

March on the Midland Nukes

Fifth Estate Collective

1979

The only good thing the Three Mile Island accident has provided is a needed kick in the butt to the anti-nuclear movement. Or rather the small, dedicated groups across the country which have been waging mostly losing struggles against nuclear energy may be at the point where the movement will take on mass proportions.

The Detroit Safe Energy Coalition (SECO) and 15 Michigan anti-nuclear groups are sponsoring a "March on the Midland Nukes," Saturday, at noon, April 21 in Midland, Michigan. The demonstration will be in opposition to the \$2.2 Billion atomic power plant being built there by the engineering firm of Babcock-Wilcox, whose last construction feat was the Three Mile Island facility. The Midland plant is scheduled to begin operation in 1982 and has the capacity to threaten the entire center section of the state (including the Detroit-Toledo megaplex) if an incident like the Pennsylvania one should occur.

We do not encourage participation in this march without reservation, however. The anti-nuke groups across the country, including the ones sponsoring this action, have a decidedly liberal/pacifist/reform slant, which immediately ties them into establishment and leftist politicians seeking the rank-and-file as recruits for their parties and campaigns. A SECO rally held in downtown Detroit April 6 explicitly called for support of Democratic Sen. Carl Levin's moratorium on nuclear construction and featured a number of local politicians who are already sniffing at the opportunities which lie in the popular opposition to nuclear energy.

It's not that a moratorium should not be supported, but it is the Levins and other politicians, through their support for this system, who bear ultimate responsibility for the spawning of one disaster after another, whether it is wars, economic collapses or ecological catastrophes.

It is natural for reform movements to gravitate to politicians of one stripe or another since all they are trying to accomplish is the end of one abuse among many. But even high-minded reformers usually wind up as the toadies or cannon-fodder for one set of politicians or another once the latter realizes the political advantage in heralding the particular banner of reform (and the social cost of the offense in question becomes too high).

If we are successful in ending the mad drive toward nuclearization it will probably be on the terms set by those in power, but hopefully it will be accomplished by a movement that has not been integrated into this system like the McGovern wing of the anti-war movement during the Vietnam era.

A decentralized, independent movement must be created that realizes nuclear energy cannot be separated from the proliferation of nuclear armaments that threaten human life even more than the power plants, that the "need" for more energy only comes from a commodity-glutted people who power electric room deodorizers, pencil sharpeners, and trash compactors, and that all forms of current technology lend themselves to centralized political control.

It is with these perspectives in mind that we are involving ourselves in the March on Midland and hope you will join us or participate in similar activities in your area. A group of us met recently to plan activity that will distinguish us as much as possible from the reformers. We will be doing skits, putting out our own leaflets, carrying flags and banners, as well as distributing this newspaper, in an attempt to forge a separate identity. If you want

further information about transportation call the FE at 831-6800. We also have the numbers of several state-wide anti-nuke groups available which are also making preparations for the demonstration.

See you in Midland!

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