

Welcome Committee at EB Gate

by Mary Christiansen

On Nov. 22, 3000 guests in a festive mood streamed through the gate at Electric Boat Co. to watch the launching of the Ethan Allen. Our line of 10 vigilers acted as a sort of reception committee. We too were in a generous mood that warm, sunny day, offering through our leaflets and signs to share with the guests some uncomfortable thoughts. There was a minimum of hostility and a maximum of indifference to us before the launching.



There was a disturbing incident involving three very young boys dressed in Navy blue wearing arm patches identifying them as a Junior Coast Guard patrol. Each accepted a leaflet, only to have it immediately snatched away by a man in civilian clothes who was apparently shepherding them. I called quietly to the last boy and urged him to be sure and find another copy and read it.

Other than our own cameramen and the security officers of EB who record our activities from their office across the street, I didn't see any press photographers. However, I was happy to see the social editor of the New London Day copying the messages on our five signs and reading our leaflet. Her article the following day contained no mention of our vigil. Lack of space, no doubt.

It was interesting to observe the increased interest of the guests as they came away after the launching. Many stood around and looked carefully at us and read our signs. Six men dressed in costumes representing the Green Mountain Boys, in a U.S. Army station wagon, actually asked a Groton Borough policeman to bring them one of our leaflets. Maybe we were more welcome than we thought!

MILLIONS SEE AND HEAR OF DEMONSTRATION

by our press correspondent

Exceptional photographic coverage of the Ethan Allen demonstration Nov. 22 was responsible for the best worldwide news coverage of a direct action project in memory.

Don Martin's climb aboard the Ethan Allen was recorded from coast to coast and in Europe. At least 50 million Americans saw the picture and nine million Britons.

America's most influential newspaper, the New York Times, printed a picture of Don's exploit on page one and a photo of the Henry David Thoreau being towed away on an inside page. The Times devoted more text to the boarding than the launching. All other N.Y. papers carried similar accounts. The Post devoted nearly half its tabloid front page to three pictures of Don in various stages of his climb.