

STATISTICS AGAINST THE MISSILES

Radstats members who have read Protest and Survive or recent issues of State Research will be aware that the current arms race involves a good deal of statistical jiggery-pokery. Most of us are at a loss when it comes to assessing different estimates of the balance of terror, the range of arguments for and against Britain's nuclear commitments (e.g. Cruise missiles), or the likely consequences of nuclear war. Thus, it looks like a good idea for Radstats to set up a new working group aimed at putting together a critical assessment of these issues, directed towards as wide an audience as possible; it should be a well-illustrated, readable and saleable piece, perhaps like In and Against the State in its first edition.

This should not require specialised expertise on nuclear war issues: our arguments can be checked by the Armaments and Disarmaments Information Unit, and our facts derived from that unit, the Oslo and Stockholm Peace Research Institutes, Dan Smith, and other such sources. It should be a short-term project - just a few months to complete. What is really needed is Radstats members with commitment to the anti-missile campaign and enthusiasm for doing some demystifying in its service!

It also seems worthwhile to respond to the request from our colleagues in BSSRS and the University Staffs Left Groups (see letter from Ankie Hoogvelt in RS19), who wondered about compiling dossiers on military-related work in British higher education. This would be an ongoing function of this Radstats sub-group. (Try guessing how much of Britain's R&D budget is spent on 'defence'! And then compare with other European countries

If you are interested in this proposed working group, please come to our inaugural meeting at

9 Poland St., London W.1.,

on Friday 27 Feb. 1981,

at 6 p.m.

(The meeting will be held in one of the basement conference rooms.) Or telephone

Ian Miles: 0273-686758 w. OR Jeff Evans: 01-804-8131 w.  
0273-601369 h. 01-348-5514 h.

We would hope to make a preliminary report on the group's progress at the AGM (13-14 Mar.)

Useful Resources

Helen Caldicott, Nuclear Madness, Autumn Press, Brookline Mass. 1978.

E.P. Thompson and Dan Smith eds., Protest and Survive, Penguin, 1980.

CSE London-Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, In and Against the State, 2nd edn., Pluto, 1980.  
State Research (published bi-monthly), 9 Poland St., London W.1 (sub £5 p.a.)