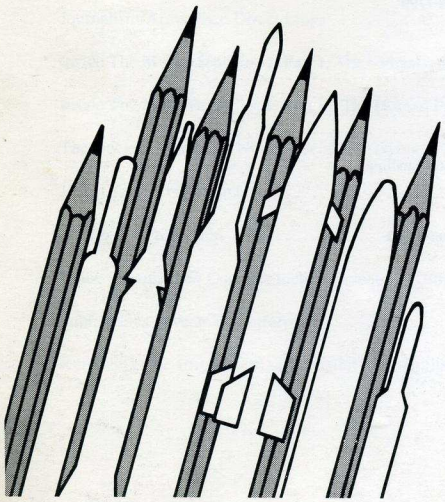
# *War, Peace and the Media*

***(Third Printing, Revised and Expanded)***



*War, Peace and the Media*

© Copyright Barrie Zwicker 1983, 1984, 1985

First Printing, November 1983

Second Printing, July 1984

Third Printing, August 1985
(Revised and Expanded Edition)

Originally reprinted from *SOURCES*, The Directory of Contacts for Editors, Reporters and Researchers (Summer 1983 Edition)

**ISBN: 0-920299-01-6**

For additional copies of this book, write or call:
*SOURCES*, 9 St. Nicholas Street, Suite 402, Toronto, Canada M4Y 1W5
(416) 964-7799

| | |
|---|---|
| Single copy | $4.00 |
| 2-4 copies | 3.50 |
| 5-7 copies | 3.25 |
| 8-10 copies | 3.00 |
| 11 or more copies | 2.75 |

(Plus postage and handling)

**Cover price: $4.00**

## *War, Peace and The Media*


Preface to Third Edition ..... ii

The Needle is Deep Into the Red Zone ..... 3

The Myth of Symmetry ..... 4

Public health research vs the MX ..... 7

Our Portrayal of the Soviet Union Dooms Ourselves ..... 8

Preoccupation with Demonology, Bone-deep Current of Darkness ..... 16

The Big Lie of the Arms Race ..... 17

"Tell me, Daddy, Who's the Baddy?" ..... 20

The Media and Civil Defence ..... 22

One Paper's New Attitude Toward Peace ..... 24

Historic Film Withheld 36 Years ..... 25

" . . . and they were doing Cartwheels." ..... 27

Words and War ..... 28

Media-MX Deal Denies Protestors' Rights Through News Blackout ..... 30

Journalism/Arms Race Direct Links ..... 31

Inside The Mushroom Cloud, Part I, The "Physics Package" ..... 32

Inside The Mushroom Cloud, Part II, The Human Package ..... 33

The Nuclear Death of a Nuclear Scientist (Dying of Radiation) ..... 37

Journalism and the Bomb ..... 40

A Crisis of Perception ..... 46

Peace Organization Contacts Include Scientists, Citizens, Generals ..... 47

Publications Diverse and Informed ..... 47

Renewing the Impact: "Extra-Visual" Journalism ..... 48

## *Preface to Third Edition*

ORIGINALLY War, Peace and the Media was written for journalists alone. It became the editorial section of the Summer 1983 Edition of *SOURCES*, The Directory of Contacts for Editors, Reporters and Researchers.

As is often the case with material critical of journalism it did not elicit much written response — from journalists. It did, however, result in the loss of at least $7,000 in advertising revenue for *SOURCES*.

It was written because it had to be written. The survey of coverage in the three Toronto English-language dailies was done because it had to be done. It is of over-arching importance and no one else — in or out of academia or the media — was, or is, doing it.

There were enough requests for reprints that it was decided to produce this book. Little did I realize how well it would be received among teachers, peace groups and people in general who found out about it.

That this is the third printing shows that — whatever interest journalists have in the role of their craft in the survival of the world — many non-journalist Canadians are vitally concerned about the role of journalism. No Canadian publication has ever sought to reprint a word of *War, Peace and the Media*.

Some of the material here, including the results of the survey of the Toronto papers, might seem to be out of date. Alas, I have gone over every word in revising this material, and it is as germane as when originally printed.

The ideas expressed, too, are up-to-the-second. The advent of the Star Wars space monster is just the latest (although this could be the final technological step to oblivion) development to which previous wisdom about disarmament applies.

Going over this book gave me a new insight into what "out of date" can mean. A journalist would never dream of considering as news, for instance, an article titled "The Language of the Cold War" by psychologist Dr. Jerome Frank that I ran across in my files. It clearly was published in the late sixties (although the exact date and place of publication are not evident).

When Dr. Frank wrote the article there were "only" 10,000 nuclear devices in the world (there are more than 50,000 today). Yet the points he makes about there being no security in this "overkill" capacity cannot be improved upon. His comments about the inappropriateness of calling such a buildup of devices of mass destruction "defence" cannot be improved upon.

No, it is those who still haven't grasped the "old" information in articles such as Dr. Frank's who are truly and dangerously out of date.

Five pages of "new" material have been added to this Edition of War, Peace and the Media. Under the general heading "Inside the Mushroom Cloud," starting on page 32, are Part I, "The 'Physics Package' " and Part II, "The Human Package."

The "Physics Package" is a term used by those in the military-industrial-academic complex to avoid saying "man-made horrific device for causing instantaneous wanton destruction on a scale previously reserved for hellish nightmares," or more simply "The Bomb." "Physics Package" is so much cleaner and much less stressful.

"The Human Package" tells what the "Physics Package" does to flesh and blood.

"The Nuclear Death of a Nuclear Scientist" is a poignant individual story of a remarkable young Canadian who worked at the secret Los Alamos lab which created the first Bomb.

Finally, on pages 47 and 48, an all-too-brief spread about what could probably be called a new form of journalism, "extra-visual" journalism. This example is by a brilliant and dedicated young journalist in India. It shows that new ways of pointing out our peril must and can be found.

One of the most difficult aspects of media criticism, I've found, is assessing whether "progress" has been made. How do we measure "progress?" To what extent should we take heart in such "progress" as we find?

For instance, it seems to me that the number of television progams dealing with the nuclear arms chase is greater now than at any time in the past. But if there is a percentage increase — let's say it's a 15 per cent increase — how significant is this? What percentage of all the TV programming available do these programs represent? One per cent? At the most. So are we to be cheered that the supreme threat to all life on the planet, the number one question on the human agenda, now is occupying one per cent of TV programming time rather than .85 of one per cent?

Yet if one does not give credit where credit's due, if one does not recognize and even celebrate improvement, however late or little, one perhaps is too negative, one perhaps contributes to demoralization. And demoralization is part of the problem.

*War, Peace and the Media* is not intended to demoralize. It is intended to instruct, to provide evidence where previously the ignorant could hold forth without rejoinder. It is intended to spur action: that each and every one of us realize we are part of the mass media system, that each and every one of us has a responsibility to participate actively in that system through writing letters to the editor, contributing articles, phoning our radio or television outlet when there's something to praise or something to be criticized, through finding and subscribing to alternative journals (some are listed under "Publications Diverse and Informed"). Through recognizing that even though there may be precious little time left, we are engaged in a long haul, that our learning and acting must be continuous and unflagging.

We must NOT be demoralized. It is well to remember the words of Edmund Burke: "Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little." — B.Z.

# The Needle is Deep Into the Red Zone

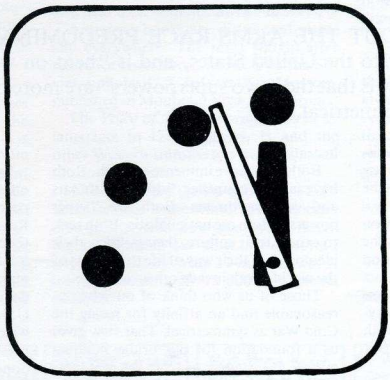
"HISTORY IS A RACE BETWEEN education and catastrophe," wrote H.G. Wells. Few deny that today the mass media are the greatest educator on public issues. And few deny that the ultimate catastrophe may be drawing closer now, even quickly.

History, or the end of history, is more in the hands of the mass media than most in the mass media want to think about personally.

One of the many reasons for this avoidance is that the threat of extinction is also a threat to traditional journalism. The faults of journalism — and it's natural that many within the media would be the last to recognize them or admit to them — are painfully illuminated when coverage of the threat of extinction is examined.

More accurate coverage of war-and-peace issues demands, centrally, more accurate coverage of the Soviet Union. These are inseparable. We are not in danger of going to war with Sweden or Japan or even China. Until recently every nuclear weapon outside the USSR was pointed at the USSR. Without replacement of our grotesque sterotype of the Soviet Union by something closer to reality, there is no hope of ending the Cold War, or ending the arms race, and therefore no hope of saving ourselves. In today's world, we cannot simultaneously indulge the luxury of hating the foreign devil out-group while hoping to stop the arms race. The first is at the core of the second. It is not for the Soviets' sake (not that this would be an unworthy motive) that we need to see them more rationally: it is for our *own sake.*

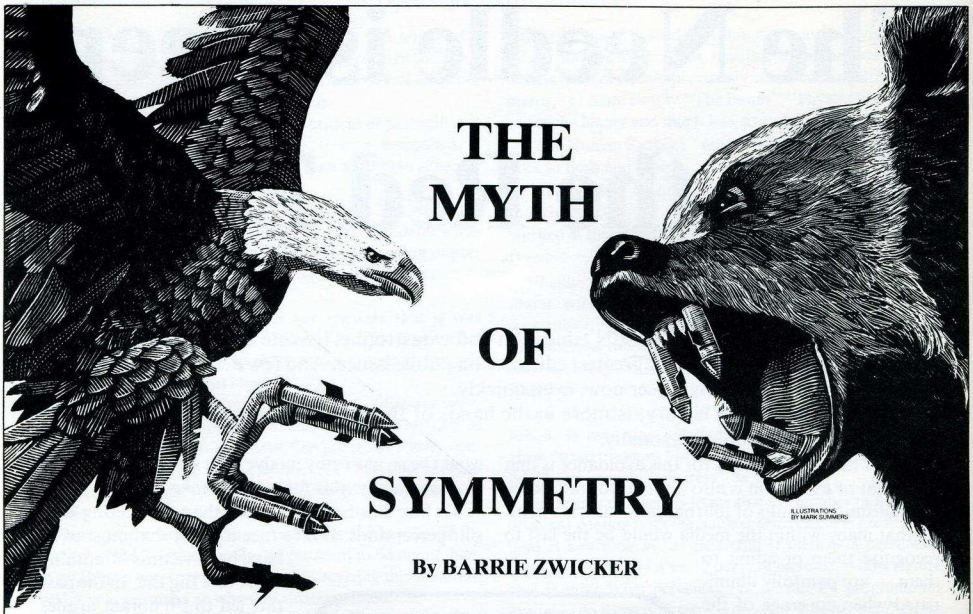
To face this is to face more than a tinkering with our perceptions. It is to face the fact that most of us have been victims of nothing short of a Big Lie. In the past this led to "ignorant armies clashing at night," in the words of Matthew Arnold. Today the price of the Big Lie is potentially the death of all.



**The symbol of the threat of nuclear doomsday hovering over humanity, the Clock of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* stands at four minutes to midnight.**

As we draw closer to war — more properly, to extermination — it should be evident that war is the ultimate failure of public communication. But we have incineratingly deep built-in biases against the corollary: that peace is public communication's ultimate aim. Our media have thrived on violence and confrontation and controversy; these have been at the very heart of what is "news".

All the lessons of history have to be learned, and acted upon, in time, by those now living in order to prevent the unnecessary catastrophe of nuclear war. There's a lot of evidence we won't make it. — B.Z.



# THE MYTH OF SYMMETRY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARK SUMMERS

**By BARRIE ZWICKER**

TWO BASIC VIEWS ABOUT THE ARMS RACE PREDOMINATE. One is that the Soviet Union is militarily superior to the United States, and is "bent on world domination," the Red Menace view. The other view is that the "two superpowers" are more or less equally to blame, that the arms race is basically symmetrical.

As an abundance of evidence in this issue and elsewhere shows, the media overwhelmingly protray the Red Menace as the true state of affairs.

But in longer think pieces, especially on the subject of arms control (which was the subject of the think piece that started on page D1 of the Sunday *Toronto Star* last Feb. 6 using the art on this page), the image of one evil empire menacing everywhere and one decent one defending truth and liberty everywhere becomes difficult to sustain.

That is where the middle ground comes into focus, and symmetry, or something approximating it, comes into play and is manifest in such as this page's artwork. (The article it illustrated, by the way, stated that American Defence Department documents show a "continuing U.S. advantage in the more important areas" of military capability.)

There appears quite a lot of evidence to justify characterizing the Cold War, and the nuclear arms race especially, as the creation of two crazed giants locked in a deadly embrace. It is a powerful model and its imagery lends itself to effective illustration.

Both sides have immense arsenals. Both have satellite countries. Both make threats and counter threats. Both are "super powers." Both are nationalistic. Both seek to export their culture, their politics, their ideology and their way of life to all parts of the world. Both invade other countries.

Those of us who think of ourselves as reasonable find an affinity for seeing the Cold War as symmetrical. That view gives us a foundation for our bridge-building efforts. It distances us from the rabidness of the Red Menace people, yet provides the safety net of maintaining our required quota of anti-communism. For the reasonable, then, it's a platform, shield and safety net.

Symmetry has appeal, too, for those who don't know much about the issues, and who know they don't know. Symmetry fits the folk wisdom that "the truth lies somewhere in the middle."

Symmetry is also handy for those who would stand above it all. "A plague on both your houses," they can say, and do nothing more (although it doesn't logically follow that they should do nothing more).

Symmetry is a useful club for those who otherwise don't accept it. "Why don't the peace demonstrators ever march to the Russian embassy?" a thousand letters to the editor have asked. (It seems never to be asked of those who demonstrate against martial law in Poland why they don't also demonstrate at the U.S. Embassy against U.S. involvement in Central America, which is far more direct, bloody and repressive than anything the Soviets have done in Poland.)

Pierre Trudeau, typically, has adopted and promoted a symmetrical model of the Cold War for every purpose mentioned. He woos the reasonable with observations about Ronald Reagan that few would attempt to refute, clubs the peace movement as being "anti-American," shields himself from right wing criticism by coming up with his quota of "Soviet threat" rhetoric and in the confusion poses as being in the middle, albeit somewhat elevated.

"Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union will let the other major power install itself in its back yard," he told a student in Toronto in early April (*Globe*

*and Mail,* "Just What Was Said," April 6). "It's great power politics and the advantage of middle sized countries like Canada is that we can take an even view and condemn both sides . . . But . . . you have to do it in an even-handed way."

Many people in the peace movement either believe in symmetry or would like to believe it. British historian E.P. Thompson, one of the leading disarmament thinkers and activists in the world, has said that "the most critical and decisive point" in the building of a new European peace movement would be whether the anti-militarist publics of Western Europe could link up with their counterparts in Eastern Europe and the USSR.

Apart from the various uses the idea of symmetry is put to, does it not stand up? These dualities, are they not profound? The existence of "two super powers" is beyond question, is it not? Even the Soviets use the term, as they do the term "arms race" with the "balance" of terror that implies. The threats, the counter threats, the nationalism, the expansionism, — are these not unhappy facts of life about our world? Or are they the surface?

They are less than the surface. They are the appearance of surface.

## MYTH : THAT THERE ARE TWO SUPER POWERS

There are three areas in which any country could qualify for super power status: the economic sphere, the cultural sphere and the military sphere.

### The Two Economies

The total value of all goods and services produced by the United States — the Gross National Product or GNP — is twice that of the Soviet Union.

No one in possession of the standard view of the Soviet Union provided in the West should need much convincing of this fact. The under-achievements of the Soviet state have been well chronicled. The relative lack of consumer goods is well known. Just to meet its food needs, the USSR finds it necessary to import millions of dollars' worth of grain from Canada, for instance.

A visit to the Soviet Union will confirm the difference in material living standards. There are not two economic super powers. There is one. It is the United States.

### The Two Cultures

The world is increasingly an information culture. The United States is in quality and quantity the leader by a huge margin over all other countries in the production and export of information and entertainment.

Between two-thirds and three-quarters of all the information in the world originates in the United States. Hollywood films are shown widely virtually everywhere in the world. American TV productions blanket the world. The furtive importation of American movies on videotape into the Soviet Union is a problem so advanced that the Politburo recently addressed it.

The three U.S. commercial TV networks together import about 12 hours of foreign programming a year. They export 370,000 hours a year; "Bonanza" is still running to weekly audiences of 350-million.

American music is heard everywhere. You can get it any hour of the day, for instance, on one of the hi-fi channels in the Hotel Pribaltiskaya in Leningrad. You will also hear it on domestic Soviet airliners.

American books are distributed virtually everywhere. The most sought-after reference book about Moscow in the Soviet capital is *U.S. Information Moscow,* published in Mountain View, California.

The *Voice of America* broadcasts in 35 languages in 123 countries. It and the other Western transmitters outnumber all the Soviet ones.

*AP* and *UPI* are the top two "Big Four" news services in the world. *TASS* doesn't even qualify. *AP* is the biggest by far, reaching an estimated one-third of the world's population daily with 17-million words transmitted through 48,000 newsmedia offices.

American magazines have long dominated the world, with an American viewpoint, naturally enough. *Reader's Digest* is the largest circulation magazine in the world but *Time* with its many editions, *National Geographic* with its incredible penetration into the world's school systems and many others, play their part.

Anti-Soviets make much of the alleged perfidy and danger of *Radio Moscow.* It's taken as a synonym for lies and propaganda. They point to the fact that the United States, however, does not jam *Radio Moscow* as the Soviets have jammed Western broadcasts.

But few people in North America ever listen to short wave. There's no need to jam *Radio Moscow.* And the handful who might tune in are so thoroughly warned that very little of what they heard could conceivably pierce their wall of prejudgment.

But shortwave is much listened to in Europe and the Soviet Union, and English is widely understood. (There are as many teachers of English in the USSR as there are people who speak Russian in the United States.)

Not including the billion Chinese, or perhaps including them, English is the most common language internationally. And it's the language of the United States.

Informationally there are not two super powers. There is one. It is the United States.

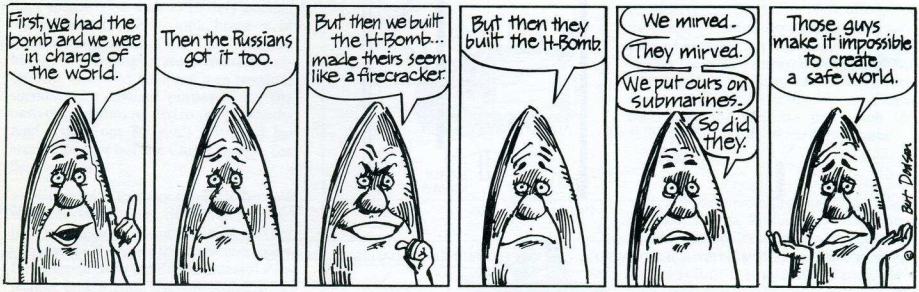
### Relative Military Capacity

At the end of the Second World War, the USSR lay largely wrecked. It suffered greater losses in that war than any other country: 20-million dead, its second and third largest cities (Leningrad and Kiev) in ruins along with thousands of other cities and towns.

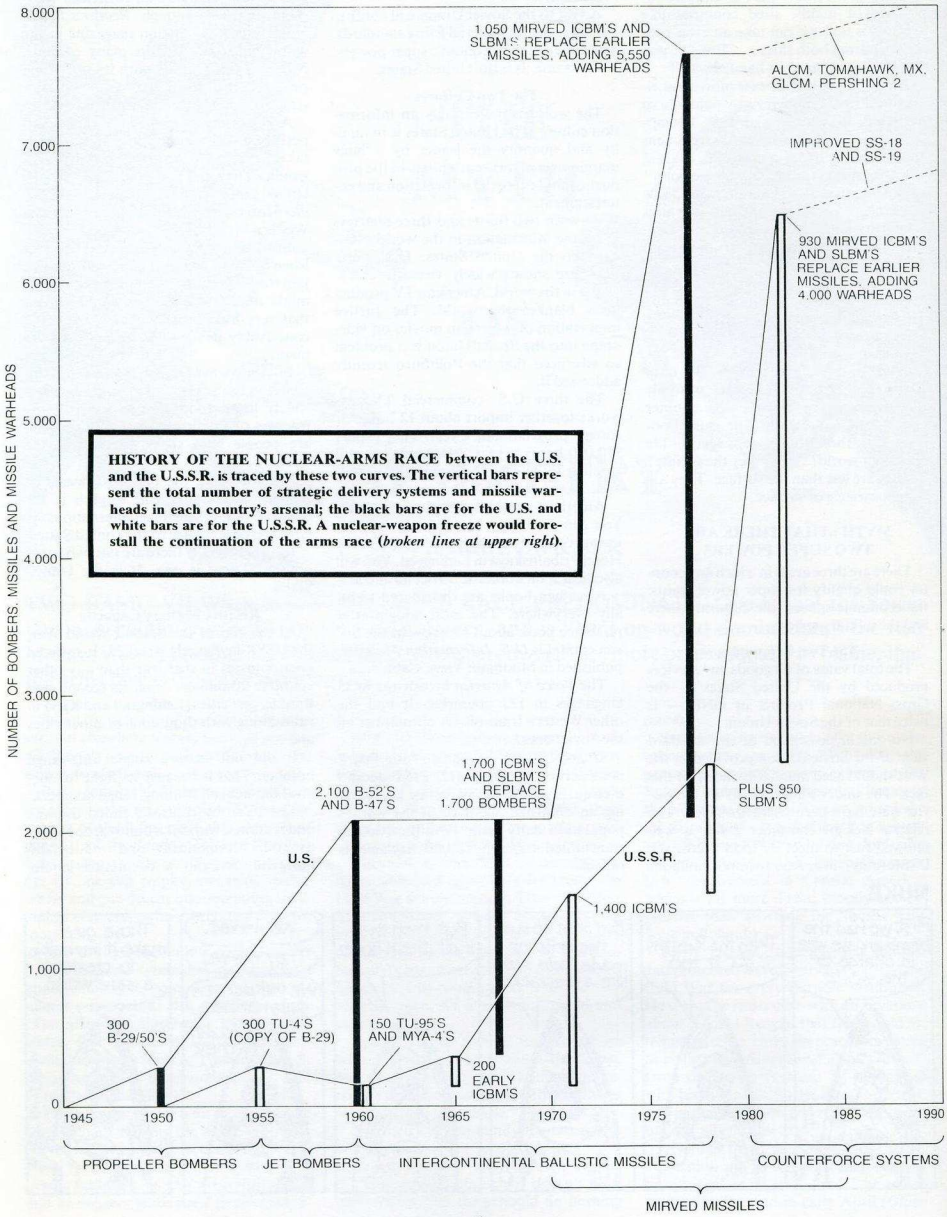
It did not have a single long-range bomber. That is because its fight for survival did not call for long-range bombers.

The U.S., by contrast, ended the war undevastated without a bomb dropped on its soil, economically and industrially powerful, without a decimated labour

## NUKE



From "Bilateral Nuclear-Weapon Freeze," by Randall Forsberg. Copyright © 1982 by Scientific American, Inc. All rights reserved.



force, and with a fleet of long-range bombers. The U.S. also had a monopoly on the Bomb, and it is a matter of historical record that there were powerful figures including General Douglas McArthur who favoured launching atomic war on the Soviet Union.

The Soviets, who had already been militarily attacked by the United States (and by Canadian soldiers) in an early effort by the West to crush their revolution, developed the ultimate weapon too.

Justified, promoted and spurred always by waves of anti-Sovietism (McCarthyism, the "bomber gap," "the missile gap," the "window of vulnerability") arising from the steady 65-year drumbeat of anti-communism, the United States has unilaterally initiated, led and promoted the so-called arms race in every category — nuclear subs, MIRVS, cruise missiles, the neutron bomb, and so on — during the past 36 years.

The incontrovertible history of what should properly be called the arms chase is charted opposite, reprinted with permission from the *Scientific American*. More detail about the chronology of American aggressiveness is provided in the accompanying table, prepared by Robert Aldridge, former design engineer for Lockheed Missiles and Space Company for 16 years. (He has joined the resistance movement against nuclear arms).

The central generating source of untrue and confusing information about the arms race is Washington. Yet even in 1983, a lie uttered by a U.S. president or cabinet member will be quoted in news without question. One example is the extraordinary statement made by U.S. vice-president George Bush in Paris in June: "It is unacceptable that the Soviet Union should be more heavily armed than the rest of the world combined," he said and was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* (June 9, page 13) and on *CBC radio* news without question or rejoinder.

Both symmetry and the Soviet Menace theory obscure the centrally-threatening fact of today's world. There are not two military super powers. Except for the nuclear retaliatory power of the USSR there is only one military super power. That is the United States.

And even while the United States, with eight per cent of the world's population, consumes 40 per cent of the world's wealth, even while it influences or dictates policy from Warsaw to Rome to San Salvador to Manila to Ottawa, even while it encircles the Soviet Union (which it has done for 20 years) with nuclear missiles which can reach the Soviet heartland in minutes, even while it has the upper hand in nuclear submarines, bombers, missiles of all kinds, technology of all kinds, even while all of this is true, it also has so much propaganda power that it can successfully persuade the majority of people that it is a pitiful Mr. Nice Guy threatened by an evil omnicompetent monster called the Soviet Union.

That this is the state of affairs beyond Orwell's 1984 is exquisitely mind-boggling.

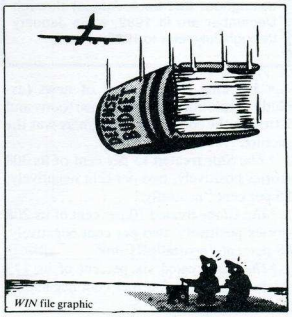
**Escalation of the Arms Chase**

| | *U.S. (Action)* | *USSR (Reaction)* |
|---|---|---|
| First nuclear chain reaction | 1942 | 1946 |
| First atom bomb exploded | 1945 | 1949 |
| First H-bomb exploded | 1952 | 1953 |
| European alliances in effect | 1949 (NATO) | 1955 (Warsaw Pact) |
| Tactical nuclear weapons in Europe | 1954 | 1957 |
| Accelerated buildup of strategic missiles | 1961 | 1966 |
| First supersonic bomber | 1960 | 1975 |
| First ballistic-missile-launching submarine | 1960 (Polaris) | 1968 (Yankee) |
| First solid rocket fuel used in missiles | 1960 | 1968 |
| Multiple warheads on missiles | 1964 | 1973 |
| Penetration aids on missiles | 1964 | None to date |
| High-speed re-entry bodies (warheads) | 1970 | 1975 |
| Multiple independently-targeted re-entry vehicles (MIRVs) on missiles | 1970 | 1975 |
| Computerized guidance on missiles | 1970 | 1975 |
| **Star Wars** | **1983** | ? |

# Public Health Research vs MX Research

THE SCALE of the coming boom (in military spending) is such as to defy normal understanding. I tried to look, however, at just one component of the (U.S.) military budget — spending for research and development — and to compare it to research spending for civilian purposes, on the basis of programs related to public health. And I used not Reagan's projected increased budget but the Carter budget for fiscal year 1981.

In that year military research for one weapons system alone, the MX missile system, amounted to about $1.5 billion. That was greater than the total amount spent for all research by the Environmental Protection and Mental Health Administration, plus all Veteran's Administration medical research, plus all Agriculture Department research on human nutrition, plus all research on highway safety. Add to this the entire research budgets of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and of the Department of Education, and you still do not reach the research total alone of the MX missile.



*WIN* file graphic

— *The Economics of the Arms Race*, by Prof. Emma Rothschild, Massachussetts Institute of Technology. Presentation at the Riverside Church Disarmament Program fourth annual conference, New York, Nov. 15-16, 1981.

# Our Portrayal of the Soviet Union Dooms Ourselves

**. . . the view of the Soviet Union that prevails today in large portions of our . . . journalistic establishment (is) so extreme, so subjective, so far removed from what any sober scrutiny of external reality would reveal, that it is not only ineffective but dangerous as a guide to political action.** — George Kennan.

## *Survey Report*

SOVIET SPIES, real or imagined, were the subject of 126 stories in three leading Canadian dailies over a recent six-month period — as many as dealt with Soviet art, artists, culture, sports, daily living, foreign policy, media, science and travel *combined.*

The three papers are the *Star, Sun* and *Globe and Mail* of Toronto. The period covered was Nov. 1, 1982 through March 31, 1983.

In that time a total of 922 stories, editorials, commentaries, cartoons, photographs and letters to the editor about the Soviet Union appeared in the papers. All sections for all days were scanned and clipped. Other findings of the survey:

- Of 147 opinion columns published over the six months, four could be considered friendly or favourable to the Soviet Union in any way.
- Of 43 editorials and cartoons in the same period, 25 were hostile or negative about the USSR and 18 were neutral. Not one Toronto editorial board was able to find one positive thing to write about the Soviet Union, its people or policies, in the half year.
- Three of the 922 items — or one-third of one percent — consisted of editorial words directly from a Soviet source, without comment.
- The number of items which consisted of a complete unedited text or statement from a Soviet source was zero.
- As the clippings were gone through, they were sorted into 21 categories that suggested themselves. Three hundred and twenty-four, or 35 per cent, fell into categories that could be considered negative from a Soviet viewpoint, namely Afghanistan, Soviet arms, dissidents, "repressive regime" stories, "Soviet threat" stories, and spying.
- Each story was assessed as to its *treatment* (i.e., headline, phraseology outside quotes, etc.) *as opposed to* the subject matter. A conscious attempt was made *not* to assign a story to the "negative treatment" category unless it was clear-cut that it belonged there. All doubtful cases were assigned to the "neutral" category. (See sidebar for fuller explanation of methodology.)

### EXCLUSIVE *SOURCES* SURVEY

About dates: Except where noted, throughout this book August through December are in 1982, while January through July refer to 1983.

- Looking at treatment of news (excluding columns, editorials, cartoons and letters to the editor) by paper, here was the picture:

**The Star* treated 13 per cent of its 308 stories positively, two per cent negatively, 85 per cent "neutrally."

**The Globe* treated 10 per cent of its 208 stories positively, two per cent negatively, 88 percent "neutrally".

**The Sun* treated six percent of its 173 stories positively, four per cent negatively, 90 percent "neutrally".

It must be kept in mind here — although it is discussed more fully elsewhere — that "neutral" coverage in the context of these survey findings in no way translates into "fair" or "balanced" or "even handed" toward the Soviet Union, much as one would wish this would be true of any subject dealt with by our press.

For instance, because of a conscious leaning over backwards to give the benefit of the doubt to the papers, the following would be *typical* of stories in the "neutral" category:

*A story at the top of page A10 of the *Star* on Dec. 28, 1982 with a two-column, three-line head reading: "Soviet inmates used in pipeline, dissident says." The *Chicago Tribune* story out of Washington is based on unnamed U.S. State Department sources.

*Soviets training Irish terrorists, witnesses tell congressmen," a three-column, two-line head on page H4 of the *Sunday Star,* March 27, based on a *London Sunday Times* story relying on unnamed sources in Washington.

*A story by staff writer Steve Payne in the *Sunday Sun* Feb. 13. The headline is "Yikes! Is it a Soviet plot?" and the flashline is "Haze Linked to Big Melt." The lead paragraph reads: "Another ice age? Forget it, start worrying about a melting age."

The second paragraph begins "Canadian scientists think a mysterious arctic haze may be a pollution threat . . ." The scientists are paraphrased later in the story to the effect that they are "anxious to know" whether the haze is a threat and that they hope to "pin down the source."

The link with the Soviet union comes from an unnamed "recent report released by the U.S. office of naval research" which "pointed a finger at the USSR."

• Looking at opinions expressed in the columns, editorials, cartoons and letters to the editor:

*Three per cent of *The Star's* 76 opinion items were favourable regarding anything to do with the Soviet Union. Thirty-two per cent were unfavourable.

*Eleven per cent of *The Globe's* 47 opinion items were favourable regarding anything to do with the Soviet Union. Thirty-six per cent were unfavourable.

*Three per cent of *The Sun's* 110 opinion items were favourable regarding anything to do with the Soviet Union. Seventy-three per cent were unfavourable.

Again, regarding the 65 per cent of the *Star's,* 53 per cent of the *Globe's* and 24 per cent of the *Sun's* opinion items classified as "neutral," the approach of bending over backwards to be fair to the papers placed as typical "neutral or indeterminate" the following items:

*A column in the Jan. 31 *Sun* by William Stevenson in New York headed "Was the West betrayed?" It was about a deceased Canadian spymaster, Charles Ellis, who Stevenson wrote was "in the thick of pre-World War II Soviet and Nazi conspiracies, working for our side." The column concludes: "Col. Ellis has never been given a public clearance. He can thus be used to explain the betrayal of trans-Atlantic intelligence secrets to the Russians."

*A *Globe* editorial headed simply "Leonid Brezhnev" (Nov. 12, 1982) which began: "The cult of personality which surrounded former Soviet President Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev was not only the creation of the Soviet propaganda apparatus . . ." and concluded: "The Russia Brezhnev left at his death this week could be a colossus of brass on a pedestal of clay."

• Turning specifically to opinion columns:

*Of *Toronto Star* columns one was classified positive, nine negative and 37 "neutral."

**Globe* columns were classified two positive, four negative and 15 "neutral".

**Sun* columns were judged one positive (mole), 58 negative and 20 "neutral".

• As far as editorials were concerned, there were zero editorials positive about anything to do with the Soviet Union in any of the papers for the six-month period, as noted. The *Star* was judged to have published four negative and eight neutral editorials, the *Globe* four and five and the *Sun* 17 and five.

• Published letters to the editor, according to opinions expressed regarding anything Soviet, classified themselves as follows:

**Star:* one positive, 11 negative, five neutral or indeterminate.

**Globe:* three positive, nine negative, five neutral or indeterminate.

**Sun:* two positive, five negative and two neutral or indeterminate. (30)

**Number of stories, photos, editorials, cartoons, opinion columns and letters to the editor about the Soviet Union in the *Star, Globe and Mail* and *Sun* of Toronto, Nov. 1, 1982 through March 31, 1983**

| | |
|---|---|
| Spying | 126 |
| Brezhnev, Andropov | 86 |
| Soviet armaments | 57 |
| Afghanistan | 54 |
| Arts, culture, sports | 49 |
| Soviet arms proposals | 47 |
| Space program | 41 |
| The "Soviet threat" | 36 |
| Trade | 36 |
| Foreign policy | 33 |
| Daily life | 29 |
| Dissidents | 29 |
| Miscellaneous | 26 |
| USSR as a "repressive regime" | 22 |
| Media | 8 |
| Economy | 4 |
| Science | 2 |
| Travel | 1 |

| | "Neutral" to USSR | Hostile | Non-Hostile | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Columns | 71 | 71 | 4 | 146 |
| Editorials/cartoons | 18 | 25 | 0 | 43 |
| Letters to the editor | 12 | 25 | 6 | 43 |

## *Assessment*

IMPLACABLE OPPONENTS of the Soviet Union and warm admirers of the USSR alike should equally be demanding better press coverage of that country.

Whether your motive is to know your "enemy" better, or build bridges of friendship — or anything between — the coverage provided by the press in Canada falls ludicrously short of serving you. This conclusion is based on a six-month survey of three Toronto dailies.

Instead of anything approaching an informative, rounded, realistic picture of a country the papers themselves repeatedly claim is so important, the public is being mistreated to a hodge podge of distorting trivia, boring stereotypes and transparent bias parading as news.

Unnamed sources abound. Clichés from "Soviet threat" and "free world" on down, are standard. There are gaps large enough to drive the Soviet economy through (there were four stories on the Soviet economy in the three papers in six months). There is virtually no human face, but a dehumanized ideological abstraction.

The assembled 922 clippings are profoundly uninformative, a journalistic yawn that is helping us sleepwalk toward the biggest slumber of all time: nuclear war.

As noted elsewhere, the 126 stories about Soviet spies, real or imagined, exactly equalled the number of stories about Soviet sports, art, culture and daily life, the Soviet economy, foreign policy, media, science and travel in the USSR, combined. This fact is illuminating beyond the numbers involved.

Spy stories by definition are seldom a result of conventional journalistic digging. Your average assignment editor doesn't instruct your average reporter on your average day to "drop down to Mountie headquarters and ask some questions about spying." Precisely *one* of the 126 stories, one by Joe O'Donnell of the *Star*'s Ottawa bureau, was the apparent result of assigned digging. (Based on a scoop by the Ottawa *Citizen* — a scoop otherwise unreported in the Toronto press — O'Donnell's story said the Soviet Union "blew the whistle on the RCMP in 1978 for a series of illegal or improper activities . . ." including the forging of the solicitor-general's signature. A former senior RCMP Officer said the allegations were "bang on," the story said. "The allegations were published in a Moscow newspaper and the embassy in Ottawa released a translation of the story here. But Canadian media dismissed the report as propaganda and ignored it," O'Donnell wrote.)

All the other stories originated from government, statements by politicians, news services (the majority) or are of un-

clear origins.

(For instance, on Nov. 3, 1982, the *Star* suddenly published an article, occupying almost two-thirds of a page, by Nowlan Ulsch, a "Boston-based writer who teaches at the Boston University School of Public Communication." Ulsch had interviewed one Ladislav Bittman, "formerly a high-ranking officer in Czech intelligence," who defected to the U.S. embassy in Berlin on Sept. 3, 1968. The "timely" peg some *Star* editor dragged out to justify running this piece was "the wake of the defection to Britain last month of Vladimir Kuzichkin, Soviet diplomat and possible KGB spy.")

Statements that should draw laughter are printed in seriousness in spy stories. "The United States is asleep to the growing infiltration of the U.S. by KGB agents and other Soviet operatives," Bittman is quoted as saying. (In *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence,* by Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, published in 1974 *after* being censored by the CIA at the demand of the U.S. government, the authors state (page 80) that *at that time* official, known, U.S. Government-sponsored and approved spying cost at least $6,228,000,000 and employed at least 150,000 people.)

These spy stories are, collectively, a moulded product. The timing of the stories alone merits a separate analysis. (As this is written, U.S. vice president Bush is in Scandinavia and "unidentified submarines" have simultaneously been reported in Scandinavian waters.)

The number and nature of spy stories is also essentially controlled by the spy agencies through leaks and through personal contacts they trust to get these stories across in the media.

A basic criticism of the overkill in the number of "Russian spy" stories might be on the basis of balance. It is commonly agreed that both "sides" in the Cold War spy extensively. Khrushchev once suggested to a U.S. President that the two countries should pool the information from their spies.

Yet it is primarily examples (of whatever validity) of Soviet spying that are publicized. And, indeed, the particular examples that the sources of the information wish publicized. These same sources hush up or downplay examples of "Western" spying that may through unmanageable circumstances come to light.

Only four of the 126 clippings about spying involved Western spying on the USSR. One was the O'Donnell story. The other three concerned Richard Osborn, described as "a U.S. diplomat" in all three stories (*Star,* March 10; *Globe,* March 11 and, finally, *Sun,* March 18).

The three headlines were, respectively, "U.S. diplomat caught spying red-handed: Tass," "Moscow expels U.S. Diplomat" and "Ousted U.S. envoy leaves USSR." The three stories were four, five and 10 paragraphs respectively. Nothing further has ever been published.

Osborn had on his person a portable transmitter tuned to send signals directly to the U.S. Marisat communications satellites, as well as water-soluble paper, according to *UPI* and *Reuter.* The *Sun's* story suggested the expulsion, first such in four years, was simply retaliation for a series of expulsions of Soviets from Western countries.

The news media portray, collectively, not the reality of spying, but the reality the "intelligence community" of "our side" wishes portrayed.

Another common flaw in coverage of the Soviet Union is hard to understand, in light of most journalists' real concern about being duped by "news management" techniques, especially news management by government.

A story that apparently breezed through all the filters of skepticism to land on page A14 of the *Star* on Feb. 15 was headed "Destroy all chemical arms, U.S. urges." It was a *Reuter* story out of Geneva.

The lead was: "The United States has proposed the destruction of all chemical weapons over a 10-year period." The story continued in this vein, as if this paper proposal — of which nothing has been heard since — had to capture the lead of the story, was the news. Within the context thus established was information that "the Western superpower challenged the Soviet Union to allow inspections on demand . . ." But the second last paragraph disclosed a fact of considerably more concreteness relating to chemical weapons, namely that President Ronald Reagan had just asked Congress for $158-million to build nerve gas shells to update chemical weapons stocks.

While the media consistently fail, apparently, to see through such transparent and standard diversionary tactics to cynically mislead public attention, they consistently, on their own, downplay Soviet paper proposals — and even more concrete Soviet actions — on the arms control front.

These seldom make the front of the paper or include much detail. A statement by a leading Soviet policy-maker Georgi Korniyenko that the Soviet Union would consider a 25 per cent reduction in its strategic arsenal rated three column inches on page A10 of the *Star* Nov. 22, 1982.

Yuri Andropov's major disarmament offer of Dec. 21, made in a key Kremlin address marking the 60th anniversary of the Soviet Union, and his first major foreign policy address since his succeeding Leonid Brezhnev, was carried on page 34 of the Dec. 22 *Sun* under the barely intelligible headline "MX hints of war." The *Globe* ran the story the same day on page 12 under the two-column head "Soviets offer to cut missiles in Europe."

(In the speech, the Soviet leader offered to slash Soviet medium-range missiles in Europe, renounce first use of conventional as well as nuclear forces and confirmed the offer, first hinted by Korniyenko, to cut Moscow's strategic long range missiles by 25 per cent. The *Sun* and *Globe* stories did not even mention strategic long range missiles.)

Andropov's offer did manage to get onto the *Star's* front page Dec. 21, or at least 4-1/2 column inches of it did, with a two-column head. But the whole story was just 12 column inches. More typical was the 16-column inch story under a banner headline on page A3 of the Jan. 10 *Star* reading "U.S., allies see nothing new in East's peace proposal."

In this all-important arena, our press is basically content to practice at best a biased version of "he said - she said" journalism rather than examine the proposals and responses in detail. The European press does far more of this examination, one of the key reasons the European public is so much better informed about nuclear arms issues — and is so much more concerned — than is the North American public.

The best coverage, in terms of factuality, colour and permitting a glimpse of Soviets as human beings, is in the sports pages. "Montreal love-in ends Soviet players' tour," read the four column head over a story and under a photo of goalie Vladislav Tretiak receiving a fervent embrace from one female fan among a throng of admirers (*Star,* Jan. 10.)

The writing was not pro-Soviet but neither did it contain the innuendoes and disclaimers that seem obligatory in so much coverage of its people. (In the *Star* of Dec. 20, 1982, for instance, under the heading "What Soviet Union thinks of the MX proposals" there appeared the *only* significant example in the three Toronto papers in six months of words of a Soviet official being passed along to readers relatively unedited. It was an edited transcript of an interview by *TASS* with Soviet Defence Minister Dmitry Ustinov. The *Star* felt compelled to state, bizarrely: "The views expressed do not necessarily correspond with those of *The Star.")*

Of course, it's hard to impute the sinister when reporting how 15,0000 fans turned out to attend a 90-minute practice by the visiting Soviet Union National Hockey team, or even in the fact that 500 of the fans broke past police and stormed onto the ice for autographs. So the phrase "love-in" was not ill-chosen journalistically.

# The Evacuated Ones

**By Lisbeth Hedebye**
Special to The Star

**During the Spanish Civil War 3,000 children, orphans of rebel families, were taken in by the Soviet Union. Here is the story of one of them.**

MADRID — The year 1937 was a bad one for the Spanish Civil War. The attacks against northern Spain were very heavy indeed and with the support of German aircraft and Italian soldiers, Franco's troops occupied Bilbao in June, Santander in August, Gijon in October.

In September, 3,000 Spanish children between 5 and 15 were evacuated to the Soviet Union. The Soviets had offered to take care of children from the worst hit areas until the war was over.

The children were orphans or half-orphans of killed Socialist or Communist families. Most were living in orphanages.

Late one night in September, 1937, while the harbor of Gijon was under heavy bombardment, a cargo-steamer with 3,000 children aboard slipped out to carry them to the Soviet Union and safety.

On board was Rosita Suarez, today 50 years old, who has returned to Spain and now is living and working in Barcelona.

That night 45 years ago she was only 5. Together with a sister, 8, and a brother 11, she said farewell to her mother and a little sister on the quayside of Gijon. Later she learned her mother was imprisoned and her little sister had died.

After a long journey by ship they came to Leningrad, where the whole town was out to receive them. The children were taken to different hotels where they were given a bath, food and were dressed in sailor's costumes.

In Leningrad they were divided into several groups and taken to different places in the Soviet Union. Rosita came to Mozjajsk, a few miles outside Moscow.

The Soviets had arranged something they called "Spanish children's homes" and in each one 300 children were living together with the Spanish teachers who had come with them from Spain.

As the Soviets were very careful not to separate brothers and sisters, Rosita, her sister and brother lived in the same home.





**Then and now:** Rosita Suarez at 19 when she was in the Soviet Union, and today aged 50, living in Spain.

When she was 7, Rosita started school. All instruction during the first four years was given in Spanish with Russian as a second language. After that, the instruction was given in Russian with Spanish as one of many other subjects.

Rosita is thankful to both Spanish and Russian teachers because they gave all of themselves.

When World War II began and the Nazis attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Rosita was in the children's home in Mozjajsk. From the very first moment she heard the German bombers flying above them. They had to run downstairs to the air-raid shelter many times a day.

The fear had only been away four years, the fear for that dreadful sound of bombers.

As in all wars there was of course lack of food. But Rosita says that if there was bread it was given to them. The Spanish children were always privileged.

At the end of 1944 they returned to Mazjajsk. Rosita was then 12 years old. There she continued her studies and passed her matriculation exam. Then she studied mathematics and physics at the University of Moscow.

At the age of 21 she was a qualified teacher and started working in Mozjajsk.

The Soviets in general knew of the Spanish children's existence. Rosita tells how the children would exploit the situation and remembers how she and her sister had asked for money from the staff of the children's home to go and visit their brother in Moscow.

Instead of tickets they bought candy. When the conductor wanted to see their tickets they looked at him with innocent eyes and said, "but we are Spanish children." He pinched them lovingly on their cheek, smiled and replied: "There is no need for tickets."

As Rosita felt completely integrated in the Soviet life and society she applied for a Soviet passport. They were free to choose to be Soviet citizens or not. That doesn't mean that Rosita didn't want to return to Spain one day.

She says that there lies perhaps the greatest merit of the Soviet Union — that they educated them so that Spain was their native country. They saw to it all the time that they kept all the Spanish facets of their lives alive: Music, dance, literature and language.

After 19 years Rosita finally went back to Spain. Her mother had joined the children in the Soviet Union in 1954, but couldn't settle.

She hadn't intended to return until Franco was dead. The Soviet Union had always felt a certain responsibility toward the children and if they wished to return to Spain it wanted certain guarantees from the Franco regime, guarantees that they wouldn't suffer from reprisals and that they would be guaranteed work.

For Rosita it was hard to come back and she did it mostly for her mother's sake. In Asturias, where they first arrived the word was kept. She got both residence and work, mostly thanks to the governor of Asturias of that day. But when she moved to Barcelona it was a different story.

She was offered jobs as a teacher, but only if she joined Franco's Fascist party. She couldn't. The same thing happened to all her friends who had returned to Spain in 1956. As soon as it was known that they had belonged to the group of Spanish children in the Soviet Union all doors were locked. Most of her friends then went back to the Soviet Union — only to come back once again when Franco died in 1975.'

Rosita supported herself with different jobs. For 10 years it was hard. She wants to forget those first 10 years in Spain, she was longing to go back to the Soviet Union every day.

Now she has long ago understood and accepted that she has two homes — one Spanish and one Russian. There are very few of the evacuated ones left today and they will probably also return to Spain. A Spaniard, Rosita says, always longs to be buried in the native soil.

**This is the only story about an ordinary Soviet individual to be published in three Toronto dailies over the six-month period ending March 31, 1983. In the time there were 922 stories, photos, editorials, cartoons, opinion columns and letters to the editor about the Soviet Union printed. Of these only 21 concerned daily life in the Societ Union as such. Of the 21 "The Evacuated Ones" was the only one that was not anti-Soviet. An anti-Soviet story is defined as one which does one or more of: (a) Focussing on a difficulty or shortcoming of Soviet life (b) Using language to reinforce negative stereotypes or to introduce innuendos (c) Inserting "Western"-perspective explanations for facts about Soviets. It appeared on page B7 of the *Saturday Star* on Nov. 27.**

---

Analysis of the language of many of the sports stories turns up a number of military analogies. "Soviets add hitting game to hockey arsenal," was a headline in the Jan. 2 *Star* and "NHL merely laughs as Soviets fire salvo" was one in the Dec. 17 *Star*.

Militarized language is not peculiar to stories about Soviet sports people, of course. " Loan rate ignites car wars," was the headline in the business section of the Jan. 1 *Star,* for instance.

To consider this is to begin to appreciate how militarized our public language is, a holdover from centuries in which war was largely accepted and in many quarters glorified. Most journalists now accept that to remove racist and sexist phrases from common usage is a step forward. Removing militarist phrases is only beginning to be seen as another important step forward.

Many subtle analogies are available to replace military ones. "Soviet elite dumps classless Nordiques" in the Dec. 31, 1982 *Globe* and had a nice twist. And "Soviet machine rolls on," in the Jan. 5 *Globe* did the job.

Consider just one other of the 18 subject areas of coverage: the life of ordinary Soviet people.

In an effort to be more than fair, any item that could faintly qualify was in-

cluded. The "ordinary life in USSR" file includes, therefore, stories headed: "New year brings sterner laws for criminals in Soviet Union" (*Globe,* Jan. 1), "Dozens killed at Moscow stadium" (*Sun,* Oct. 24) and "The Soviet birthrate timebomb" (*Star,* Dec. 12).

In all, in six months in the three Toronto dailies, there were 21 stories that could be construed as being about the life of Soviet people as such. (A more even-handed selection process would probably give a total of 11.)

Fourteen of the 21 — *apart from* the degree of their validity, which will be examined in a moment — could be construed as anti-Soviet. That is, they were stories *on subjects* that would be chosen for publication by a person who wished to make the Soviet Union look bad, or to engender fear or dislike of the Soviet Union. Such a motive — need it be said? — would be incompatible with journalistic principles of "balance" and "fairness."

These 14 carried headlines such as "Sober up! Andropov warns Soviets" (*Star,* Jan. 23), "Spread VD and face jail, Soviets told," (*Star,* Jan. 1), "Russkies learn con game" (*Sun,* Oct. 8) and "Soviet women 'drudges' " (*Star,* March 12).

Six could be construed — although placement in any of these categories should be the subject of interesting debate — as neutral. The six are "Singles clubs start up in Soviet Union" (*Star,* Nov. 5), "60 years of union hasn't produced a workers' paradise" (*Globe*, Nov. 17), "Make that Rubikov's Cube . . . " (*Sun,* Dec. 9), "Rubik's Cube mania hits Moscow" (*Star,* Dec. 9), "Soviet public flocking to see American movies" (*Star,* Feb. 1) and "In Yakutsk, -30 Celsius is called a heatwave" (*Globe,* March 21).

(This last story, by *Reuter* correspondent Mark Wood, focusses on the weather, permafrost, vicious mosquitoes and other non-political facts of Siberia. To counteract any subversive notions the article might engender in *Globe* readers — for instance that Soviets and Canadians share a common interest in coping with permafrost and developing Arctic agriculture — Wood's article was surrounded by three articles with the headlines "Afghan refugees recount tales of Soviet attacks," "Official fired for corruption" (datelined Moscow) and "Engineer saw forced pipeline labor.")

How many of the 21 stories could be construed as "positive" in the sense of (a) not focussing on a difficulty or shortcoming of Soviet life (b) not using language to reinforce negative stereotypes or to introduce innuendos and (c) not inserting "Western"-perspective explanations for facts included in the story? In other words, how many stories about the Soviet people as such in three Toronto dailies in six months were not anti-Soviet?

The answer is: one. It is the story (*Star,* Nov. 27) of Rosita Suaraz, one of 3,000 Spanish children evacuated to the Soviet Union from Spain during the Spanish Civil War. It is so unusual that we republish it. It is significant that this was also the only story in these papers during this period to deal with one ordinary individual human being. Three leading papers in a society that prizes "individualism" so much managed in half a crucial year only one story about the Soviet Union that was not couched in abstractions or generalized conclusions.

This one story sheds a great deal of light — by contrast — on the journalism of the other 921 stories.

It can fairly be said as a blanket statement that coverage of the Soviet Union is anti-Soviet. Such coverage must be described as unbalanced, distorted, unfair. The charge, made by Soviets from time to time, that the Western press "prints only anti-Soviet lies and slanders" is true.

If it were true of Japan or Switzerland or Sweden, it would be bad enough. But this is about a country that is inevitably significant to Canada and the future of us all. The journalistic failure is beyond reckoning.

Articles that attempt to deal in an overall way with life in a country are perhaps more important, and therefore more deserving of analysis, than the hodge podge of "news" stories. Only two such attempts were published in the papers in this period.

One, by American Marc Greenfield, occupied most of a page in the *Sunday Star* of Nov. 28. A banner photo at the top showed Soviet soldiers with guns at the ready. Next came the large banner head "How sharp are Soviet bear's claws?" followed by the deck "Huge military machine camouflages shoddy existence of a tired people."

This is all rather odd because the article *never mentions soldiers and does not deal with the Soviet military.* Apart from the phrase "advanced space and military programs" in one sentence, the only mention of arms in the 52 column inches of copy is the following: "Intensely patriotic, they are proud of the country's bigness, enjoy being America's rival and compete with us in the only fields they can — world influence and the arms race. On the other hand, anybody who has seen the disorganization that characterizes the Soviet civilian economy can't but wonder about the state of their military establishment."

The other picture on the page carries a cutline which begins: "Lining-up for food." But the picture shows a Soviet street scene in which people obviously are walking, not standing in line.

It is an incredibly incompetent and misleading treatment of the piece, but who is going to write a letter to the editor? Who's going to go out of his or her way to defend the Soviet Union and its people from journalistic incompetence and worse? The Soviet embassy could occupy itself with doing nothing but write letters all day every day, but who's going to believe a letter from the Soviet embassy when everybody in the media already "knows" that anything any Russian says is a lie?

Speaking of lies, this brings us back to the piece itself. In three trips to the Soviet Union — in 1964, 1974 and this year — I have yet to meet a single Soviet who "enjoyed" "competing" in the arms race. My Russian language professor at the University of Toronto School of Continuing

**NUKE**



Education came close to the truth. Of Polish descent, he harbors a dislike for the Soviet Union, but studied there for three months. "They're scared shitless of nuclear war," he said.

Greenfield's piece is an ingenious mixture of truths, half-truths, lies and omissions. There are enough snippets of usually-neglected information in it to give him — if they were quoted out of context — some credence with people who want to be fair to the Soviet Union. (Greenfield apparently has cultivated contacts in the peace movement. Before I left on my recent trip to the USSR I was told by an activist in the peace movement in Montreal that Marc Greenfield "knows a great deal about the Soviet Union" and that I should call him. He had provided his number and encouraged such contacts. I was told he likes to talk to people travelling to the Soviet Union. I didn't get around to calling him).

Greenfield mentions the "crash program to relieve the country's desperate housing shortage" that was undertaken "in the decade after Stalin's death." This is the most curious imaginable way of describing a housing shortage that was due to the ravages of the Second World War, which left many of the USSR's cities in rubble. His failure to mention this is such an astounding omission that the mind seeks vainly for a parallel to illuminate it. Perhaps "in the decade after Hirohito's fall from grace, the Japanese government undertook a crash program to relieve the desperate housing shortage in Hiroshima and Nagsaki" would qualify.

The second example of an attempt at an overall look at the Soviet Union was by Orland French, the *Globe's* Queen's Park columnist, in that paper's Nov. 17 issue.

The obligatory putdown tone was set in the headline: "60 years of union hasn't produced a workers' paradise." The piece itself was certainly an attempt to be fair but it suffered several defects, defects which paradoxically are the very features that enable some pieces about the Soviet Union to be published at all.

There are omissions which are hard to understand. For instance, French mentions that Soviet jet aircraft are much noisier than North American jets "yet ground crews don't wear protective ear coverings". It would seem the perfect opportunity to mention — something I have yet to see in the Western press — that aircraft of any kind are not allowed to fly over Soviet cities. This is one of the things that makes Soviet cities relatively quiet — a most enjoyable aspect once you think about it. (Many visitors to the Soviet Union don't notice this even while in the cities. I've observed that visitors to the Soviet Union seem relatively unaware of the extent to which what they notice and don't notice is a function of their preconceptions.)

French wrote that "no matter how well appointed the hotel room, there was inevitably something wrong with the bathroom plumbing." To point to deficiencies in Soviet plumbing is certainly valid, but at least two points — neither included in his piece — need to be made.

First is that there has been improvement. On my 1964 standard tourist trip we stayed at larger hotels like the National in Moscow and found sink stoppers missing, for instance. My 1974 trip was part of a college educational program and we were put up in student hostels or small hotels. Typically the toilet paper was in short supply and in one memorable instance, a large tile fell off the wall of the shower with a clatter while I was in it. This year I found the plumbing in the new Hotel Pribaltiskaya in Leningrad to be ultra modern and perfectly functioning, in line with all the furnishings and decor of my typical room. It is a new hotel, built by a Swedish firm under contract. The plumbing in the pleasant old Dnipro Hotel in Kiev worked just fine. At the new Cosmos Hotel in Moscow, you'd be lucky to get warm water for a shower even at 7:30 in the morning and the sink stopper wouldn't stop properly. But at no hotel in 1983 did I need to use any of the emergency roll of toilet paper I'd taken with me.

The second point has to do with fairness, history, context, some relevant facts which require *little* digging to assemble.

When the Soviet Union was invaded by the Nazis on June 22, 1941, the country's plumbing was not close to North American standards. The USSR, in the early years of its struggle for existence, had many higher priorities. During the Second World War the country lost 20-million dead (about the total population of Canada at that time). Most of these were able bodied young men of all trades, including plumbing.

Rebuilding electric power plants, factories, bridges, schools, hospitals and so on was the focus of postwar reconstruction — that and, as Greenfield wrote, a "crash program" to provide housing for the homeless. The Soviet Union, during this period, received no help from the outside, even from the richest of its wartime allies, the United States, not in regard to plumbing or anything else.

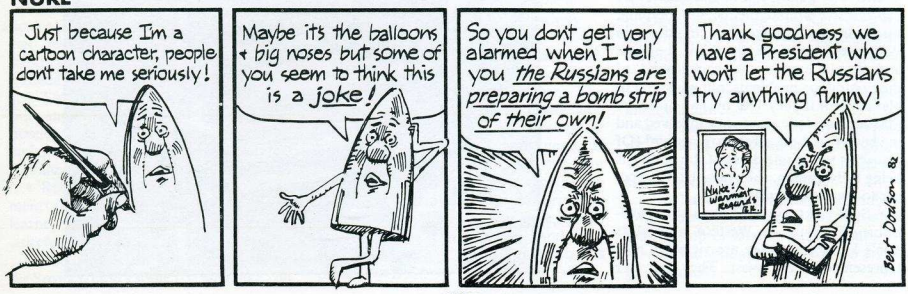
Plumbing, among others, became a trade largely for women. But there were few skilled plumbers left to teach the trade.

One could go on. The point is that there are very significant and interesting background factors to something as seemingly simple as a leaking sink in the USSR. For pampered North Americans — I'm not referring to French personally here, but the collective North American complainers about Soviet plumbing, including myself — not only to go on about it, but to fail to look beneath it, is as interesting as the plumbing problem.

There are even more layers of self-analysis required by French's typical follow-up paragraph to his report on plumbing. When Nikolai, one of the guides, was asked "when the Great Lenin was going to train plumbers, Nikolai went stone faced. I explained about the bathrooms. He said simply 'I am not familiar with that question.' "

That this was not pursued by French in his article is typical of even the best of newspaper articles we see about the Soviet

**NUKE**



Union — and French's is one of the best.

Soviets do often clam up or provide transparently unacceptable explanations or evasions for some difficult and some seemingly simple questions. But rather than trotting out those exchanges as the ultimate reality (and one which re-inforces a pre-existing stereotype) it is far more interesting and fruitful to take the next logical journalistic step: digging further. I do not pretend to have accurate insights in this area, but let me share some observations that may apply to the stonewalling of Nikolai and the many replays of it that the visitors to the Soviet Union will encounter:

• Author and journalist Jill Tweedie is a former Moscow correspondent for, and regular columnist with, the *Manchester Guardian*. Jonathan Steele is another former *Guardian* Moscow correspondent and currently the paper's chief foreign correspondent. Malcolm Muggeridge was the *Guardian's* Moscow correspondent during the 1930's. The three were interviewed for an hour by *CBC*'s "Morningside" host Peter Gzowski on May 11. The three agreed on the contradictions and deep fears about foreigners embedded in the Russian character by the history of invasions from outside and repression within.

Tweedie recalled a story in which she and Steele spent a long time talking about war and its effects with ordinary Soviets they approached uninvited in a park. "Do you remember," she said, "the way they talked about it? I thought it was very moving. When you first asked the question, Jonathan, a young girl said 'It's too sad to talk about.' It would be very hard to find a girl of around 20 here saying the war is too sad to talk about."

Steele recalled: "Virtually everybody we spoke to had somebody — either a grandfather or a father or a brother — lost in the war so it is different than going to people in the streets of London or Washington. You haven't got the same background."

• Soviet tour guides are not inexperienced in discussions with Westerners. On any given day between April and September there are one million visitors in the USSR. The guides know and face every day massive prejudgments, stereotyping, suspicion and antagonistic mindsets in Westerners. I personally think they can and should explain the background of their plumbing problems, but who am I to blame them if they feel overwhelmed by the thought of the arguments involved and the bad vibes from all the arguments? (Of course, if you don't think of the guides as being fully human, this is less likely to occur to you as an explanation).

• Soviets know what even such well-informed people as Western journalists don't know: that they are viciously misrepresented in the West. They are very self-critical internally, but all the good it does them in the West is that the Western press picks up every published scandal, every crackdown on corruption, all news of shortages, and plays each big, while simultaneously downplaying or, usually, ignoring achievements or advances except those, real or imagined, in weaponry. Why should a tour guide knowing this share his family problems, as it were, with every Westerner at the drop of a question?

* * *

It is possible to imagine coverage of the Soviet Union which is only as flawed as the coverage of, say, Britain.

It is even possible to imagine coverage that is more balanced, informative and comprehensive, coverage which is the result of planning by some intelligent and concerned editors.

What is barely imaginable — about as imaginable as, say, the day when disarmament actually begins in earnest — is coverage of the USSR that would include in-depth, sensitive interviews with Mikhail and Ekaterina in their kitchen and on the job, coverage that would explore, with all the colour we normally reserve for a Tory leadership convention, the rich complexities of Soviet history and life . . . coverage, Saints preserve us, that might even make us shed a tear for what Russians have suffered, share in their joys, make us feel a little friendliness toward them, even to consider them neighbours on a small planet.

To open your paper is to forget it.— B.Z.



Courtesy *Soviet Life*

## *De facto Censorship*

WHAT'S LEFT OUT of our press coverage of the Soviet Union is probably more important than what's published. The most spectacular single omission in the six month period surveyed in three Toronto dailies was possibly any ungrudging straightforward portrayal of what's good in Soviet society, or in any aspect of Soviet society (with the sole exception of hockey) or with any region or city in the Soviet Union, even in the travel pages.

Other significant omissions:

- How the Soviet school system helps students achieve so well academically, and what we could learn from this.
- That there is no unemployment in the Soviet Union, the whys, the good and the bad of it, and what we might learn that might apply to our own unemployment problem.
- How the Soviet medical system provides free care for everyone, the strengths and weaknesses of their system, and what light this may shed on the reassessment of medicare that is taking place in Canada.
- How even one ordinary Soviet citizen lives. What kind of apartment he or she lives in, where he or she works and relaxes. What his or her hopes and plans and fears are, what his or her recollections and reflections are. A comparison of this person with a Canadian counterpart.
- Why the Soviet Union is apparently unable to grow enough food to feed its people and hence buys hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of grain from Canada. What the impact would be on the living standard of Canadians if the Soviets managed to improve their agricultural sector. Isn't there some curiosity about this?
- What the country with the second-largest land area in the world (Canada) might learn from the transportation system of the country with the largest land area (the Soviet Union). How is the USSR able to provide such cheap transportation to its own citizens? And/or why does it do so?
- How the Soviet government works on the local and regional level.
- Uncensored texts or substantial portions of texts from the Soviet press or Soviet leaders on matters of extreme significance or that especially impinge on Canada.
- The life of children in the USSR. Theories and practice of upbringing and child development, the place of daycare centres, and other matters that would be of interest to Canadian families with small children.
- Retirement policies and arrangements for the elderly, and what might be learned from this for policy makers and citizens in Canada's aging society.
- The policies and practices regarding the Soviet Union's some 100 language and ethnic minorities. In Canada, where two cultures seem to provide quite a challenge, perhaps something could be learned from the Soviet Union's experience.

It might be said our press does not publish these sorts of articles about Great Britain or Japan or any country for that matter. This would probably not be true. And certainly a good deal of such coverage is carried about the United States, even though Canadians already know a great deal about that country.

But if it were true that our press does not print such material about, say, Great Britain or France or Japan, it's also true that we're not in any danger of being blown to bits in a war with Great Britain or France or Japan.

Our journalism doesn't have to view the Soviet Union through the prism of the Cold War as an implacable enemy. In fact, our journalism should try to break the prism of the Cold War. Cold War journalism is bad journalism.

Even if we insist on the model of competition rather than co-operation, between nation states, why is ours a journalism that seems afraid of looking closely at their society?

If our ideas are better than theirs, why does our press never allow for the expression of their ideas directly to us?

If their people are alright, and only their leaders monsters, why does our press not introduce us to their people?

Looking at the performance of our press in portraying the country in the world that we above all others need to be properly informed about, we see almost total journalistic failure. This indicates either a need to return to our professed principles, or for a new vision.

One vision might be that of American diplomat George Kennan, as quoted by Canadian novelist Hugh MacLennan:

> Let us remember that the great moral issues on which civilization is going to stand or fall cut across military and ideological borders, classes and regimes, across in fact the makeup of the human individual himself. No other people as a whole is entirely our enemy, no people at all, not even ourselves, is entirely our friend.

And it might finally be said that, whatever else is the case, we need much more "social and personal" journalism. The present diet of statements by politicians, statements by generals and statements by economists, interspersed with news of wars, accidents, natural disasters, film stars and local happenings is repetitious, unexciting and, above all, uninformative about the great issues of our time, which are whether we're going to live, and if so, how we're going to live together, on this planet. — B.Z.

## *Methodology*

A six-month period was chosen to improve the chance of the survey reflecting typical coverage. The death of Leonid Brezhnev and the ascendancy of Yuri Andropov, which happened to occur in the period, would bias press coverage of the Soviet Union toward a greater than usual amount of relatively neutral coverage, in the author's opinion.

The three Toronto papers were chosen because of ease of access and because of the relative spectrum of ideology and approach represented in the three.

The categories emerged without much difficulty from the nature of the clippings. No categories were pre-determined. Categories survived based on the number of clippings found to fit (for instance, "Soviet threat") or because of clarity (i.e., travel, even though there was just one item which fitted the category).

In assessing whether the *treatment* of an item was "negative," "positive" or "neutral," as opposed to the *subject matter*, we didn't classify an item negative unless there was *clear bias*. An example of negative bias would be the "week in review" news roundup item in the *Star* that carried the unbylined lead: "Helsinki civil rights accord violations are usually expected from the Soviet Union, but last week protests targeted on the U.S."

In the same spirit, when there was any doubt, items were classified as "neutral". Thus, a number of Lubor Zink columns in the *Sun* were classified as neutral.

The survey analysis could be taken as preliminary. For instance the clippings in the files holding editorials, cartoons, opinion columns and letters to the editor perhaps should be redistributed into the subject categories, although this would probably not change the proportions greatly.

Further useful analysis could be undertaken based on questions such as the following:

— Which statements about the Soviet Union are treated as "givens?" (In the line "The Soviet advantage in nuclear submarines is growing, according to . . .," for instance, it is a *given* that there is such an advantage; the story is placing as tentative whether the accepted-as-fact "advantage" is growing.)

— What would a detailed language analysis show?

— What would an analysis of placement show? For instance, what impressions are given collectively by front page stories about the Soviet Union?

— What would an analysis of only the longer pieces show as to origins, subject matter, impressions left, and so on?

— What imagery is conveyed by the photos used? — B.Z.

## *Study of Coverage of USSR in U.S. Media*

# Preoccupation with Demonology, Bone-deep Current of Darkness

THE JOURNALISTIC FAILURE of three Toronto dailies in their coverage of the Soviet Union over a six-month period is an echo of a failure uncovered in the American media around the same time.

". . . if the American people are ever to be permitted to authentically debate matters of foreign policy and defence, the mainstream news media . . . must end their preoccupation with demonology and instead embrace journalism," declared William A. Dorman in one of three major papers* prepared for the conference on War, Peace and the News Media at New York University in March.

"Until then," Dorman concluded, "Americans are likely to continue to be obsessed with their own Great Satan, to borrow a phrase from Khomeini's Iran . . ."

Dorman rated as "dim" the prospects for a great national debate over defence policy and relations with the Soviet Union, because it "will not easily shake 40 years of Cold War rhetoric and 65 years of accumulated fear of communism in general and the Soviets in particular."

Dorman and a fellow researcher undertook an intensive study for most of November 1982 of five prestige dailies *(The New York Times, Washington Post, Christian Science Monitor, Wall Street Journal* and *Los Angeles Times), Time, Newsweek,* selected stories from *UPI* and *AP* and the evening news programs of *NBC, CBS* and *ABC.*

Dorman avoided judging the media "on whether they provided their audiences with 'the truth,' for it is a risky business to assert what that may be," and rather concentrated on "whether the (media) used loaded frames and labels to characterize Soviet life, intentions and behavior; whether journalists presented a range of plausible alternative explanations for the course of events; whether the news media reported all that was reasonably knowable at the time; and perhaps most important, whether journalists remained independent of the foreign policy establishment in their judgments."

He found "Russian intentions and behavior to be painted in the darkest possible shades." Journalistic themes "persist in echoing those of official Washington, Americans' worst fears go unchallenged in the press, and labels continue to be substituted for analysis."

Dorman harked back to the classic critique by Walter Lippman and Charles Merz of how *The New York Times* covered the Russian Revolution. In a special supplement to the *New Republic* in 1920 titled "A Test of the News," Lippmann and Merz examined thousands of clippings and concluded:

> From the point of view of professional journalism the reporting of the Russian Revolution is nothing short of a disaster. On the essential questions the net effect was almost always misleading, and misleading news is worse than none at all.

In a passage that anticipated, as Dorman noted, press coverage for the next six decades, Lippmann and Merz wrote:

> In the large, the news about Russia is a case of seeing not what was, but what men wished to see . . . The chief censor and the chief propagandist were hope and fear in the minds of reporters and editors . . .

The big phrase in coverage then — the equivalent of today's "Soviet threat" — was the "Red Peril." Lippmann and Merz warned: "You cannot make truce with Peril."

George Kennan, writing 60 years later, felt compelled to make the same point:

> I must go on and say that I find the view of the Soviet Union that prevails today in large portions of our governmental and journalistic establishments so extreme, so subjective, so far removed from what any sober scrutiny of external reality would reveal, that it is not only ineffective but dangerous as a guide to political action.

Dorman noted simultaneous conflicting stereotypes about the Soviet Union that could hardly be true of any country. For instance, one stereotype is of a nation in a hopeless mess ("economic paralysis" according to Robert Gillette, *Los Angeles Times;* "economic system doesn't work," Dan Rather, *CBS News).* At the same time, the Soviet Union has "far surpassed" the United States as a military power, is in "an expansionist period" and is "hugely menacing."

The Soviet Union is in a no-win situation in the U.S. media. Some say it's a threat because it's strong; others (for instance *Time,* on Nov. 22) say "the Soviet Union could be less predictable and more dangerous when it is economically weak."

Many unflattering observations in the mainline media about Yuri Andropov, Dorman noted, came verbatim from "a report written by the State Department's Intelligence and Research Bureau" that was conveniently declassified just after Brezhnev's death. Only two journalists in America, so far as Dorman could find, "directly quoted from the report and clearly identified their source."

The media, he said, "are often little more than spear carriers for official Washington."

He found the U.S. media unified in their historical view of the Cold War: the theme of a "long-suffering United States pitted against a ruthless and intractable Soviet adversary."

The U.S.-as-unsuccessful-good guy theme carries over into other areas. "Journalists unanimously agreed that the Soviet Union killed both detente and Salt II by the invasion of Afghanistan. The media did not assay the possibility that Congress might still have ratified the treaty had public opinion not been whipped to a frenzy, or, yet another possibility, that Salt II was in deep trouble in the U.S. Senate (from the American right) long before the invasion, and would never have passed under any circumstances."

As we did in our Toronto press survey, Dorman found "little attention was accorded the Soviet people and their reactions to events. The *New York Times* was

*(Continued on page 19)*

---

"*The Image of the Soviet Union in the American News Media: Coverage of Brezhnev, Andropov and MX," a paper presented by William A. Dorman to the conference on War, Peace and the News Media, at New York University, New York City, March 18-19, 1983. The conference was sponsored by the university and the Gannett Foundation. William Dorman is a professor of journalism at California State University, Sacramento, California.

## The Soviet Threat

# Big Lie of the Arms Race

**By RICHARD BARNET**

Behind every war there is a big lie. Reality is much too ambiguous, much too complex to elicit the popular enthusiasm needed for modern mobilization. So things must be made "clearer than truth," as Dean Acheson once put it.

The nuclear arms race, with its proliferation of missile stockpiles and its even more expensive supporting cast of aircraft carriers, unilateral strike forces, and aging armies in the center of Europe, is a Thirty Years' War going on forty. To keep it going in the United States it has been necessary at strategic moments to raise the spectre of the Russian horde. The Soviet threat is the big lie of the arms race.

The Soviet Union does indeed pose a threat to the United States. Any power that aims thousands of nuclear warheads at our people is making and intends to make a threat. It is the same threat which the United States in more diverse and more sophisticated ways has been making against the Soviet Union for a longer time.

But the Soviet threat, a national myth used as the rationale for an ever-escalating arms budget and a policy of U.S. military intervention over two generations, is something more than an official dramatization of Soviet missile strength. The Soviet threat pre-existed the Soviet missile arsenal. It is rooted in an analysis of Soviet intentions. The essence of the Soviet threat is this: The Soviet leaders, bent on world domination, will stop at nothing to defeat the United States, by bluff, if possible, by nuclear war, if necessary.

As the years go by, the characterization of the Soviet threat has changed. In the early postwar period, the Soviets were dangerous because their ideology was a powerful virus. They were, as one of our ambassadors put it, a cause rather than a country. There was nothing they were not prepared to do, even if they had nothing to do it with.

***The introduction of the cruise missile, with the capability of delivering many more warheads, significantly increases the American threat for the Soviet leaders.***

The threat salesmen of our day stand these ideas on their heads. The Soviet Union is now dangerous because its ideology has been discredited and its economy is a failure. Therefore all it has is military power, and with that power it intends to frighten us into submission.

As World War II ended, the Soviet Union lay prostrate, 73,000 cities and towns smashed, 20 million people dead. The Soviet army was in the heart of Europe, but the Soviet economy was in ruins. In order to build a Center-Right political coalition in Western Europe against the Left (until 1947 French and Italian Communists participated in the cabinets), the spectre of the Soviet invasion was raised.

***No one asks what motive they would have to drop bombs on us other than the fear that we were about to do it to them.***

Winston Churchill stated in 1950 that but for the atomic bomb in America's hands the Russian hordes would be at the English Channel. Most of the panicky public in Europe and the United States agreed. But one searches the historical record in vain for any responsible official of the West who privately shared that belief. James Forrestal, who was obsessed with the Soviet challenge, wrote in his diaries that the Soviets would not move that year — "or at any time." At the founding of NATO, John Foster Dulles, then a senator, underscored his view that the Soviets did not pose a military threat to Europe. The Joint Chiefs of Staff testified in a similar vein.

George Kennan, the architect of the containment policy, has written that NATO was to be a "modest shield" behind which the West could restore its economy. It was not intended as a permanent standing army in the heart of Europe because there was no danger of a Soviet attack. Neither the roads nor the railroad track for a Russian blitzkrieg in Europe existed, even if the still-bleeding Soviet society could have supported one. "The image of Russia poised and yearning to attack the West and deterred only by our possession of atomic weapons was largely a creation of Western imagination, against which some of us who were familiar with Russian matters tried in vain, over the course of the years, to make our voices heard," Kennan has asserted.

By 1955, the Soviet Union had about 350 bombers capable of delivering atomic bombs on the United States; the United States had four times the number, many located in bases close to the Soviet frontier. This was the era of the bomber gap, when Paul Nitze and many of his colleagues in the Committee on the Present Danger first began to sound the alarm.

Then came the famous missile gap. Now Nitze and his friends accused President Eisenhower of being soft on the Russians, and John F. Kennedy campaigned for the White House in 1960 on this theme. In fact, the United States had a huge superiority in nuclear striking power. The Soviets had built very few missiles. But the new Kennedy administration ordered huge new missile programs anyway, increased the military budget 15 per cent, and "won" the eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation over the emplacement of missiles in Cuba in October, 1962.

***The Pentagon has two rules for negotiating arms agreements: One is "Don't negotiate when you are behind." The other is "Why negotiate when you are ahead?"***

One result of the United States "victory" was the ouster of Khrushchev, who had tried to substitute bluster and bluff for spending money on missiles, and the beginning of a serious Soviet rearmament program. It is that program which is the basis for the current hysteria about Soviet intentions.

At that time, the United States military,

# The Russians are Coming!




eager to ward off pressure for an arms moratorium, concluded that the Kremlin was resigned to being a permanent underdog. (The Pentagon has two rules for negotiating arms agreements: One is "Don't negotiate when you are behind." The other is "Why negotiate when you are ahead?") The Soviets had "lost the quantitative race," Secretary McNamara declared in 1965, "and they are not seeking to engage us in that contest."

Unlike the era of the bomber gap and the missile gap, there *is* a Soviet military buildup. It has proceeded steadily since the Brezhnev era began in 1964. The rate of buildup appears to have remained the same over the years, though the pace of missile production has slowed somewhat. The current version of the big lie is that the Soviets are out to gain superiority over the U.S. The hawks warn that if present trends continue, the Soviets will have "won" the arms race and will be able to dictate surrender.

***The SS-20 cannot reach the United States and does not, therefore, constitute an upset of the balance of strategic power equivalent to the new NATO system (cruise and Pershing missiles). — Soviet dissidents Roy and Zhores Medvedev***

Talking about "current trends continuing" is like observing in the midst of a spring rain that if it keeps up the Empire State Building will float away. The Soviets are building to catch up. Every missile in the world not located inside the Soviet Union is aimed at the Soviet Union — those of China, Britain, France, as well as the United States. (This was true until SS-20's were installed in Czechoslovakia and East Germany. — *Ed.*)

United States generals and Soviet generals genuinely disagree on how much the Soviet Union needs to catch up. What looks defensive to one looks offensive to the other. The Soviets started far behind the United States. To draw even close to nuclear striking forces their rate of production and deployment over the last 10 years would have had to be greater than that of the United States.

But the huge head start and continued commitment of the United States to the arms race still leaves this country far in the lead. According to a Library of Congress study, the United States leads in strategic warheads, submarine-launched warheads, and heavy bombers. Soviet missiles are less accurate. They suffer from geographical disadvantages. Fifty per cent of the U.S. missile-launching submarine fleet can operate away from port at any one time; only 11 per cent of the Soviet submarine fleet can.

The famous Soviet civil defense program is modest. The cost has been calculated at $4 per person compared with $50 per person for civil defense in Switzerland and West Germany. The program, a July 1978 CIA study concludes, is one in which Soviet leaders "cannot have confidence in the degree of protection their civil defense would give them" and hence "the program is unlikely to embolden the Soviet leadership to risk a nuclear war."

It is the United States, not the Soviet Union, that is approaching a theoretical first-strike capability. The Soviets have most of their striking force in land-based missiles which are becoming increasingly vulnerable to our increasingly accurate warheads. Their submarine force and their bomber force are inferior copies of the United States originals. The introduction of the cruise missile, with the capability of delivering many more warheads, significantly increases the American threat for the Soviet leaders.

Stalin's death camps, the brutality of Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968, and Soviet mistreatment of intellectuals, Baptists, Jews, and dissident workers elicit and ought to elicit moral outrage, but none of these crimes is evidence of an intention to start a nuclear war.

The Kremlin's worries about the United States are not based on vague historical analogies but on painful experience. The United States participated in a military intervention in the Soviet Union after the revolution "to strangle Bolshevism in its cradle," as Winston Churchill put it. The U.S. conducted a 20-year quarantine of the Soviet Union which in part still continues.

***As World War II ended, the Soviet Union lay prostrate, 73,000 cities and towns smashed, 20 million people dead.***

Looking from the Kremlin window, a Soviet leader sees the fast development of a United States-West German-Japanese-Chinese alliance, a collection of historic enemies. He sees a resurgence of anti-Soviet rhetoric and anti-Soviet politics in the United States. He may well be aware of the fact that the reappearance of the Soviet threat always coincides with the emergence of new weapons systems from the drawing boards and the renewed eagerness of one military service or another to make an addition to its bureaucratic empire. (The first wave of anti-Soviet sentiment coincided with the development of the intercontinental bomber, the second with the intercontinental missile, and the present one with the new generation of counterforce technology — MX, Trident, and the rest of the new computerized-war apparatus.) But that is small comfort. The Soviet leader listens to Senator Henry Jackson, who does not speak for himself alone, and he hears the message: We have nothing to negotiate with the Soviet Union.

There has never been a time since the Cold War began when privately expressed and official, public views of the Soviet Union in the United States have so diverged. Public expressions of alarm about Soviet military spending, activities in Africa, and the missile buildup conceal a growing off-the-record assessment of Soviet weakness. CIA analyses point to a serious labor shortage, mounting difficulties in exploiting the rich mineral potential of the Soviet Eurasian land mass, and perennial problems with agriculture. There is mounting dissatisfaction with the system and a loss of ideological elan.

There is a consensus among Sovietologists about the mounting problems of the Soviet Union, but considerable difference of opinion on what conclusion to draw. Some, like former Secretary of State Vance, see the Soviet problems as providing a powerful incentive for the leaders in the Kremlin to press detente, to reduce the expenditures of the arms race, and to turn their attention to their own systemic crisis.

But there are others who still hold the dreams of "rollback" cherished by John Foster Dulles. Senator Henry Jackson, for example, apparently believes that this is the time to push the Soviets hard. Perhaps they cannot be physically pushed out of Eastern Europe, but their world influence can be undercut and they can be pressed hard in an escalating arms race in which all the advantages lie with the United States.

To be obsessed by the Soviet threat in a world in which more than one billion people starve, half the global work force is projected to be without a minimally paying job by the year 2000, and industrial civilization is close to collapse because political paralysis and greed have kept us from solving the energy crisis is, quite literally, to be blinded by hate.

Every time we read a statement by a general or a senator or a president that we are prepared to threaten or launch a nuclear war in order to keep the Soviet leaders from doing something we don't like, a threat to recreate a hundred Auschwitzes has been made in our name. But we are blind to it. If we do not have the clarity of moral vision to see that the Russian people cannot ever deserve a hundred Auschwitzes whatever their leaders do, then our faith rests not on reverence of God and his world but on power fantasies and fear.

The characteristic of sin is confusion. We become possessed by irrational fears. Our minds stop working. The Russians stop being people and become hated symbols. No one asks what motive they have to drop bombs on us other than the fear that we were about to do it to them. There is no worldly prize worth the destruction of the world, or the Soviet Union, or the city of Minsk for that matter, and there is a good deal of evidence that the Russian leaders believe that. No one knows how many Russians would die from the radioactivity floating back from a Soviet attack on the United States.

The insanity of the arms race is underscored by the fact that even the most avid hawks do not believe in the eventualities against which we are pouring out our treasure and poisoning our spirit. It seems rather evident that the Russians, however depraved they may be, would rather trade with Western Europe than occupy a smoking and uncontrollable ruin.

This reality puts us very far from the choice with which the arms race enthusiasts taunt us: Red or Dead? But the question does at least force us to examine the values we think we are promoting by posing the threat of a hundred Auschwitzes.

The biblical injunction to love one another does not rest in the idea that people are lovable in a human sense. The mystery and the burden of Christian love can be traced to the stubborn fact that love is difficult — people are hard enough to love one by one, and harder still to love by the millions. Yet the injunction is inescapable because creation cannot be sustained without it.

The choice is between love and hate, and hate is death. Hate demands an enemy. The identity hardly matters. Enemies change, but the spirit of enmity and fear remains.

The big lie behind all murder, from the random street killing, to the efficient ovens of Auschwitz, to the even more efficient hydrogen bomb, is that the victims deserve to die.

— Reprinted from the August 1979 issue of *Sojourners*. (30)

*(Continued from page 16)*

practically alone in running a news feature on Moscow's citizen-in-the-street." For the most part, "the views and feelings of Russians rated only passing mention in news accounts. *Newsweek* concentrated entirely on dissidents, while *Time* devoted a *single paragraph* (within) its 23 pages of coverage (at the time of Brezhnev's death)" to Soviet citizens' feelings and views.

Dorman noted the fact, true in the Toronto coverage also, that the media "are preoccupied with Soviet dissidents," carrying a "flood" of stories about them. If the media in any other country were to report Canada largely through the medium of Canadian dissidents, most of us would consider this — at the least — bad journalism. But no double standard appears too blatant to be applied to the Soviet Union. No ball is too foul to be counted fair in the Cold War, perhaps the war more than any other in which truth was the first casualty.

The result, as Dorman stated, was that the media's "interpretation of Soviet history, behavior and intentions was unrelentingly negative." The emphasis was on a "bone-deep current of darkness."

History has its reasons, Dorman paraphrased filmmaker Jean Renior, "yet American journalism pretended that it does not. Successful propaganda, as Jacques Ellul has observed, is based not on lies but on the interpretation truths receive."

Kennan has written in frustration of the insistence of the press — shown in the Toronto survey — to provide "an endless series of distortions and oversimplifications" of the USSR, "a systematic dehumanization of the leadership of another great country," "routine exaggeration of Moscow's military capabilities" and "monotonous misrepresentation of the nature and attitudes of another great people."

This would be an incalculable journalistic crime in itself. But it may not be without incalculable cost to those in the media who perpetrate this integrated Manichean distortion and to the public that depends upon the media for a view of the world.

For it is exactly this view which permits and justifies the plans for nuclear war that are being refined and rehearsed.

For André Dumas, the lie is biblically portrayed as "the first and most poisonous source of injustice."

"The essential violence" of media misrepresentation about the Soviet Union and the arms race, suggests Alan Geyer in *The Idea of Disarmament,* "is that it destroys communication, trust, and confidence — and eventually generates hostility and death." Lies are the vanguard of Armageddon. — BZ (30)

## The Psychology of the Arms Race

# "Tell me, Daddy, Who's the Baddy?"

THE HEART OF THE ARMS RACE, psychologically, is the perception of a menacing hostile "out-group," namely the USSR.

A wealth of independent evidence (see "The Myth of Symmetry" elsewhere in this issue) shows that the strength of this perception is not justified. Here, however, the purpose is not to discuss military equipment, GNP's or geopolitical maps. It is to try to deal with the Cold War in psychological terms only.

The perceived existence of a hostile out-group automatically creates an in-group, namely "ourselves," "the West" or "the free world."

This double creation — the "us" and "them" — requires in turn a relationship between the two. Walter Lippmann in his 1921 classic *Public Opinion* explored the distortions inherent in such a relationship, a relationship which " . . . mark(s) out certain objects as familiar or strange, emphasizing the differences, so that the slightly familiar is seen as the very familiar, and the somewhat strange as sharply alien."

These distortions have generally been encouraged by tribal and nation-state leaders. A populace convinced along these lines is less questioning when it is called upon to make war upon the out-group. In this sense, simplistic stereotyping of "good guys" and "bad guys" served to help the tribe survive and conquer. But such a psychology integrated into the politics of today's nuclear nation-state becomes a death mechanism. This is because the psychology requires weapons buildup and leads to confrontation. Today's weapons are capable of destroying everything. Total destruction is a condition neither of conquering nor surviving.

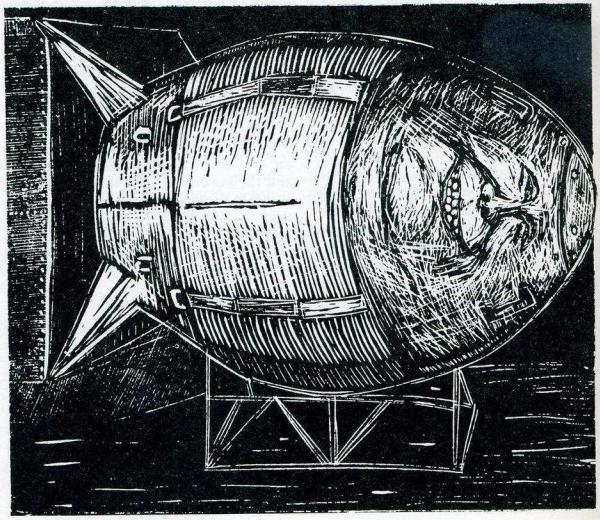
Marshall D. Shulman investigated the psychology of the Cold War in a talk titled "Tell Me, Daddy, Who's the Baddy?" Shulman, Director of the Averell Harriman Institute for Advanced Study of the Soviet Union and Adlai Stevenson Professor of International Relations, gave the talk May 6 at a Symposium on Political and Psychological Aspects of Soviet-American Relations at Columbia University, New York City.

"The title . . . is not frivolous," Shulman said. "It suggests an authority figure identifying the hostile out-group, thereby giving us . . . comfort, identity, stability, orientation and a relief from complexity."

Shulman assured his audience that he believed there are "real and serious differences" between the USA and the USSR. "But familiar psychological mechanisms," he continued, "most often operating below the conscious level, tend to make these differences more absolute and therefore more intractable . . ."

What are the "pictures in our minds" of the Soviet Union, and where do they come from, Shulman asked. "They come from many different sources, some from preconceptions whose source may be long forgotten, some from our particular experiences.

"For example, an emigreé from the Soviet Union, who may have spent years in a labor camp or years waiting for an exit visa, when he thinks of the Soviet Union, may think primarily of the police and party bureaucrats with whom he had to deal, and the vision that comes to his mind is of a bunch of thugs with whom one cannot and should not do business . . . A businessman, who has dealt mostly with economic managers, may visualize the Soviet Union as a country of hard-bargaining but hard-working managers . . . To the professional military planner, the Soviets are the "reds", the enemy,



ruthless, omnicompetent, poised to attack."

Of course, very few people have visited the Soviet Union in *any* capacity. The prevailing perception, therefore, is fundamentally a mass media creation.

Shulman went on to list the several anxieties and tensions of everyday life in North America, ranging from economic insecurity to vulnerability to nuclear destruction. "Confronted with anxieties with which (he or she) cannot cope, the individual falls back on some familiar defence mechanisms," Shulman suggested. They include *displacement, denial* and *projection.*

In *displacement,* fears, failures and anxieties from other sources are "commonly attributed to the Soviet Union as the source of our troubles. We have seen this in the attribution to the Soviet Union of responsibility for all upheavals in the Third World (as well as) the anti-nuclear war movement . . ."

The most striking instance of *denial,* Shulman said, is the false belief that nuclear war cannot happen.

It is *projection,* however, which is probably the most widespread and threatening to our survival. It's as tricky as it is dangerous. In its simplest definition, it is when we blame others for those very faults we don't want to admit in ourselves. Its everyday occurrences are myriad. It's the kind of mechanism which seems to maintain a reserve of applications in each of us, no matter how many applications we discover and root out.

For instance, we feel justified in hating the "Soviet Union" (note we normally avoid the phrase "people of the Soviet Union") because of our perception that the "Soviet Union" is "bent on world domination." "Our side" never dominates.

Another manifestation of projection, Shulman pointed out, is its double standard under which we "look with indulgence on what 'we' do or say, and with harsh severity on what 'they' do or say."

This thinking in its extreme form leads to "a Manichean struggle between God and Demon, between absolute good and evil." This aberrational double standard is suffered and promoted by U.S. President Reagan when he describes the Soviet Union as "an evil empire" while he fails to see or mention the number of corrupt and despotic regimes the United States has aided, protected or in some cases (such as the Shah's Iran or in Pinochet's Chile) even established.

But to blame Reagan for everything is itself an exercise in projection. Each of us is responsible for projection insofar as we practice it. And although we do not do so equally, we all do practice it. That is why Sylberberg's 7-1/2 hour tour de force film *Our Hitler* was so aptly titled.

By exploring some roots of projection, Shulman showed how deeply ingrained it is. Yet that very realization gives added hope that we can at least root it out from that misshapen corner of our minds reserved for the Cold War and all its hostile appurtenances. This is especially important for journalists to do. For as gatekeepers, we control a flow of "facts" about the Soviet Union (and the "free world") to the public. Yet an important lever in our control mechanism is a projected pre-judgment about "us" and "them." Thus are we instruments for our own deception.

Projection can be seen in infants as young as eight months, and in animals. To put Shulman's observations into layman's terms, infants develop a sense of identity through building on bonds of affection and the familiar. At the same time infants reject those people and events which are unfamiliar and which seem to act aggressively.

These "exaggerated beliefs associated with a category" enable the simple mind of the infant or animal "to handle countless small stimuli." The exaggerated beliefs also offer stability and certainty. The price is that the infant gives up what psychologists call "validity". In ordinary language this might be expressed as "the truth."

Psychiatrist Charles Pinderhughes goes so far as to suggest that any constant relationship which is *without ambiguity* is "basically paranoid."

Shulman gives as examples the common acceptance that Soviet military programs necessarily "reflect hostile intentions; American military programs are by definition defensive. The expansion of Russia and the Soviet Union to the Pacific is proof of inherent Soviet tendencies to expand until it conquers the world; the continental expansion of the United States is a matter of right. Soviet activities in the Third World are manifestations of aggression; United States activities in the Third World are altruistic. Soviet espionage is traitorous; American espionage is patriotic."

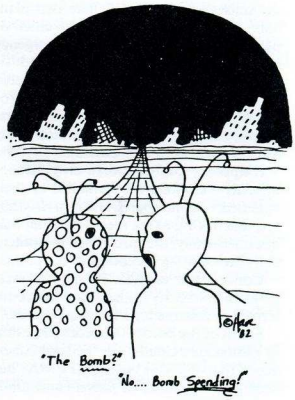
The terrible danger in all this is that the "enemy" is de-humanized. Thus "our side" is relieved of inhibitions against immoral behavior; any action is justified. This de-humanization process in the minds of the Nazis (and in the minds of large numbers of Germans, it must be said) against the Jews, communists, Slavs and others led to atrocities including the gas chambers. The Roman Catholic bishop in Washington state who referred to a Trident nuclear submarine — each one can unleash 2,040 Hiroshimas — as the "U.S.S. Auschwitz" is helping us see what, psychologically, we have become, insofar as we countenance the unleashing.

Shulman concluded: "The human mind needs its stereotypes . . . But what we can do is to seek continuously to refine our stereotypes . . . so that they come closer to a reflection of reality. This will in turn make possible a mobilization of the intellect . . . It may be that only under great duress do human beings bring their intellects into play to give a sense of proportion to the urges and beliefs that arise from instinct and emotion. The present headlong course of events surely constitutes that great duress."

A layman might add that the media have greater responsibility than any other institution to refine stereotypes, to explode myths. The media have the capacity to do it. Long gone, for instance, are the racist stereotypes once common in the press. Previously taboo subjects such as venereal disease and incest have been brought out into the open.

In the last few years stereotypes about the aged and the handicapped have been exploded vigorously and repeatedly enough that they have lost much of their stultifying power. We are freer and can think more clearly because of these stories and the attitudinal changes within the media that have followed. This is the finest gift journalism can bring: understanding, refinement. On too many subjects journalism's contribution is endless rehashes of stereotypes in the guise of news.

We now face the last-bastion stereotypes, those most fervently and universally held, the mutually-supporting ones about life-and-death issues. At the heart is the stereotype about the all-time baddy, the "red menace." If we cannot find the courage to take a fresh look, and a historical look, at this pervasive "given" we increase the risk of a "war" against people most of us have never met. — B.Z. (30)



# The Media and Civil Defence

"FINDING SHELTER from the Bomb" was the essentially misleading headline on page B8 of *The Toronto Star* on June 25.

*The Star,* as a paper, has done more than any other Canadian daily to give the danger of nuclear war the visibility it deserves, so this is not to criticize the paper in general.

But this particular story, by Jack Cahill, echoes for the most part the emphasis, and creates the tone that Canadian "emergency preparedness" planners want.

The main emphasis is that a nuclear war is essentially an "emergency" that can be "managed." The tone is one of reassurance. *Facts* about nuclear explosions known to atomic scientists are downplayed or absent in the talk of the "emergency planners."

The entering assumptions of the planning by the Reagan administration. FEMA is launching an extensive public "education" campaign which includes providing all newspapers in the United States with camera-ready articles "describing all aspects of evacuation and shelter." These "are to be printed during a 'crisis-buildup' period."

The minds of the young in the United States are to be reached by FEMA through a "curriculum on emergency management, divided into four sections according to grade levels." This curriculum was pilot-tested in 22 states in 1982.

"An incomplete and optimistic assessment pervades this curriculum," write Jennifer Leaning and Matthew Leighton in a special 16-page supplement to the June-July issue of *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.* "In the list of suggested readings there is no reference to *The Effects of Nuclear War* by the Office of Technology Assessment or the report of the UN Secretary General, *Nuclear Weapons.* Nuclear war is presented as one more in a series of manageable disasters, along with earthquakes, floods, toxic spills and hurricanes." (Leaning is an emergency physician and internist in the Boston area and co-editor of the forthcoming *The Counterfeit Ark: Crisis Relocation and Nuclear War.* Leighton is a city planner and staff researcher at the Traprock Peace Centre in Deerfield, Mass.)

The supplement's three analyses of FEMA show that Reagan's appointees are proceeding under the following assumptions:

• **"If you've seen one disaster you've seen them all."** FEMA claims that "disaster management represents a series of homogenous procedures applicable to any contingency." This was explained to the U.S. House Committee on Armed Services on March 12, 1982 by FEMA's director, Louis Guiffrida, a Reagan appointee. (*Los Angeles Times* reporter Robert Scheer writes in *With Enough Shovels* that Guiffrida uses the term "nuke war" in his speech and that he told *ABC News* nuke war "would be a terrible mess, but it wouldn't be unmanageable.")

• **The "Tinker Bell" Effect.** Under nuclear attack people will behave cooperatively and calmly, "staying within assigned role behavior as long as they feel no substantial conflicts with family obligations and (as long as they) retain confidence in the administrative authorities."

Leaning and Leighton contend that "if transport, communications and life support systems cease to function" (which is exactly what happens in nuclear war, as a growing number of people know or intuit), "people may very well respond to the actuality, regardless of previous belief systems."




ners are debatable in the extreme. One is that a nuclear war would follow a deterioration period of at least 30 days between the nuclear superpowers. The two planners quoted, Frank Jewsbury, chief of plans for Ottawa's directory of emergency preparedness and Bill Snarr, head of Emergency Planning Canada, are quoted by Cahill as saying shelters would be "of tremendous value" even in the "worst possible scenario, in which a bomb is detonated directly over a Canadian city."

It appears that Canadian civil defence officials are taking the same line as their American counterparts. Insofar as they are, and insofar as the media transmit that line uncritically, they are joined in a potentially incinerating deception of the public.

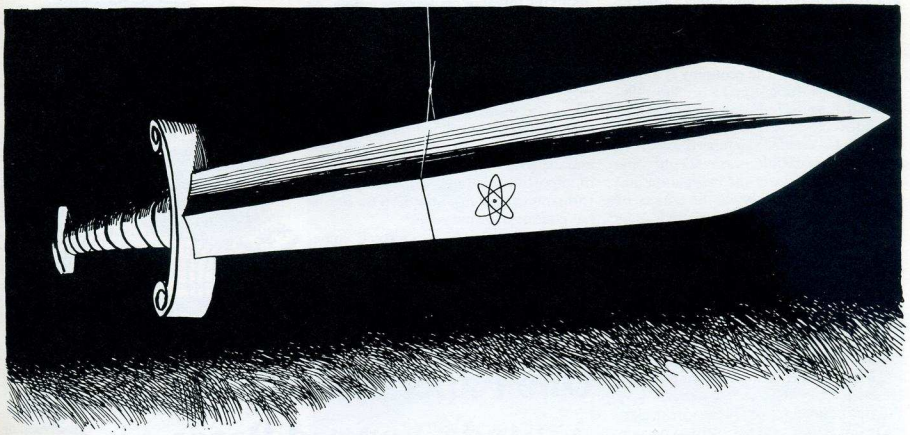
Consider an analysis of the theories, plans and publicity of the American counterpart of Emergency Planning Canada.

South of the border (a border irrelevant to radioactive clouds) the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been granted increased powers and fund-

• **The best-case analysis.** " . . . if you could get most people out of the cities (where about two-thirds of our population - about 135-million people - live) and into that other 95 or 97 per cent of the U.S. land area, many millions of people are going to survive who wouldn't, if they stayed in town," states U.S. civil defence *Bulletin No. 306.*

"To imply that a full-scale nuclear war on the United States would affect only three to five per cent of the land area," Leaning and Leighton write, "is to ignore all radiation consequences, the potential for mass fires and firestorms and the cumulative and synergistic effects on economic and ecological systems."

• **Nuclear war is familiar.** Throughout civil defence literature, references abound to the Plague and to the Second World War as suitable precedents. Because these were survived, the implication is that nuclear war is survivable. But the Black Death took place over three years in a relatively uncomplicated society, left cities



standing, social infrastructures in place, and the environment unscathed. On none of these scores is nuclear war comparable.

• **One aspect can be considered at a time.** Perspective is fragmented in FEMA planning and literature. Interactive and synergistic happenings are overlooked. This permitted a so-called expert at the RAND Corporation, N. Hanunian, to write in *Dimensions of Survival: Postattack Survival Disparities and National Viability:*

"Man's material resources tend to be less vulnerable to nuclear attacks than himself . . . The resource basis would exist for making output *per worker* larger postattack than it had been preattack. In this sense, then, nuclear war could be expected to increase per capita wealth."

• **Research is solid.** As Guiffrida declared in his March 1982 testimony: "The Civil Defence Research Program provides the scientific, analytical and technical basis for the entire Civil Defence program. It is . . . sound, well documented, and thought through properly and objectively."

But when Leaning and Leighton reviewed this literature they found reports that addressed "the larger and more relevant issues of feasibility and survivability" came from a relatively small number of authors who "cross-reference each other, share a distribution list, attend the same government-sponsored seminars and over time have developed a hermetic consensus."

Here are some of this network's claims:

• *New York City can be successfully evacuated in 3.3 days.* Some requirements of this estimate are air transport of 10.7 per cent of New York City's population to upstate New York airfields by conscripting 50 per cent of U.S. commercial Boeing 747's and 75 per cent of the DC-10's and Lockheed 1011's; water transport to Albany of 2.7 per cent of the population via freighters which are assumed to begin the crisis period at the Manhattan docks, unloaded; and car transport of 57.8 per cent of the population, assuming all two million cars begin with full tanks and only one to two per cent will break down en route.

• *People will remain obedient and cooperative.* This assumption is based on a review of literature on natural disasters, the worst of which was an explosion which killed 54 persons outright and injured another 400, of whom 27 later died; an earthquake which resulted in a statewide total of approximately 100 deaths; and a hurricane, which prompted the evacuation of half a million people from coastal areas.

• *Urban recovery will be relatively rapid.* One study, *Post Attack Recovery of Damaged Urban Areas,* estimated that debris clearance could begin in some areas "as soon as 2.5 hours post-attack."

Why is the Reagan administration — with our Canadian authorities apparently following in their familiar bowed stance of obeisance — trying to fool the public to this extent?

It is because *everything* — paradoxically including the very society ostensibly protected — is incidental to the Cold War ideology through which the White House sees the universe. Lest this be considered ungracious rhetoric, ponder the objectives of the U.S. civil defence program, as defined by President Carter in Presidential Directive 41 and then revised by President Reagan in March 1982. Those objectives are to:

• "enhance deterrence and stability in conjunction with our strategic offensive and other strategic defensive forces. Civil defence as an element of the strategic balance should assist in maintaining perceptions that this balance is favorable to the U.S.;

• "reduce the possibility that the U.S. could be coerced in time of crisis;

• "provide for survival of a substantial portion of the U.S. population in the event of nuclear attack preceded by strategic warning, and for continuity of government should deterrence and escalation control fail."

The American public, note, is mentioned only in the third part, and then as incidental (or central, take your pick) to the nuclearist abstractions which the Reagan administration takes for reality.

A question remains. Wouldn't a civil defence plan actually save at least a few lives, and therefore be worthwhile?

John Lamperti responds to this question in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* special supplement on FEMA. "The life-saving, humanitarian argument would be entirely appropriate," Lamperti writes, "*if* we were preparing for a natural catastrophe . . . But a nuclear attack is not a natural disaster. Whether nuclear weapons are used depends on human acts, judgment and perceptions. *Any* sort of large-scale preparations for nuclear war, including civil defence, *will* have an effect on the chance that there will be a war . . ."

In other words, civil defence activities actually place people in greater danger, increasing the very risk of nuclear war while giving the public a false notion they can survive it. This is a wide garden path indeed.

Consider a scenario put forward by Lamperti. An international crisis develops. The United States puts its massive

evacuation program into effect. Then no attack takes place. Days and weeks pass with the crisis unresolved. Millions of Americans are living under conditions of great discomfort. The economy is almost at a standstill, food supplies are short and discontent and confusion become widespread.

"Will we decide," Lamperti asks, "to endure these conditions as weeks become months? Will we end the evacuation and return to our homes while the danger of war continues? Or will some of our leaders feel that matters must be resolved quickly; that a showdown would be preferable to continuing the stresses of relocation?

"It is at least possible," Lamperti, a mathematics professor at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, argues moderately, "that the crisis would be *less stable with evacuation* than without it, and so the danger of nuclear war could be increased."

Large numbers of physicians are declaring that it is unethical for them to participate in any planning regarding nuclear holocaust. Their reasoning is similar to Lamperti's. Such preparation both deceives the public and increases the risk of the event.

There are at least three areas of ethical implication for journalists and media managers in the current drift in civil defence planning.

First, how ethically bound are journalists to acquaint themselves in more depth on the civil defence issue? If for no other reason than to be ready should a big peg come along?

Second, how big should the issue be played now? Is it as important as the deaths of the babies at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, for instance? Less important? More important? How do media managers decide?

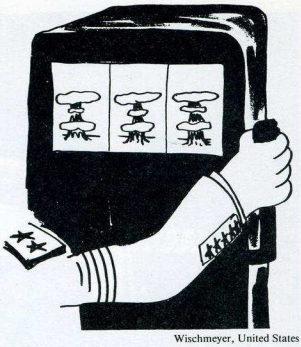
Third, to what extent should the media acquiesce in the thinking of the authorities? To what extent do journalistic ethics require investigation of the thinking of the authorities? Whose welfare is at stake? To what extent are the media the public's detectives and to what extent the state's messengers? How should the notion of "national security" be considered in dealing with these questions?

One role is already clearly envisioned for the media by the authorities. "Emergency preparedness" planner Jewsbury told *The Toronto Star*'s Cahill that a new system to warn the populace of impending nuclear attack "will use TV and radio channels." In one of the proposed electronic systems, given the cuddly acronym CHAT (for Crisis Home Alerting Technique) "radio and TV sets will utter a loud screech if left on low volume during 'quiet' hours," Cahill wrote, "and this will be followed by an informative message."

The time for informative messages about the threat of nuclear war is **now.** As the lead editorial in the summer edition of *Media Development* (the quarterly journal of the World Association of Christian Communication) began: "War is the ultimate failure of public communication; peace is its ultimate aim."

It's a life-and-death matter that our radio and TV channels, and our newspapers and magazines, bring us **now** a great deal of important — even if unwelcome — information about just how deep the needle has gone into the red zone.

Personally, should the screech come, I'm not going to listen to an "informative message" from my local TV station. I'm going to curse it for not having done more to avoid the calamity that will then be much too late to stop. — B.Z. 30



Wischmeyer, United States

# One Paper's New Attitude Toward Peace

**SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 1982** was the day. The *Toronto Star* is the paper. The *Star* made newspaper history by devoting its whole front page that day to just one subject, and it was not a news event.

The *Star's* focus was the nuclear arms race and the growing peace movement trying to stop that deadly race. Now you might ask: "Is this really so surprising?" The answer is yes, definitely. The April 10 *Star* reflected a fundamental change in how some editors and reporters define what news is.

Gary Lautens, the *Star's* executive managing editor, headed up the coverage.

"First of all I think that the nuclear business — bombs and so on — that's the number one moral issue facing mankind. And while I think you're a journalist and therefore a spectator on the events that go around you, you also have to be a human being and be a participant in what's going on. And I know that I didn't raise my children to be cinders. And when I see people talking — I can't believe the insanity — talking about limited war, first-strike capability and so on — they're talking about a holocaust, they're talking about blowing up the Earth and there's no way that I as a journalist, as a human being, as a father, as a husband, just as a human being — as I say — can stand back and be passive and just record this insanity. I've got to try to stop this insanity. And I do it the best way I can. I try to do it with facts, but there's a gut passion and feeling about it, that this is, this is, madness and somebody's got to stand up and say stop."

The traditional definition of news gives us "event journalism." Most newspaper people most of the time are conditioned to take for granted that if something hasn't happened as an event it isn't real. It isn't news. As a result our papers are filled with a hodge-podge of unrelated fragments called "news stories."

Now the arms race is real enough, but not an event, rather a process. Those who believe in "process journalism" say papers must begin to paint whole pictures and give the pictures the weight they deserve. The *Toronto Star* has decided that the arms race is more important than clinging to an outdated definition of news.

Critics say the *Star* overplayed the topic of peace. They mention the size of the main headline, which read "Choose life over the bomb." But a *bigger* blacker headline was used when martial law was declared in Poland. Isn't the imminent destruction of mankind more important than one development in Poland? And all of the *Star's* April 10 peace coverage occupied less than three per cent of the paper's 112 pages that day.

No, the *Star* didn't go overboard. It only appears so by comparison with the astounding underplay of the peace issue that the press routinely gives us. Travellers to Europe have found the level of public knowledge there about the arms race much higher than it is in North America. The press here bears most of the responsibility for public ignorance and hence apathy about our possible impending destruction.

The *Star* on April 10, 1982 took one small step for peace. But it was a very large step within the rigid traditions of the press.

— Commentary by Barrie Zwicker, broadcast nationally by *CBC Radio* Syndication April 1982. 30

# Historic Film Withheld 36 Years

THE DELIBERATE WITHHOLDING, for 36 years, of 95,000 feet of colour film showing the post-atomic-attack destruction and people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is as good an example as any of why more people, including journalists, are less concerned than they should be about the danger we're in from nuclear weapons.

The film (enough to make 30 feature-length movies) was taken by a U.S. film crew on the direct orders of U.S. President Harry Truman, the only person so far to order a nuclear attack.

It was immediately classified "top secret" and concealed from the public. Few people even know the film exists. It would still be hidden away were it not for Herbert Sussan, now retired and living in New York City after an award-winning career in television.

Sussan knew the film existed and had never been able to forget it. When he was 24 years old, he was the production director for that movie crew sent to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The whole story is told in a five-page article, "Why The Bomb Didn't Hit Home," in the March issue of *Nuclear Times.* Here are some edited excerpts:

* * *

Before going overseas, Sussan had been assigned to a motion picture studio in Culver City, California producing training films for the Air Corps. His squadron commander was Lieutenant Ronald Reagan.

* * *

"Nobody had prepared us for what was in this city (Nagasaki) as we went in. I was shocked. I could not believe what one bomb . . . could do. I felt that we were here in this moment, which hopefully would never be repeated, and if we didn't get a picture of what's happening — this holocaust — nobody would ever know," says Sussan.

* * *

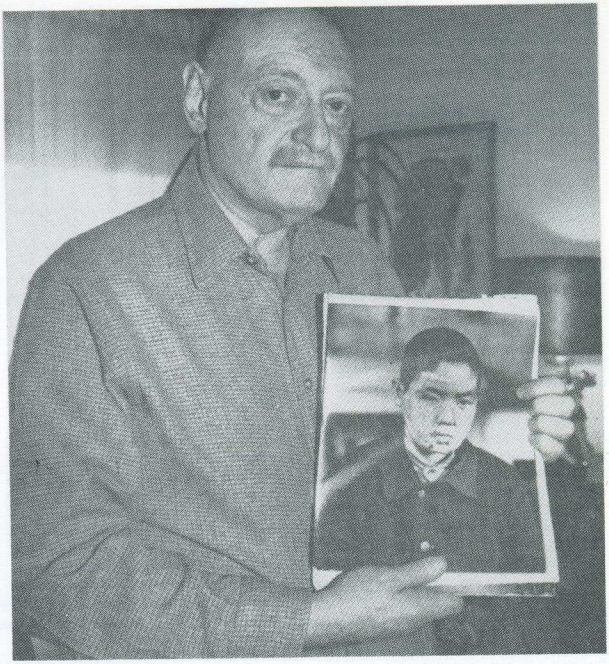
After ordering all of the colour film available in the Pacific, Sussan's unit began filming the ruins and the survivors.

* * *

"We took pictures in Hiroshima," Sussan recalls, "where vaporized bodies — the remains of people in the shelters — were given back to relatives in little wooden boxes. That's what was left of people in the shelters."

* * *

The crew was abruptly ordered to bring the unprocessed film back to Washington in June 1946. At the Pentagon "the military police took the footlockers containing the reels of film . . . to the Pentagon basement," Sussan recalls.



*Herbert Sussan*

* * *

Sussan reported to Major General Orvil A. Anderson, who headed the Military Analysis Division of the Strategic Bombing Survey. General Anderson, among others, thought it might be a good idea at that time to unleash an atomic attack on the Soviets . . .

* * *

Allied occupation officials in Japan were keeping strict control of all *media coverage* coming out of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the United States denied, *officially,* that radioactivity was harmful.

* * *

Besides concealing the Sussan footage, the American government confiscated all of the footage taken by Japanese film crews in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and declared it top secret, too.

* * *

In 1948 Sussan joined *CBS* in New York, the first step in a career that would win him many awards, including an Emmy and a Gold Medal from the Freedom Foundation. At *CBS* he met Edward R. Murrow who as host of "See It Now" was the most influential newsman on television. Sussan wanted to make a documentary, narrated by Murrow. "But he investigated and felt, no, it wasn't the thing for him to do. I was shocked by his lack of interest." (One of Murrow's close friends was David Lilienthal, first chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission).

* * *

Earlier, Sussan was told in a letter from the White House (he had personally appealed to President Truman to release the film) that "parts of (his) footage had been assembled by RKO studios into four military training films" which would "lack public appeal."

* * *

Sussan became senior producer for *NBC*'s heralded "Wide Wide World," a

90-minute Sunday afternoon program. He approached *NBC* News, and co-anchor Chet Huntley, about obtaining the footage. "But *NBC News* felt this was not a subject they wanted to get into."

* * *

Sussan kept asking if the film could be declassified. He asked Defence Secretary Neil McElroy in 1956 (Sussan met him while producing "Force for Survival," a program saluting the armed forces); Attorney General Robert Kennedy in 1962 (Sussan was doing a 1962 series called "The Law Enforcers"); former president Truman (Sussan arranged the filming of the 39-part series "The Decisions of Harry Truman". All said the film could not be released.

Finally a friend obtained from the Pentagon the four military training films. Sussan watched just a few minutes before becoming ill. One of the films, titled "Strategic Attack", showed how to use an atomic bomb in battle. The narrator of at least one of these films was Edward R. Murrow.

* * *

Top brass in the Pentagon and the Atomic Energy Commission wanted the footage "buried," according to Daniel McGovern, a self-described "conservative" who admits he "had control" of the film for many years at Norton Air Force Base in California. McGovern wanted to make military training films from it but "I was told by those people that — hell and damn no — they did not want that material shown because it showed the horrible effects on man, woman and child. They were fearful of it being circulated."

* * *

The film might still be hidden were it not for a chance encounter during the first Special Session on Disarmament at the United Nations (UNSSOD I) in 1978. (That was the session at which Prime Minister Trudeau made his speech suggesting the arms race be "suffocated" by ceasing the technological development and testing of missiles, such as the cruise.) But something more important than Trudeau's




speech happened. Sussan visited an exhibit of Hiroshima - Nagasaki photographs set up by the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Publishing Committee. The exhibit's chief co-ordinator was Tsutomu Iwakura, who was surprised to learn from Sussan of the existence of the colour film.

Iwakura started looking for it and was successful the next year at the U.S. National Archives, where it had been sent after being declassified without anyone including Sussan having been notified.

* * *

Nearly 500,000 Japanese have contributed to the H-N committee's Ten Foot Campaign, donating $12 to $15 to purchase 10 feet of the film. Iwakura's group has produced two films from the footage so far. The only American film to use Sussan's footage is *Dark Circle,* which premiered at the New York Film Festival last fall.

* * *

Sussan may have suffered ill effects from radiation. He has been stricken with lymphoma, a form of cancer common among atomic bomb survivors and people exposed to fallout from atomic tests. The disease has an extremely long latency period. He has been too ill lately to renew his fight to get some of the footage on network television.

* * *

"All I want to do for the next two to five years, or whatever time I have, is to work to make people understand that this kind of weapon must be erased from the face of the earth," Sussan says. "They must understand the dimensions they're dealing with."

* * *

Herbert Sussan feels it's ironic that he was sent to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1946 while his boss, Ronald Reagan, stayed behind at a film studio in California. "Reagan," Sussan notes, "still doesn't know the true effects of the bomb, obviously." — B.Z. (30)

**Let us remember that the great moral issues on which civilization is going to stand or fall cut across military and ideological borders, classes and regimes, across in fact the makeup of the human individual himself. No other people as a whole is entirely our enemy, no people at all, not even ourselves, is entirely our friend.** — George Kennan.

# *Report from the* L.A. Times

# ". . . and they were doing cartwheels."

ALTHOUGH I HAVE spent much of the past three years reporting for the *Los Angeles Times* on our drift toward nuclear war, there are still times when I lose my sense of the devastation that lies behind the sterile acronyms by which these modern weapons are described. The words have grown stale after nearly four decades of so-called strategic development. We hear about SLCMs and MIRVs or of that weird hodgepodge of nuclear-war-fighting strategies — the window of vulnerability, the first-strike scenarios, the city strips — and after a while, the mind doesn't react with the appropriate horror.

The question of universal death grows stale partly because the arguments are often unnecessarily complex, rely on an insider's lingo and use terms that mute just what it is these bombs will do — which is, to start with, kill the people one loves and nearly everyone else as well.

I came to appreciate this fully only during a conversation with a former CIA analyst who had been responsible for evaluating Soviet strategic nuclear forces. He has spent much of his adult life concerned with the question of nuclear war and has heard all the arguments about nuclear-war fighting and survival. But an experience from his youth, he told me, remains in his mind and, he admits, may yet color his view.

This man had conducted some of the most important CIA studies on the Soviets and nuclear war. Now in his middle years, still youthful in manner, clean-cut and obviously patriotic, the father of a Marine on active duty, he recently left the CIA to join a company that works for that agency, so I cannot use his name.

He told me about this experience of his youth because he was frightened by the Reagan Administration's casual talk about waging and winning a nuclear war and thought it did not really comprehend what kind of weapon the bomb was. As an illustration, he recalled having seen, as a lieutenant in the Navy, a bomb go off near Christmas Island in the Pacific. Years later, at the CIA, he had worked with computer models that detailed the number of fatalities likely to result from various nuclear-war-targeting scenarios. But to bring a measure of reality to these computer projections, he would return in his mind as he did now to that time in the Pacific.

"The birds were the things we could see all the time. They were superb specimens of life . . . really quite exquisite . . . phenomenal creatures. Albatrosses will fly for days, skimming a few inches above the surface of the water. These birds have tremendously long wings and tails, and beaks that are as if fashioned for another purpose. You don't see what these birds are about from their design; they are just beautiful creatures. Watching them is a wonder. That is what I didn't expect. . . .

"We were standing around, waiting for this bomb to go off, which we had been told was a very small one, so no one was particularly upset. Even though I'd never seen one, I figured, Well, these guys know what is going to happen. They know what the dangers are and we've been adequately briefed and we all have our radiation meters on . . . No worry."

He paused to observe that the size of the bomb to be exploded was ten kilotons, or the equivalent explosive power of 10,000 tons of TNT. The bombs dropped at Hiroshima and Nagasaki were 13 and 23 kilotons, respectively. Now such bombs are mere tactical or battlefield weapons. Many of the ones to be used in any U.S.-Soviet nuclear war are measured in megatons — million of tons of TNT.

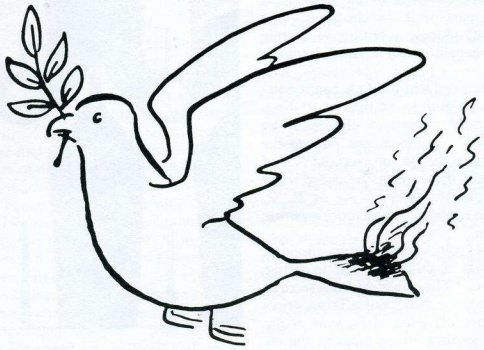
He continued his account:

"So the countdown came in over the radio, and suddenly I could see all these birds that I'd been watching for days. They were now suddenly visible through the opaque visor of my helmet. And they were smoking. Their feathers were on fire, and they were doing cart wheels. And the light persisted for some time. It was instantaneously bright but wasn't instantaneous, because it stayed and it changed its composition slightly. Several seconds, it seemed like — long enough for me to see the birds crash into the water. They were sizzling, smoking. They weren't vaporized; it's just that they were absorbing such intense radiation that they were being consumed by the heat. Their feathers were on fire. They were blinded. And so far, there had been no shock, none of the blast damage we talk about when we discuss the effects of nuclear weapons. Instead, there were just these smoking, twisting, hideously contorted birds crashing into things. And then I could see vapor rising from the inner lagoon as the surface of the water was heated by this intense flash.

"Now, this isn't a primary effect of the weapon; it is an initial kind of effect that precedes other things, though it is talked about and you can see evidence of it in the Hiroshima blast and in Nagasaki — outlines of people on bridges where they stood when the bomb was dropped. But that initial thermal radiation is a phenomenon that is unlike any other weapon I've seen."

The men who now dominate the Reagan Administration and who believe that nuclear war is survivable would surely wonder what those reflections have to do with the struggle against the Soviet Union. But what my CIA friend was telling me was that those birds are us and they never had a chance. (30)

*(From "With Enough Shovels," by Robert Scheer,* Playboy, *December 1982.)*



Bas, Greece

# Words and War

**By Barrie Zwicker**

*"Wars commence in our culture first of all, and we kill each other in euphemisms and abstractions long before the first . . . missiles have been launched . . . The deformed human mind is the ultimate doomsday weapon . . ."*

— E. P. Thompson

WORDS ARE BULLETS, as the phrase "war of words" suggests. Partisans select their words — opponents say "twist" them — to suit their purposes.

The mainline media are supposed not to be partisan. As a separate article shows, the Canadian mainline media are unhelpfully partisan in a Cold War mould, in selection, play and terminology. But that is not the concern of this article.

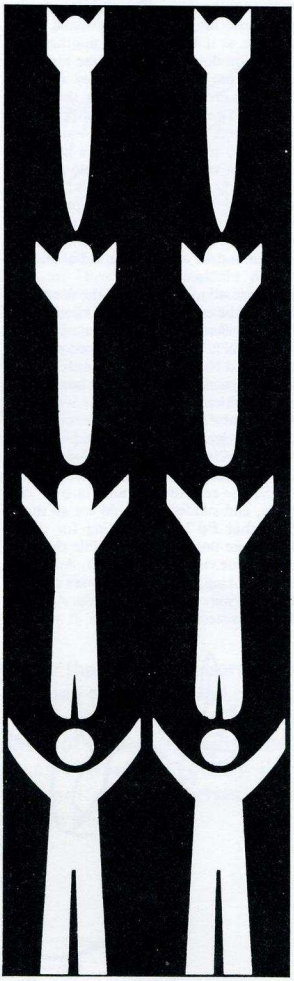
The concern here is the language of a less-examined and equally troubling area of partisanship, the arena in which, arrayed on one side, are those who — for whatever reasons — would countenance the use of nuclear weapons. Opposite them are those deeply opposed to the manufacture, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons, so as to prevent their use.

The division, of course, is not that neat. By the same token, the gulf between the two sides is much wider and deeper than these tame words suggest.

The words we use to describe nuclear weapons, the circumstances of their use, their effects, and their victims are not separate from the arguments across the gulf. They are part of it. In choosing — or worse, unthinkingly accepting — certain words, journalists take sides. At stake is survival.

First the word war itself. A commonly-accepted definition of war has been Clausewitz's "pursuit of diplomacy by other means." If the means include the destruction of all life, or even the risk of that, should these means be called war? Would not extermination — as E. P. Thompson suggests — be a more *accurate* word?

We have, too, various connotations of the word war, naturally enough suggestive of past wars. "The public does not seem to have grasped the fact," Kosta Tsipis writes in the June/July issue of *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* "that most of the effects of a nuclear detonation are not just due to the enormity of the energy released, but to the extremely high temperatures (some million degrees centigrade)." Instant heat of a magnitude that vaporizes human tissue, that ignites or melts materials in a radius up to 20 miles, that creates firestorms of up to three thousand square miles, in a typical blast, is *not* a rerun of World War II.



Courtesy *N. Y. Mobilizer*

Nuclear War has not been experienced. The application of the old word is very likely to contain a dangerously misleading element.

Take another phrase given amplified coinage by the media: theatre nuclear war. First is the unarticulated premise that it is a somewhat likely category of reality. But how likely, for instance, is the commonly-trotted-out "scenario" (another pleasant word) of a "battlefield exchange" of "tactical" nuclear weapons in Western Europe?

"Any use whatever of nuclear weapons, on no matter how small a scale, would generate a prohibitively high probability of expansion to large scale, general use," says one group. "The possibility of limitation, restriction or control of any nuclear conflict is remote. We are sitting on top of a volcano." The group is comprised of retired NATO generals and admirals from France, Italy, Greece, the United States, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Norway, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany. The group, called Generals for Peace and Disarmament, set out its views in a memorandum to the UN in June 1982. (By the way, do you recall learning of this from the mass media?)

Let us tarry for a moment, nevertheless, in the probably imaginary world of a "theatre nuclear war." The word theatre has many positive connotations (from Shakespeare to Neil Simon). The pedigree of the word theatre in conjunction with the old word "war", however unfortunate, is beyond dispute. But in conjunction with the word nuclear? Subliminally, the meaning could come out something like: "Extermination. That's Entertainment!"

Once the psychic contradiction is exposed, the phrase itself is seen as a linguistic theatre of the absurd. Such phrases

**NUKE**




spell curtains, for life and language. But the average news consuming Joe is subtly conditioned, accepting words as reasonable coinage that he assumes can be traded for equivalent reality.

Consider the terms "conventional war," and "conventional weapons." The word conventional connotes acceptable, normal. The prospect of conventional war takes on an almost reassuring meaning, in contrast to "nuclear war." But stick your average reporter or editor in front of the business end of a Phantom jet, in the midst of a napalm attack or next to an anti-personnel mine and you would have a profoundly threatened person. Someone killed by "conventional" weapons is just as dead as someone killed by an atom bomb, to invoke the reverse of a twisted argument once used to downplay and therefore justify the production and use of atomic weapons.

Psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton coined the term nuclearism to describe devotion to and dependence upon nuclear weapons. Nuclearism, like any faith, has its liturgy, its mythic code, functional words, and taboos. Many of these are adopted and disseminated by the mainline media. Insofar as they are in turn adopted uncritically by consumers of the media, the consumers' minds are nuclearized. I don't think most of us realize how far this process has taken place.

The power of naming was exercised in earlier times by priests and shamans. Today, in the heaven-and-hell issues, this power is the would-be domain of our "leaders (one of whom would *name* a nuclear missile "Peace Keeper"), of "strategic analysts," political strategists, psychological war "personnel," military "public affairs officers" and the like.

The predecessors of these powerful men (very few were or are women) originally with good reason shrouded everything about "The Bomb" in secrecy. They learned its language from the physicists, developed further language to cope with it and then to promote their special interests.

"The masses," wrote Robert K. Musil in "On Calling A Bomb A Bomb" in the March issue of *Nuclear Times*, "are forbidden to speak of some of "The Bomb's" most sacred vessels and objects; its most holy places can be entered only by the nuclear high priests."

That is why, Musil continued, the trial in 1981 of the "Ploughshares Eight," nonviolent religious activists including Daniel Berrigan, "was something of a heresy trial."

The centrepiece of the trial was an MK12A "re-entry vehicle." The eight had entered the General Electric plant in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, dented the MK12A with hammers, dishevelled some papers and poured their own blood upon the MK12A.

"During the trial," Musil wrote, "the dark, conical, 4-1/2 foot re-entry vehicle, capable of carrying 10 nuclear warheads, each with the power of 17 Hiroshima bombs, was brought to the courtroom.

"Representatives from General Electric refused to acknowledge the name or purpose of the object . . . The company spokesperson . . . referred to the cone as 'the product.' (The warheads themselves are known in the military-industrial sector as 'the physics package.')

"Once coded as 'the product,' the H-bomb carriers gain all the legitimacy and status that a society that venerates property can bestow," Musil wrote.

Such evasion of reality serves a serious purpose beyond providing another layer of anesthetic for those engaged in the design and manufacture of "unspeakable" machines of death. As Musil observes, the evasion is not to fool the intended victims, human beings in the Soviet Union. " . . . the policies are designed to mold the minds of the public (in 'the West') through the suppression and distortion of language."

To begin to examine this nuclearist language entwined with Cold War terminology is to realize how pervasive it is. We have "strategic analysts," who are accorded great respect, called "authoritative," and who are paid very well to consider, ostensibly on our behalf, "scenarios" of oblivion. Their arcane specialty requires an arcanely-specialized vocabulary. Included are words such as megadeath, throw weights and yields; acronyms such as MAD (Mutual assured destruction) and a host of abbreviations including DOE (death of earth).

These terms originate somewhere. That somewhere is primarily in the minds of people in the military-industrial-academic complex of the United States. In his frighteningly well documented book *With Enough Shovels*, journalist Robert Scheer names scores of these people. Based on his tape-recorded interviews with them over several years, he concludes: " . . . most of these men are academics at home in academic settings. I have been struck by the curious gap between the bloodiness of their rhetoric and their apparent inability to visualize the physical consequences of what they advocate."

The language of the nuclearists confuses, distracts and misleads. It is intended to. As Scheer writes: "The neohawks refuse to acknowledge (the) reality (of nuclear war). But it is one thing to talk oneself into accepting that the nuclear arms race and the game of threat escalation are not so dangerous and quite another to convince ordinary voters to go along with this madness. This is why (they) invoke the chaste vocabulary of 'vulnerability' and 'deterrence' rather than the blunt language of death and disaster."

Scheer writes: "Instead of talking openly about nuclear war fighting, as they did in the first year (of the Reagan administration) — before their poll takers advised them to soften their rhetoric — they now stress the need for 'credible deterrence' . . . But the neohawks have already said and written too much to conceal their true intentions."

Scheer's not entirely right there. Every time a journalist chooses to use a nuclearist phrase rather than the ordinary

English equivalent, he or she is joining in the concealment.

Less grand obfuscations than "deterrence" and "window of vulnerability" meanwhile are commonplace. The military conduct "war games" (often, in the media, outside of quotation marks) and the phrase "unarmed cruise missile" has become standard in our own Canadian nuclearist media wordscape.

This phrase, which the newspapers insist upon using, carries an implication that the described object is not particularly dangerous. An unarmed man is not taken to be dangerous, at least in comparison to an armed one, and rightly so. But a conventional word in an unconventional setting can bounce oddly.

The distinction between an armed and an unarmed cruise will have real meaning for those in the immediate area of the testing. No question about that.

But the nub of the cruise controversy has to do with the missile as a strategic nuclear weapon, with all that implies. Keeping in mind the purpose of the weapon, then, the more appropriate term is "cruise missile." The machine is a deadly and integral component of a death-dealing package. The "unarmed cruise missile" is not, after all, being developed to deliver mail. Even President Reagan does not request funds from Congress to test "unarmed MX missiles."

Examining our language is a never-ending challenge. Outside the scope of this article, other than to mention it here, is for instance denial, the individual psychological defence mechanism which has become an Achilles heel in our present danger.

Another thing journalists might keep in mind is that a growing share of the public is increasingly sophisticated in detecting mind manipulation through phraseology. In my opinion, nothing causes the credibility of a media outlet to plummet more precipitously than when it parades as the reality of a crucial issue a version the reader or viewer knows to be profoundly bogus.

To note that in many cases we're only quoting a misleading phrase does not constitute an acceptable excuse. Such a defence is legally useless in libel and morally useless in the arena of nuclearism. When words and phrases confuse or mislead people about life-and-death issues, lead them down the paths of powerlessness rather than help them find their way toward survival, journalism becomes a deathly craft.

It is not so much that any one phrase used one time is a great danger. Rather it is the *cumulative power* of repetition in the mass media — what the advertising people call frequency and reach — that unquestionably could help seal our doom.

Frequency and reach sell soap, ideas or bombs. And, yes, extinction. (30)

# Media-MX Deal Denies Protestors' Rights Through News Blackout

"SOMETHING WAS MISSING", wrote *In These Times* correspondent William Swislow, "from most of the media June 16 and 17." It was a big story — news of the MX missile's scheduled test launch and the secrecy under which the U.S. Air Force was conducting it.

Officials of Vandenberg Air Force Base in Santa Barbara, California, called selected U.S. news outlets the morning of the 16th. They told assignment editors that they'd share the exact date and time of the test if the media outlet would keep that information out of the papers and off the air. The editors who agreed with the embargo would be given access for their journalists to the launch site. Those reporting the launch time would have their people barred.

Three outlets — one in Santa Barbara and two in Los Angeles — broke the ban, but most of the public in the U.S. and around the world was kept in the dark. The three outlets were barred. About 100 journalists showed up to cover the event. They outnumbered the people there to protest it. Previous protests had drawn thousands.

The reporters covering the launch got some spectacular pictures, nothing more. Only *CBS* reported the embargo. No outlet reported that Daniel Ellsberg was one of the 16 people arrested for protesting the launch.

The air force said the secrecy was to keep the Russians in the dark. Other officials "admitted the Russians had been informed of the test," Swislow reported. *The Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* said air force officials "left no doubt" the secrecy was prompted by a wish to prevent a protest — by means of denying the public information through the news media.

A Santa Barbara area TV employee was quoted by Swislow as saying: "The general public has no idea . . . of this . . . example of media manipulation. So the whole United States got a chance to watch the Pentagon jerk off in complete glory, and that's the only story they got."

An interesting sidelight, journalistically, was whether air force officials are the only possible source for launch timing information. In this case, inside opponents of the MX had phoned news outlets and divulged the planned launch time correctly — prior to the access deal. (30)



*It may not be too late.*

# Journalism/Arms Race Direct Links

"THE ARMS RACE is already killing us," reads a button. That's a summary of the inflationary effects of arms spending, the diversion of scarce resources, the cutbacks in civilian programs, contribution to unemployment (money invested in the military yields fewer jobs per billion dollars than any other major expenditure area) and contamination of the environment (radioactivity in waste products from nuclear weapons production equals precisely the radioactivity that would be released by explosion of all the weapons produced).

What journalists seem oblivious to are the harmful effects on journalism of the arms race.

• In the United States the *Public Broadcasting System* and *National Public Radio* have both been forced into crisis primarily by cutbacks in government funding, in line with the Reagan administration's putting top priority on the arms buildup at the expense of health, educational, social, artistic and environmental programs.

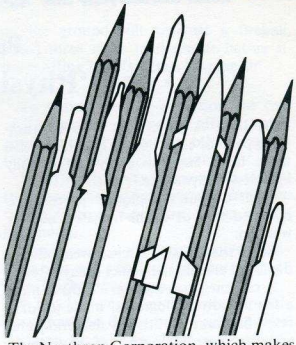
In Canada the *CBC*, funded in part by public funds (and a unique independent voice approximately in proportion to its public funding), has suffered severe cutbacks in that public funding. Can this be related to the arms race? It certainly can, even though no one ever says it.

"Canada, though invariably described as a low military spender, in fact ranks within the top 20 per cent of military spenders in the world when measured on a per capita basis," note Ernie Regehr and Mel Watkins in the recently-released *Canada and the Nuclear Arms Race* (James Lorimer & Company, paperback).

In absolute terms, Canada's $7-billion arms budget for fiscal 1982-83 ranks this country closer to the top 10 per cent of arms spenders, and within the top third of the top 30 industrial countries in this dubious category. In recent years, Regehr and Watkins note, Canadian military spending has been increasing at a rate of between 15 and 20 per cent annually.

• Developments in the U.S. media have considerable impact all over the world, as two-thirds of all the information in the world originates in the States. Probably nowhere is the impact felt more than in Canada, with our massive imports of wire copy, TV footage (entertainment and news), magazines, books and movies. Increasingly in the States, companies that produce nuclear weapons own substantial interests in media companies.

Some of them have even become substantial advertisers in journalism reviews.



The Northrop Corporation, which makes inertial guidance systems for the MX missile, runs ads regularly in the *Columbia Journalism Review* featuring a single quotation by a prominent American on the meaning of a free press. "Presumably," writes Robert Friedman in the March issue of *Nuclear Times*, "these bold-faced statements are intended to convince the editors and publishers who read this magazine that Northrop is on their side. (In fact, Thomas Jones, the chairman of Northrop, was for many years a director of the Los Angeles Times company.)" Of course, Jones curries favour on various fronts. It was revealed that Jones gave one of Richard Nixon's bagmen $75,000 cash — money that ended up helping pay the defence bills of the Watergate burglars.

McDonnell Douglas is a substantial advertiser on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border. Advertising is well known absolutely everywhere except among journalists to have a collective statistical relationship with editorial copy. Generally, industries and large companies that are substantial advertisers are neither investigated nor criticized.

At the same time, these companies — McDonnell Douglas is an example — promote their version of reality in the same media.

McDonnell Douglas, which does half its business with the Pentagon, has run ads in *Time* and *Newsweek* promoting the merits of the cruise missile which it helped design (but which even the U.S. General Accounting Office criticized).

McDonnell Douglas ran a number of ads in *Aviation Week* magazine raising the spectre of a Soviet invasion. "One of these ads, prepared by the J. Walter Thompson agency, shows a map of the Bering Straits under the headline, 'How to take the worry out of being close,' " reported Friedman in *Nuclear Times*. "The point of the campaign, according to John Bickers, director of advertising for McDonnell, is to combat the company's number one public relations problem: the perception that the United States is spending too much on weapons."

• Secrecy. Secrecy is supposed to be anathema to a free press. But the nuclear weapons establishment has been the greatest single promoter and enforcer of secrecy in the history of the world. "The . . . perhaps most striking difference between atomic energy secrecy and other government secrecy is the way in which decisions are made," wrote Mary M. Cheh in the December 1982 issue of *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. "The information is simply 'born-classified.' "

From World War II on, Cheh noted, "press and public simply continued the wartime habit of not asking any questions. The pattern of self-censorship was apparently deeply ingrained." How different was and is the situation in Canada? Not different. It is just that we have no *Bulletin of the Canadian Atomic Scientists* to discuss the matter, to make it live in black and white.

The press establishment, such a vigorous defender of freedom of the press in the abstract, changes its tune when press freedom is seemingly in conflict with a sense of patriotism, no matter how ill-defined or ill-placed. When the *Progressive* magazine was prevented by the U.S. government in 1979 from publishing an article about government secrecy and the




proliferation of nuclear weapons, many newspapers, including the *Washington Post*, were sharply critical of the *Progressive*.

As Cheh put it in her low-key way, "there are also the many negative effects associated with a public kept purposefully uninformed or misinformed about an area of vital national concern." It is especially troubling when the media, ostensibly dedicated to promoting public understanding of important issues, have been for so long such an integral part of the nuclear secrecy establishment. — B.Z. ⑳

## Introduction To "Inside The Mushroom Cloud"

Physicists are by their general training as scientists and by their particular specialty more likely than most to remember the basics. This may explain why the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* for 37 years has paid attention to the basics. The *Bulletin* has judged politics and public policy by the degree of threat or assistance they provide to life and its support.

The accompanying piece, "The 'Physics Package,' " comprises edited excerpts from Part 2 of a "weapons tutorial" which appeared in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* in January and February of 1983. The series was written by Kosta Tsipis, co-director of the Program in Science and Technology for International Security in the Physics Department, MIT, Cambridge, Mass. He also serves on the *Bulletin's* board of directors.

"The Human Package" comprises edited excerpts from an article entitled "Casualties in a Nuclear War" by Prof. Brian F. Habbick of the Department of Pediatrics, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

Melded in are excerpts from three other sources, primarily an article by Prof. V.L. Matthews, head of the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine at the same university.

Another excerpt is from an article by Prof. Donald G. Bates of the Department of Humanities and Social Studies in Medicine, McGill University, Montreal.

Finally, a short quotation, as noted in the text, is by Dr. Helen Caldicott, of Physicians for Social Responsibility, from a talk she gave at the Riverside Church in New York City in November 1981.

The articles by Professors Habbick, Matthews and Bates appear in *Nuclear War and Public Health*, reprinted for Physicians for Social Responsibility by *The Canadian Journal of Public Health*, official publication of the Canadian Public Health Association (Vol. 74, No. 1, 1983).

Any mistakes of omission or emphasis are mine. — B.Z.




# Inside The

## Part I

## The "Physics Package"[1]

IMAGINE A FREIGHT TRAIN rumbling past for eight hours. The train is 250 miles long. Imagine every car is fully loaded with dynamite.

Such a train's explosive potential is equal to that of a one-megaton nuclear weapon.

More than 50,000 nuclear weapons are deployed around the planet today.

A one-megaton weapon weighs at most a few hundred kilograms, made up of a few kilograms of lithium deuteride and tritium, some kilograms of plutonium, and about 100 kilograms of uranium-238.

* * *

Very large nuclei like uranium-238 are not very hard to break up; above atomic weight 242 there are no stable nuclei.

* * *

It so happens that every time a uranium-235 or plutonium-239 nucleus breaks up into two fragments it releases, on the average, two neutrons. These have such energies that if they hit another uranium nucleus they can split *it*. This is the chain reaction that makes nuclear weapons possible.

* * *

How fast can this chain reaction happen? To figure that out we must find how long it takes for one doubling step to occur. That is as long as it takes the neutron to travel to the nucleus it splits.

* * *

On the average the neutron travels three centimeters in uranium before it hits a nucleus. Its speed is comparable to the speed of light. So it takes about a tenth of a nanosecond (a nanosecond is one billionth of a second) to complete a step. There are 70 doubling steps. So fission is completed in about eight nanoseconds.

* * *

During the first seven nanoseconds only about one percent of all available nuclei have fissioned: 99 per cent of the energy in a nuclear explosion is released within the eighth billionth of a second.

* * *

Because the sphere has no time to expand in the eight nanoseconds it takes to release all this energy, the pressure inside it will have to rise in direct proportion to the temperature, which is about 130-million degrees Centigrade. Since originally it was one atmosphere, the pressure will rise to more than 100-million atmospheres.

* * *

The energy released takes many forms. Some is released as kinetic energy. But the largest fraction of energy is released in the form of electromagnetic radiation: gamma rays, x-rays, ultraviolet light, visible light and, eventually, infrared radiation.

* * *

The fireball is completely transparent to all electromagnetic radiation, so this radiation escapes from the fireball and heats up the adjacent air.

* * *

But the x-rays can't go very far because they are absorbed by air molecules. This heats the air around the original fireball to such a high temperature that in turn it becomes transparent, allowing the radiation to move out and heat up additional layers of air farther away from the expanding fireball.

* * *

This process removes energy from the interior of the fireball and cools it down uniformly; it also makes the fireball expand at supersonic speed.

* * *

As the fireball expands and cools, the radiation that escapes from it changes from x-rays to visible light to thermal (infrared) radiation. When the fireball temperature is reduced to about 300,000 degrees centigrade, the speed of its growth becomes equal to the speed of sound in the air.

* * *

At this point, two things happens: First, the superheated weapons debris that travels inside the fireball with supersonic speed catches up with the outer edge of the fireball; and second, a shock wave develops at the outer surface of the fireball that begins to shock-heat the air around

**(See opposite)**

[1] Nuclear warheads are known in the language of the military industrial complex as "the physics package."

During the trial of the Ploughshares Eight in 1981, representatives of General Electric refused to acknowledge the name or purpose of the dark, conical 4-1/2-foot-tall MK12A re-entry vehicle introduced as an exhibit.

Each MK12A can accommodate 10 nuclear warheads, each with the power of 17 Hiroshima bombs. The company spokesperson would only refer to the cone as "the product."

For an exploration of the language of nuclearism, see separate article.

# Mushroom Cloud

the fireball, making that air incandescently hot.

* * *

Since hot air absorbs visible light, one cannot see the fireball until the gases around it have cooled enough to permit visible light emitted by it to escape. The obscuring of the fireball by the shocked air is the cause of a characteristic "double flash" of light that a nuclear detonation in the air displays. This, incidentally, is the signal by which monitoring satellites detect nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere.

* * *

How big does the fireball eventually get and how high does it rise into the air? The fireball keeps on growing after breakaway and reaches its maximum size minutes later. A megaton-size weapon exploding on the ground will generate a fireball about three miles in diameter before it starts lifting 25,000 meters into the air.

* * *

To summarize, the explosion has created a number of physical effects, some common to all explosions, others characteristic only of a nuclear detonation.

First there is a very intense burst of neutrons and gamma-rays coming from the fission fragments and the fusion of the light nuclei.

Then comes a silent giant wave of intense heat and a flash of light hundreds of times brigher than the sun.

A shock wave of very high pressure follows, pushing down on everything with crushing force. This shock wave travels outward from the point of detonation like an ever-expanding ring, slapping down on the ground.

It is followed by intense winds that reach speeds of hundreds of miles per hour and die down slowly as the shock wave travels farther and farther away from the point of detonation.

As the fireball rises from a ground explosion, it entrains with it millions of tons of vaporized dirt that cools, condenses and starts falling toward the ground as the winds at the upper level of the atmosphere sweep the huge cloud downwind from the point of detonation.

A billion billion billion million ($10^{33}$) oxygen and nitrogen molecules in the air have been combined by the heat of the blast into nitrogen oxides, which then rise with the cloud to the upper levels of the atmosphere.

An even larger number of liberated electrons start spiraling along the lines of the geomagnetic field of the Earth. (30)

## Part II

## The Human Package

The accounts in this paper are not figments of imagination, though some guessing as to numbers involved has to play a part since the extent of any nuclear war is not yet known. The descriptions are based mainly on official publications of various governments, especially the U.S. government. Two of the more recent reports were: "The Effects of Nuclear War," U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment (1980) and "The Effects of Nuclear Weapons," 1981, Gladstone & Dolan, published jointly by the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of Energy.

The casualties will be discussed in a chronological sequence — that is, from the time of the explosion, the so-called barrage period, through the first days and weeks after the explosion, to the long-term effects.

THE BARRAGE PERIOD is associated with the following types of injuries:

1) *Flash burns.* These arise not from the first pulse of ultraviolet radiation, but from the second pulse of infrared light which contains nearly 35% of the energy of a nuclear bomb. With a one-megaton bomb, this thermal radiation causes second degree burns on exposed skin of anyone in a range of 6-10 miles on a clear day. The heat is transmitted along the line of sight, so that any object between an individual and the heat source acts as a shield, and even a single layer of clothing helps protect against burns.

(Those who looked at the explosion would be blinded and Dr. Helen Caldicott says the eyes of many would be melted.)

2) *Blast effects.* The flash burn effects on people up to three miles from the bomb are irrelevant as most people within this range — and many, of course, outside it — will be killed by blast injuries. There are three sources of these: primary, secondary and tertiary.

(The primary are ruptured lungs. Eardrums, of course, would be ruptured, but merely being deaf would not be a serious problem in the circumstances.

(Statistically, more people would be killed by the secondary blast effects: buildings of all sizes being smashed down causing hundreds of thousands of shocking compound fractures and cuts, as well as the millions of shards of flying glass.

(The smallest number of the total killed would be those persons sucked out of buildings by the overpressure and thrown against solid objects.)

3) *Flame burns* will be suffered by many of those surviving the initial blast, particularly if a firestorm results. The development of a firestorm is unpredictable. Hiroshima had one, Nagasaki did not. It depends on various factors, including the combustibility of material and the effects of the blasts, which may even blow small fires out. However, it is highly likely that widespread fires would be present.

In Hamburg and in Dresden during the Second World War, huge firestorms arose after raids with conventional bombs. Temperatures of more than 800°C were recorded.

(Firestorms consume oxygen; most if not all of those in shelters are asphyxiated.)

It is reasonable to assume that a one-megaton bomb dropped on *one* major city would lead to thousands of severely burned casualties. In the entire U.S.A. last

**(from previous page)**

year, there were about 1,000 so-called burn beds.

(Severely burned patients need six months of intensive care: at least one nurse per two patients, fresh frozen plasma, intravenous fluids, antibiotics, grafts, operations every couple of days, hundreds of units of blood, and even then the patient often dies. The impossibility of the whole medical establishment of the North American continent dealing with a single nuclear attack on a single city is quite clear.)

4) *Acute radiation* accounts for 5% of the bomb's energy. With a one-megaton bomb, the initial radiation of doses which would cause rapid inevitable death does not extend beyond the range where inevitable death will occur from blast and fire. In the surrounding areas the radiation will affect survivors in ways which will be discussed later. The range of effects depends on the height at which the explosion occurs and the shielding effects of buildings and hills.

5) *Early fallout radiation.* This will be discussed later. The scenes in the first hours in Hiroshima are described in Hersey's book; simply titled *Hiroshima:*

"So, within a few short hours Hiroshima had been devastated. Of a population of 245,000, 78,000 were dead and a further 84,000 injured. No one could understand what had happened. Thousands of hurt and maimed people began to flee from the city. Hair and eyebrows were burned off; skin hung in sheets from faces and hands. Some were vomiting. Almost all had heads bowed, looked straight ahead, were silent, and showed no expression whatsoever."

THE SHELTER PERIOD — the period in which people will try to find shelter — can be divided into the first day, and the period up to the end of the first month.

1) *Flame burns* are certainly going to continue to affect large numbers in this period.

2) *Suffocation and heat prostration* will also kill many. In Dresden in 1943, it was found that *all* those in shelters died; the only survivors from the heat were those who had been in the open. In Hamburg, it was found that some days after the raid, as shelters were opened, enough heat remained that the influx of oxygen led to the entire shelter bursting into flames.

3) *Lack of medical care.* This is discussed in a paper by Prof. V.L. Matthews, head of the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon:

"Emergency equipment and drugs are handled through a complex, centralized distribution system. In Canada, practically all drugs and medical equipment are manufactured in other countries and channelled through two main distribution systems located in Montreal and Toronto . . . supplies of drugs and equipment might be cut off in an instant . . .

"Hospital and medical services are heavily concentrated in large urban centres which are primary targets in nuclear warfare. The number of nurses, physicians, physiotherapists and other health workers who would be annihilated by the first wave of destruction would be disproportionately high. . . . It is also evident it would remove . . . all of the superspecialty and most of the specialty services.

"H. Jack Geiger has described the potential clinical-care situation in an American city in the following terms: 'One carefully detailed study of an American city suggests that there would be 1,700 seriously injured survivors for every physician. . . . If conservatively we estimate only 1,000 seriously wounded patients per surviving physician and if we further assume that every physician sees each patient for only 10 minutes of diagnosis and treatment and if each physician worked 20 hours a day, it would be eight days before all the wounded would be seen once by a doctor. Most of the wounded would die without medical care of any sort; most would die without even the simple administration of drugs for relief of pain.

4) *Early fallout radiation.* At the time of the explosion, very fine particles are carried into the stratosphere and the troposphere with the mushroom cloud. Larger particles, like dust and heavier, begin to descend within minutes and continue to fall for 48 hours, the rate of descent depending on particle size.

The radiation exuding silently and invisibly from all these particles, which are breathed in, get on the skin, and into almost everything, affects human tissue in two basic ways. First, it causes damage to cell membranes, which causes leakage of intracellular fluid. This affects the brain and lungs particularly. Secondly, it causes a loss of reproductive capacity in stem cells, especially in intestines, bone marrow, skin and reproductive tissue.

Irradiated survivors can be divided into three groups. In the first group, survival is improbable. Vomiting occurs promptly and continues, and is followed by prostration, diarrhea, anorexia and fever. These symptoms occur with a dosage of 600 rads. More than 5,000 rads is associated with convulsions and other CNS signs.

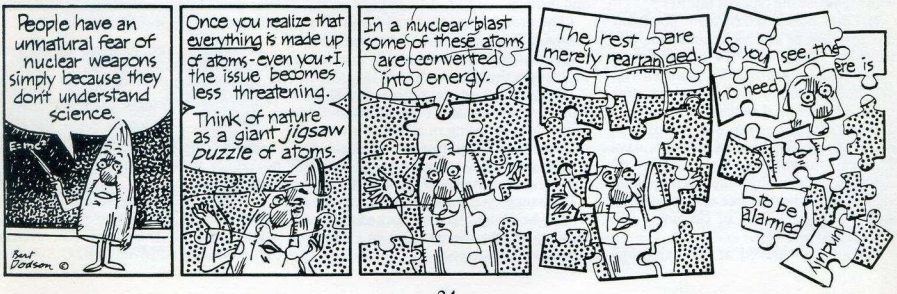
In the second group, there is early-onset vomiting, but it is of short duration. There is a period of apparent well being though some peripheral blood effects can be detected after the first week. After the latent period of 1-3 weeks during which there may be few symptoms other than fatigue, other effects start — hair loss, purpura, diarrhea and infection.

In the third group, there may be transient nausea on the first day. There may be no further symptoms, but haemopoietic changes may be seen, and depressed wound healing and immune deficiency may also be present.

It has been calculated that about 50% of those who receive 250 rads and about 90% of those who receive 400 rads will die.

(All of these effects would be taking place in an area where there was no electricity, no reasonable transportation system, no effective communication system, no ambulances and essentially no hospitals. There would also be no functioning water distribution system and any water

**NUKE**



**ANSWER ONE QUESTION TO FIND OUT IF YOU SUPPORT THE NUCLEAR FREEZE**

left in reservoirs or the water pipes themselves would be highly contaminated. There also would be little housing and no distribution of electricity or fuel to the housing left. Central marketing and all distribution systems for food would also be effectively destroyed and what food that could be found would for the most part be contaminated.)

To quote again from Hersey's book:

"In general, survivors that day assisted only their relatives or immediate neighbours, for they could not comprehend or tolerate a wider circle of misery. From every second or third house came the voices of people buried or abandoned who invariably screamed. . . . Towards evening the streets became quieter. Now not many people walked in the streets, but a great number sat and lay on the pavement, vomited, waited for death, and died." "Others felt terribly thirsty and they drank from the river. At once they were nauseated and began vomiting, and they retched the whole day."

"Continuing fires whipped up by the wind forced cast crowds towards one of the rivers. Those near the bank were pushed in — and drowned."

The *later part of the shelter period* is associated with casualties due to flame burns, smoke inhalation, heat effects, and radiation. The latter begins to affect people at some distance from the explosion because fallout continues downwind.

*Dehydration* arises because of the hot conditions in fallout shelters, and also from vomiting and diarrhea secondary to gastrointestinal radiation, and gastrointestinal infection.

*Malnutrition* will occur. Most domestic animals will die in the affected areas, food storage areas will be destroyed, and there will be difficulty in transportation of food to needed areas.

*Communicable diseases* will arise. An article by Abrams and von Kaenel in the *New England Journal of Medicine* pointed to several factors which will lead to an increased risk and severity of infection:

- Radiation leading to depressed immune systems and gastrointestinal damage
- Burns can become easily infected because of the blood and immune effects
- Malnutrition, which will inevitably be widespread, has been shown to predispose to infection
- Exposure and hardship due to inadequate shelter, lack of heating fuel, and intensive labor, will lower resistance further
- Lowered natural resistance due to suppressed immune mechanisms can cause spread of diseases, including some exotic varieties.

Factors which specifically might cause spread of disease include:

- The crowded, hot, unsanitary conditions in shelters

**Q. THE MOST SENSIBLE FIRST STEP TOWARDS FEWER NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS TO BUILD MORE.**

**AGREE ☐ DISAGREE ☐**

- The sanitation problems with disruption of water supplies, food preparation, sewage and waste disposal
- The proliferation of insects and bacteria, which are extremely resistant to radiation. Cockroaches are not appreciably damaged by radiation of 40,000 rads. Only 10% of an E. coli population is killed by 20,000 rads of radiation
- The decreased immunity of animals may lead to the spread of infections such as brucella, leptospirosis and rabies.

IN THE SURVIVAL PERIOD casualties will be seen from several mechanisms which have been discussed previously, but medium-term effects from the fallout radiation need further discussion. These include sterility in males, which may last several months to years; effects seen on the foetuses of women irradiated while pregnant, i.e. increased incidence of microcephaly, mental retardation (50% of those in the Japanese experience were from mothers exposed to 200-300 rads); and increased stillbirth and abortion rates. For instance, in Nagasaki there were 177 pregnant survivors and 45 had abnormal terminations of pregnancy — 19/19 in those within 3 km of the centre, 15/20 in those within 3-20 km, and 11/138 in those more than 20 km away.

THE RECOVERY PERIOD. These are just words. It should not be assumed there would be a recovery period. The elimination of all life on the planet not only is technically feasible. The means exist to accomplish the elimination. These means would be used in the event of an all-out nuclear war. Most military planners agree that should a nuclear war break out, it will be almost impossible to limit it. The term "recovery period" assumes such limitation.

For the last 35 years, an on-going study has been conducted on the survivors of the American atom bomb strikes on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The studies have been conducted by American and Japanese scientists. Some of their findings:

1) *Cancer.* Definite increases in incidence have been seen with leukemias, especially in those under 10 or over 50 at the time of the bombings, and with some solid tumors, including thyroid, breast, lung and stomach.

2) *Genetic damage.* Ionising radiation induces genes mutation and chromosome breaks more or less in proportion to the dose, but increased incidence of genetic defects in children of survivors of the Japanese bombs was not demonstrated, though delay in studies being carried out initially may have led to inaccuracies in analysis. What effects might occur in future nuclear explosions is difficult to say because of uncertainty about the weapons to be used.

Likewise, in the first generation offspring there has been no increase in mortality, leukemia or alterations of growth and development.

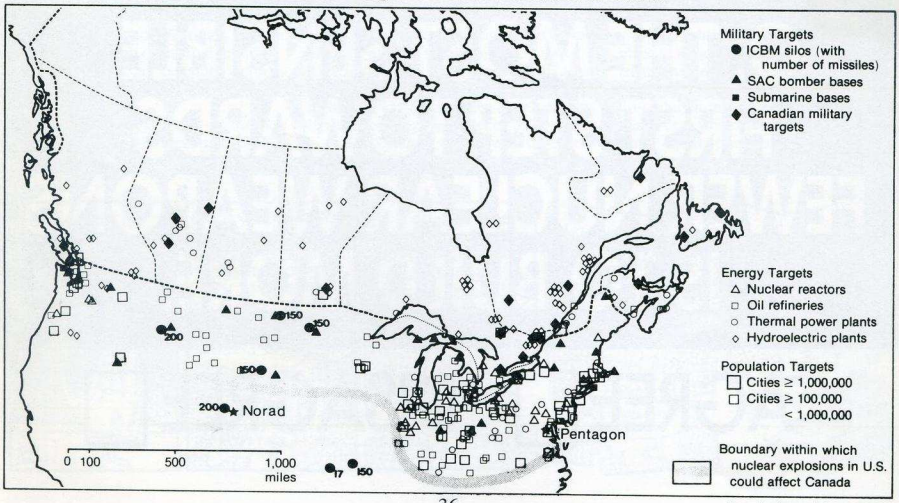
3) *Cataracts.* There was an increase in the incidence of cataracts in the Japanese survivors. These started to occur about five years after the explosion.

4) *Effects on ozone layer.* This potential problem was raised by the National Academy of Sciences in 1975 and is discussed by Prof. Donald G. Bates of the Department of Humanities and Social Studies in Medicine, McGill University, Montreal:

"Planners now talk of a nuclear war in terms of the number of megatons involved — and a commonplace (but modest) figure is the 10,000-megaton war, the explosive equivalent of 10-billion tons of TNT. The U.S. National Academy of Sciences suggests such a war would be enough to modify the climate, probably toward cold. For two years or more there would be a 50 per cent reduction in ozone in the atmosphere; there would be significant contamination of food crops for years to come (and) worldwide famine. There would be an increase in the cancer rate of 2-10 per cent. . . . It would be dangerous to go out in the sun.

5) *Delayed fallout.* Quite apart from the long-term damage arising from early fallout, there has always been concern about the possible harmful effects of delayed fallout, which may take years to descend. Only a few isotopes are important because they are produced in large amounts, have long half lives and emit substantial amounts of radiation. (30)

**North American Targets of Potential Relevance to Canada**






James Lorimer and Co., Publishers

## The Nuclear Death of a Nuclear Scientist

# Dying of Radiation

"PERHAPS IT IS MERCIFUL that minds can be immunized against dread. But in the circumstances it is also dangerous. And so it seems well, from time to time, to recall such events as may serve to keep comprehension fresh and exquisite. Among these events may be counted the last days of Dr. Louis A. Slotin, physicist and biochemist who was born in Winnipeg in 1910 and who died in the secret atomic city of Los Alamos at the age of 35."

These are the words of writer Barbara Moon, from an article which appeared in the October 1961 issue of *Maclean's* and won the President's Medal as the top magazine piece in Canada that year.

The article is at least as significant and timely today as it was then. Because there remains ignorance of, or denial of, the intimate effects on the human body of the burst of radiation emitted in the eighth nanosecond of a nuclear bomb detonation, we reprint edited excerpts from "The Nuclear Death of a Nuclear Scientist."

* * * *

HE WAS A STUDIOUS, self-possessed, bespectacled little boy. At The University of Manitoba he grew into a brilliant student of chemistry, with a particular knack for designing the swift, imaginative experiment that would test a theory, and for improvising the necessary apparatus.

He also grew into a seemly youth, reserved and quiet but with a quizzical air that lent him poise, and also what a friend later called "a romantic and elaborate view of himself and the world." He earned his doctorate at The University of London and at the same time turned himself into a crack bantamweight boxer.

* * *

By the age of 30, in the laboratory with his colleagues, he was a leader. At lunch with them he would neglect his food while he talked, reaching among the flatware with his finely shaped, expressive hands, smoothing out a paper napkin, covering it with diagrams . . .

* * * *

In 1944 he was recruited to Los Alamos . . . After a time there he became, in effect, chief armorer of the United States.

* * *

In the glove compartment of his cream Dodge convertible Slotin kept something that looked like a hydroelectric bill. It was the receipt made out by the U.S. Army when it took delivery from him of the epochal A-bomb core, the first one, tested at Alamogordo. For Slotin's job, along with some others, was to run final tests on the active core of each precious A-bomb to make sure it would produce the explicit nuclear burst it was supposed to.

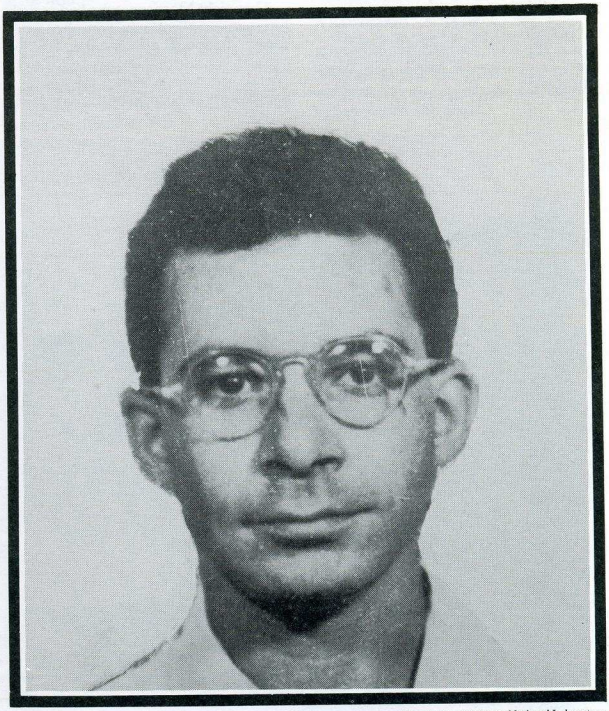
* * *

TUESDAY, May 21, 1946

The day was clear and sunny, like most days at Los Alamos. At noon (Slotin) lunched on chili con carne at the Technical Area PX with his friend and colleague Philip Morrison, a brilliant young theoretical physicist with a bright impudent face and a crippled leg.

* * *

It was around 3 o'clock . . . in a bare, white-painted room, unfurnished except for the sparse, unimposing equipment of critical assembly tests. They watched as



Courtesy Los Alamos National Laboratory

**DR. LOUIS A. SLOTIN**

Slotin set up the experiment on the centre table.

* * *

The assembly was a nickel-plated core of plutonium, weighing about 13 pounds, in the form of two hemispheres which, when put together, rather resembled a gray metallic curling stone. They were the active guts of one of the three A-bombs due to be shipped to Bikini for Operation Crossroads.

The plutonium rested in a half-shell of beryllium, a metal that can bounce escaping neutrons back into the mass of an active metal so they are conserved for the fission process . . . (and) there was a matching upper half-shell of beryllium.

The technique of this experiment consisted of lowering this upper shell until it almost met the lower shell . . . A slow, controlled chain reaction would start. But . . . if the two half-shells came to within an eighth of an inch of each other—thus making a critical surplus of neutrons available simultaneously — a fast, uncontrolled reaction called a "prompt burst" would ensue.

* * *

. . . this time the assembly didn't perform according to Hoyle. So Slotin improvised.

* * *

What Slotin did was to remove two tiny safety devices — spacers — that served to block the upper beryllium hemisphere from closing absolutely on the lower one. Instead he lowered one side (of the upper shell) onto the blade of a screwdriver . . .

* * *

At exactly 3:20 Graves heard a click as the screwdriver blade escaped the crack and the beryllium shell came down on the rest of the assembly. In the same moment a blue glow surrounded the assembly; those in the room felt a quick flux of heat. That was all.

* * *

. . . Slotin . . . (dropped) the beryllium shell onto the floor. It was still 3:20 and he had just been killed.

* * *

Slotin had vomited once, in the ambulance on the way to the Los Alamos hospital. By 6:30 p.m. his left hand was fat and reddened.

* * *

That night Morrison, who had seen the aftermath of Hiroshima, consulted workmen in the special machine shop attached to the lab and together they began to invent a contrivance with a book-rack to stretch across a hospital bed, strings to clip to every page of a book, a ratchet system to turn the pages and a switch to invoke the ratchet. The switch was placed so it could be operated by the reader's elbow. It was a reading-machine — for someone who was not going to have hands to use.

* * *

WEDNESDAY, May 22

By the afternoon, 24 hours after the accident, Slotin's left hand was distended till the skin looked as though it would burst; the right hand, too, was swollen. By Wednesday night the first of the huge, tightly swollen blisters had formed . . .

* * *

FRIDAY, May 24

By now morphine and ice packs could no longer control the pain in Slotin's dying hands. He was getting daily blood transfusions — friends lined up from the clinic door to the street to give blood. Morrison was coming whenever he could to read aloud to Slotin . . . Wives of colleagues brought sheaves of garden gladioli.

* * *

SATURDAY, May 25

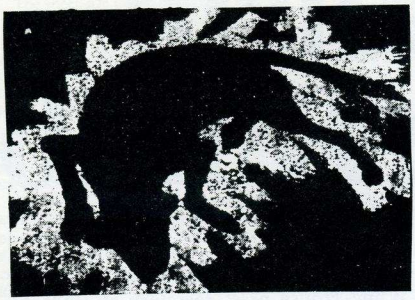
When Slotin's parents arrived, he was still in the phase of apparent latency and was sitting up to greet them. . . . Slotin made light of his condition. But (his

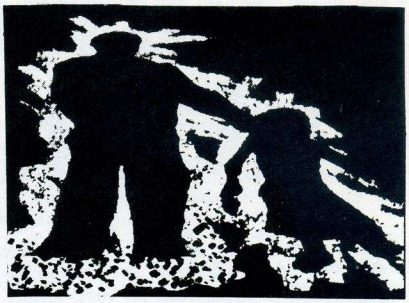
**(See opposite)**



Courtesy Los Alamos National Laboratory

**Los Alamos National Laboratory and townsite. Snow-filled Valle Grande appears upper centre.**





mother), who touched his hair, exclaimed: "It's stiff and dry, like wire."

* * *

SUNDAY, May 26

Annamae Dickie, the nurse in charge of the blood studies, did her routine count of white cells in the blood and burst into tears. The count had plummeted. The white cells — the lifesavers in the blood — had stopped reproducing themselves and were dying.

Slotin was still coherent and alert.

* * *

MONDAY, May 27

"The fifth and sixth days (Sunday and Monday) were evidently very hard ones," Morrison wrote in a letter describing the course of Slotin's illness to their colleagues in the field.

Slotin passed quickly into a toxic state; his temperature and pulse rate rose rapidly; his abdomen became stiff and distended; his gastro-intestinal system broke down completely; all his skin turned to a deep angry puce. His body was dissolving into protoplasmic debris.

* * *

TUESDAY, May 28

The platelets in the blood, which govern its healthy clotting, suffered a fateful drop. "This was a sure sign of the onset of the hemorrhagic phase," wrote Morrison.

* * *

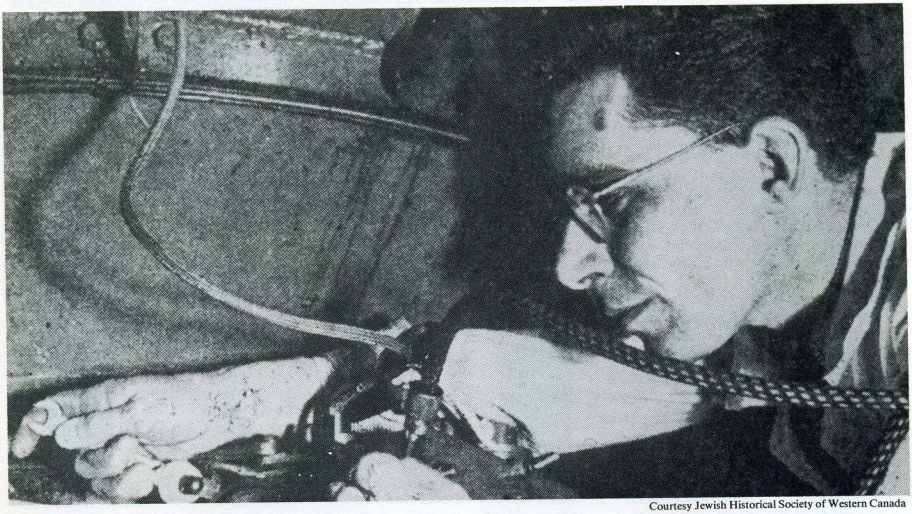
WEDNESDAY, May 29

Slotin was already having periods of mental confusion and by Wednesday was in delirium. His lips turned blue and he was placed in an oxygen tent. By nightfall he had passed into coma.

* * *

THURSDAY, May 30

At 11 a.m. — the ninth day after the accident — Louis Slotin died. ⓢⓞ



Courtesy Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada

**Dr. Louis A. Slotin died in the townsite hospital at Los Alamos.**

# Journalism and The Bomb

By BARRIE ZWICKER

THE ATOMIC AGE BEGAN, in media terms, in a way any reporter can identify with.

It began with a press release, read aloud by a White House press secretary at 10:45 the morning of Aug. 6, 1945. The reporters who had been called to the briefing were told that 16 hours before, "one bomb" had been dropped on Hiroshima, "an important Japanese Army base."

The reporters were told the bomb was more than 2,000 times as powerful as the British "Grand Slam" which until then had been the largest bomb ever used in the history of warfare.

The new bomb, they were told, "is an atomic bomb. It is harnessing the basic power of the universe."

At first, an observer wrote, the reporters seemed unable to grasp what it was about. Once they did, "some of them had difficulty in getting their news desks to grasp the import of it."

We can identify with this. It is not surprising. What is surprising is that 40 years later, with more than 50,000 of these bombs deployed all over the planet, so many people in and out of journalism *still* have not grasped the import of it.

It isn't that the enormity of the bombs' destructiveness is a secret (as it had been, until that press release).

It isn't as if the finest minds have not warned with clarity and eloquence. Albert Einstein, whose genius laid the groundwork for the bomb, said: "When we released energy from the atom, everything changed except our way of thinking. Because of that we drift towards unparalleled disaster."

Bertrand Russell devoted much, perhaps most, of his post-Hiroshima life to warning and campaigning against the bomb. Linus Pauling, the only person to win two Nobel Prizes, wrote his book *No More War* in 1958.

It's unlikely full historical perspective will ever be written on why these voices of wisdom and caution did not prevail.

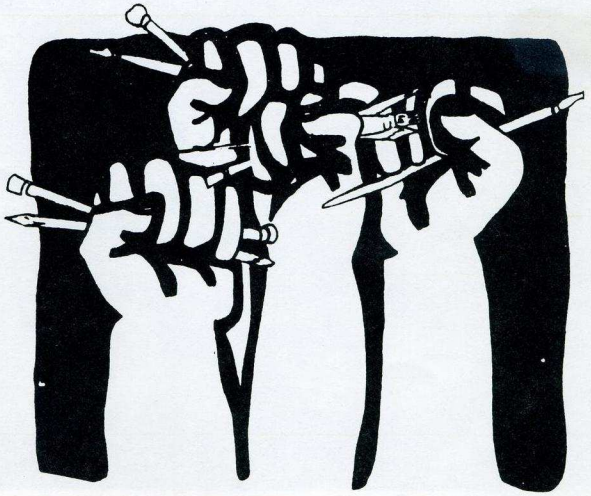
It's unlikely because — in this writer's opinion — nuclear war now is probable. Most of the evidence needed by historians to tell the story of the greatest tragedy of all time will be vaporized, especially if Washington, D.C. is successfully targeted.

But even today, in the narrowing time until what people have called World War III but which surely we must call Extermination Day, we can see some outlines of how the needle got as deeply into the red zone as it now is. (As I wrote this in 1983 Margaret Thatcher had just said she wouldn't hesitate to press the nuclear button. As I update it, in 1985, Washington instantly branded as "propaganda" Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's announcement of a five-month unilateral Soviet ban on nuclear weapons tests.)

### WAR AND THE MEDIA

My main focus is the media's part in getting us into this predicament. Although the media's role is blended with those of the nation state, the culture and technology, it can be isolated to some extent.

There still may be time for useful learning and behavioral change. Of all the elements that are contributing to our drift towards unparalleled disaster, the role of the media may be the one most amenable



MVS file graphic

to rapid (in historical terms) change.

The sheer size and bureaucratic inertia of the military-industrial-academic complexes means they cannot be diverted more than a few degrees from their suicidal directions. More than half the scientists and engineers in the United States now work for the military.

A scientist whose job is perfecting warheads for the MX cannot walk into his lab one day and start working on an anti-cancer vaccine.

Journalists, on the other hand, have long noted that — unlike other industrial products — the news is different every day. (Let us put aside, for the moment, the criticism that "the news remains the same; it just happens to different people.")

A journalist does have some latitude to walk into his or her office tomorrow and write something completely different. More importantly, as the journalist becomes more enlightened over time on any given subject, his or her work will consistently reflect that growth. The bomb-making scientist whose opinions change has much less freedom — or more stark opinions, if you will: continue making bombs, or quit.

We're lucky to be journalists, but our relative freedom imposes upon us a corresponding responsibility.

The arms race challenges the value system of every nation, every organization, of every institution and individual, not least journalism and journalists.

Veteran *CBS* newsman Daniel Schorr told a Foundation for American Communications media seminar in San Francisco: "The biggest ethical problem facing the media today is which of the sea of waving hands in front of the camera to recognize."

But the most significant waving hands are *not* hard to pick out. As Richard Pollak, a former editor of the journalism review *MorE,* told a seminar on War, Peace and the Media in New York in March: "Nuclear holocaust is not just one story among many. The prospect of nuclear extinction is light years ahead of all other stories."

What actions are we going to take — or not take, for an act of omission is a powerful act — about the unparalleled drift to disaster? This is the supreme ethical question faced by each profession and individual alive today.

"The odds are lousy and everyone here knows it," Pollak told the conference sponsored by New York University and the Gannett Foundation. "I come here not as a press critic but as a supplicant: wake up.

"Think of this problem not as an anchorman . . . but as a human being. Think how radically journalism must change. Not a single journalism organization has a peace beat. The ultimate deadline is upon us. Yet the (New York) *Times* has a sports staff of 30 editors and reporters.

"This is not man bites dog; this is man devouring himself. It is the military-industrial complex out of control. It's news.

"Journalists must keep relentless page one pressure to keep this story before our people and our government."

At the same conference, Robert Manoff, former editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review,* contributed a compelling paper, titled:

## COVERING THE BOMB: PRESS AND STATE IN THE SHADOW OF NUCLEAR WAR

Manoff documented how close journalism and the state have been in the matter of war. Taking the dawn of the atomic age as his peg, he noted that one reporter at that White House briefing on Aug. 6, 1945 was neither surprised nor skeptical.

"His name was William L. Laurence. He was a . . . science reporter for the *New York Times.* And he had written the release.

"Laurence, a 15-year *Times* veteran, had been recruited for the Manhattan Project (the secret atomic bomb operation) three months before . . . Laurence would work for the government, but continue to be paid by the *Times,* which would also keep his whereabouts a secret.

"The collaboration was a fruitful one . . ." as Laurence won a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting about the bomb after he went back to the *Times,* to place beside his special citation from the War Department.

Laurence, as the *Times* later would explain, was ". . . with the War Department . . . to explain the atomic bomb to the lay public." In effect, he was hired to sell the bomb to the world.

Laurence's view, Manoff writes, "was an emotional celebration of the science, engineering and industry behind the bomb, couched in superlatives that left . . . dilemmas . . . far behind.

"Reporting the Alamogordo test . . . he equated the bomb's beauty to 'the grand finale of a mighty symphony,' and the mushroom cloud, boiling up from the New Mexico desert, to the Statue of Liberty."

Nevertheless, shortly after Hiroshima — and this is part of our hidden history — there was a worldwide outpouring of human concern about the meaning and portent of the bomb.

During this brief interlude of one precious month there was a stunning example of how the media — well within the boundaries of conventional journalism — could be a powerful reflection of, and therefore promoter of, humanity's concerns (as opposed to those of a nation state).

But this kind of reporting (based on premises of humanitarian concern) was quickly squelched by an American administration even then dominated in its foreign policy by anti-Sovietism. The administration's actions, and the media's knee jerk adoption of the nationalistic administration view as their own ideological framework, set the pattern which has been unbroken in its essentials right to Reaganism today.

But let Manoff sketch the interlude:

"The enormity of the (bomb) and the paucity of detail . . . combined to create a journalistic space in which a different and more troubling view of Hiroshima could be considered.

"It was not a major feature of the first day's coverage, dominated, as it was, by the War Department's releases. But it was one that would assume a prominent place in the coverage until at least the early part of September.

"It appeared first in the words of Clifton Daniel, who wrote from London of 'the terrible toll (the bomb) will levy on Japan.' Hanson W. Baldwin, the paper's military affairs analyst, composed a tormented and angry piece about strategic bombing throughout the war. 'Americans have become a synonym for destruction,' he wrote. 'We may yet reap the whirlwind.'

"For weeks the paper was awash with British Bishops, worried scientists and earnest educators addressing their consciences and the future of the world. The *Times* as a whole, it began to seem, assumed this agenda as the paper's own, and others ignored it at their peril.

"For example the day after a diverse group of scholars and writers gathered at Columbia University for the sixth annual Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, they awoke to find a *Times* story by Morris L. Kaplan, whose incredulous tone was well captured by the headline it bore: ATOM BOMB FAILS TO EXCITE SAVANTS: ONLY 1 OF 31 PAPERS AT THEIR MEETING HERE WARNS BLUNTLY OF DANGERS IT PRESENTS; OTHERS TREAT IT CALMLY.

"It was with evident satisfaction that Mr. Kaplan was able to report the next day that the conference had, at its second session, thrown away its agenda and had confronted, 'with a note of hysteria,' the crisis of the Atomic Age," Manoff writes.

### TWO COMPETING ORIENTATIONS IN COVERAGE

Manoff identifies two basic orientations in the *Times* during this period, one "in its reliance on official sources, in its preoccu-

pation with policy, in its focus on government, basically *statist*.

"The second, largely reactive to the first, took root in the journalistic interstices — in adjectives, in analysis and editorials, in fugitive paragraphs within the statist narrative.

"It was, in its recourse to moral authority, in its dependence on unmediated expression, in its respect for individual opinion, basically a *civil* voice.

". . . the former tended to be a journalism of achievement, the latter one of consequences; the former a journalism of causes, the latter of effects; the former a journalism of politics, the latter, of ethics."

The Cold War began on Sept. 4, 1945. On that day the *Times* published a page-one story headlined SOVIET HINTS RACE FOR ATOM BOMB.

"Where," Manoff writes, "in the weeks after Hiroshima, *Times* editors had chosen to emphasize the moral judgements of critics, by early September they were beginning to feature the political assessments of Congressmen.

"By late September, the Cabinet dispute over sharing the secret had heated up sufficiently to provoke one of the parties to go public with a pre-emptive leak. Aimed at heading off co-operation with the Soviet Union, it turned up as a front page story on Sept. 22."

In early October the U.S. president unilaterally announced the United States, which alone possessed the bomb, would not share its secret nor co-operate with its wartime ally, the Soviet Union. The press fell quickly into line, accepting its government's perspective as its own. Government aims and policies became in effect the valves and filters of media coverage of the bomb from then on and have shaped the premises and outlook of us all in the intervening years.

"Within two months the closure had become complete," writes Manoff. The civil voice was suffocated in the *Times*. The *Times* in this respect represented all American journalism, being then as now the acknowledged leader and primary continuing agenda-setter.

"Quandaries and dilemmas were put aside, or relegated to the political fringe and the journalistic margins."

Hanson Baldwin had written in mid-September: ". . . the iron of public opinion, which was malleable, is setting now into the cold mould of the old order." And the new mould of the old order was the Cold War.

## JOURNALISM AND MILITARY FORCE IN HISTORY

War in the 18th Century, Manoff notes, was the business of absolutist governments. And there were a number of constraints on the conduct of war at that time.

First, the peasant was not to be disturbed at his tilling. In an agrarian economy the peasant was clearly the foundation of wealth for the autocrats. Pillaged peasants cannot pay taxes.

Also, soldiers were impressed or were mercenaries. The unreliability of such soldiers was reflected in de Tocqueville's description of the aristocratic soldier as one who "acts without reflection, triumphs without enthusiasm, and dies without complaint." And there were constraints flowing from the small amount of damage any known weapon could inflict, slowness of transportation, problems of supply and so on.

As a result, it was believed in the 1700's that there were "natural limits" to the size of armies: about 50,000 men.

Then the autocracies fell. But there was more to the end of autocracy and the coming of what we call democracy and the "free Press" than has yet met our eye.

First, the chronology. The "free press" arrived in the wake of "democracy."

(Now, I place quotation marks around these words for compellingly significant reasons.

(Removing the press from control of the authorities — either direct control or control through licensing — was of course a giant step in the *direction of* freedom. But freedom is not an absolute. The press did *not* go from being "unfree" to being "free."

(It did move a significant distance along the continuum which has the abstraction "no freedom" at one end and the abstraction "complete freedom" at the other.

(Notice that politicians have no qualms about using words like "freedom" and "democracy" to lead the public by its conditioned nose.

(The term "free press" linguistically forecloses questions, questions that the term "Western press", for instance, would not. Questions, for instance, about the ideology that suffuses the media in the West because of the prevailing ownership structure. We correctly use the descriptive and non-judgmental term "Soviet press."

(Similarly with "democracy." C.B. Macpherson begins his brilliant Massey Lectures titled *The Real World of Democracy:* "There is a good deal of muddle about democracy."

(We cannot here go sufficiently into Macpherson's analysis of "democracy." We can note, however, that he states: " . . . democracy is not properly to be *equated with* (my emphasis — B.Z.) our unique Western liberal-democracy . . ." and ". . . non-liberal systems which prevail in the Soviet countries, and the somewhat different non-liberal systems of most of the underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa, have a genuine historical claim to the title democracy."

("Democracy originally meant rule by the common people, the plebeians. It was very much a class affair: it meant the sway of the lowest and largest class," Macpherson explains. "In the present Soviet countries . . . democracy, we may say, came as a revolution against the liberal capitalist society and state. The political movements that came to power there thought of themselves, and do now think of themselves, as democratic. For them democracy has had something like its original meaning, government by or for the common people, by or for the hitherto oppressed classes."

Further, as Macpherson points out, Western style democracy "is, like any



other system, a system of power." It is a double system of power in which power relationships are controlled through access to accumulated capital and property, and in which people are *governed* (his emphasis), "that is, made to do things they would not otherwise do, and made to refrain from doing things they otherwise would do."

(Macpherson notes a "third fact, which some people find admirable and some people would prefer not to have mentioned." That is that "democracy" and capitalism go together. Yet capitalism came first and "democracy" was an add-on, in the final analysis, suitable to capitalism.

(". . .the democratic franchise did not come easily or quickly . . . it required many decades of agitation and organization . . . The female half of the population had to wait even longer for an equal political voice: not until substantial numbers of women had moved out from the shelter of the home to take an independent place in the labour market was women's claim to a voice in the political market allowed."

(The preferred terminology, then, would be "Western-style democracy," "liberal-democracy" or "capitalist democracy.")

### WAR, JOURNALISM AND DEMOCRACY

Return now to the relationship *within Western history* of "democracy," journalism and war.

Clausewitz was one of the earliest observers to see how crucial this triple intersection was, Manoff notes. Clausewitz in 1832 could write that by engaging what he called the "heart and sentiments of a nation" Western states completely altered the nature of War.

With the move away from an agrarian economy, with the rise in technical capacity to destroy, with the accumulation of wealth and with the availability of masses of people to fight (if they could be persuaded of the righteousness of the state's cause), the scene was set for a major escalation in the size and destructiveness of war.

The persuasion part was crucial and the newly "free" press was to be the agent of persuasion.

But a press with a strong self-image as simply "free" cannot knowingly accept a role as agent of the state. The state therefore must find a cause which the gatekeepers of the press will find righteous on its own merits.

Early on Western states found one, serviceable in all circumstances. The manipulation of the sentiment evoked by the abstraction "democracy" was apparent, as Macpherson notes, "by the time of the First World War, a war which the Western allied leaders could proclaim was fought 'to make the world safe for democracy.' "

This same reason was invoked, among others, by successive U.S. administrations to justify the U.S. war in Vietnam.

(The Reagan administration still relies to some extent on the "defence of democracy" argument to justify its support for the regime in El Salvador, and its undeclared war against the government of Nicaragua.

(The major premise in the Nicaraguan case is that for a Marxist government to simultaneously be democratic in *any* sense of the word democratic is simply a contradiction in terms. Marxism and democracy are implied by the administration and, in practice, inferred by the mainline media, to be fairly precise terms, like oranges and apples, with no gradations, no subtleties, no possibility of change and above all, no overlap.

(When facts incontrovertibly show that the simplistic manipulation of labels does not correspond with reality — as with the democratically - elected Marxist government of Salvadore Allende in Chile — the facts are physically erased through application of illegitimate military violence.

(A U.S. administration will then return to creation of reality in the public mind by means of repetitious rhetoric with the abstraction "democracy" at its manipulative core. Historical fact — for instance, the existence at one time of a Marxist-style democracy — is displaced in the public mind by a synthetic belief that such a democracy is impossible.

(Exactly in the degree to which the mainline media do not find politically-relevant (i.e., widespread and persistent) means for questioning and modifying politicians' manipulative use of dangerous abstractions, those mainline media are precisely *agents of the state.*)

The foregoing, it should be evident, is relevant to an unholy vortex: the power of words to prepare for war; journalism's entanglement in what could well be termed war propaganda; both the perception of and the condition of Western-style democracy today; and the danger of globalization of local conflict.

But it is to the historical relationship of global conflict (today meaning nuclear war or extermination), "democracy" and journalism that I wish to return now.

Popular ardour fanned by the press enabled early "democracies" to dramatically change the face of battle, Manoff writes.

"Where 17th Century armies were thought to have natural limits of 50,000 men, democratic armies grew so large that French revolutionary forces lost 1.5-million . . .

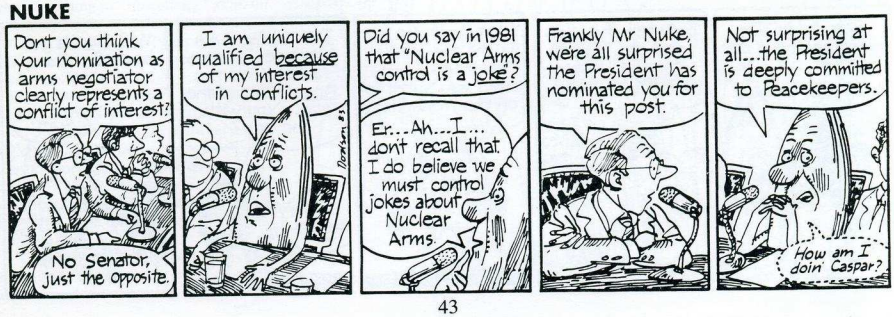
"Popular wars presented neither serious political nor journalistic problems for democratic states until 1914," according to Manoff.

### WORLD WAR I: A TURNING POINT

Then came the First World War, the most ferocious until then. It left 13 million dead; the British lost enough men to field a 17th Century army in one particular single day of combat.

The alliance of the civil society and the state under the banner of the nation was for the first time brought seriously into question.

People, especially in Europe, began to question the legitimacy of mass warfare. But the questioning was deflected, "nowhere . . . more successfully than in the United States," writes Manoff.



". . . in the first decades of the century, the Roosevelt administration had already formalized planning for modern warfare by creating a War College and the General Staff Corps. Roosevelt told a British journalist it was time "to get my fellow countrymen into the proper mental attitude." The press for the most part required little coercion "to play the role the state required," writes Manoff. Journalists signed on to write war propaganda.

Six thousand press releases by the U.S. government during the First World War produced 20,000 columns *per week* of "news."

"As revealing," Manoff writes, "as what the newspapers ran was what they didn't: when pacifist O.G. Villard's *New York Evening Post* printed the complete text of secret Allied treaties, which dramatically undercut the public's idealism (about President Wilson's) war aims, only nine other papers published even small excerpts, while the *New York Times* condemned the leak."

Walter Lippmann, who himself had signed on to write war propaganda, reflected later: ". . . it seemed impossible to wage the war energetically except by inciting the people to paroxysms of hatred and to utopian dreams."

The story was much the same during the Second World War. This is not to say the First and Second World Wars were indistinguishable. Nor to say waging war against Hitler's Germany was mistaken. Most emphatically not. The point *is*, however, that the media (by this time, radio and film were important components of propagandizing the public) were supporting war efforts *on terms established by the state.*

"By the summer of 1942," Manoff writes, "as Walter Laqueur has shown in compelling detail, one of the war's biggest stories, the slaughter of European Jewry, was widely known in Allied capitals but scantily reported." It was believed in Washington and London, Laqueur concluded, "that stories like these would at best sidetrack the Allies from the war effort . . ."

A story the state *wanted* told (Manoff's emphasis), however, faced no such difficulties "and by the summer of 1945 the ease with which William L. Laurence could shift from the *Times* to the Manhattan project and back again can be taken as symptomatic of the interpenetration of the press and the state which mass warfare had fostered."

Coverage of the bomb in the Western press has been predominantly from the point of view of (perceived) national self interest. This is true of what was not sought out, what was sought out, what was reported, and the interpretation of what was reported, including play.

## AEC COVERED LIKE SOCIETY NEWS

In 1984, Manoff reports, "Herbert Marks, general counsel for the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission — responsible for all atomic research and weapons productions — observed that the press covered his agency 'rarely with more penetrating comment or follow-up than that which accompanies the society news.' "

Manoff contends there has been what he calls a "failure of nuclear reporting" especially over the past 20 years, the years during which the nuclear arsenal has built to its present enormity.

The failure, he suggests, is due to the media's acceptance of the state's goals. These included public indifference. With indifference, the technocrats and strategists and the military-industrial-academic complex which pays them could get on with their own games and profits.

"First," Manoff writes, "the story has been largely ignored. In light of news judgments routinely applied elsewhere, this represents a stunning lack of attention.

"In all of 1972, for example, the *CBS* Evening News ran only one minute on the military balance. In 1973, . . . *CBS* ran nothing at all on the balance story.

"Second," Manoff continues, "such reporting as there has been on strategic doctrine over the last decades has largely accepted policy declarations at face value."

And coverage has "ignored the fact that declared policy represents only the facade of a complex strategic structure," he adds. That is an extremely kind interpretation.

". . . one might have watched years of television news," Manoff concludes on this point, "read volumes of magazine coverage, and followed some of the best newspapers for months at a time without encountering anything but the most perfunctory descriptions . . . of America's strategic policy." Yet these perfunctory descriptions (basically the highly varnished if not tainted declarations by politicians of nationalistic intent, crafted by clever phrase makers) have been the language (i.e., thinking) tools provided to the public by the media for the public's consideration of nuclear extermination.

That there have been honourable exceptions to the failure of nuclear reporting does not detract from the enormity of the collective lapse.

Even in those cases where the media have taken an interest in a nuclear weapons issue, it has usually been because of a policy disagreement *within the state* rather than through initiative by the media.

Manoff cites several U.S. examples. A Canadian example might be the cruise missile controversy. Because the government, exemplified by Prime Minister Trudeau, was divided on the issue of cruise testing, it became a story. It's the controversy, more than the enormity of the weapon, that is at the heart of the "newsworthiness" of the cruise testing story.

As Manoff remarks: "The press, for its part, merely has to report a controversy in order to find itself well outside the customary limits of its coverage. As always, it is the state which seems to establish the boundaries of journalistic inquisitiveness and anticipate the parameters of responsible dissent. The press may discover these limits but it does not set them."

Manoff's conclusion is thought-

**NUKE**



provoking for any journalist who has read this far.

Journalists should recognize the "actual relationship (the media have) with the state, on questions of war and peace," he contends.

And journalists should embrace the relationship (media as servant of the state) "instead of waging an imaginary contest in the name of a liberty it has never been able to exercise."

Journalism should, in other words, "cast aside the delusion of objectivity" and recognize itself "as a partner of the state."

But the press should serve the state by also recognizing the state "needs the truth . . . in order to survive." The assumptions state leaders have about other leaders and other countries should be vigorously and thoroughly scrutinized by the media *in the interests of the state's survival.*

"Journalism . . . must find the freedom it yearns for by affirming the actual limitations on its liberty — not by persuading itself, as it has always tried to, that they do not exist.

"In fulfilling the objectives (of scrutinizing and evaluating the state's war policy), the pressing needs of the state coincide with the highest aspirations of journalism."

## A NEW ETHIC FOR JOURNALISM

This is, virtually, a new ethic for journalism, or at least a renewed basis for the existing journalistic ethics — save one. For the thoughtful traditional journalist, the new ethic provides a thorough justification for pursuing greatly the story that is of transcending significance compared to other stories: the prospect of extinction and how to avoid it.

Things are going very badly. The needle is deep, deep into the red zone. Individual heroes are not going to emerge out of nowhere to save us. Large impersonal forces have a deadly momentum. Only large personal forces can stop them.

Western journalists in the past few decades have clung to "objectivity" as an untouchable ethic of their craft. As a synonym for fairness, "objectivity" has merit, even if more preached than practiced.

But in the final analysis, as Donna Wolfolk Cross wrote in her article "Junk-Food Journalism" in the February issue of *Penthouse:* "In fact, to be 'objective' in a news report usually means to conform to traditional ways of thinking. *New York times* columnist Tom Wicker calls the practice of objectivity 'an act of advocacy for the status quo.' "

"Objectivity" leads to — or is invoked to justify — the journalist distancing himself or herself from issues.

Distancing oneself from the prospect of one's own unnecessary and horrible death is fatally maladaptive, however. The uniquely threatening jam we're in forces a basic reappraisal of the journalistic ethic of "objectivity" and the emotional hiding place it provides.

If the missiles are launched, it will be as much a failure of journalism as anything else. Journalism that did not put first things first, that did not crusade, that conducted business as usual in the store while dispassionately watching foolish men lug keg after keg to dynamite into the store basement.

Thousands of journalists and writers marched in the giant and totally peaceful rally for peace in New York City on June 12, 1982. To put it in negative terms, they had ceased to find meaningful that part of their journalistic ethic which would have prevented them from expressing their concern to be living journalists rather than dead journalists.

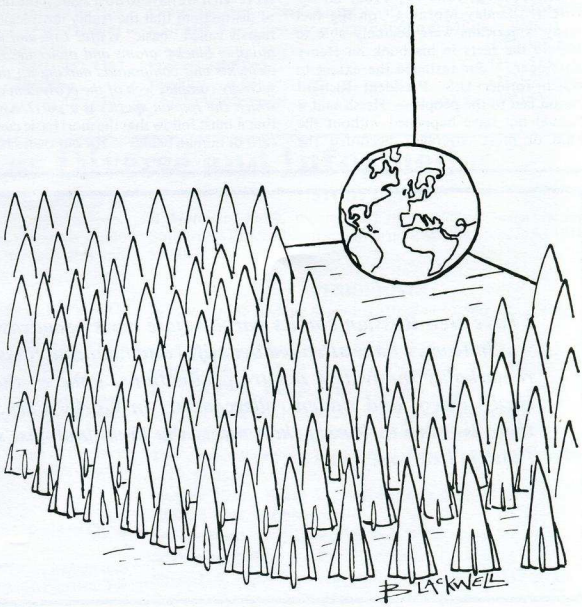
To put it positively, they saw that peace is not only the biggest story on earth, it's also the greatest need on earth. That the "other side" is suicide.

The time to work fully on the story of the threat of universal death is now. History has handed us the assignment and marked it "MUST" and "URGENT." Nuclear war doesn't lend itself to post blow-up analyses. There will be no retrospectives. Journalism will end with everything else.

Journalism and activism for peace are one and the same, insofar as the journalism is of the highest order and is about the threat of war. The telling of it is simultaneously an attempt to prevent it. To paraphrase Manoff, the highest needs of humanity coincide with the highest aspirations of journalism (and coincidentally the need of the journalist for personal survival.)

It isn't easy journalism. But it's exciting. And involving, since there's a wealth of fact and history and secrets and opinion to be dug out and flung to the fore. It's the most challenging journalism there is today, demanding that we understand our craft better, that we place more of ourselves than ever before on the line, that we provide better context than we normally do, that we use language more precisely than we usually do, that we have more courage than is normally required of us, that we dig deeper, work harder, ask more questions, work in new ways and with new people, that we grow faster than we have, that we give up most of our hiding places.

It is, in the words of newspaper columnist and peace activist Sister Mary Jo Leddy, "time for ordinary people to do extraordinary things." 30



# A Crisis of Perception

WE LIVE IN a perceptual crisis. The external parts of our nervous system — primarily the mass media — are delivering signals dangerously out of accord with the real world.

As Donna Woolfolk Cross wrote in her article "Junk-Food Journalism" in the February issue of *Penthouse:* "Our survival as a species may well depend on the nature of the information we get from the news media."

And as news consultant Frank Magid explains: "It is not surprising . . . that research indicates (TV) ratings rise when the broadcaster is successful in exposing the listener to what he *wants* to hear . . . In terms of news, this means ratings are improved when listeners are told not what they *should* know but what they want to hear."

Media critic Edwin Diamond summarizes: "Press-guideline values . . . may work against the basic task of getting at and facing 'the facts.' "

Seymour Hersh is one of the top investigative reporters — if not the top one — in the world today.

Commenting, June 19, 1983, on the *CBC's* "Sunday Morning" on the fact many Americans were scarcely able to believe the facts in his book on Henry Kissinger — for instance the extent to which former U.S. President Richard Nixon lied to the people — Hersh said it "could not have happened without the kind of press coverage" accorded the White House. And he spoke in the present tense as well as past of the towering problem of media distortion.

While the media are thus self-disabled there is no shortage of those filled with certainty about their worldview and about what is of ultimate significance, those would-be arbiters of what it means to "get back to the basics." (It also happens that most of these voices of certainty are the very voices of the status quo which it is the media's disabled norm to accord greatest play.)

Our synthetic perceptual environment — both created by and lived within by the media — predominates with these voices which in Canada resonate that "our main task is to get this country moving again," that "the most important thing is to restore full employment," that "the private sector must be freed to do its job," that "the key thing is to reduce government waste," that "we have to get government off the backs of the people," "get back to the Three R's," and so on.

Are we in journalism so befuddled by such abstracted concerns that we cannot see (even if we have to do it against the tide of distraction) that the reality most legitimately called "basic" is *life? Life and its building blocks: atoms and molecules of elements and compounds making up the sacredly complex web of the ecosystem of which the human species is a part?* And that it must follow that the most basic *concern* of human beings — for our own sake and for the sake of the system, which are in any event the same — must be to preserve life — to survive?

Without life and its support system there is no philosophy (no "meaning of life"), no morality (no "good guys," "bad guys" or any kind of "guys"), no education (no Three R's version or otherwise), no economy (no enterprise — state, private or mixed) and *no journalism* (good, bad or indifferent).

Just as physicists know most about the nature and scale of destruction that awaits unleashing, so do physicians know most about the effects of assaults on human flesh (and the limits on protecting and regenerating cells, the building blocks of human tissue).

Dr. Frank G. Sommers is a lecturer at the Department of Psychiatry at The University of Toronto and founder and president of Physicians for Social Responsibility, Canada. In *Nuclear War and Public Health* he writes: "In light of the medical realities, to offer to help plan for a post-nuclear war world can be a profoundly unethical act," and "Physicians of whatever background as they practice their new specialty — preventing nuclear war — are living up to the most noble aspect of their calling: the preservation of life. This, truly, is a medical issue."

Can it be a journalism issue any less?

— B.Z. (30)

***I have seen Russian comics parody state news broadcasts so well that the audience was in tears. I have attended beautiful and haunting Russian Orthodox services, seen remarkably innovative theatre productions, gone to the movies, Moscow's "Blue Bird" disco, and ridden rollercoasters in Gorky Park. Alas for Time magazine, there is more to Russia than meets the kremlinologist's eye. — Canadian student Patricia Pearson.***

## Resources

# Peace Organization Contacts Include Scientists, Citizens, Generals

AS THE PEACE MOVEMENTS grow, a growing number of contacts is available. Peace organizations are increasingly paying attention to setting up lines of communication for the media.

The main obstacle to sophisticated, expanded coverage of war-and-peace issues has been at the media end. Peace organizations typically have many members with long-standing concern for and wide-ranging grasp of the issues.

Contacts in the military arms industry and external affairs establishments are not listed here. This is not because they should not be called, but because they have for long been easily available, and in the news. They have substantial public affairs offices and people who initiate contacts with the news media or respond to inquiries.

A reporter could do worse than call a local peace group, arrange a visit, see what's happening and what's planned and establish contacts — just as he or she would do with any beat. If a reporter should be assigned to a "peace beat" let *Content, SOURCES,* the *Columbia Journalism Review* and *Editor & Publisher* know, because it will be a first for North America when it happens.

### CANADA

CANDIS (Canadian Disarmament Information Service), Toronto, Ont .....(416) 598-7985
The Peace Tax Fund Committee, Victoria, B.C. ..(604) 384-5532
End the Arms Race Coalition, Vancouver, B.C. ..(604) 736-2366
Project Ploughshares, Vancouver, B.C. Office ...(604) 733-0141
Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament, Edmonton, Alta. .....(403) 452-4393
Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, Waterloo, Ont. .....(519) 888-6541
Cruise Missile Conversion Project, Toronto, Ont. .....(416) 532-6720
NAC Survival Committee, National Action Committee on the Status of Women, Toronto, Ont. .....(416) 922-3246 3246
Voice of Women, Toronto, Ont. .....(416) 922-2997
Friends of the Earth, Ottawa, Ont. .....(613) 235-3860
Operation Dismantle, Ottawa, Ont. .....(613) 722-6001
Project Ploughshares, Ottawa, Ont. Office .....(613) 230-0860
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Ottawa, Ont. .....(613) 236-2976
Veterans for Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament, Halifax, N.S. .....(902) 964-0559

### GERMANY

Greens, Bonn .....011 49 228 69 20 21
or
011 49 228 63 84 60

### BRITAIN

CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) ..011 44 1 263 0977

### UNITED STATES

Center for Defence Information. .....(202) 484-9490
CNFMP (Coalition for a New Foreign & Military Policy) .....(202) 546-8400
Freeze Campaign .....(314) 533-1169
Mobilization for Survival .....(212) 533-0008
SANE, Washington .....(202) 546-7100

# Publications Diverse and Informed

A WEALTH of eye-opening information which deserves to be known much more widely is available from diverse publications. Particularly recommended are the two books, the study guide and *The Defense Monitor, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* and *Nuclear Times.* But ordering at least a single copy of each periodical would be an excellent move.

In the foreword to *The Idea of Disarmament!,* Lawrence D. Weiler, a former U.S. government official with unsurpassed expertise in disarmament affairs, states: **"The complacent or self-righteous ones who would argue otherwise cannot point to any case in history where an arms race did not end in war."**

Near the conclusion of the book, Geyer states: **"Disarmament, of course, isn't everything. But without it, there won't be anything."**

Between is a condensation of the facts and issues of the arms race second to none. The other material recommended is of similar calibre.

### PAPERBACK BOOKS

*The Idea of Disarmament!,* by Alan Geyer, The Brethren Press, Elgin, Illinois 1982, $15.60.

*Canada and the Nuclear Arms Race,* edited by Ernie Regehr and Simon Rosenblum, James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, Toronto 1983, $12.95.

### STUDY GUIDE

*A Matter of Faith,* by the staff of *Sojourners* magazine and Sojourners Peace Ministry, Sojourners, Washington, D.C. 1981, $3.50.

### PERIODICALS

*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* 1020-24 E. 58th St., Chicago, IL 60037.

*The Defense Monitor,* Center for Defense Information, 122 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002.

*In These Times,* 1509 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622.

*Mother Jones,* 607 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94105.

*The Nation,* 333 6th Ave., New York, NY 10014.

*The Nuclear Free Press,* c/o OPIRG, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 7B8, $10.00/yr.

*Nuclear Times,* Room 512, 298 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10001, $22/yr. in Canada.

*SANE World,* SANE, 514 C St. NE, Washington, DC 20002.

*Sojourners,* 1309 L St. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

*Soviet Life,* 1706 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

*WIN,* 326 Livingston St., Brooklyn, NY 11217.

# Renewing The Impact: "Extra-Visual" Journalism

"HOW ON EARTH, for instance, is one to give readers a genuine feel of the My Lai massacre and all the evil that accompanied it, in just 250 words? Somehow, I tried and tried. Wrote and re-wrote. As for the result, you tell me what you think."

Those are the words of my friend Sainath Palagummi, Deputy editor of *BLITZ*. *BLITZ* is a weekly paper published in Bombay; it and four sister publications have a combined readership of close to six million.

In August 1983 Palagummi pioneered what could perhaps be called a new form of journalism, "extra-visual" journalism. It takes the form of a supplement to a mass distribution paper. It is factual journalism which deals with fundamental questions.

His first supplement was titled "Picture of India 1983." It used only officially-sanctioned government statistics, about housing and hunger and the place of women, for instance. But these statistics were juxtaposed with photos. The photos basically showed the statistics were self-serving for the most part, or that at best the statistics constituted an emotionless mask for the reality they supposedly represented.

Palagummi's May 1985 supplement, "*BLITZ* Against War. Apocalypse No," juxtaposes brief, trenchant copy with photos dealing with precisely that copy. "Visuals in themselves, with just a few captions, as in a photo-essay, will certainly not have the desired impact," Palagummi writes.

The form is demanding. "It's a labour of love that took nearly two and a half years to complete: two years to collect the photographs from nearly 30 countries and months to design and produce."

"In a tv/video age," Palagummi notes, "more and more people read less and less. There are different ways of responding to this very negative phenomenon which precludes people from reading serious and vital information. One way is to bemoan the passing of the good old days, which never really existed. The other is to adapt to the new situation and devise forms which will hold the most impatient of readers."

An Australian peace group has expressed the hope it can reprint 10,000 copies, with an Aussie wraparound covering ANZUS issues. Palagummi is giving permission to anyone who wants to reproduce his supplement to do so. He only insists on "non-distortion of the political line" and including his byline. He produces page negatives at cost, minus the *BLITZ* logo, so that the reproducing group can fill in its own name. (He welcomes money contributions, however, as he's trying to finance an edition for non-*BLITZ* readers in English and every major Indian language.)

It's telling and fundamental that *BLITZ* makes no claim for the supplement being "objective" or "neutral" as these terms are understood in Western journalism. "Frankly from that standpoint (our supplement) would be characterized as one-sided and biased. And it is: as one-sided as reality often is, as biased as facts often are," writes Palagummi. — B.Z.

(Note: Any organization interested in finding out more about reprinting the *BLITZ* supplement should call or write me at the address given in the inside front cover.)

# BLITZ AGAINST WAR



# APOCALYPSE NO!

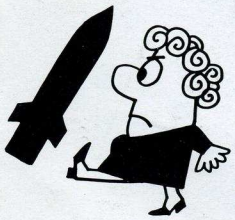
*'There have been 1,656 attempts to secure peace through an arms race since 650 B.C. Of these, 1,640 led to war. The rest, to the participants' economic ruin'*

"**MANY JOURNALISTS ARGUE** with deep and honourable conviction that their job is to report in a value-free and non-judgmental way, and that they will be impaired from doing this if they are seen to be committed to a position. (But) no journalism is ever free of value judgments or bias.

"Journalists in our tradition are in favour of free access to information, of honesty in government, of responsible and accountable public officials, of open elections, of access to law courts and parliaments, of the protection of journalistic sources. All of these issues are controversial in certain segments of the population. But to (journalists) these are not controversial: our life and work is informed by them.

"I contend that to wish for the survival of the world is similarly non-controversial . . .

"We need to give the arms race more ink and airtime than we have been giving. We must exercise our judgment and bias in favour of bringing this topic constantly before our publics **in order to encourage action.** This is interventionist. We are similarly interventionist about crime, good government, liberty. Why not about world survival?"



—Patrick Watson, "Robinson Crusoe and the Bomb, Fantasy in the Arms Race and the Role of Journalists," *CUSO Journal,* 1983.