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https://acdn.net/spip/spip.php?article870

For a Nuclear-free Europe

Publication date: Tuesday 3 June 2014

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Will Europe one day become the zone free of nuclear weapons and nuclear power-plants that we wish for? Recent events - the world energy crisis, the Ukraine crisis, the European elections of 25 May... - do not seem to be bringing that day any nearer. What can we do about it?

Perhaps to maintain some hope we need to look away from the summits, the macroscopic level, the great movers and shakers and look more at the close horizon, the base, the grassroots level: focus not on the distant future but the immediate present.

On 13 June in the National Assembly building, the Friends of the revue "Passages" will hold a colloquium on the theme: "TOWARDS AN ATTRACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY IN THE CONTEXT ON GLOBAL COMPETITION"... It will be a closed shop: *"No person not previously registered will be able to enter the building. At the gate you will be asked for identity documents to verify your registration and for security reasons."* This event will obviously assemble the cream of France's nucleocracy, and the concluding speech will be by Christian Bataille, a socialist MP from northern France and a true flower of the French system.

That is happening with the official support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Yes, you haven't misread. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports AN ATTRACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY. That's normal, actually. The government is officially making a transition towards an energy transition, and this is how it transitions things. Isn't that why you voted for François Hollande (if you did) in 2012? Isn't it?

If you didn't, then read this article (in French). It dates back to November 2011, a lifetime ago, but it will enable you to understand who it was who conned all the "greenies" who voted for Hollande, and how the swindle was done.

On 14 June 2014, the day after that grand gala in Paris, three events will occur, among others, that are much more modest and naturally lack official support... but may not necessarily prove useless.

That day will be the inauguration in Béganne (Brittany) of the first "citizens' windfarm" in France. After ten years of difficult negotiations and obstacles, four wind-turbines financed by citizens will be producing renewable energy, the alternative to nuclear. This will show the way: we must act as citizens, consumers and producers to make a real and practical exit from the nuclear age and to combat the deterioration of the earth's climate.

On the same day, in Paris, at least ten groups belonging to "Nuclear Phase-Out" Network will meet to call for a Congress for the purpose of reunited France's antinuclear movement, currently fragmented.

Also on 14 June, ACDN will hold its ordinary and extraordinary AGM in Saintes. So what is ACDN? What is the use of this little NGO? What do its members want?

ACDN is a core participant in France's antinuclear movement, but refuses to see the movement ghettoized, and wishes it to open to the outside, to unite at last in its diversity, and to hold a Federating Congress that is open and convivial enough to attract and welcome all its components. If this perspective is confirmed after the antinuclear groups meet in Paris, ACDN will play a full part.

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Since its foundation in May 1996, ACDN has carried on an unremitting struggle for a world without nuclear arms or other weapons of mass destruction (i.e. massacre weapons). Since the extraordinary AGM of October 2001 which mandated me to champion an exit from military and civil nuclearism in the presidential campaign, we have proclaimed our wish for a world with no nuclear arms or nuclear power-plants as soon as possible: even today, if only that were possible.

We refuse to wait for a new nuclear catastrophe, be it called Hiroshima or Fukushima or whatever, before taking too late the only step that can prevent one: the total elimination of the bombs and power-plants.

Since nuclear arms, weapons of terror, annihilation and crimes against humanity, are the keystone of a violent system ruled by distrust, threat, morbid competition and the will to dominate, we have made their abolition our prime objective. We have contributed to that by organizing in Saintes the first Nuclear Disarmament Days (May 2001) then the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Rallies for Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Disarmament (2004, 2006, 2008). We also welcomed and organized in November 2009 the French part of the World March for Peace and Nonviolence and for the Hiroshima Flame. We welcomed in Saintes, in July 2004, the Hiroshima World Peace Mission. We organized in 2003 the first Colloquium on exiting from military and civil nuclearism.

During all those years, we have tried just about everything to change France's nuclear policies, even to the point of **a Hunger-strike to get a Referendum**, a hungerstrike that lasted 42 days. In vain. That was quite something! We have also been a French contact point for "Abolition 200" and participated assiduously in the activities of that international Network. ACDN's website bears witness to this international involvement. For a long time it was unique of its kind: so far it has received over 580 000 visits, with about 40 % of these viewing its pages in English. The merit of these is essentially due to a friend and member, a skilful translator, who lives in his distant homeland New Zealand.

But our action, far from being limited to this negative aspect of things, aspires to build a different world, a world where people will be reconciled with each other and with the natural world in which and by which we all live. A world that is peaceable, free, just, fraternal, ecological and respectful of life. That is a vision we have tried to flesh out by initiating, with six other organizations, the **"Gathering for a Livable World"** (in October 2011)] and then the "Encounter for a Livable World" (October 2013). We are happy and proud that this resulted in the collective drafting and consensual adoption of the 7 chapters and 103 articles which form the **Charter for a Livable World**.

ACDN is a non-profit organisation under the law of 1901, with very modest resources and a bank balance that is frankly laughable. Judging by these criteria it is very lightweight. But should we limit ourselves to them? If we look closer, on the international level there are at least as many reasons to hope as to despair. Our role will not have been useless if we manage to convince our partners in the French antinuclear and abolitionist movement that we must trust our compatriots, we must have confidence that they will overturn France's policies and, for example, unite and win a Referendum for the Historic Abolition of Nuclear weapons (RAHAN in French).

Allow me to end on a personal note. In May I celebrated my 70th birthday and the 18th of ACDN. I wish to continue a few years more with ACDN, but I hope the group will one day be able to do without me and to carry our obstinate struggle to a successful conclusion. The AGM on June 14 can contribute. In advance, I thank everyone who, sharing the aim and philosophy of our struggle, will join us by bringing that moral and active support that they deem useful, to the extent of their means and availability. Every gesture, every word, every sign of sympathy however discreet, would be appreciated. I speak as a toiler in the field!

A France in a **Europe without nuclear weapons or power-plants** as part of a nuclear-free world, that is worth striving for, don't you think?

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