

the ACTivist

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Canada rattles its swords

By DAVID WEBSTER
THE ACTIVIST

Western countries may resort to military action against Yugoslavia to halt brutal wars in newly-independent Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall says.

Speaking the same day United Nations economic sanctions against Yugoslavia came into effect, McDougall mused aloud about replacing Canada's longstanding commitment to peacekeeping



Mary Hutchinson

(sending Canadian soldiers under a UN flag to keep the peace in war zones) with 'peace-making'. Observers believe that's a reference to first-strike action against countries viewed as international pariahs, on the model of the UN-sponsored Gulf war against Iraq.

"We're looking at an era when we are going to have to step in earlier," McDougall said in a joint news conference with Turkey's Foreign Minister Hilmet Cetin. Turkey, a heavily armed NATO member state, has already called for either the UN or NATO to launch a war against Yugoslavia.

(Canada has committed 1,200 troops to the 14,000-strong UN peacekeeping force in Croatia. Canada has also committed peacekeeping forces to Cambodia. **Turn to Black, page eight**)

"How can I keep silent?": non-violence in Thailand

By MAGGIE HELWIG
THE ACTIVIST

Non-violent 'people power' showed its strength once again last month — this time in Thailand, where a massive citizens' uprising forced the resignation of the unelected prime minister, Gen. Suchinda Kraprayoon. Though this victory was bought at a much greater cost in human lives (it is thought that up to one thousand non-violent protestors may have been killed by the army during the days when demonstrations were at their peak), and though the situation in Thailand remains tense and uncertain, the determination and courage of the unarmed citizens who took to the streets of Bangkok remains something to wonder at and to learn from.

Of course, such an uprising could not have taken place without years of groundwork among the people. Some of that groundwork was done by Professor Sulak Sivaraksa, a Thai scholar, social critic and activist now living in exile. Sulak spent some time in Toronto, during May and June, where he was interviewed by *The ACTIVIST*.

Sulak, born in 1933, has been a vital figure in Asian social activism for decades. He is the founder of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), an organization committed to "socially engaged Buddhism." He has helped to organize poor workers in the Third World, brought those from war zones in Burma and Sri Lanka to Thailand for meditation retreats, worked on rural development projects, published eight books, and twice been driven into exile by repressive governments in his homeland.

This exile began in September, 1991,

when Sulak delivered a speech entitled 'Regression of Democracy in Siam' (as he prefers to call his country). The speech was an outspoken criticism of the ruling military junta, as well as a scathing rebuke of the Thai people for allowing the junta to remain in power.

"Why did the August 1991 coup in the Soviet Union fail in less than sixty hours while the February 1991 Thai coup shows no sign of ending? One important difference is that we Thais are not interested in democracy ... Since the first coup in 1947, the military in Siam has not had one new idea. Unfortunately, the civilians are not much better. Deep down, they seem to admire those in power, kowtowing as servants to the military ... If we consume less, practise democracy in our lives, learn to respect the poor, uphold human rights, support the Burmese students and others who are oppressed, then we will have self-respect and we can appeal for democracy. If we do this, the NPRC will not last. But if we are submissive, they may be in power many years. Long live democracy."

After he gave this speech, Sulak knew he was no longer safe. "Ten days afterward," he explains, "there was a warrant of arrest coming out against me. I was hiding, and when the time came I left the country, because there was a rumour that I would be tortured. The week before that, there was a labour leader who said that this coup had destroyed all the labour movements, and he wanted to make a complaint to the International Labour Organization in Geneva; so he was invited to the police station, and it is believed that he was tortured to death. So I didn't want to follow in his footsteps. And



Professor Sulak Sivaraksa in Toronto. Photo: Maggie Helwig

also at that time, the military radio was attacking me every night, calling me a dirty-mouthed intellectual and so forth."

Sulak was no stranger to government persecution, having been exiled also in 1976 by the Thanin Kraivichien regime. "There was one photograph published in the newspaper, then, with a circle around my face, and it said I was the Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Thailand! In fact, it was a photograph of a Quaker meeting — and a Quaker friend of mine, they drew a circle around his face and said he was from the KGB."

So, travelling from country to country speaking and trying to keep up his research and writing, Sulak was not in Thailand for the recent uprising. But he remembers the years of building that went into creating the

possibility for such a non-violent movement.

"We co-operated with other Buddhists, with Christians, with Muslims, internationally, to learn how to resist non-violently. I joined non-violence trainings in Mexico and Philadelphia. We had close ties with the Canadian Friends Service Committee here, in fact Nancy Pocock [a Toronto Quaker] went to our training in Thailand. This sort of thing was going on for fifteen years. So when the demonstrations came this time, it was this hard core that has been trained for so long that took charge, very modestly, behind the scenes, and used fasting, prayer and so on. That's why it was very, very effective; for so long, they held the people to behave peacefully. That's why the government and the military became very upset, they wanted to

Turn to Sulak, page three

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Opinions expressed in this paper are not necessarily those of ACT

Against the attack on choice

Early in the morning of May 18, unknown people threw a gasoline bomb through the back window of Henry Morgentaler's abortion clinic on Harbord Street. The clinic — indeed, the entire building — was destroyed.

This is, quite simply, an act of terrorism. Terrorism, by definition, is aimed less at destroying certain objects or people than at creating a climate of terror, terror which will control the behaviour of a target group. This act was aimed at creating terror among women, the sort of fear that some hope will prevent us from exercising choices about our sexuality, our reproductive systems, our bodies and our lives.

Opinion

It should go without saying that bombing a building in a residential district is a long way from being a "pro-life" action, and that we can only be grateful no one was hurt or killed.

It should also go without saying that most "pro-life" groups were surely unaware of the bombing until they heard it on the news, and that many of them condemned it. Their expressed commitment to non-violence is, we still believe, in most cases real. This does not mean they are entirely free from blame — in many anti-abortion actions at clinics, there have been acts of harassment and intimidation that stretch the definition of "non-violence" awfully far, and which have contributed to the idea that the best way to keep women away from abortion clinics is to scare them away.

Ultimately, the "pro-life" movement is built largely on fear and control, and the bombing was just the most extreme expression of this. It was not an anomaly. In the United States, over one hundred abortion clinics have been bombed by crusaders for "life". A movement that seems to be rooted at least partly in a panic fear of female sexuality (some of us have guarded, or escorted, at clinics, and the "pro-life" people we faced couldn't stop talking about our supposed and apparently simultaneous promiscuity and lesbianism) and a desire to control women's bodies from above tends rather logically to adopt tactics of fear.

It is not as if destroying all the clinics would stop women from having abortions. It would just mean that they would have unsafe, illegal abortions, or induce abortion themselves at home, and many of them would die.

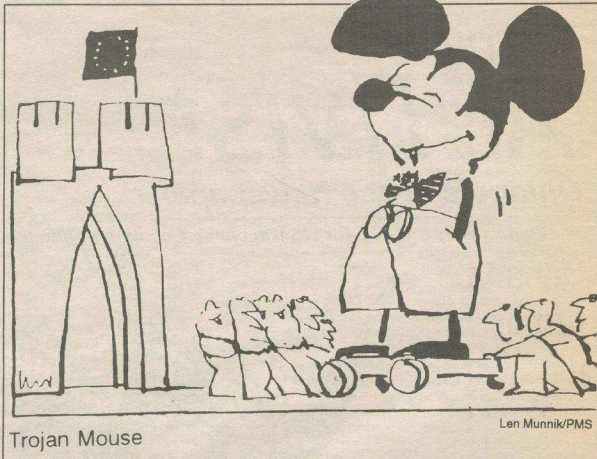
The only things likely to actually reduce the number of abortions performed would be easily available, safe, cheap birth control; men who believe that birth control is equally their responsibility; detailed and early sex education; effective measures to end rape and sexual violence against women; and proper social services for poor women, especially single mothers. The "pro-life" movement has not distinguished itself in its work for these things, and in fact has usually opposed sex education and, for instance, condom machines in high schools.

One begins to think that the real motivation is not to prevent abortions. It is to prevent women from having choices.

Full access to safe, legal abortion is a woman's right. The immediate response that has come every time the Morgentaler clinic has been attacked is proof enough that we value that right. And no terror, and no intimidation, and no gasoline bombs, will stop us from asserting that right.

ACT Toronto Women's Collective:

Janet Creery, Maggie Helwig, Mary Hutchinson, Susan Krajnc, Daphne Taylor, Diane Terry



Trojan Mouse

Len Munnik/PMS

Inside Peace with Jo Peacenik Fighting with mirrors and other fictions

America's peace dividend is fast turning into another rip-off. The U.S. government still hasn't stopped pouring its taxpayers' dollars into Star Wars, a system designed to intercept incoming Soviet missiles. Just why they think the new Russian government (propped up with Western aid) is likely to launch a nuclear strike is unclear. Some agencies in Washington believe the real nuclear threat is North Korea. There is no evidence of a North Korean nuclear threat, and no evidence that the zombified remains of North Korean dictator-for-life Kim Il Sung would even be capable of pushing the button. But in Washington, they'll believe anything.

After all, Vice-president Dan Quayle believes a fictional character on an evening sitcom poses a threat to the moral fabric of American society.

And speaking of Star Wars, the southern intellectuals that run our towering neighbour have poured \$29 billion into the make-work project for military researchers, while claiming that the country can't afford a Canadian-style medicare system (which, anyway, would be tantamount to communism, according to President George Bush).

Now the Associated Press has revealed that \$7.7 billion of the most costly military research program in American history was spent on projects that have been abandoned as impractical. Among the boondoggles:

• \$1 billion for a surveillance satellite to detect and track missiles. Abandoned.

• At least \$1.2 billion for a "ground-based laser to zap

missiles in flight by bouncing laser beams off relay and "fighting" mirrors stationed in space." Abandoned.

• At least \$500 million for a "pop-up probe" that supposedly would pick out real missiles from a cloud of decoys. Abandoned.

But all is not lost. Might we suggest the Pentagon recoup some of its losses by selling the ideas to the people who produce Saturday morning cartoons?

Can there still be any *Globe* and *Mail* readers left?

Reality seldom intrudes into the atmosphere of paranoia and gay abandon that grips the newsroom of Toronto's national newspaper. Where else could you read an in-depth series about the continuing rise in the military budget, followed by an editorial on defence cuts? Apparently even the editors aren't reading what they print.

The world's grayest newspaper, flagship of the laughable Thomson newspaper empire, continues to hemorrhage readers and money. And it seems owner Ken Thomson, who proudly boasts that he will "walk a block to save a dime" on a loaf of bread, has finally noticed that the *Globe* is costing him more than a few dimes.

Now, the *Globe's* promotions department is offering the hundreds of readers who are letting their subscriptions expire a new deal: anyone who subscribes for three months gets a cheque worth half their subscription.

Jo Peacenik predicts even this form of bribery won't be enough to stem the *Globe's* plunge. After all, a Toronto gas station that was giving The *Globe* away for free with every fill-up stopped the offer because

customers wouldn't take the freebie.

As this issue goes to press, our friends in Indonesia are holding parliamentary elections. Indonesia's president, General Suharto, opened the campaign with a pledge to avoid "Western-style negative campaigning."

It's certainly been done. Since opposition parties are forbidden by law to criticize Suharto, and all candidates are expected to be "in consensus" with the government, it wasn't, really, that hard a pledge to make.

Ballot fraud is considered widespread, with some districts reporting a higher tally of government votes than the total number of eligible voters. Opposition ballots have been ignored, "lost" and even, in one case, "eaten by rats."

Suharto, meanwhile, has refused to even show any limitation on his term of office, now at 27 years and counting. "Limitation is like castration," he spluttered when reporters raised the question. But, perhaps mellowing in his old age, he didn't order them executed.

ACT General Meeting

Wed. July 8, 7 p.m.
736 Bathurst St.
(basement)
531-6154

General meetings take place the 2nd Wednesday of every month

The Thai crisis: a chronology

Thailand's history is a long series of coups and counter-coups, with just one brief period of real democracy between 1973 and 1976. The coup of 1991 was the seventeenth coup since the end of the absolute monarchy in 1932. This chronology outlines only the events leading up to the crisis of this May.

February 23, 1991 — The elected, somewhat democratic, government of Chatichai Choonhavan is overturned by a military coup. The junta, calling itself the NPKC (National Peace-Keeping Council) quickly establishes itself in power and begins harassment of labour leaders, environmental activists and other dissidents.

September 1991 — A prominent labour leader dies in police custody. Professor Sulak Sivaraksa leaves Thailand after a warrant is issued for his arrest.

November 19, 1991 — 60,000 people attend a protest rally against the "constitution" drafted by the NPKC.

March 22, 1992 — A general election is held in Thailand. Charges of vote-rigging are widespread, and no one party

has a majority. Five parties, all closely associated with the military junta, form a coalition government, and Gen. Suchinda Kraprayoon, who did not participate in the elections, is appointed prime minister.

April 7 — Charat Vorachai, a former member of parliament, begins a hunger strike in protest against the appointment of Suchinda.

April 17 — Seven more activists join the hunger strike, including Pratheep Unsongtham Hata, a slum worker who is four months pregnant.

April 20 — 70,000 people attend a demonstration against Suchinda.

May 4-10 — Continuous non-violent demonstrations of up to 200,000 people. Chamlong Srimuang, a prominent opposition leader, joins the hunger strike. On May 10, the government promises to amend the constitution.

May 17 — When the government seems to have broken its word, 300,000 demonstrators gather at the Democracy Monument in Bangkok, at about 9 p.m. The demonstration is peaceful. At 3 a.m., Suchinda

declares a state of emergency and troops fire into the crowd, killing about 13 people.

May 18 — Non-violent street demonstrations continue. A second shooting incident leaves scores of people dead.

May 19 — Up to a thousand people (numbers of dead are still not clear) are shot by the military in downtown Bangkok. Nevertheless, demonstrations continue to be non-violent. 50,000 students barricade their compound at the university, many thousands more. This march in the streets. A total of 5,000 people are arrested and detained.

May 20 — King Bhumipol Adulyadej intervenes, demanding an end to the shooting. Suchinda is photographed on his knees before the King. There is a pause in the street demonstrations.

May 21 — Most of the arrested demonstrators are freed. A memorial demonstration for the dead takes place at the Democracy Monument.

May 24 — Gen. Suchinda Kraprayoon agrees to step down as prime minister.

Sulak Sivaraksa: "I reject their cruelty and injustice"



From page one

break it and they didn't know how to break it. They used their own gangsters disguised as demonstrators, throwing bricks, throwing bottles, and that's how the violence started."

Now, with the hated Suchinda forced to step down, it is unclear what will come next in Thailand. "The dictatorship hasn't left ... The whole cabinet still remains. And [Suchinda] only resigned the premiership, he is still Minister of Defense, and the Commander in Chief of the army is his brother-in-

law ... Maybe the army will remain neutral and allow political development peacefully through the democratic system—[it could happen] because they care very much about their image in the West." This depends, of course, on concerned people in the West letting the Thai army and government know that they are watching.

And if the army does not allow a peaceful democratic process to take place, it will be the time for peace groups and others outside Thailand to take action. "People in the West should warn them [the army], if they become bloody again—you should alert all people not to use Thai Air International, even boycott them coming here. And send a fax to the Commander in Chief of the armed forces, because he is the chairman of Thai International. Everything that comes here, he gets all the benefit. Why should you support such an organization? Tell all Canadians to withdraw from the country and to boycott it."

Both Sulak's own commitment to non-violence, and his commitment to social activism, are deeply rooted in his Buddhist faith. This faith has brought him to see social and personal transformation as intimately linked, and to understand awareness, and a life working to be free of greed, hatred and delusion, as preconditions for effective social action; but also to understand non-violent social action as the necessary outcome of spiritual growth. "There are many descriptions of religious experience, but all come back to becoming less and less selfish ... If we want social justice ... we must all start relating to each other."

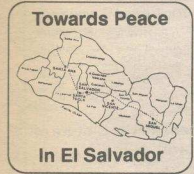
The final piece in Sulak Sivaraksa's most recent book, *Seeds of Peace*, is titled "Why I Chose to Resist the NPKC," addressed to those who believed he, as a recognized scholar, should have tried to reform the junta from within. "I want to make it clear," he says, "that I do not want to be a hero ... [But] how can I keep silent? ... If I believe in social justice, bodhisattva-dharma, and the compassionate power of the Buddha, I must be willing to be harassed and hurt. I will not surrender to the authorities because I reject their cruelty and injustice."

It is the growth of these attitudes and understandings, in many countries and taking their root in many different philosophical traditions, that is creating the non-violent revolutions that, more and more these last few years, are changing the face of the world.

Delays to peace process in El Salvador

By MARGARET SUMADI
The ACTIVIST

Four months after the official ceasefire in El Salvador, the peace process shows hopeful progress. Not everything has been resolved, but the ceasefire has not been violated by either side. Various delays and obstacles to the implementation of the Peace Accords resulted in the FMLN proposal to hold new meetings with top United Nations officials in New York in April to review the peace implementation process.



A major request was for a more active role for ONUSAL (the UN mission in El Salvador). Following several days of intense sessions between the government and the FMLN, ONUSAL announced "new mechanisms" for resolving conflicts in the implementation process. Both sides expressed willingness to accelerate and catch up with the calendar by May 31.

An Executive Command was set up with the government, the FMLN and ONUSAL, to overcome

weaknesses of mechanisms for compliance and verification with joint working groups.

A report from the University of Central America says that the government and the FMLN do not have equal responsibility for the course of the peace process. The pressing need for deep social and institutional changes — the root cause of the war — resulted in the government being left with 70% of the agreements and the FMLN only 15% (these mainly demilitarization). Thus much of the responsibility and practical control is in the hands of the government. There are, however, problems of lack of expertise and professionalism, ignorance, and incompetence. There are requirements for institutional reforms beyond the grasp of methods and values which prevail among the Salvadoran business sectors, whose members are the ones cleaved to public administration.

Bad faith has increased delays. There was apparent lack of available funds, when budgeting, to give sufficient funding to the Public Defender of Human Rights, the PNC (the civilian police), the Academy of Public Security and demilitarization. Other demonstrations of bad faith are the security forces' infiltration of the PNC, the over-flights of rebel camps, delays in dismantling the Armed Forces Intelligence Unit and the non-declaration of private army weapons.

The accumulation of delays by both sides resulted in mutual

accusations. The Church observer on the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (COPAZ) suggested that the schedule be adjusted to take into account the true rate of compliance. "It is better to revise the schedule than to keep saying we are a month behind."

The delays have been accompanied by propaganda campaigns accusing the FMLN of being the only ones to violate the Accords and the cause of recent labour agitation. Sectors opposed to the Accords are gaining strength. These are conservative sectors of business, Armed Forces and parts of the government, and the war-mongering provocations continue at an alarming rate.

In late April, Air Force flights over rebel positions resulted in armed defense, thus endangering the ceasefire. In May, another serious threat was the gunning down and serious injury of an FMLN driver on Accord support duty. The FMLN pulled out of COPAZ temporarily as a protest. Other FMLN members have been threatened, harassed and shot at.

The National Civil Police (PNC) remain a difficult issue. The Director General as appointed by the President has had past dealings with security forces and cannot be said to be objective. He is allowed to continue with other remunerated activities, which demonstrates the carelessness with which some leg-

islation has passed — equally as worrisome as non-compliance. This is an indication of lack of professionalism, rather than unwillingness. The law to eliminate the National Guard and Treasury Police was in fact amended instead of repealed, allowing them to be absorbed into the PNC. The FMLN suspended their troop concentration again in protest.

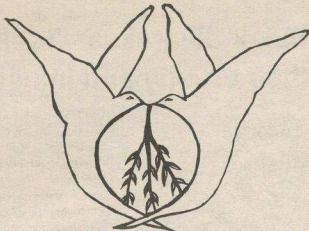
On the political front, the FMLN publicly announced their entry into the political arena by holding a rally in San Salvador in May. Although not yet legalized, this is a step towards the elections scheduled for March 1994.

In the United States, the deportation of Salvadoran refugees is to be deferred for one year. A major reason is that the Salvadoran economy would collapse without the money sent home by immigrants. In 1991 this amounted to 56.6% of El Salvador's gross domestic income.

While optimism is still justified, the success of the implementation of the Accords includes the need for international support. This includes financial, advisory, technical and administrative support.

Chinese nuclear test

On May 20, the Chinese government exploded a nuclear test bomb at Lop Nor, on the land of the indigenous Uighur people. The explosion, at 1,000 kilotons, was the largest nuclear test in recent history. Please call or write to the Chinese consulate in your city to protest.



Zagreb anti-war diary

BY WAM KAT
PEACE MEDIA SERVICE

Wam Kat, 36 years old, is on leave from his usual work as coordinator of the European Youth Forest Action, a network of 350 environmental and youth groups which has its office in Sittard, the Netherlands. In April he went to Zagreb, Croatia, to work with ARK (the Anti-War Center) because I felt help was needed."

May 2:

It is hell in Sarajevo (capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina, under heavy attack from Serbia). I am sitting here behind my stupid computer, trying to get the news around the world while at the same time riots are going on the USA. I don't know what else to do, praying as I sit in front of my screen.

It is late at night now. We are still waiting for news. You can't go home to sleep when you know that friends are going through such an ordeal.

I keep thinking: keep the peace in your heart and your head clear.

May 3, Sunday:

When I finally fell asleep last night (actually it was 7 in the morning) Sarajevo still existed but was burning in many places. I am afraid to turn on the radio or go to the ARK office to get the latest news. How many hours of bombardment must the people and children from Sarajevo to go through before this hell is over?

The line from the John Lennon song keeps repeating itself in my head: "All we are saying is give peace a chance." I dreamed I had a white helicopter and was flying above the fronts with powerful amplifiers, broadcasting that song 24 hours a day, bloody hard, harder than all the noises of war.

The most dramatic television pictures I have ever seen came in today from Sarajevo, broadcast from a studio under heavy attack. They were discussing what to do now.

May 12-13:

Tuesday evening Ben, just back from the front, came by for a visit. His appeal was accepted and he has been demobilized. He brought a tape of some war rock songs. The music produced by the war has been changing. Somehow the first ones included an element of protest against the bloodshed, while the last generation of songs is more, "We are going to win and kill all the Serbs, tatatatata." Though there is one recent song about a soldier who writes a letter to his friend in Beograd (in Serbia) telling him that he is full of worries that one day they both will be at the front and his friend will shoot at him, but in the end the singer will kill his friend from Beograd. He asks, "Why can't we just drink beer together?"

Talked by phone with people in Osijek (in Croatia, currently 'the front'). They have gone through the hardest night of this year. JNA units attacked with mortars from both sides. The telephone line with Sarajevo is cut again, the last phone call I had was with somebody in a building on fire.

A doctor at one of Zagreb hospitals told

me that the number of abortions is about 50 percent higher than normal. (Meanwhile birth control information is now totally stopped. There is more and more propaganda is made for having real Croats now.) She also told me about talks she has with the soldiers coming back who are emotionally destroyed. They try to keep up their morale by saying there are people on the other side even worse than themselves. "Maybe I took out the eyes of a Serb with my knife, but I know that Serbs have cut open pregnant women to feed the embryo to a dog." And these are the moderate stories.

May 15:

It's the World Day of Conscientious Objectors and we have another open air concert tonight. We're launching a new campaign for a better law on conscientious objection in Croatia.

The UN force is moving out of Bosnia, and not only the UN but the Red Cross and Medicine Without Frontiers, leaving 500,000 people behind.

It's a pity that the UN and similar organizations are not investing money to build up democracy and the forming of independent social movements in countries at war. What a difference it would make if one percent of the budget for the UN forces here were used in support of groups doing constructive action.

May 20:

NATO officials in Canada have proposed NATO move in. This scares the hell out of me. Does this mean that a few weeks from now there will be leopard tanks on the main square with me selling "NATO GO HOME" badges around the corner? Or maybe, as in Iraq, we won't even see the guys. They'll be doing their job from 6,000 feet in the air. . .

May 24 (visiting Osijek):

It is the middle of the night and I am sitting in a room in which all the windows are sealed with black plastic and everything breakable in the house is taped. In front of the television the owner has put his bed pillows. Otherwise it looks normal. Fortunately there has been a pause in the heavy shelling, which had its high point two nights ago. For the moment things are peaceful here.

Last night I slept like a rock, a trick I learned over the years with our traveling vegetarian kitchen (from the collective I was part of) and our work at punk concerts. You learn to sleep deep and short. It seems I slept right through a lot of machine gun fire.

As I write I can hear the artillery outside, about 400 meters away, small canons being fired by the Croatian army. Luckily for us, JNA is not responding. If they did, I wouldn't be sitting here at the 5th floor but would be down in the basement.

A few hours ago we were at the university. The whole press of Osijek, newspaper and television, is following our expedition. The room was filled with officials and other people interested in nonviolent conflict resolution.

May 28:

The convoy of humanitarian aid from Zagreb

didn't get through and, after the robbery of the UNHCR transport by Serbian irregulars in the beginning of this week, a further shipment isn't being attempted. The situation is unbearable.

But what would military intervention from the west achieve? They always talk about "surgical strikes" and use other cosmetic phrases like "smart bombs" but what actually happens is another story. The allies said the same things during the Second World War. But the fact is that the bombing of Dresden, Dusseldorf, Hannover, Berlin, Hamburg and other German cities didn't turn the population against the Nazis but actually increased support to the Nazis. We have a similar situation here and I can imagine that people will react in a comparable way.

I find it a terrible tragedy that western peace movements aren't using their energy to help stop the war. One or two peace caravans is not enough to stop the war or peace delegations visiting for five days saying, "Peace brothers," then going back home. Where are those millions who demonstrated in western Europe for peace at the beginning of the '80s? Where are all those people who stopped the Vietnam war in the States? Is this conflict not important? People are dying in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It has to stop.

One way military-style operations could help is by parachuting food and medicine into Sarajevo as was done in the Netherlands in the Second World War and into West Berlin during the Blockade. If the military can drop bombs, why can't it deliver food and medicines the same way? Otherwise people will starve in Sarajevo or die of diseases because they've got the necessary medications.

May 30:

On television today Aida saw an interview with an eight-year-old boy in Sarajevo who said that he didn't want to live anymore. At such moments I think of my children, my sons and daughter in Sittard. I miss them day after day. At least this nightmare isn't happening to them. Of course a good father should be at home and play with his children. Obviously I'm not a good father. But at least nobody has to explain to them what parents must try to explain to their children here.

What in the hell am I doing here? It is only 14 hours by car from Zagreb to my hometown in the Netherlands. By train I could be in my hometown tomorrow evening.

On the radio they are playing a song that says, "Come and kill all the Serbs," new words set to the tune of "Lili Marlene." Rambo is a child compared with this. The war songs are part of all this incredible war machinery.

With some music groups here in Zagreb, I am working on a tape called "Flowers from a War Zone" which is meant as a protest against war in any country but especially in this part of the globe. We'll use the proceeds for anti-war activities. But we need to raise funds to get this project off the ground.

May 31:

Anywhere in Zagreb you hear a radio nearby. As soon as the news starts everybody, on the street, in restaurants and pubs, become quiet and listen. They live from news to news. Anything further away than one week is in the distant future.

Nearly all foreigners have left the city, including journalists and humanitarian aid organizations. A few hundred UN soldiers have remained but are also ready to evacuate. I can't imagine what it is to leave to city at this moment, knowing you are leaving so many people behind.

June 1:

What matters most right now are the demonstrations in Beograd against the war and Milosevic. Just a few days ago a one-hour demonstration and blockade was organized in Beograd by theater players and other artists.

Yesterday a small peace demonstration grew spontaneously out to a giant demonstration involving tens-of-thousands of people protesting the government and the war. And today people are starting to camp on the streets in Beograd. It's said that they are determined to stay until Milosevic is gone and the war is over. One has to worry about them. There are still a lot of people in Serbia who believe in the war.

Good news from Sarajevo! A relief convoy from Split got through. For the first time in many weeks people in Sarajevo received food and medicine from abroad.

June 2:

Every evening when I bike back from the ARK office to Buzanova near the center of town, in a particular area where there was a bomb attack a month ago, I notice police agents standing every 500 meters or so. I suppose the aim is to make you feel secure, but seeing so many policemen together has just the opposite effect on me.

Good news: The town is full of the posters for our Saturday concert for the International Day of Children who Died in Wars. I designed it on my computer only yesterday! This poster features a drawing by my son, age 4-1/2, though he doesn't know about the poster yet. It's the most colorful broadside I've seen so far in Zagreb and the most avant garde as well.

The bad news is that the shooting in Sarajevo is even worse despite the cease-fire that was supposed to come into effect last night. Ibrahim at the International Peace Center reports their office was bombed again. Nada was unreachable the whole day.

Last night, at Ibrahim's request, we put out an urgent message via GreenNet with the news that 150 citizens of Sarajevo who depend of dialysis are dying because of shortage of infusion solutions. Also desperately needed is ANA-Tetanus vaccine. The only way it could be delivered in time is by parachute. They must have it within 24 hours.

I see no likely those 150 patient will die today. I must see air force delivering medical aid to Sarajevo. Such an action would be a miracle.

Peace groups in ex-Yugoslavia

•Anti-War Campaign/Croatia, Tkalciceva 38/11, Zagreb, Croatia; fax: 38-41-271-143 or phone 422-495

•Centre for Anti-War Action Beograd, c/o Vesna Pestic, Prote Jateje 6, Yu-11000 Beograd, Serbia, phone 38-11-431-298, fax 681-989

•Centre for Peace Sarajevo, c/o Ibrahim Spahic, Dobrovoljaca 11, Yu-7100, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, phone 38-71-214-884, fax 216-238

•Movement for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence, Mestni trg 13, Yu-61000, Ljubljana, Slovenia, phone/fax 38-61-224-666 or 210-374

•Centre for Anti-War Action Novi Sad, Maksima Gorkog 10, Yu-21000, Novi Sad, Vojvodina, phone 38-21-278-887

Please send donations, messages of support, etc. These citizens' peace groups are the regions real 'war heroes'.

Remembering for the society

By ANDREW PAKULA
THE ACTIVIST

In 1987, a group named Memorial was founded in the Soviet Union, with the goal of documenting the repression and human rights abuses that took place under Stalin's rule, and commemorating the victims. In the beginning, members suffered unrelenting harassment by the KGB, with frequent arrests and interrogations. But as a result of this courageous and hard work, the cases of 100,000 individual victims have been recorded.

In 1990, in response to changing realities, Memorial expanded its mandate to include support through service and aid to the victims of repression, and collection and dissemination of information about current human rights abuses across the former Soviet Union.

At no time in recent years has the importance of remembering for society been as great and as clearcut as it is today. In Nagorno-Karabakh and elsewhere, people kill and maim each other, driven by passions of different and incompatible versions of the past. Across the Commonwealth of Independent States, human rights abuses, ethnic violence and racism are on the rise, led by those who in remembering choose to respect neither truth nor reason.

Many lives were lost in the Gulag and they deserve to be remembered. The crimes must be remembered so that they are less likely to be repeated. It is a critical step for societies, as they begin to recover from decades of totalitarianism, to expose the Big Lie and the endless other lies that were at the foundation of the system of oppression.

Many of the victims of the Gulag have survived, often in ways reflecting the triumph of the human spirit under terrible conditions. Deprived of so much during the decades of repression and victimization by the state, they now often find themselves greatly in need, in a world where basic survival is a grim day-to-day challenge. Memorial's work on their behalf is of critical importance.

Classified

Peace activist Brian Burch will be ordained Wed., June 17th at 7:00 p.m. at Cosburn United Church, 1108 Greenwood Ave. All are welcome. Info: 422-2782

Support peace and ecology! Buy your environmentally safe products at Teekah, 96 Harbord, and tell them you want 15% of your payment to go directly to ACT for Disarmament.

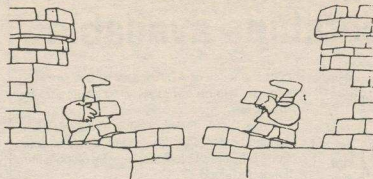
Classified ads are available for \$10 for 25 words or less, \$15 for 25-50 words. Deadline for next issue: July 8

Sadly, as past victims are being remembered and present survivors are being helped, each day brings new victims of hate and violence across the fallen empire. In response to the growing violations of human rights, Memorial's Human Rights Section has sent 15 Observer Missions to two areas of severe and destructive conflict — Nagorno-Karabakh and the border between Georgia and Ossetia. The reports from the missions are being published and circulated.

Memorial is presently developing a second kind of mission with the goal of supporting negotiation and reconciliation. They would like to collaborate with other organizations in involving international observers in their missions. With branches in most of the ex-republics and very high credibility, Memorial is in a particularly good position to contribute to improved human rights and peaceful resolution of ethnic conflicts.

It was wonderful for me, in Bratislava, to sing and talk the night away with my new friends from Memorial — from Russia, Georgia, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Holland, Italy, and, encouragingly, an Armenian and an Azeri. About a dozen of us in a hotel room shared bits of food, emotional toasts with sips of vodka and beer, and songs from home. The mood varied from the great joy of friendship and hope to great sadness. When three old friends, survivors of the Gulag, sang songs from the camps, there was hardly a dry eye in the room.

I believe Memorial's work on behalf of past and present victims of human rights abuses is of critical importance, not only for the region, but ultimately for all of us. I believe that both sides have much to gain from cooperation and dialogue between Memorial and peace organizations in other parts of the world, and I hope that such cooperation is forthcoming from many peace groups.



In the Europe of peoples

By CHRISTINE M. MERKEL
SPECIAL TO THE ACTIVIST

The Helsinki Citizens Assembly meeting in Bratislava last March brought together almost 800 people from more than 40 countries. The 'Europe of peoples' was much in evidence, with the presence of Scots, Irish, Ukrainians, Turks, Uzbeks, Georgians, Azeris, Croats, Macedonians, Estonians, Basques and others. The Middle East was also represented by Ahmed al-Khatib of the Kuwaiti Democratic

Forum and Suad Kheiri and Muffid al-Jazzeiri of the Iraqi democratic opposition.

While the founding assembly in 1990 was held in the euphoria of celebrating the end of the Cold War, the Bratislava meeting was far more sober. Many economic, ethnic, racial, nationalist and other tensions face both the 'mass democracies' of the West and the 'new democracies' of East and Central Europe. Yet these painful experiences of crises and conflict reaffirm the necessity of citizens' initiatives and

the solid building of civil society, said Martin Palous of Czechoslovakia in his opening address. And Mari Fitzduff of northern Ireland saw signs of hope for change for the better when people start to mourn the dead of both sides.

The working plenary on racism showed that the development of the notion of 'citizenship' is and will be one crucial focus for the HCA. Speakers from Vietnam, the United States, Algeria and elsewhere addressed the question, and a project proposal to start a European Charta on citizenship and democracy was put forward.

Conflict resolution emerged as another focus of future HCA work.

This second General HCA Assembly turned out to be a unique meeting place for citizens striving to build democracy in the CSCE region. How the HCA's great potential will develop in the future will largely depend on its ability to achieve participatory internal democracy and give more attention to how citizen's initiatives can organize and strengthen themselves.

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ACT memberships available

At our mini-conference on May 17, ACT for Disarmament adopted a new membership policy.

Our membership policy is now as follows:

• **Members are those individuals who have participated in/contributed to the functioning of, or the activities of, ACT for Disarmament, and who agree with the principles of ACT for Disarmament.** To become a full member, individuals will be asked to sign a declaration that they agree with the War Resisters International Pledge and that they will commit themselves to work for peace and human rights worldwide.

The usual minimum contribution to be a full member of ACT is 2 hours of volunteer work per month, and/or \$20 per year — however, no one will be refused membership for lack of funds. **Members are strongly encouraged to be active in at least one of ACT's working groups.**

Those who do not wish to sign the pledge, or whose contribution is below the minimum suggested, but who sup-

port the work of ACT or any of the working groups, will be considered to be associate members."

Associate members have equal decision-making power in all day-to-day logistical decisions but cannot block consensus on constitutional decisions.

The War Resisters International Pledge reads: **I believe that war is a crime against humanity. I am therefore determined not to support any kind of war and to strive for the removal of all causes of war.**

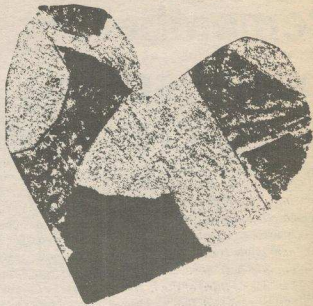
Membership cards for full members are available.

NOTICE TO ALL:

If you have already contributed, financially or through volunteer work, this year, you can become a full member of ACT by signing the declaration. Come by our office (phone first), or mail in your signature, and we will send you a membership card.

If you have not yet contributed, send us \$20 (or more, if you can!) or call us about doing volunteer work.

All full members will automatically receive a subscription to our monthly newspaper, The ACTivist.



ACT's birthday greetings

It takes all kinds of people to make a rally meaningful.

ACT's Tenth Annual Spring Protest for Peace couldn't have happened without all the volunteers who did poster, phone outreach and media work; or without the bands who donated their time and talent — Manfred John Co. (who played bravely on our sound system), Antimatter, Happy Fish and Cate Friesen.

Speakers from ACT's past and present came to share their experiences with the crowd, including Wilson Head of the Urban Alliance on Race Relations, Frank Showler of the Canadian Friends' Service

Committee, Shirley Farlinger of the United Church Peace Network, Phyllis Creighton of the Raging Grannies, and Kate Sandilands from the Green Party. Danny Béaton shared drumming and a native prayer ceremony.

But we have to send a particular thanks to someone whose name we don't even know. The little girl — does anyone know her? — who went through the crowd giving away hand-coloured paper hearts, was mentioned by many people as the one who made the day special for them.

Love and gratitude from ACT for Disarmament.

ACT Chapters and Contacts

ACT Toronto

736 Bathurst St.
Toronto M5S 2R4
416-531-6154 (phone)
416-531-5850 (fax)

ACT Oakville

140 Cavendish Court
Oakville, Ont. L6J 5S2
416-844-4453 (phone/
fax)

Vancouver Contact

Susan Moore
604-988-3740

Lindsay Contact

Cathy Lummiss
705-234-2854

Peterborough Contact

Ruth Gayle
705-741-4848

Guelph Contact

Aloz
519-767-1781

St. Catharines Contact

Bruce Allen
416-934-6233

Hamilton Contact

Peter Hutton
416-628-3168



Peace images

ACT for Disarmament has adopted a new logo — the 'yin-yang' doves, shown opposite.

Our old logo, a 'No Cruise Missiles' graphic, dates back to our days as the Against Cruise Testing Coalition. Recognizing that our mandate has now expanded far beyond a focus on the cruise, or even a single-issue focus on disarmament, we have chosen a logo that we feel reflects our concern for all the linked issues of peace, human rights, and the environment.

The yin-yang symbol is an ancient Oriental symbol of balance and harmony, and the dove is an equally classic Western symbol of peace. By combining the two, the drawing evokes the idea of peace which is in balance with nature, and in which many different peoples and cultures live in harmony with each other, respecting each other's unique gifts and ways of life.

The yin-yang doves were designed for ACT in 1984, by volunteer Gareth Lind. The design has long been one of our most popular buttons, and is also used on our ACT for Disarmament t-shirts. It will now replace the 'No Cruise' graphic on our letterhead and other official



documents.

Other artists who have contributed to ACT over the last ten years include Sue Dymont, Ted Dymont, Rebecca Barclay, Anne Perdue and Mary Hutchinson.

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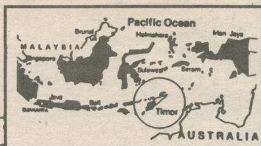


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EAST TIMOR UPDATE

Number 12 — June 8, 1992



In December 1975, just ten days after declaring its independence from Portugal, the tiny southeast Asian country of East Timor was invaded by its neighbour Indonesia. In the decade-and-a-half since, 250,000 people — over a third of the indigenous Timorese population — have been killed. Genocide and massive human rights violations — everything from rape to indiscriminate killings to forced abortions — go on to this day. But so does the struggle for freedom of the East Timorese people. It is largely the support of countries like Canada that allows Indonesia to maintain its occupation.

East Timor Update is a monthly news service edited in Toronto by the East Timor Alert Network. Reprinting is encouraged, but please credit East Timor Update. Contact the Network for more information:

National/West: 104—2120 West 44th, Vancouver BC, V6M 2G2.

Toronto: PO Box 562, Station P, Toronto, M5S 2T1.

Ottawa: 2760 Caroset Cres. #511, Ottawa Ont., K1T 2N2

Eastern Ontario: 217 Glengarry Rd., Kingston Ont., K7M 3J6.

Western Ontario: Dr Peter Eglin, Wilfred Laurier University, Waterloo Ont., N2L 3C5.

Québec: 1375 Sherwood Cres., Town of Mount Royal, Que., H3R 3C8

Action of the Month

Boycott Bata Shoes Divest from Indonesia

An information picket will be held at the Bata Shoes store in Dufferin Mall, Toronto, on **Saturday, June 20, 12 Noon**. Periodic pickets of Bata stores will continue until the company agrees to divest from Indonesia. Call (416) 531-6154 for future dates.

You can also tell Bata to divest by writing to the company's head office: 59 Wynford Dr., Don Mills Ont., M3C 1K3.

Other Canadian companies in Indonesia include: Inco Inc., PO Box 44, Royal Trust Tower, TD Centre, Toronto, M5K 1N4 (mining); Gulf Canada Resources Ltd., Second First Canadian Place, Toronto (oil and gas); SNC-Lavalin Inc., 235 Sheppard Ave. W., Willowdale Ont., M2J 5A6 (engineering studies); Pratt & Whitney Canada Inc., 1000 Marie-Victorie Blvd., Longueuil PQ, J4G 1A1 (aircraft engines); GE Canada, 2300 Meadowdale Blvd., Mississauga Ont., L5N 5P9.

Bata Shoes Boycott launched

East Timor supporters in Toronto have launched a campaign calling on the more than 300 Canadian companies operating in Indonesia to divest from Indonesia because of the government's appalling human rights record and its wars in East Timor and West Papua. The first company to be targeted is Bata Shoes, a Toronto-based multinational which operates two factories in Indonesia.

In the late 1970s, following the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, Canada ranked ahead of the United States in investments in Indonesia. Even today, Canada is the fifth largest investor. The Canadian government has invested more than \$1 billion in the Indonesian economy, notorious as one of the world's most corrupt. One of the largest Canadian investments belongs to Bata Shoes, a privately-owned company vulnerable to consumer pressure. A 1980s boycott forced Bata to divest from South Africa.

Protesters disrupted the opening of the new Bata Shoe Museum to publicize Bata's record in Indonesia and other Third World countries. In a meeting with Aqeel Zaman and Maggie Helwig, Bata general counsel Tom Drucker refused to consider a call to divest from Indonesia. Accordingly a consumer boycott has been called.

"Subversive" students jailed

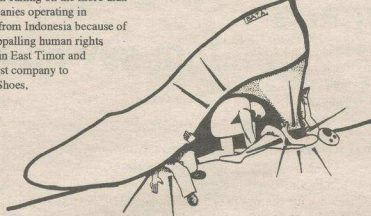
Two East Timorese students studying in Indonesia have been sentenced to long jail terms for organizing a demonstration in support of East Timorese independence last November, while three participants are also headed for jail. João Freitas da Camara and Fernando de Araújo have been sentenced to jail terms of ten and nine years respectively for "subversion," despite the protests of Amnesty International and other human rights groups in Indonesia and around the world.

"I want to say once again that I am not Indonesian," Araújo said. "It is unethical that (prison) is imposed on an East Timorese who is fighting for his rights and freedom. The East Timor problem is an international problem."

The trials of other Timorese protesters continue. Three of them have been sentenced to between six and 30 months in jail for "expressing hostility towards the government."

Another group of Timorese students, including two men charged with subversion, is on trial in Dili, East Timor, accused of provoking Indonesian soldiers to fire on an unarmed crowd at the Santa Cruz cemetery last Nov. 12. As many as 200 people died in the subsequent massacre, which was filmed by a British TV crew. (The documentary of the massacre, Cold Blood, has recently been given an award by Amnesty International. It is available, for educational screenings only, from ETAN.)

Independent observers have placed the blame for the Santa Cruz massacre on the generals at the head of the Indonesian armed forces, but only rank-and-file soldiers have been charged. Ten soldiers are being court-martialed on charges of "disobeying orders" by shooting on the crowd. Several have been sentenced to jail terms, ranging from four to



seventeen months.

Meanwhile, the United Nations still has not released the conclusions of its special envoy Amos Wako, who was sent to investigate the Santa Cruz massacre. Sources at the UN say the report will be kept secret because it is "too damaging to Indonesia."

The aid tango

Following a request by the Indonesian government, the World Bank has agreed to chair a new consortium to co-ordinate economic aid to Indonesia. The Consultative Group on Indonesia (CGI) will meet July 16-17 in Paris. The CGI has taken the place of the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI), which was disbanded when the Suharto regime rejected all further aid from the Netherlands and announced that it no longer wanted that country to chair its international aid consortium. The CGI now joins the pack of World Bank-led Paris Clubs which coordinate aid for many developing countries.

Indonesia's economy is heavily dependent on overseas aid. Last year the \$4.7 billion received through the IGGI accounted for 20 per cent of the country's budget.

According to TAPOL, the London-based Indonesian human rights campaign, "The decision to punish Holland and revamp the donor consortium, placing it in the hands of the World Bank which he hopes is less vulnerable to pressure on human rights issues, was Suharto's way of telling the world community: 'Yes, indeed, we violate human rights and will continue to do so with impunity; this is a domestic affair which is of no concern to anyone or any country.'"

Human rights are not presently on the agenda for the CGI, but other Paris Clubs chaired by the World Bank, among them consortiums on Kenya, Malawi and Togo, have halted aid because of human rights abuses. Canada is among the countries that are being heavily lobbied in advance of the meeting, and the Canadian stance there will have a major influence on other countries. Canada suspended \$30 million from its 1992 aid package, which was to have totalled \$76 million, because of the killings in East Timor. It is the only country that still has aid sanctions against Indonesia in place.

Torture goes on

The crackdown on East Timor announced by new Indonesian military commander Brig-General Theo Syafeli early this year continues unabated, according to recent letters from resistance sources. Much of the underground movement behind Indonesian lines has been arrested, tortured, and prevented from

functioning, but resistance still continues.

"Among the cruel treatment of the wounded," one letter from Dili says, "the (Indonesian security forces) tortured a young man named Simplicio da Costa de Deus and tore off one of his ears. A young girl called Joseffina ... was shot in the hip and the bullet pierced her vagina. Isabel da Costa ... was also shot and the bullets were lodged in her stomach. Many unknown others appeared with swollen and bleeding faces."

US Congress considers aid cutoff

A bill that would end all American economic and military assistance to the Indonesian government has been introduced in the US House of Representatives. "At a time when every US foreign aid dollar is undergoing rigorous scrutiny, why should the taxpayers provide aid to a nation which has seized and subjugated its neighbour?" asked Tony Hall, an Ohio Democrat who is the prime mover behind the bill.

HR 5176 would end American aid, military sales and intelligence co-operation (leaving intact only humanitarian aid) until Indonesia agrees to a referendum on self-determination in East Timor (as proposed by East Timor Bishop Carlos Belo), allows free access to East Timor to humanitarian agencies, complies with United Nations resolutions on East Timor, and ends all violations of human rights in the territory.

If the bill is successful, it would be a major blow to the Indonesian government. The United States is Indonesia's main military supplier and its second-largest aid donor after Japan.

Blood-pouring verdict postponed

A verdict will be handed down June 22 in the trial of Maggie Helwig and Joanne Young, who were charged with mischief over \$1,000 for throwing blood on the doors of the Indonesian Consulate in Toronto last February. The trial on May 29 heard testimony from Abé Barreto Soares, recently appointed Canadian representative for the East Timorese resistance. Defence lawyer Paul Berstein argued the right to freedom of speech took precedence in this case, as all other avenues of protest had been tried.

Xanana to UN: Don't forget East Timor

East Timorese resistance leader Kay Rala Xanana recently written to Boutros Boutros Ghali, the new secretary-general of the United Nations, to call for renewed international action on East Timor, as mandated by repeated UN resolutions that call for Indonesia to withdraw its troops and allow East Timor the right to self-determination.

"We believe that peace is not the privilege of just a few people, because peace is essentially an aspiration of mankind," Xanana wrote from the interior of East Timor. "East Timor is a case that falls under international law. The prevailing situation in East Timor constitutes a violation of international norms and a rejection of universal principles."

The full text of the letter is available from ETAN on request.

**THE
INDONESIA
KIT**

On sale in Toronto at This Ain't the Rosedale Library, DEC Bookroom and ACT for Disarmament.

Black ribbons in Belgrade

From page one

Cyprus and several other countries. The Gulf war in 1991 marks the only use of Canadian forces overseas for non-peacekeeping forces since the 1950s.)

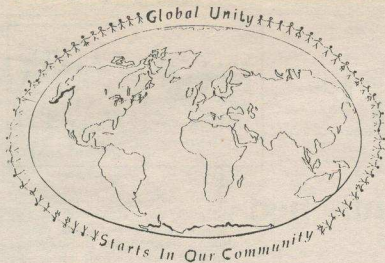
On May 30, the United Nations voted to impose sanctions against the Serbian-dominated government of Yugoslavia, including a trade ban, oil embargo, the freezing of Yugoslav assets abroad, and an end to airline flights to Yu-

goslavia.

The same weekend also saw new pressure on the Yugoslav government to seek an end to the wars in Croatia and Bosnia. The Serbian Orthodox church blamed the government for the suffering in Bosnia, where thousands of people have died and tens of thousands been displaced from their homes by the war, but also opposed sanctions as a further blow to ordinary Serbian citizens, already "the victims of

Communist tyranny" at the hands of their own government.

Meanwhile, Yugoslav opposition groups also called for an end to the war, and boycotted parliamentary elections. As the UN imposed sanctions, 20,000 anti-war marchers took to the streets in Belgrade and formed a black ribbon two kilometres long to symbolize those who had been killed. ☺



Together for peace

Oakville celebrated its sixth annual Peace Festival on Sunday, June 7, taking as its theme 'Global Unity Starts in Our Community.'

"World peace," says Jordan Barkovitz of the organizing committee, "demands communities which are peaceful. This year's theme stresses racial and religious unity."

The featured speakers reflected this theme. Wilson Head of the Urban Alliance on Race Relations addressed not only the need to overcome racism but also the anger and frustration felt by many young people — too many of whom can see no alternatives left to them except violence. We must present real and positive alternatives if we want these young people to listen, and to try to find other ways of dealing with their anger at a racist and troubled society.

Danny Beaton presented the message of his elders of the Six Nations, a message of care for the earth and for each other, and shared music and prayer.

Karen Ridd of Peace Brigades International spoke of her work in communities in El Salvador, but stressed "Our actions at home can have significant effects elsewhere in the world...It is hypocritical and misguided to only promote others' issues without addressing local problems around us in our own community."

A last-minute addition to the speakers' list was Robert Green, a former British naval officer who left the Ministry of Defense in protest against their nuclear-weapons policy (see 'Just say no', this page).

There were also speakers representing the Bahai faith, and many Oakville community groups. "Even

the menu features some ethnic foods not commonly found in the average Oakville restaurant," says Jordan.

As usual, a range of bands made up of young Oakville people entertained the crowd — this year, among others, Lucid Dreams, The Plain Daddies, Theories of the Mind, and Twice as Nice, the first rap act to perform at the Oakville Peace Festival.

The Peace Festival is an important Oakville event, with many students on the organizing committee and a wide range of local activists involved — environmental groups, women's groups and religious organizations as well as peace groups. Groups who had tables this year included the Halton Rape Crisis Centre, Women of Halton Action Movement (WHAM), the General Electric Boycott Committee, Alternatives Natural Food Store, the Oakville Humane Society, Voice of Women, Youth Challenge International, and of course ACT for Disarmament — represented by both the Oakville and Toronto chapters.

Despite rainy weather, hundreds attended the Festival. The day concluded with a group singing along of 'Get Together' and a drumming jam which kept Coronation Park lively well after the official programme had concluded.

Oakville activists are still pursuing, as well, their plan to create an Oakville Peace Centre. As well as being a base from which to run campaigns for peace, human rights and the environment, the Peace Centre will house a resource library, and be a spot for film nights and educational events ("And a karaoke machine" suggested one Festival-goer). ☺

Just say no to nuclear weapons

By DAVID WEBSTER
THE ACTIVIST

The military men who operate the world's nuclear arsenals aren't often found in the ranks of the peace movement. But a retired British naval officer who worked with his country's nuclear weapons program may be changing all that.

"I seem to be the first of my generation who operated nuclear weapons to have spoken out against them, and I have had a very traumatic time in doing it," Robert Green told a youthful crowd at the sixth annual Oakville Peace Festival. Green, visiting Edmonton and Toronto at the invitation of Veterans Against Nuclear Arms, was a last-minute addition to the festival program.

He brought with him an anti-nuclear message based on a twenty-year involvement with Britain's nuclear arsenal. In 1982, Green quit his job at the Ministry of Defence following the British government's decision to buy Trident, a new nuclear-armed submarine system.

"I could not serve with full commitment in the Royal Navy which had Trident," he said in an interview at the festival. "I could see it coming and it was going to do a lot of damage to the Navy... I saw the way the decision was taken, and I saw it was folly."

Trident was announced by a jingoistic Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher the same year as the Falklands war. Its four submarines, each armed with 16 nuclear

missiles, were to safeguard Britain's position as a world nuclear power in its own right. The fact that the system was American-designed, and its huge cost to a country where unemployment was reaching one in ten, were ignored. The first Trident submarine was officially launched last month by Princess Diana, but the system will not actually be operative until the turn of the century.

"Meanwhile Polaris is going to have to keep going to sea, leaking radiation, damaging the health of the crews," Green said. "They're all so macho about the British nuclear deterrent that no one dare say no."

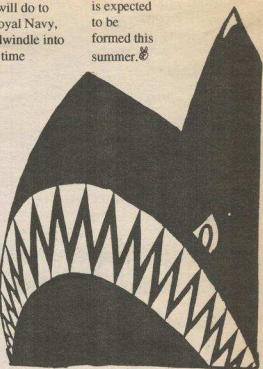
Green is no pacifist. A major objection to Trident, for him, is the damage it will do to the traditions of the Royal Navy, which he fears could dwindle into almost nothing by the time Trident is in place. He is calling for armed forces to be strengthened for roles like peacekeeping and environmental protection.

But the bottom line for that to happen, he believes, is the elimination of nuclear arsenals. Armies must "re-qualify as protectors of the innocent, and that is something they have lost, particularly when it comes to nuclear

weapons. It is the ultimate antithesis to protecting the innocent to threaten to use nuclear weapons."

The solution, he said, lies in campaigns like the World Court Project, launched earlier this year by the International Peace Bureau. The plan is to get a case to the World Court asking for an opinion on the legality of nuclear weapons. "Chemical and biological weapons have been outlawed. Nuclear weapons have not. We see that as like prohibiting cocaine whilst legalizing heroin."

The World Court Project is pushing for results by the end of next year. A Canadian committee is expected to be formed this summer. ☺



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