.

Billy Bragg and Gil Scott Heron warmed up the audience between two speeches. Paul Weller was there too. A balloon with the caption 'Seventy three percent say no to Trident' on it went up into the skies. It was time to make the journey back home.

Stirling University C.N.D. has not been inactive since the demonstration. Forthcoming events include a Jumble Sale (30th November, Albert Hall), videos and guest speakers, and a trip to Greenham Common. People interested in joining C.N.D. are welcome. See us on the Link Bridge stall, or join us in 2X3 every Wednesday, at 1.00pm.

GEORGES KIEFFER

in the Disco Quiet Room, which is where the Catholic community usually assembles

the rank of Archbishop by the Pope. Asked about his current activities

years ago, by explaining that Scotland