



FRED WEIR

THE ARMS MENACE

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fred Weir is a 28-year-old history graduate who has travelled widely in both Eastern and Western Europe, and in the Middle East. He is currently the editor of *New Horizons* magazine.

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By Fred Weir

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For more than thirty years, an ever-intensifying arms race has been the central fact of human existence. The destructive potential of the global arms stockpile has, in our day, reached such terrifying levels that for some people it has ceased to hold any meaning whatsoever. Mention of the fearful danger often calls forth no more than an apathetic shrug, or an allusion to the immutability of 'human nature'. The arms race is generally thought to take place in a sphere totally removed from everyday existence, following internal dynamics which are well beyond any kind of public control. Nothing could be further from the truth.

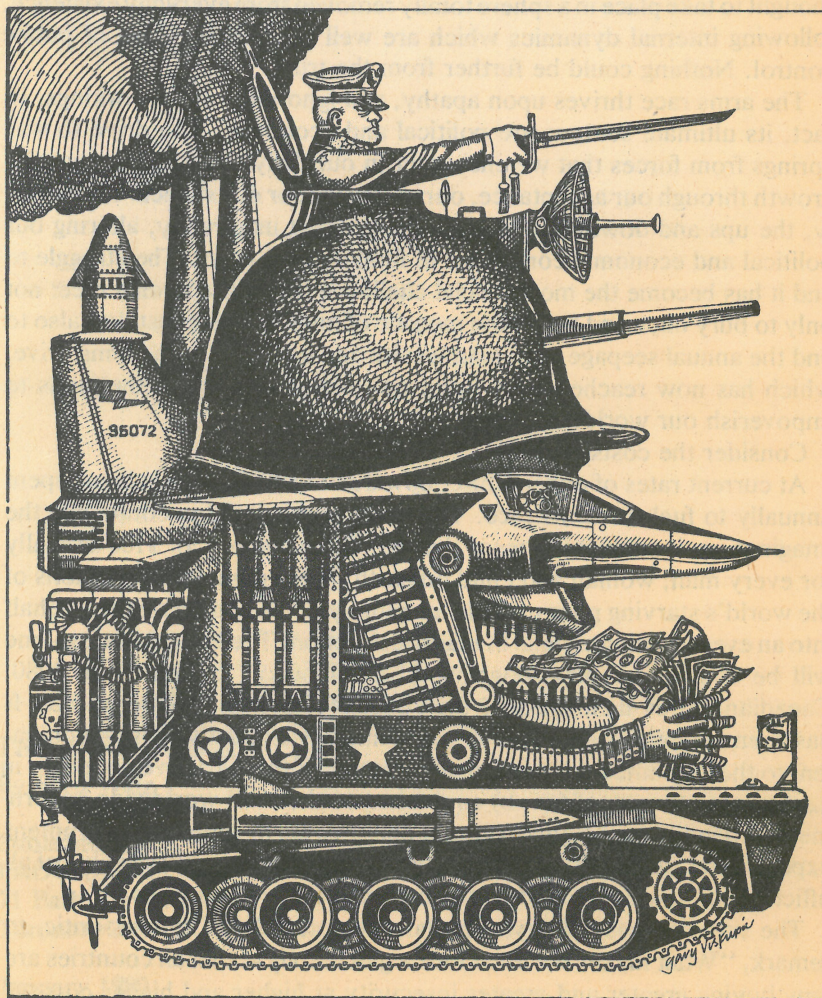
The arms race thrives upon apathy, and ignorance of its workings. In fact, its ultimate sources are political and economic. The drive to war springs from forces that we encounter in our daily lives. We support its growth through our acceptance, our confusion, or our silence. Conversely, the ups and downs of the arms drive affect us directly, altering our political and economic conditions in fundamental ways. The struggle to end it has become the most crucial challenge facing the human race: not only to bury once and for all the menace of nuclear holocaust, but also to end the annual seepage of human wealth and energy into the arms drive, which has now reached such immense proportions that it threatens to impoverish our world.

Consider the costs:

At current rates of expenditure, upwards of \$400 billion is being spent annually to fuel the arms race. The scale of this buildup confounds the imagination: it amounts to more than \$1 billion *per day*, or \$100 annually for every man, woman and child on earth. More money than millions of the world's starving poor make in an entire year, is poured on their behalf into an ever-growing arsenal of mass destruction. The United States alone will be spending a mind-boggling \$122 billion on "defense" in 1980. Canadian figures are in line with the trend: \$4 billion, or \$160 per person. It has been computed that the total world military expenditure is: a) equivalent to the combined gross national products of the sixty-five countries in Latin America and Africa; b) equivalent to the total worldwide government expenditures on education, c) about twice as large as government expenditures on health; or d) about fifteen times as large as the value of all official assistance provided to the underdeveloped countries.

The situation has led Alva Myrdal, the noted Swedish arms-critic, to remark, "What makes the arms race a global folly is that all countries are now buying greater and greater insecurity at higher and higher costs."

The figures deserve reciting because they represent far more to us than numerical abstractions. Embodied in those amounts are tremendous investments, often of the very best human creativity and labour. Properly channelled, those forces could have enriched our lives as new homes or schools, art galleries or industrial projects. Instead, the value has been pumped into an ever-growing mass of armaments. Today, the arms race hangs like dark storm-clouds above all our heads, threatening to explode at any moment in a hail of destruction.



An issue of such central concern to the future of humanity, as the arms race is, should occupy the attention of scientists, scholars and governments. Yet not a thousandth part of what is spent on armaments finds its way into peace initiatives. The debate around the arms race — insofar as it is discussed in public — is carried out at the crudest possible level: finger-pointing, sensational “revelations”, and statistical distortions characterize the average newspaper item. Understanding does not result.

What confronts us in the daily press is the argument — emanating from generals, politicians and editors — that this rapid accumulation of military hardware is necessary to ‘preserve the peace’. Oft repeated is the old adage that if you want peace, you should prepare for war. . . .

To many people, this logic seems compelling. After all, any confrontation has two sides, and who knows what the other side is up to?

Also, some very influential voices are whispering in our ears.

“Soviet policy is essentially built up for a frontal, all-out attack on the West”, says Joseph Luns, Secretary-General of NATO.

“America is becoming number two!” declares the Committee on the Present Danger, a group of prominent Americans which numbers generals and Congressmen in its ranks, “The early 1980’s threaten to be a period of Soviet strategic nuclear superiority . . .” The *Toronto Sun* echoes, “The Soviets are capable of wiping out all America’s land-based missiles in a half-hour holocaust . . . Yet America has no retaliatory capabilities that add up to a satisfactory deterrent.”

To accept these arguments at face value is to conclude that the “price” of peace must be to constantly keep up our military guard, to stay one step ahead of the “enemy”. Yet, forgotten in all this is the central historical experience of our century: war preparations lead inexorably in one direction — to war. Each war of our time has been more devastating than the last; we stand today on the brink of what may well be the final holocaust. The burgeoning pace of modern technological development presents us with a harsh decision, which no appeal to the political formulations of the past can avoid: end war forever, or be destroyed! This is the terrible truth that is concealed behind the strident polemics and balance of forces computations that constitute the public face of the arms drive.

In aiming for a more complete understanding of this global crisis, there are two basic questions that we should explore. First, what are the mechanics of build-up, and who is initiating the process? Second, what are the underlying social, political and economic factors that have given rise to, and still sustain the arms race?

CHAPTER II.

"We face a challenge, and we will do whatever is necessary to meet it", declared Jimmy Carter in April, 1978. The President's words reflected a carefully cultivated sense of urgency, the need to counter a real and visible threat to the security of the United States.

More properly, however, it was Carter who was posing the challenge. Since the end of WW II, the United States has maintained a massive strategic superiority over the Soviet Union. Analysts now claim that the gap is narrowing, that the USSR is 'catching up' in the arms race. At the same time, meaningful channels for disarmament have developed, in the form of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, (the SALT-I Agreement was signed in 1972, and SALT-II is still waiting ratification), and the Vienna Talks in Mutual Force Reductions in Europe. Carter has chosen to ignore the potential for peace, and to concentrate on facing the military "threat" implied in the Soviet progress toward strategic parity. In line with this, the United States has developed a number of new weapons systems, which represent a qualitative escalation of the arms race, and which are designed to restore to America her 'strategic edge' over the Warsaw Pact nations. If these advanced weapons are deployed, they must certainly mean the acceleration of the arms drive to a precarious new level.

Specifically, four American initiatives threaten to wipe-out any current prospects for peaceful disarmament:

- **The Neutron Bomb:** Not really a "bomb" as such, the neutron bomb is known as an 'enhanced radiation weapon'. This means that it has a relatively small blast effect, but generates far more deadly neutron radiation than standard nuclear weapons. The N-bomb is designed to be used in surface-to-surface tactical missiles and even in artillery shells. In other words, it is intended for use in "conventional" war situations, against columns of tanks, or troops. Therein lies its great danger, as more and more experts are pointing out, since it would tend to blur the distinction between conventional and nuclear warfare, thus making escalation from one to the next much more probable.

With the development of the neutron bomb, that old spectre from the 1950's, the prospect of a "win-able" nuclear war walks abroad once again in the Pentagon and the daily press. It represents a fearful throwback, and one which threatens to nullify all the advances made toward peace in recent years.

Although deployment of the N-bomb has been postponed, largely due to pressure from peace forces, it is almost certain to reappear once the political "heat" dies down.

- **The Cruise Missile:** Another weapon ready for use that threatens to rupture any hope of stabilizing the arms race is the Cruise missile. Armed with a nuclear warhead, the Cruise missile is capable of flying at high subsonic speeds and extremely low altitudes in order to evade radar, and hit its target with great accuracy. Cruise missiles are relatively cheap to produce, and therefore could be deployed in great numbers. The Pentagon claims that it is a 'tactical' as opposed to a 'strategic' weapon, and therefore should not be included in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. This simple deception could make a mockery of attempts at nuclear disarmament. Any limitation of big 'strategic' nuclear missiles would be meaningless if the Americans developed the ability to blanket another country with small, nuclear-armed Cruise missiles fired from bombers, ships, submarines, and surface launchers.

Another aspect of the Cruise missile is especially problematic from the point of view of controlled disarmament: since the missile requires no identifiable launch facilities, such as silos, submarine launch tubes, or airfields, it is almost impervious to international inspection. Technologically, the Cruise missile is a major escalation of the arms race. Politically, the threat it poses to development of mutual trust and understanding may well be explosive.

- **The MX Missile Program:** The largest and most costly missile effort ever undertaken by the United States, the MX is essentially a system of missile launchers which would constantly move underground, thus reducing their vulnerability to attack. While military and government personnel are debating the 'usefulness' of this program, most observers agree that the main result of the \$30 billion project will be to force the Soviets to embark on a similar effort of their own, thus driving the arms race spiral up another notch.

- **The Pershing II:** A medium-range 'battlefield' nuclear missile which NATO, after fierce internal debate, decided late last year to deploy in Europe. In adopting the weapon, NATO turned a deaf ear to Soviet pleas that the Pershing II would upset the precarious balance-of-forces in Europe, and compel them to launch a program to upgrade their own nuclear capability. (NATO also scoffed at a no-strings-attached Soviet initiative to withdraw 20,000 troops and 1000 tanks from the European theatre. Carter called the effort "meaningless"). With the Pershing II, for the first time U.S.-controlled 'battlefield' missiles will be able to strike targets deep inside the USSR. Besides representing a significant advance over previous weaponry, this development makes a mockery of the NATO-sponsored concept of "limited nuclear war", or the idea that nuclear weapons in any future war might be confined to strictly battlefield

uses, and that an exchange of big, inter-continental ballistic missiles could be avoided. Now, if the Soviets see their heartland coming under attack from Europe-based Pershing II's, how long can they restrain themselves from launching ICBM's at the United States in retaliation, with all the attendant consequences?

Dr. Georgi Arbatov, a leading Soviet authority on American affairs, warned recently that, "We are approaching a turning point. If the next stage of arms development is not stopped, it will destabilize the military situation and make some important things irreversible. . . . Meaningful approaches to disarmament have become the most pressing necessity of our time. None of us can any longer allow the spending of so much of our resources — financial and intellectual — on new and ever more frightening generations of armaments."

THE "OTHER SIDE"

Behind the words of President Carter, and the new American determination to accelerate the arms drive, looms the continuing myth of the "Soviet menace". Of late, great efforts and tremendous sums of money have been expended to convince us that the Soviets have attained a new military superiority, and that the West is now at their mercy.

The editorial hype of the *Toronto Sun* reflects the tinge of hysteria that has been creeping into the mass media concurrent with the new arms drive: "Political and psychological consequences are devastating as the American nuclear umbrella grows smaller and the Soviet umbrella larger. America's confidence will wane, and Soviet aggressiveness will grow."

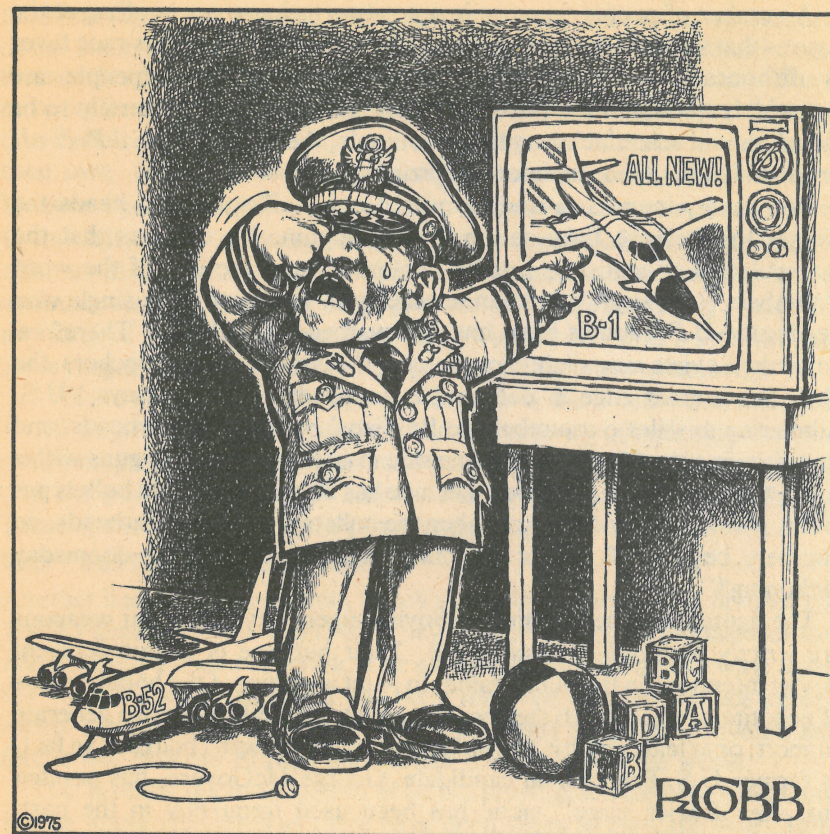
Such arguments are always accompanied by lists of figures which "prove" that the Soviets are outstripping us in the nuclear arena, and that we've 'had it' if we don't get moving on re-armament. Again the *Sun*:

"Estimates are that by 1985 the Soviets could have a 3-1 lead in total megatons, a 7-1 lead in land-based megatons, and a 2-1 lead in the ability to destroy unprotected targets, like cities."

The cited figures vary widely, but their import is always the same. From the U.S. newsmagazine *Commentary*, the following alarm:

"The fact is that between 1967 and 1977, the Soviet war economy — talking, say in terms of numbers of submarine-launched ballistic missiles — has moved from a 1:6 inferiority vis à vis the United States to a 3:2 superiority. . . ."

The first thought that enters a rational mind is that in this era of massive "overkill" — each side has the ability to annihilate humanity hundreds of times over — such numbers are meaningless. But there is something more than that: *the figures are not true*. They do not represent an accurate picture of American strength vis à vis Soviet strength. In fact, as



NATO generals and American officials freely admit among themselves, the reverse tends to be true. Consider the words of Gerard Smith, chief American delegate to the SALT-I negotiations:

"The strength, variety and flexibility of our forces gave us ample bargaining power at the SALT talks . . . The Soviets cannot match American scientific, engineering and industrial power. Yet this is not what readers and listeners around the world have been told. . . ."

William Epstein, disarmament consultant to the UN Secretary-General says bluntly that the US is far ahead of the Soviets "in every single aspect" of the arms race and the idea of Soviet superiority is "complete rubbish". He points out that since 1972 the US has added about 4,000 strategic (i.e. nuclear) warheads to its arsenal, while the Soviets have added about 1,500, so that the U.S. now deploys about 9,000 to the Soviets' 3,500.

A number of people who are in a position to know are scoffing at the figures that saturate the mass media. They assert that the arms-race fever is dishonest, based upon statistical distortion. These people are *not* widely quoted in the press, and their viewpoints are generally to be found only in scientific or technical journals, the *Congressional Record*, or in small-circulation opinion magazines.

One such person is retired Admiral Gene LaRoque, who heads the Center for Defense Information in Washington. He explains that the manipulation of statistics usually centers around the use of the word "numbers". He says, "Russian missiles now deployed have single warheads; the U.S. models have multiple warheads (MIRVs)." Therefore, while the Soviets may slightly outnumber the Americans in launchers, the U.S. has a great edge in deliverable warheads. Thus, he says "U.S. submarine missiles outnumber the Russians' by 6 to 1 in warheads, and therefore in actual firepower. If one side in a shoot-out has 30 guns with a single bullet per piece, and the other side has 20 guns with eight bullets per piece, who is "superior"? And when the bullets are nuclear warheads, do numbers beyond 20, 30 or 100 have significance beyond doomsday reckoning?"

The figures designed to 'prove' Soviet superiority in nuclear weapons are *strictly for public consumption*. Their purpose is to misrepresent Soviet intentions in the public mind, to paint a picture of the hopelessness of negotiating peace with the socialist countries, and thereby to generate support, or at least apathy, toward larger and larger arms budgets. In fact, as former U.S. Presidential candidate, George McGovern, has pointed out, the "Soviet scare" tactic has been used frequently in the past, whenever the Pentagon and its allies have wanted to revitalize the arms race:

"The hucksters of security gaps have been with us for years. In the early 1950's we were told of a 'bomber gap'. We later learned that it was a myth, but nonetheless we beefed up our B-47 and B-52 forces. From 1957 to 1962 there were leaks of secret studies pointing to a 'missile gap'. It was also a myth, but nonetheless we vastly expanded the deployment of Minuteman missiles. In the 1960's there were civil defense and ABM 'gaps', and we launched programs in those areas — only to realize that they were largely worthless."

No one argues that over recent years the Soviets have been gradually catching up with the American lead in nuclear weapons. It is inevitable that in their own 'security consciousness' they would try to do so. Even so, this *by itself*, might legitimately be perceived by the West as some kind of threat. However, the Soviet gains in the direction of military parity with

the West have been coupled with a massive 'Peace Offensive' on the part of her leaders. The USSR was instrumental in getting the Helsinki Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe off the ground. They have pressed continually for the expansion of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, and have offered a number of impressive peace initiatives of their own. (These include a frequently re-iterated offer to disband the Warsaw Pact, if NATO would agree to disband simultaneously, an offer to mutually cease manufacturing nuclear weapons of any kind; and an offer to discuss a worldwide treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. None of these proposals has, unfortunately, received any kind of serious response from the West). In last year's interview to *Time* magazine, Leonid Brezhnev put the Soviet view succinctly:

"We are not seeking military superiority over the West, we do not need it. All we need is reliable security. And the security of both sides will no doubt be greater with the arms race curbed, war preparations curtailed and the political climate of international relations made healthier ... Peace, peace and once again peace is our cardinal task."

THE "BLITZKRIEG FACTOR"

Another line of argumentation, which seems to be particularly favored by NATO generals these days, is to imply that the Soviet enthusiasm for nuclear disarmament is a trick. The scenario runs roughly this way: once the West's nuclear deterrent has been removed through "peace agreements", the Russians with their "overwhelmingly superior" conventional forces will overrun Europe and dictate their terms to the world.

This is really the resurrection of an old propaganda formula which has had as many variations as there have been years to the Cold War. Still, when it is dressed-up in the daily press, given a sense of urgency, and 'analysts' are trotted out to solemnly compare SALT with the Munich Agreement of 1938 (which gave Hitler the green-light to launch WW II), it is capable of taking on a thoroughly real and frightening appearance to the average person. The idea of being attacked scrapes a raw nerve: we all fear aggression, and we all suspect the intentions of foreign powers of whom we know little. Once again, however, a closer examination of the facts — both military and political — yields very little substance to the claims. Our fears, suspicions and prejudices become the levers by which we are manipulated and deceived.

A fairly concise summary of the supposed threat was given recently by William Hyland, a former CIA executive, and top U.S. defense expert: "The Warsaw Pact vastly outstrips NATO in military manpower, tanks, artillery, and warplanes. ... The Europeans, on their own, are never

going to be a match for the Soviets. Thus, we must simply fill the gap and move five U.S. divisions to Western Europe to join the four we now have there. . . ."

This follows the classic recipe: an appeal to paranoia, followed by the assertion that America must make the 'only possible' response — more arms, more men, a new level of confrontation.

NATO figures on Warsaw Pact conventional strength — as well as their conclusions about Soviet 'intentions' — tend to be as half-baked as their 'assessments' of Soviet nuclear forces. A reader of NATO reports will be rewarded with endless graphs, charts and lists of comparative statistics. At no time, however, are *real* situation, real needs, or real capabilities ever considered or calculated as "factors". For instance, the Soviet Union is forced to provide security for an 8,000 mile land frontier; she borders upon numerous potential enemies, and faces increasing military pressure from a hostile China on her eastern flank. By contrast, the United States borders on Canada and Mexico. The security needs of the Soviet Union must be deemed, under the circumstances, to be somewhat greater than those of the U.S. It is generally conceded, moreover, that NATO maintains a fairly large technological edge in military hardware. This may force the Soviets, at some pressure points, to try to make up in quantity what they lack in sophistication. Nowhere has NATO ever publicly evaluated their technological advantage in terms of what it means to the balance of forces. Yet they are extremely free with statistics that seem to show Soviet numerical superiority.

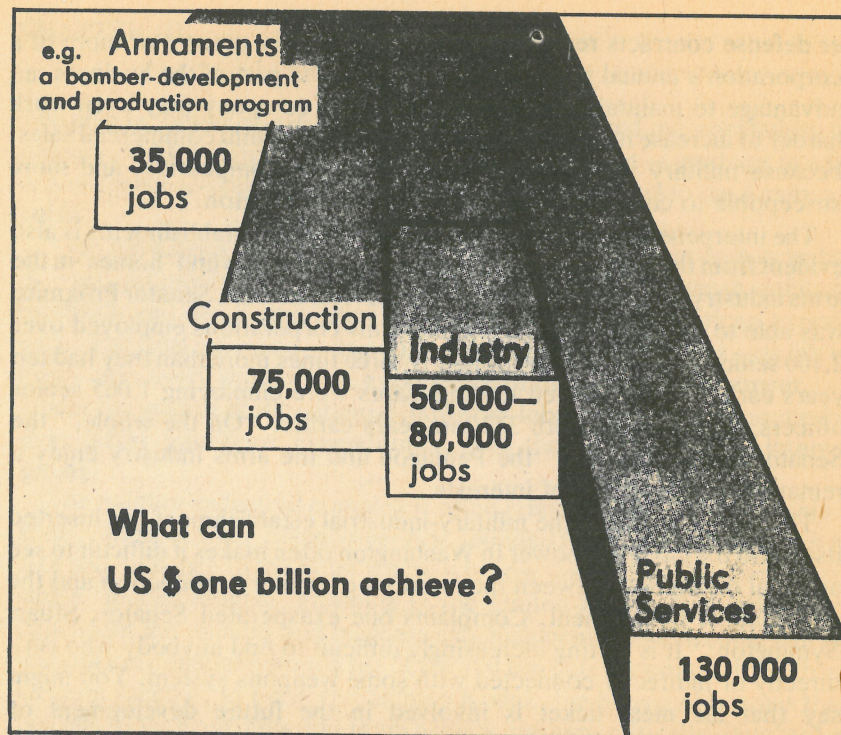
The favorite stage for these arguments is North-Central Europe, where NATO claims the 'Soviet threat' is at its most menacing. There, they claim, Soviet forces number 945,000 men opposed to NATO's 630,000. However, to arrive at this figure, they count every Warsaw Pact military person as far east as the Urals. They ignore any ameliorating factors (for instance, many functions which are considered "military" in the USSR, are performed in Western armies by civilians, or computers). By contrast, to arrive at their own modest strength assessments, the NATO statisticians count *only those European and American military units which are directly assigned to NATO*. The estimates naturally omit large numbers of Western European forces not committed to NATO operations (for instance, the French). Most particularly, they 'forget' that more than adequate numbers of troops can be airlifted to Europe from North America, within a matter of hours.

Despite all this, the Soviets still complain — and they deserve to be heard — that NATO overestimates Warsaw Pact troop strength by as much as 150,000 men!

It is necessary to examine these matters in some detail, because the hail of statistics which show Soviet "superiority" form the basis of the conclusion that Soviet intentions are 'aggressive' and 'warlike'. That conclusion is taken as an *a priori* fact by the mass media and the political powers-that-be in the West. Yet the existing balance of forces does not show cause for alarm. A close look at the real capabilities of both sides shows that America has no more lost her conventional lead than she has lost her nuclear edge over the Soviet Union. Testifying before the U.S. Senate, Herbert Scoville, a former deputy director of the CIA and now Secretary of the Arms Control Association, expressed the puzzlement that has beset many former members of the U.S. establishment: "We hear an awful lot of words about the Soviet threat. I'd find this almost laughable if it wasn't for the fact that many people take it seriously. . . . Really, I find these kind of threats, that the Soviets are planning an attack, are very unconvincing."

What is frightening in the present situation is that at a time when the Vienna Talks offer at least some hope of gradual reduction of opposing conventional forces in Europe, NATO has launched a major campaign to poison the atmosphere, and to justify the enlargement of weapons budgets. Other developments, like the new 'understanding' between the U.S. and China, and the decision of some Western European countries to provide sophisticated arms to China, are bound to increase the direct political and military pressure against the USSR, and render prospects for meaningful disarmament dimmer.

Why, at this time, when the *need* for peace has never been greater, and when reasonable possibilities for its achievement exist, has a major military, political and ideological campaign been launched in the West to renew the arms race? The intentions of the West — its governments and peoples — are surely no more 'warlike' than those of the Soviet Union? Nor, as we have seen, is there any lack of people, at all levels, who are willing to struggle on behalf of disarmament. Yet, their voices seem to be a distinct minority in America today, as powerful internal forces heave the country's military and industrial might outward, into a massive challenge to the Soviet Union.



proliferation of "citizens" groups and lobbies which have sprung up in the last couple of years to oppose the growing sentiment for disarmament. They include groups with names like The Committee on the Present Danger (whose founding charter begins: "The principle threat to our nation, to world peace, and the cause of human freedom is the Soviet drive for dominance based upon an unparalleled military buildup"), The Coalition for Peace Through Strength, and the Emergency Coalition Against Unilateral Disarmament (which has managed to enlist the support of 40 Senators). Another group, calling itself the American Security Council, has produced a somewhat rabid propaganda film entitled "The Price of Peace and Freedom" which has been shown on more than 200 television stations around the United States. Older right-wing groups, like the American Conservative Union have begun re-orienting their priorities, to concentrate their fire against the concept of disarmament. A.C.U. spent more than \$1 million during 1979 combatting the SALT-II agreement.

These organizations exhibit a remarkable degree of integration with the military-industrial establishment. Principal public spokesmen for the

Committee on the Present Danger include such luminaries as William Colby (former Director of the CIA), General Matthew Ridgeway, Dean Rusk, General Maxwell Taylor, and David Packard, head of Hewlett-Packard Corp. (no. 97 on the Pentagon's list of 100 top defense suppliers). Major-General George Keegan Jr., recently retired as Air Force Chief of Intelligence, is these days energetically stumping the U.S., striking fear of Russia into the hearts of Americans young and old:

"I believe the United States is incapable of carrying out its assigned war-time retaliatory tasks of crippling the Soviet industrial economy, the essential civilian-military leadership, nuclear stockpiles and the basic fighting capacity of the USSR. What it all means is that the Soviets believe they can survive a nuclear war. . . ."

An even more impressive display of military-industrial solidarity was the recent appearance of a full-page ad in the *New York Times*, signed by 178 retired generals and admirals, and calling for increased military budgets in the face of the Soviet Union's alleged drive for "superiority, not parity, in the military arena."

The apparent ability of the right-wing, backed by the armaments industry and by powerful friends in Washington, to dominate the mass media and manipulate the public mind, has put most liberals in the United States — not to mention progressives — increasingly on the defensive. America's chief SALT negotiator, Paul Warnke — who is committed to the concept of disarmament — has been reduced to pleading publicly that, in his heart, he believes the Soviets are "a bruised and lonely people, who in their singular way are searching for their place in the family of man." Faced with the awesome power of the mobilized right-wing, the liberal American magazine, *New Times*, remarked succinctly that, "in the end, the Committee on the Present Danger is the present danger."

RETURN OF THE COLD WAR

It may well be that each side in the arms race has its "hawks" and its "doves", and that each side has developed a huge defense establishment that operates largely according to its own self-justifying dynamics. But to ascribe everything to these factors — as many observers do — to say that the arms race is the result of an "arms race mentality", is to over-mystify the subject. The fact is that only one side *needs* the arms race.

The Cold War has been with us since the end of WW II. It has generally been identified with the policies of the military-industrial establishment, to maintain strategic military superiority over the Soviet Union, and to defend, through force when necessary, American 'interests' abroad. Despite hopes in recent years that détente and arms control might replace

armed confrontation, America seems to be returning to an all-out policy of Cold War against the USSR and the socialist countries. Few people realize how deeply Cold War policies are rooted in the political and economic exigencies — both international and domestic — of American capitalism.

Domestically, the Cold War message to the American people (and the people of all capitalist societies) has been that they are faced with an evil and ruthless tyranny, one which they must combat to their last breath. 'Communism' is that enemy, as embodied in the socialist countries, primarily the USSR. Central to this assertion has been the claim that socialism offers an inferior lifestyle, which it seeks to impose upon 'free' Americans. If that should prove *not to be true*, either through the advances of the USSR, or the decline of America, then the very underpinnings of capitalism are threatened. James Donovan, expert on U.S. militarism, writes "For the past 30 years, the nation's and the militarist's enemy has been 'aggressive communism', product of the world-wide communist conspiracy. . . . The military, for its part, always has to focus upon a potential enemy. . . . If there were no communist bloc, and no such potential threat, the defense establishment would have to invent one."

Since WW II, overwhelming American strategic superiority has forced the Soviet Union to allocate a massive portion of her gross national product to meet the perceived threat. Soviet leaders themselves frequently complain that the strain of mobilization is a continual hindrance to development and expansion in other vital economic areas. The American show of strength around the world, then, besides being profitable, has helped greatly to maintain the status quo. And it has been very much an *American* status quo.

However, the very fact that today the Soviets are closing the military gap with the U.S., is indicative of a far larger truth. For thirty years, Soviet arms expenditures, expressed as a percentage of the GNP, have remained stable at around 12%. What *has* grown, and qualitatively developed, is the Soviet economy. In almost every field, Soviet growth rates over recent years have been far more impressive than American ones. The United States is no longer manifestly the superior society. The experience of the '70's — economic crisis and the rise of national liberation movements in the third world — have added immeasurably to the desperation of American capitalism. An outbreak of peace, at this point, seems to threaten the U.S. ruling class with slow strangulation. George McGovern writes:

"What terrifies the arms builders and unreconstructed Cold Warriors is that there is at least some prospect for success in the Strategic Arms

Limitation Talks, for the first time since SALT began in 1969. The arms builders fear they will lose business and profits. The Cold Warriors fear the decline of what they see as the essential American strategy for dealing with the Soviet Union — the use of our greater financial and technical resources to pursue an arms race, thereby forcing the Soviets to divert funds from the other needs of their society."

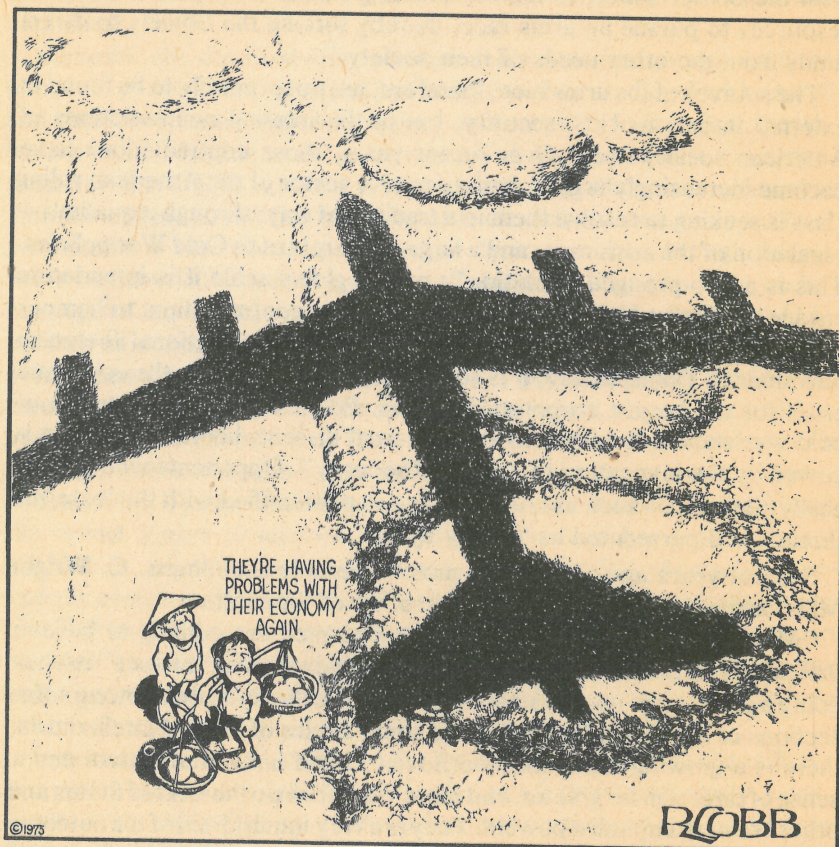
The sources of the arms race, therefore, are not primarily to be found in external threats to U.S. security, but in the internal contradictions of American society itself. Over recent years, those contradictions have become increasingly urgent, and a decisive sector of the American ruling class is seeking to resolve them in a traditional way: through a qualitative escalation of the arms race, and a large-scale return to Cold War policies. This is a two-pronged "solution": on the global scale it is intended to engage the Soviet Union in an ever-intensifying confrontation, to hamper their development, and to discourage them from aiding national liberation movements. Domestically, it is seen as a partial answer to the economic crisis for the largest corporate interests. Politically, the resumption of cold war standards serves to stifle internal dissent: liberal opposition is cowed by the invocation of "national security". Opponents who are not easily silenced — such as communists — are identified with the 'external threat', and persecuted as 'enemy agents'.

Several years ago, America's most venerable sociologist, C. Wright Mills, arrived in his own way at the heart of the matter:

"Many U.S. decision-makers and spokesmen are coming to believe that time is on the side of the Soviet system; indeed, that "history" itself is going against their own system. The truth, I believe, is that among some sections of the U.S. power elite and some circles of NATO intellectuals, there is a growing sense that the Soviet Union has a momentum and a sense of direction far greater, and more vital, than do the United States and other Western capitalist powers. They are very much afraid of the outcome of a peaceful competition between the two systems. Only by an act of military will, some of them believe, can the U.S. win out in this competition of the two systems — although what such a "victory" might mean they do not really know, or at least never say. The Soviets (on the other hand), believe that they can win without war."

This jives very closely with the view that the Soviet Union itself has put consistently forward during the years of Cold War: that peaceful co-existence is possible between differing social systems; that meaningful arms control can benefit the Soviet Union, and all of humanity. As Leonid Brezhnev told *Time* magazine reporters who were interviewing him, "We think that the struggle for a stable peace on earth is the most

important thing. ... Because if only one nuclear bomb were to fall anywhere in the world, it would be bad for journalists, for me, and for everyone on earth."



CHAPTER IV.

The drive to war is not a superficial or transitory feature of American capitalism. It arises from the very nature of the system itself. And when this system, the alliance of the biggest corporate interests, the military, and the state is projected aggressively outward onto the international scene, it can have only one name: imperialism.

The policies of Cold War and arms build-up have taken root, to a greater or lesser degree, in all the Western capitalist nations. These policies find support among big industrialists, politicians and militarists who identify their interests with those of imperialism. Huge multinational corporations extend U.S. influence throughout the world and integrate all capitalist countries — whether they like it or not — into the arms-race economy. The military alliances — primarily NATO and NORAD — tend to bind the armed forces of all members into a single command structure dominated by the United States. In the case of NATO, any decision taken by its predominantly American leadership will draw the entire organization into action, whether individual members feel that it is in their interests or not. (If the ultimate should happen, and a nuclear war were to occur, the time allotted for NATO brass to "consult" with allies is approximately 7 minutes). Effectively, the entire military resources of the Western world are placed at the disposal — and discretion — of the United States. With the notable exception of France, the NATO allies have always accepted this state of affairs uncomplainingly.

Professor John W. Warnock, a noted Canadian defense critic, writes: "I examined 16 major decisions concerning NATO over the years. In all cases the policy changes were initiated by the United States and later approved by the organization. The other NATO allies chose to follow the leadership of the U.S. on these issues even when they did not approve. *This is normal in higher politics.*" (italics added).

The situation that Canada finds itself in today is very much a case in point. This is clearly not the place for a detailed discussion of American penetration of our economy, but let it suffice to note that the commanding heights are dominated by huge multinational corporations, most of which (but not all) are based in the U.S. The People's Assembly for a New Foreign Policy, held in Ottawa in 1974, found that "Multinational corporations are everywhere, in all fields: industries, national resources, agriculture, trade, finance, politics, religion, ideology, through the media and culture, etc. They increase their political power as they increase their prices and profits."

Canada is fully integrated into the imperialist military structure,

through NATO, and also through the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD). NORAD, which is based in Colorado Springs, was initiated in 1958 to defend North America from the 'possibility' of a Soviet bomber attack across the North Pole. In the NORAD scheme, Canada is seen as a buffer between the USSR and the USA — a kind of nuclear no-man's-land. Despite the fact that the age of the manned bomber has long since given way to the intercontinental ballistic missile, NORAD remains an entrenched component of the North American defense establishment, and costs Canada some \$200 million yearly. Agreements to renew the alliance were signed — after much public opposition — in 1972, and again in 1975. The issue is due to come up again in 1980, but although the entire NORAD set-up is obsolete — as well as being designed to meet a threat that never existed! — it seems unlikely that the Canadian government has any intention of scrapping it: they have recently resolved to spend up to \$5 billion to purchase 130 new fighter planes, the bulk of which will be committed to NORAD.

Although Canada is liable to be among the first victims of any war that our alliances draw us into, we have pathetically little input into the upper echelons of command. An embarrassing illustration of this occurred in early 1978 when the Cosmos 954 satellite accidentally fell to earth over northern Canada. The Soviets warned NORAD of its likely trajectory almost a month in advance, however the NORAD commanders did not bother to inform the Canadian government until just a few days before the crash!

Stephen Clarkson, political economy professor at the University of Toronto, writes: "NORAD is the historical symbol of bigger issues: the integration of Canada economically, culturally, physically, and politically in an American-controlled North America."

The policies of Cold War and arms drive are gradually being re-asserted in Canadian life. After a decade of relatively low military expenditures, arms budgets are on the rise once again. This follows in the wake of an intensive pressure campaign, in which it was widely claimed — through the media, and at NATO summit meetings — that Canada was the 'cheapskate' of NATO, and that she was 'selling her allies short'. Considerable Soviet threat hype has also found its way into the Canadian press, radio, and T.V.

Darker allegations, concerning Canada's basic security — emanating from sources linked to the military-industrial complex — have lent themselves to the growing Cold War atmosphere and the pressure to join the new arms drive. Late in 1978, the British Institute for Studies in Conflict, a NATO propaganda outlet, published a report suggesting that Canada was

not capable of looking after herself, that she was dangerously close to being 'de-stabilized' by 'subversive' elements. The fault was to be found in Canada's laxness toward security matters:

"Traditional Canadian complacency, the open society, and a feeling generated by geography that 'it can't happen here' help to create the troubled waters in which the revolutionary fish can swim and propagate. . . ."

However, the Canadian government seems to have needed little encouragement. A new program of weapons-acquisition is already underway, which as the *Financial Post* delightedly reports "actually adds up to little less than a revolution." The purchases are the biggest in Canadian history, and they will mostly be awarded to foreign (mainly American) firms. They will include, as mentioned above, as much as \$5 billion to an American corporation for new fighter aircraft; plus \$1 billion for a long-range patrol plane; \$3.5 billion for 20 new destroyers; \$200 million for West German "Leopard" tanks; \$185 million for radar to modernize NORAD's "Pinetree" early-warning line (which scans the north for the aforementioned "bomber threat"); and \$300 million for 600 to 700 armoured cars (to be manufactured in Switzerland under license from General Motors).

No complete weapons system is to be produced in Canada. This is because the Canadian armaments industry has, in recent years, begun to specialize within the imperialist economy. Canada has concentrated primarily upon high-technology avionics and telecommunications, industries that have been enriched with large-scale NATO orders. The process of specialization, however, has left Canada completely integrated with and dependent upon the military-industrial complex.

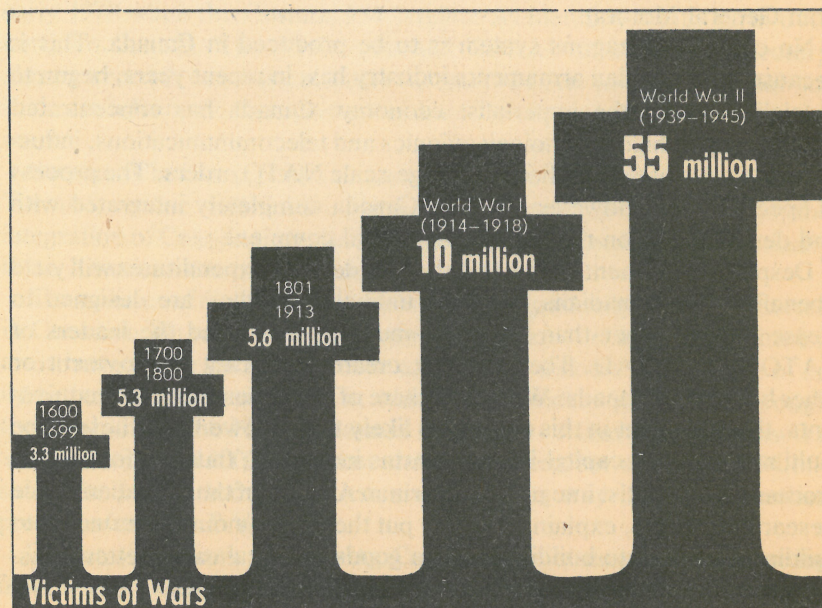
Despite government claims that the new defense expenditures will yield "benefits" for Canadians, it seems unlikely that they are designed to please anyone other than the great multinationals, and the leaders of NATO and NORAD. They will *not* create significant employment or other benefits in Canada. Whatever share of the expenditures, or equivalents, that are spent in this country is likely to be plowed into those same multinationals and capital-intensive arms industries, thus reinforcing the process of imperialist integration. Norman Alcock, of the Canadian Peace Research Institute, explains: "If you put the same amount of money into building homes, into building civilian goods, medical care, better transportation, new energy sources, education, any one of these areas would be much more productive for your economy. Almost the worst way to spend money is for the military."

What is particularly galling for most Canadians is the fact that simul-

taneous with the new arms purchases, the government launched a new restraint program, which has eliminated \$2.5 billion from family allowances, health and medical research, housing, unemployment insurance, transportation, and so on.

Through these political and economic processes, and through membership in the military alliances — NATO and NORAD — Canada has become very much a reflex of a larger will. Behind it lie the same forces which in the U.S. are generating and co-ordinating the new arms drive. As long as Canada is bound into the imperialist system — economically, politically and militarily — it must be swept along with the rising tide of arms build-up.

Jean Vautour, Executive Secretary of the Canadian Peace Congress, argues: "Everything points to the need for Canada's withdrawal from NATO and NORAD. ... Canada should strike out on a new course corresponding with her real national interests, and the role she can play in the world. These interests lie in Canada dissociating herself from military alignment and working for the elimination of all military blocs. In this way, Canada can truly become a peacemaker in our world."



CHAPTER V.

None of the foregoing is meant to imply that nuclear war or the endless acceleration of the arms race are the inevitable outcome of current trends. Quite the contrary. The sentiment of the world's people has never before been so overwhelmingly in favour of peace and disarmament. Hundreds of millions have signed the Stockholm Appeal to End the Arms Race. Over one million people in Canada alone put their signatures to that document. Early in 1978, more than ten thousand people demonstrated in Amsterdam against the neutron bomb. That massive display of opinion forced a halt — if only temporarily — in the production of the weapon. Also in 1978, the United Nations held a special session on disarmament, which brought together the widest and most universal condemnation of the arms race ever voiced. The only dark cloud hanging over that event was the fact that NATO, in a gesture of contempt — or perhaps warning — chose to hold their military summit at precisely the same time as the U.N. disarmament meeting.

Despite the direction in which U.S. policy is presently being steered, there is adequate evidence that the majority of Americans are not as one with the aspirations of the military-industrial establishment. A recent poll taken by *Newsweek* magazine, for instance, indicated that fully 65% of Americans favour nuclear arms limitation through a SALT-II agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Many Americans, and indeed people in all capitalist countries, are coming to realize that to be a "patriot" does not necessarily mean to support the policies of confrontation and arms buildup. The very social and economic contradictions which are driving the U.S. ruling class back into Cold War policies — economic crises, shrinking markets, deteriorating international position — are also worsening the quality of life for the average person. High unemployment, inflation, falling living standards, and erosion of democratic rights are becoming fixed characteristics of American and Western society. The arms race, as far as the majority is concerned, does not offer any meaningful solution to these problems. Many people are beginning to wonder why arms budgets should mushroom, while social spending is curtailed; or why we must sacrifice our much-touted 'advantages' over socialism (i.e. our 'prosperity', our 'democracy') in order to fight socialism? One angry American wrote to *Time* magazine:

"Our conflict with the Soviets is not over any strategic nuclear attack

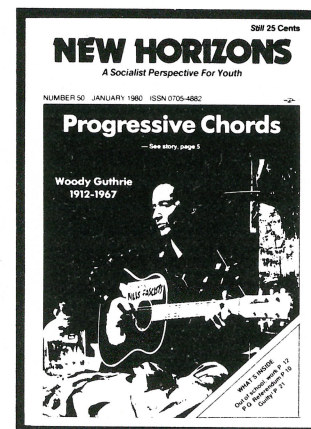
issue, but over the kind and quality of our respective economic and social systems. If we allow inflation to go unchecked, continue to channel our technological expertise into "smart" weapons and away from better cars, more public transportation, and alternative energy sources, we are giving the Soviets just what they want — the spectacle of a degenerating America."

The policies needed to defeat the arms race are very much within the scope of the majority of people. They are, like the causes, political and economic. Struggles *against* growing arms budgets necessarily take on the character of struggles *for* greater spending on human welfare, education, health, and economic development. To fight against the arms race without introducing this dimension is to run the risk of being merely pious and ineffectual. To work for the expansion of political and economic human rights without struggling against the basic causes of the arms race, that is to say without an *anti-imperialist focus*, is dangerously narrow and lacking in global perspective.

Peace is very much a now-or-never thing. The next cycle of arms buildup and Cold War is already well under way. Generals are speaking *with certainty* of nuclear war in the mid-1980's, and are actually debating the "win-ability" of such a war. That, from the point of view of humanity, is by far and away the most pressing 'present danger'.

The noted Soviet journalist, Dr. Georgi Arbatov, writes:

"By the end of the century, if current trends continue, the simple needs of a growing humanity will be our greatest challenge. We will have tremendous problems with natural resources, with food, and with the environment. Military rivalry, the arms race, and absence of co-operation are follies which we cannot allow ourselves. . . . Moreover, there is no other way if we hope to avoid the next world war — the last and most final war."



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