IMAGES OF WAR

by David Lorge Parnas

When the Gulf War escalated on 16 January, we were deluged by images. Through television we watch events in Baghdad, Washington, and Tel Aviv as they happen. We can watch bombs dropping and politicians preaching. There are things that the media cannot show us but, because humanity is no stranger to war, we know that they are there. Images, both old and new, form a crazy-quilt with a message that must not be ignored.

• The sky lights with fire as a city is shaken by the sound of powerful weapons; children run screaming to their parents. Those parents, feeling as helpless as we would, try to comfort their children. The children's cries change to terrified whimpers.

• At a basketball game in the Southern U.S., play is interrupted by the announcement that the 'Liberation of Kuwait' has begun. Both the players and the audience cheer and dance.

• An incoming missile is intercepted by an anti-aircraft battery and crashes into a home. Children scream and a mother looks in unbelieving horror at her dead child.

• At the Tokyo stock market speculators seem to be climbing over each other as they try to profit from the market's wild swings.

• People wander confusedly through the streets trying to find a member of their family from whom they have been separated. There is only a crater where his place of work once stood.

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• A reporter says ‘Good Morning’ to a Kuwaiti citizen in Saudi Arabia. ‘Yes’, he says, pointing at aircraft heading towards his country, ‘A very good morning.’

• In his home country, poor people, people who were not able to leave, cower in fear as they hear aircraft and bombs exploding. They have heard that the ‘liberation’ of their land has begun but, never having been free, they can’t imagine what it means. They just wish that the frightening noises would stop.

• Near the U.S. airfield a Kuwaiti points at the bombers as they take off, and describes the roar of the jets as ‘a beautiful symphony’.

• A young boy lies buried in rubble and screams for his parents who lie dead in the next room.

• The fans at the basketball game cheer wildly.

• An Iraqi missile hits a residential area of Tel Aviv destroying homes and ruining lives. In a bombed out home, an old couple sit in their living room, staring at a wall that is no longer there.

• A business reporter smiles as he tells us that the markets are soaring and the war has given new confidence to investors.

• Thousands of tons of munitions explode on Kuwait and Iraq. People wait and try to live normally, knowing that they have absolutely no voice in what happens to them. Nobody ever asked THEM what they wanted.

• The arms industry breathes a sigh of relief, as they anticipate orders for more Cruise Missiles. Engineers smile when they learn that some deficiencies have been demonstrated during these ‘tests’ with live targets. Soon there will be new contracts and money to correct those problems.

• Israeli citizens die because they have not used their gas masks properly. There was no gas, but the terror caused by the war has killed without it.

• TV viewers switch channels, complaining about the boring pictures of the war. They stare at the screen with rapt attention when the football scores are reported.
A pilot smiles broadly as he describes Baghdad 'lit up like a Christmas tree' and likens the scene to the Fourth of July. 'We really did it' he says with pride.

A three-year-old cries when taken out of bed to go down to the bomb shelter yet another time.

A Canadian reports that people in Florida are very frightened. She responds with silence when asked how the residents of Iraq feel.

The stock of Raytheon corporation soars because, sometimes, the Patriot missile is able to destroy a SCUD rocket, a simple weapon first deployed 20 years before the Patriot was ready for use.

In Kuwait and Iraq, parents survey the damage and wonder if they will be able to find bread for their children.

President Bush says that he will not compromise with Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein says that he will not compromise with the Satan in the White House. Both men eat a good dinner in safe surroundings.

The Kuwais go to bed wondering what will happen to their neighbourhoods while they sleep. While they sleep, a small house turns into dust. It happened to be near a communications center, which survived.

President Bush spends the weekend in Camp David and John Major goes to Checkers. Both claim the war is going as planned.

Thousands of refugees try to escape with nothing more than they can carry. The refugee camps have no more room, little food, and even less hope.

A local religious leader appeals to his congregation to 'live with normalcy' thereby denying victory to the enemy.

In Palestinian camps, parents who have never known normalcy hope that a heroic saviour will let their children live normal lives. We who have ignored their suffering for 40 years shake our heads in disbelief and disapproval.

For the human computers who live in Washington and Baghdad, the war is going well. For the human beings who live where the missiles strike, the war is like all other wars - a terrifying and bloody horror, a crime against humanity.

I once hoped that modern electronic communications would make us aware that people all over the world shared our fears, desires, hopes and pain. I hoped that we would learn that 'they' are as human, and as important as 'us'. I hoped that we would learn to imagine ourselves in their position and think about how we would react if our positions were reversed. That does not seem to be happening.

We now treat war as a video game. It can be started by throwing money down a slot and pushing some buttons. The game is played as if people far away are cartoon characters who can rise and walk after they are blown up. We have so forgotten the humanity of our fellows that we believe that we have the right to make millions of innocents suffer for the sins of their unelected leaders.

Our marvelous technology is bringing us the images of war without the fear and suffering that used to be the price of such information. Because we have seen so many fake images, we forget that these are real people with real wounds and real pain. When we understand that we are assisting in the bombing of our kin, we will rise up and demand that the war be stopped. We will demand that the energy now going into war be used to bring normalcy to the lives of those who have never known it. We can never know true peace and normalcy until everyone has it.


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EDITORIAL MATTERS

The War, The War ...

... Inside my brain a dull tom-tom begins.
Absurdly hammering a prelude of its own,
Capricious monotone
That is at least one definite 'false note'.

T.S. Eliot

All we could do was listen, watch and read - half hypnotised despite ourselves - as the US Service chiefs threw us crumbs of information or misinformation at their pleasure. Inside us, the three-letter word resonated. Now it's supposedly over, though the immense killing ground, devastation and the hatreds aroused will not easily be forgotten.

This was strange ground for Science for Peace to operate in. The very name of our organization signals our general or characteristic attitude on use of most if not all weapons of war. But this number of the Bulletin is not meant to add to our knowledge of how the weapons and strategies of the War functioned. Despite the communications Tower of
Babel that overwhelmed one’s very senses, the news that emerged was too meagre for us to judge the real significance of what was happening.

One thing continues to haunt many Science for Peace members: the belief that everything might have been settled without a war (but see ‘E-Mail and the Gulf War’). And one more thing angers: that, in the Prime Minister’s own words, Canada will be unlikely to play a direct role in future peacekeeping in the region.

The present Bulletin concentrates on presenting certain material still of importance to the functioning of Science for Peace. Much of this material arose as a consequence of a remarkable discussion, with numerous contributions, that began on our computer network before January 15, 1991, and that soon afterwards reached a crescendo. Of course, those who have already seen this material may have little interest in seeing it again here. On the other hand, the attempt has been made to organize and select, so that the thematic thrusts of the several major positions presented become clearer. Furthermore, there is editorial comment on some aspects of the discussion. Some of the contributions to this interchange were by way of short papers. Three of these were by our President David Lorge Parnas, and one of them ‘Images of War’ is placed before other material in this Bulletin (Michael Steinitz’s response to ‘Images of War’ appears in Network Correspondence). Two more of David Parnas’ short articles – ‘How to Free Kuwait’ and ‘False Dichotomies: How the War is Sold’ – are also brought together following this editorial. All of us should feel gratified that we have a President who writes penetratingly and eloquently on what concerns us all. In this he maintains the standards and activity of his two predecessors George Ignatieff and Anatol Rapoport. All these people have served Science for Peace splendidly – and we are very lucky to have had them as our Presidents.

This Bulletin also offers the text of a talk by Anatol Rapoport given recently at University College, U of T, and most of an article by George Lakoff which appeared in the computer discussion.

Anyway ... what, for Science for Peace, is the take-home message from the Gulf War? Simply that as a result of the colossal technical mastery that enabled the coalition forces to prevail so sweepingly and so totally over what had appeared to be a tremendously dangerous army, the armed services and the arms industries the world around – the military-industrial complex – will receive a huge popular boost at a time when it really appeared that their future might be in jeopardy. As someone said: ‘You ask what happened to the peace dividend. It went to the Gulf!’

In concluding, and in these times that can be so discouraging to those whose greatest wish is for a peaceful, prosperous and humane world, in which science would function as a beneficial servant rather than an agent of death – prospects that are sometimes made to seem terribly remote – four passages seem not inappropriate. The first:

The answer to the question whether there can be a science of peace and whether this science could save humanity from extinction is yes. It should be understood, however, that the product of this science, unlike the products of natural science, would be not an increase of power over nature, much less power over people, but rather enlightenment in the sense of emancipation from superstitions which still plague humanity in contexts involving human relations, most significantly, prevalent ideas about conflict.

The hope is that this emancipation will crystallize in forms of effective political action that will eventually force the abolishment of the institution of war. Institutions are not immortal. They do die. And they can be helped to die. This was the fate of human sacrifice, of the Holy Inquisition, of chattel slavery, of absolute monarchy based on the myth of the divine right of kings, and of the colonial system. This can also be the fate of the most pernicious of all obsolete institutions - war. Enlightenment aimed at enabling people to see the true role of war and of all its support systems in the present stage of human history should be a principal goal of the study of conflict.

Anatol Rapoport, 1988,
‘The Study of Conflict’

The second is:

I may have thought the road to a world of free and happy human beings shorter than it is proving to be, but I was not wrong in thinking that such a world is possible, and that it is worth while to live with a view to bringing it nearer. I have lived in the pursuit of a vision, both personal and social. Personal; to care for what is noble, for what is beautiful, for what is gentle: to allow moments of insight to give wisdom at more mundane times. Social: to see in imagination the society that is to be created, where individuals grow freely, and where hate and greed and envy die because there is nothing to nourish them. These things I believe, and the world, for all its horrors, has left me unshaken.

The third is: -

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, remembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was the beginning;
At the source of the longest river
The voice of the hidden waterfall
And the children in the apple-tree
Not known, because not looked for
But heard, half-heard, in the stillness
Between two waves of the sea.
Quick now, here, now, always -
A condition of complete simplicity
(Costing not less than everything)
And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well
When the tongues of flames are in-folded
Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one.

T.S. Eliot, 1963,
‘Collected Poems’

The fourth is: -

... Ye see yon birkie, ca’d a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a’t that;
Tho’ hundreds worship at his word,
He’s but a coof for a’t that:
For a’t that, and a’t that,
His riband, star, and a’t that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a’t that.
... Then let us pray that come it may,
As came it will for a’t that;
That sense and worth o’er a’ the earth,
May bear the gree, and a’t that.
For a’t that and a’t that,
It’s coming yet, for a’t that,
That man to man the world o’er
Shall brethren be for a’t that.

Robert Burns, 1904,
‘Poetical Works...’
(written in 1794)

Alan H. Weatherley

Although the following was written before the Gulf War had started, it remains as a model of alternative ways in which the war might have been avoided and Kuwait freed.

HOW TO FREE KUWAIT

by David Lorge Parnas

Almost everyone agrees that the use of military force to gain territory or other benefit is illegitimate and should be discouraged. Most of us agree that Saddam Hussein and Iraq should not be allowed to profit from the invasion of Kuwait. To allow violence to result in gain would be to encourage the future use of violence. The only issue is how best to get Iraq out of Kuwait.

If the US attacks Iraq and defeats it quickly, Saddam Hussein becomes a martyr. Even if he dies, or is captured, Hussein will be a hero to those who support him. Future leaders and demagogues will be able to stir up mass movements by mentioning his name. The only lesson that will be learned is that one should not use force unless one has superior force.

If the US attacks Iraq and defeats it slowly, at the cost of thousands of soldiers’ lives and injuries, Hussein becomes even more of a hero because he was able to inflict suffering on the giant ‘oppressor’ nations. The forces of misguided nationalism everywhere will have learned that it pays to be heavily armed. Both winners and losers will resolve that, the next time there is a dispute, they must be stronger.

If the US attacks Iraq and a stalemate results because its military is unable to function well on the enemy’s home terrain, Hussein becomes a living hero and far more dangerous than he is today. He may be able to add captured arms to his arsenal, and some countries now allied against him may be forced by public opinion, to become neutral or to side with Hussein.

If the US does not attack, but the sanctions continue, Hussein’s country and his army will grind slowly to a halt. Shortages of spare parts and highly refined fuels will deplete his arsenal. He will have to reduce his training missions to conserve fuel and weapons. Soldiers now at a battle pitch of enthusiasm will slowly become bored and dejected. Food will be in short supply, appliances will fail and won’t be replaced, depression and boredom will set in. Hussein will not look powerful, he will not look like a hero, he will look like an impotent fool. Eventually Saddam Hussein’s control machinery will break down and the Kuwaitis will become free to pick their own system of government.

If military force is used, the belief that one must resort to force to settle disputes will be strengthened. If sanctions are allowed to defeat a well armed country, the world will learn that it does not pay to depend on military strength.

Saddam Hussein knows that his only hope of survival is a war. If the sanctions are allowed to bring his country to a slowly grinding halt, he will fail.
We often hear that war was necessary because, ‘Appeasement and weakness have never worked.’ Again, we have a false dichotomy. The alternative to an expanded war was not appeasement. The incredibly strict sanctions, enforced by the military forces of many countries, are neither weak nor appeasement.

For months we have been told that Hussein was a modern Adolph Hitler and that, unless we used military force against him, we would see a repeat of the World War II scenario. While it is true that in both cases we failed to take a principled stand before the villain took military action, the differences between the two situations are great. Adolph Hitler led one of the most powerful, and most sophisticated countries in the world. German scientists and engineers were world leaders; Germany developed all its own weapons and was self-sufficient economically and militarily. We should never forget that it was German scientists who taught the US how to build missiles after World War II. In contrast, Iraq is a small country, one that depended on imported technology as the basis for its war machinery. Even the massive bomb shelters that give it endurance, could not have been built without foreign help. Iraq is like Nazi Germany in having a charismatic megalomaniac anti-semitic leader, but the differences are far more important.

Every day we are told that if we did not use military force we would have allowed Saddam Hussein to continue his aggressions and seize more territory. ‘Someone had to stop him.’ I fact he had already been stopped. On the 15th of January, Iraq’s forces were already bottled up. The presence of foreign ‘trigger forces’ in Saudi Arabia, Nato forces in Turkey, a powerful military in Iran, and western support for Jordan, had made it impossible for Iraq’s aggression to continue. Moreover, Iraq’s force deployments in Kuwait were primarily defensive in nature. They built fixed fortifications within the area that they already controlled. There was no sign of a plan to move forward. Iraq had already been brought to a halt before the US led attack on Kuwait began.

One of the most powerful arguments in favour of the military action that began on 16 January is that we must support the United Nations; we are told that if we do not participate we will be undermining the UN, which Canada helped to found. The UN’s founders hoped that it would prevent wars like the present one, but they are realists. The Charter includes provisions for forces operating under the control of the UN itself. Canada’s forces have previously served under UN command as ‘blue berets’; this time, by fighting under our own flag, they are undermining the UN as a mechanism for the enforcement of international law. We must also remember that the Security Council did not authorize force
explicitly; instead it authorized the use of ‘all necessary means’. As a result of this wording, each country could decide for itself whether or not force was needed. Some countries concluded that it was necessary and are now at war with Iraq. Several other countries are calling for a Security Council meeting on the crisis but the warring countries have not allowed that meeting to take place. The UN is not being allowed to function as it should. We can best support the proper functioning of the UN if we insist that all forces be put under UN command and that the Security Council, not individual countries, determine the policy.

For some, the most appealing argument for the use of military force, is that we must defend the residents of small, weak countries. In fact, it is only the Kuwaiti Royal Family that have asked for this action. Nobody knows what the actual residents of Kuwait would want; it is hard to imagine that they want the carpet bombing that they are now experiencing or the incredible destruction that will come when the ground fight begins. Who has the right to make that decision for the people in Kuwait?

We have the great privilege of living where we can debate our involvement in this war. When we do so, we must not allow ourselves to be distracted from the real issues. We are not debating whether or not to reward Saddam Hussein; the debate is whether or not to bomb the people that he rules so cruelly. We are not debating whether or not Saddam Hussein should be rewarded for his aggression; we are debating whether or needed to attack others to punish Hussein. We are not discussing Germany before World War II, we are discussing Iraq in 1991. We are not debating whether or not Hussein should be permitted further aggression; we are asking whether an attack was needed to stop him. We are not debating the value of international law; we are discussing how that law should be enforced. We are not debating whether or not the people of Kuwait deserve our support; we are debating how best to help them.

November 8, 1990

‘And I would think that when he (Saddam) surveys the force that’s there ... he will recognize that he is up against a foe that he can’t possibly manage militarily.’ - President George Bush, White House news conference.

November 18, 1990

‘A short one that would be over in a matter of days.’ - Lieut. General Sir Peter de la Billiere, British Commander in Saudi Arabia, describing a potential war with Iraq.

December 31, 1990

‘If force is necessary, it will be quick, massive and decisive.’ - Vice President Dan Quayle, speaking to troops in Saudi Arabia.

January 8, 1991

‘I judge the risk of a bloody campaign, with casualties in the 10,000 - to - 20,000 range, including several thousand fatalities, to be small.’ - Report by Wisconsin Representative Les Askin, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

January 17, 1991

‘We are prepared to continue the operation just as long as we need in order to achieve our objectives ... that could be a significant period of time, or it could be a relatively short period of time.’ - Defence Secretary Dick Cheney, Pentagon news conference.

January 21, 1991

‘I feel quite sure that a protracted ground war, in the sense that I think you’re talking about - one that takes months or years - yes, can be avoided.’ - Lieut. General Thomas Kelly, director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Pentagon briefing.

January 31, 1991

‘I think it may take three or four weeks, something like this?’ - Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, ABC’s Primetime Live.

February 6, 1991

‘The task is formidable, and no one should underestimate Saddam’s military capabilities.’ - Secretary of State James Baker, speaking to the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

February 6, 1991

‘Things are going darned well over there. I feel very confident that this matter is going to resolve itself, and it’s not going to take that long, and it is going to be total and complete.’ - George Bush, at a bill-signing ceremony.

February 7, 1991

‘I believe the land war is inevitable. There is no indication that the Iraqi army is going to crack in the immediate future.’ - Sir Peter, in Saudi Arabia.

Quotes and Notes

From Time, February 18, 1991

From ‘Sorting Out the Mixed Signals’

August 31, 1990

‘In a day he would be decimated. It would be over in a day’ - Captain Jay Yakely, commander of the air wing of the USS Independence, New York Times.

September 16, 1990

‘Air power is the only answer that’s available to our country’ (to avoid a bloody landwar). - General Michael Dugan, Air Force chief of staff, Washington Post.

From Richard Gwyn ‘Attack teaches Third World about US might’, The Toronto Star, February 24:
Logistically, militarily, emotionally it was all but impossible to accumulate half-a-million troops in the Gulf and then not use them.

How else to win medals and promotions? How else to show that their tanks and artillery pieces are as invincible as the smart bombers of the air force pilots?

How else to test properly the latest military marvels like the multiple rocket launcher system and fuel-air explosives?

The other reason for the ground attack is to administer an object lesson - not just to Iraq but to any other Third World country that might, one day, think of challenging the First World.

The attack ... demonstrates that the United States and its allies have the will to pursue their purposes relentlessly and ruthlessly.

From ‘Einstein in America’ by James Sayer, Crown, 1985:

Einstein viewed the escalation of the arms race with undisguised horror. ... Reviewing (in 1950) the consequences of a policy which he described as 'security, through superior force, whatever the cost,' Einstein noted that American militarization at home and abroad was proceeding at an unprecedented pace; a growing domestic police force was supervising the loyalty of its citizens; political dissenters were subjected to harassment; and the arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States had, assumed 'hysterical proportions.' 'If [efforts to build the hydrogen bomb] should prove successful ... radioactive poisoning of the atmosphere, and, hence, of all life on earth will have been brought within the range of what is technically possible. The weird aspect of this development lies in its apparently inexorable character. Each step appears as the inevitable consequence of the one that went before. And at the end, looming ever clearer, lies general annihilation.'

Three years earlier, Einstein had been asked what weapons would be used in the Third World War. He is alleged to have replied, 'I don't know. But I can tell you what they'll use in the fourth - rocks.'

REALPOLITIK AS A FORM OF MADNESS

by Anatol Rapoport

In a serious discussion of a controversial subject it is often advisable to begin with definitions of terms in order to avoid controversies rooted in misunderstandings. But trying to define value-laden terms often aggravates these very controversies. So it is with 'madness.'

Initially, 'madness' was the layperson's term for 'insanity.' But then 'insanity,' because of its pejorative connotation was replaced by 'mental illness'. Thomas Szasz attempted to expel this euphemism for 'insanity' from medical vocabulary by entitling a book of his 'The Myth of Mental Illness.' To be sure, the book dealt specifically with hysteria, which Szasz portrays as a form of communication rather than an illness. But a similar practice pervades other wide areas of discourse where evaluation of human behaviour is involved. There is a tendency among people of liberal or humanitarian persuasion to expunge pejorative connotations from practically
every evaluation of human behaviour. There are not retarded children, only ‘exceptional’ ones; no delinquents, only ‘deviants’; no primitive cultures, only pre-industrial or pre-literate ones; and I am not sure that even these terms are not prescribed as condescending. I think the proper designations are now ‘non-industrial’ and ‘non-literate.’ Relativity of values at one time became the cornerstone of cultural anthropology, an indispensable ingredient of its method, not without justification, to be sure; for just as a foreign language, especially one far removed from one's own, cannot be fully mastered unless one discards one's phonetic, grammatical, and semantic preconceptions, so a culture far removed from one's own cannot be fully understood without undergoing a similar conceptual purge. I submit that controversies about relativity of values, just as those about the reality of mental disease, are often at cross purposes, because one of the disputants is primarily interested in understanding a phenomenon, while the other is intent on doing something about it. This recognition does not in itself resolve the issue but only transposes it to another level. The question arises whether something should be done at all about the phenomenon in question. Plainly speaking, should certain practices which may appear repugnant to us but which fit admirably into some culture be tolerated if we are empowered to eradicate them? If some contend that we have no business interfering with sun worship or polygamy, will they also contend that we have no business eradicating infanticide or chattel slavery or head hunting? What about isolation of individuals? If an idiot should be treated as a full-fledged member of a community, should a demonstrably homicidal paranoic or a compulsive rapist be treated with the same consideration? I take the position that evil exists in a very real sense in human affairs. Moreover, the concept of evil, although it may be irrelevant for understanding certain forms of behaviour, is necessary for designing ways of dealing with them, in particular, of containing or eradicating them. Further, I will speak of evil only as it becomes manifest in observable conditions and actions. I will not infer anything about the inner states of persons to whom the conditions or the actions portrayed as evil may be ascribed. It may be indispensable to speculate about these inner states if the task is to understand the evil, but less so (sometimes not at all) if the task is to control or eradicate it. Next, I want to emphasize at the start that this avoidance of consideration of inner states of persons to whom evil-generating actions can be ascribed has nothing to do with an inclination to either vindictiveness or lenience in dealing with them. In fact, the evil I shall be discussing, namely, the events ascribable to Realpolitik, is not of the sort that is ascribable to hatred, destructiveness, mischievousness, or some such state of mind. Rather, it is an evil that results from the dialectic opposition of local rationality and global rationality. It will be defined entirely in terms of its manifestations, not in terms of people's intentions. I will identify Realpolitik with collective madness and madness with bizarre behaviour that produces evil, without regard to its status as a mental category. I will avoid any definition that only raises further questions, especially questions rooted in the conviction of the relativity of values. I will use the crude form of definition — definition by enumeration of actions or conditions that I regard as evil — and hope that most other people do the same. To repeat: madness will be understood as bizarre behaviour that has evil consequences. Granted, what is regarded as bizarre depends on cultural criteria. But since to get anywhere in a discussion, one must anchor one's conceptions, I will anchor my conception of bizarreness in the culture with which we are familiar. If a person keeps snapping his fingers and explains that he does this to keep elephants away, we feel justified in calling his behaviour bizarre, especially if he insists that his action is effective, since there are no elephants around. But as long as this bizarre behaviour has no demonstrable evil consequences, it still does not qualify as madness. When, however, amassing weapons of total destruction is regarded as a way of keeping peace and the absence of war in Europe is offered as proof of its efficacy, this equally bizarre behaviour qualifies as an instance of madness as soon as its evil consequences can be demonstrated.

Evil conditions, then, are those under which many people suffer privation, illness, or untimely death. Actions that generate these conditions are evil actions. Explanation of these actions having no discernible relation to reality are symptomatic of madness. It remains to define reality.

Here, too, I will eschew profound metaphysical questions. I ask the reader to go along with me in identifying reality with observable conditions and events describable without recourse to high levels of abstraction. I know that science has revealed aspects of reality not accessible to ordinary human senses. But these realities do not concern us in this discussion, because conceptions of evil, and by implication of madness, are not applicable to events on those levels. Human suffering and absence of it are aspects of reality with which we will be mainly concerned. These constitute evidence that evil and, by implication, good, are aspects of reality.

Now the link between Realpolitik and madness is in the circumstance that Realpolitik regards states as agents and ascribes interests to these agents, moreover, interests that are strongly associated with addiction to power. Realpolitik not only depicts the behaviour of these agents (states) as motivated by
the pursuit of power but also prescribes 'rational' means of engaging in this pursuit. This interpretation of political 'reality' provides a rationalization for the continued existence of war as an institution. This, in turn, produces untold misery and untimely death of millions of people for whom the power appetites of states means absolutely nothing, in fact, cannot possibly mean anything. So the bizarreness of behaviour associated with Realpolitik is in the breach between its ideational content and commonly observed reality. And the evil generated by the behaviour, specifically the conduct of war, justifies the categorization of this behaviour as madness.

The claim of Realpolitik to 'rationality' is based on two of its features. First, it purports to explain the behaviour of states more credibly than other conceptions of international relations, for instance, conceptions that ascribe considerable weight to the psychological predispositions of political leaders or to ideological determinants of conflicts between states. Second, in accepting the pursuit of power as a principal motivating factor in the behaviour of states, Realpolitik uses this 'reality' as a basis for a normative theory of international relations. There is a natural distinction between a deictic and a normative theory. The former purports to tell it as it is, that is, to describe the acts of political life. The latter purports to indicate how things ought to be, to prescribe courses of action which in some sense are expected to produce optimal consequences.

As a descriptive theory, 'political realism' has some claim to success in that the behaviour of some states can be more easily understood as motivated by power considerations than, say, by the psychological make-up of leaders or ideological predilections.

In theories related to human affairs it is often difficult to separate a descriptive mode from the normative. Knowing how things are is usually a prerequisite to finding ways to make things as one would like them to be. So the present state of affairs is taken as a point of departure. It is natural to assume that in order to take effective action, one must be adapted to the existing conditions. Adaptation means acceptance. In this way, one's value system is brought into concordance with the ways of the world as it is. This is why the political philosophy underlying Realpolitik is called by its adherents political realism.

The philosophy goes back to Machiavelli, who in his best known work, The Prince, speaks of virtu (a concept related to 'virtue') as the competence of the prince in the business of acquiring power and holding on to it. Henry Morgenthau, the prominent exponent of political realist school of international relations, does as much when he defines power as the fundamental 'good' of political life, much as wealth is taken to be the fundamental good of economic life. Morgenthau goes on to point out that political behaviour is not devoid of a sense of values. However, he also points out that the values inherent to political behaviour are different from those inherent to, say, relations between human individuals or to other fields of social behaviour.

The principal virtue of a political actor, especially in the international arena, according to Morgenthau, is prudence. To see the import of prudence in international relations, we must examine a theory of peace based on the concept of 'balance of power,' which is the normative component of the school of political realism. That prudence is a prime virtue of the political actor is implied in the definition of politics as the art of the possible. Indeed, if the prime motive of political life is pursuit of power, then prudence dictates a realistic assessment of the amount of power one can realistically expect to amass. In this assessment the attempts of others to acquire and/or hold on to power must be taken into account. Realistic assessments of this sort put limits on everyone's ambition. Keeping within such limits is supposedly conducive to peace (understood here as the absence of war). In this way, political realism, in recommending 'balance of power' as something to strive for in international relations can be said to espouse a value consonant with people-oriented values.

It is easy to accept the definition of rationality as awareness of the likely consequences of one's actions and as deliberate choice of actions that are likely to lead to preferred consequences. Thus, rational design of policy in its relation to the policies of other states coupled with the prime goal of maximizing one's relative power would inhibit a state from launching crusades, holy wars, and such, going to war in search of glory, to avenge an insult, and the like; in short, would deflate romantic notions of war. There is always a bottom line in the list of incomes and expenditures of war, which for the political realist is the net gain or loss of power. And this, as already mentioned, serves for the political realist as the universal measure of utility in the international arena. If all political leaders thought in those terms, political realists maintain, balance of power would indeed be an inhibitor of war, since only by attacking a weaker state could a state reasonably count on victory and its payoffs in the currency of power. But under ideal balance of power conditions, no state would be weaker than any other state, so there would be no point in starting a war.

Conclusions arrived at by formal reasoning often fail to be realized. Medieval scholastics argued that a hungry donkey placed exactly between equally attractive bales of hay must starve to death, because being equally attracted to both, it could not move in either direction. I doubt whether such an experiment was ever actually carried out. But if it
were, I doubt that the predicted result would be observed. More likely, the donkey, disregarding the balance of forces, would approach one or the other bales of hay and eat it, and, if it were still hungry, would eat the other also.

If we prefer formal arguments to common sense ones, we can invoke the concept of equilibrium stability, which the medieval philosophers were ignorant of. An equilibrium is stable if a slight perturbation generates a force that tends to restore the equilibrium. It is unstable if a slight perturbation generates a force that increases the perturbation still further. Clearly, Buridan's Ass, as the donkey striving between the two bales of hay was called, found itself in an unstable equilibrium. The slightest deviation from the exact midpoint would drive it to the one or the other bale of hay.

The same principle was posited by Lewis F. Richardson in his mathematical models of arms races. He showed that under certain conditions, which, he had some reason to believe, were approximated in a situation involving two states in an arms race, the equilibrium, i.e., balance of power based on military potential, was likely to be unstable. Thus perturbations would be likely to be magnified rather than attenuated.

Unlike the situation with Buridan's Ass, arms races are starkly real. We have just witnessed over four decades of one and, in spite of the projected arms control agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union, the arms race spawned by the Cold War is still going on.

A political realist would point out that a runaway arms race results not from following his recommendations but on the contrary from ignoring them. Balance of power could be made stable if a state that got an edge in its war potential eliminated it by partial disarmament. This is practically never observed, but there was one notable exception, viz., when the Soviet Union in negotiating arms control in conventional weapons with the United States, agreed to reduce its forces by a much greater amount than the United States in order to reach a 'balance'. It should be noted, however, that this decision came in the wake of explicit rejection of the paradigm of political realism, namely, abandoning the basic tenet of the class struggle (the Marxist version of political realism where classes rather than states engage in a perpetual struggle for power). In this way, one might say that the exceptional behaviour of a state (reducing its war potential to attain 'balance') has weakened rather than strengthened the basic hypothesis of political realism.

I submit that the normative recommendations of political realism, specifically the attainment of preservation of a balance of power between states cannot be realized. In support of this conclusion, I call attention to historical evidence. Attempts to preserve or restore a 'balance' of power have typically led to arms races and war rather than to a lasting peace. Political realism also suffers from two additional defects. First, it fails to take into account the addictive nature of power. Second, it fails to recognize the ambiguity in the conventional definition of rationality. It is those failures that make political realism as a theory and Realpolitik as its practice pernicious influences in today's world, contributions to madness that threaten to destroy us all.

Let us first examine power as an addiction. We can distinguish two kinds of needs, non-addictive and addictive. The former are manifested in cycles. A need stimulates behaviour that satisfies it. Thereupon the need subsides then increases again, until it is again satisfied. Typically, the peak intensity of the need remains more of less constant. Such are the ordinary bodily needs: hunger, thirst, sleep, sex. In contrast, the intensity of an addictive need increases with each satisfaction. This is clearly the case with drug addiction. Each fix changes the physiology of the addict and intensifies the need for the next fix. The addictive need frequently destroys the addict. The need for power, to the extent that it exists in some people (I am not prepared to say how many) has some aspects of an addictive need. Machiavelli advised the Prince to destroy the friends of the defeated ruler, lest they plot revenge. The more are destroyed the more enemies are likely to be acquired. The need to destroy (kill, banish, imprison) becomes addictive. The mutually stimulating arms race can also be regarded as an example of power addiction. Increasing one's own military potential is almost certain to stimulate others to do the same, who thereby become potential enemies and make further increases imperative.

Let us now examine the mainstay of political realism - its claim to rationality. The claim is based on recommendations of careful assessment of power relations in the international arena in the process of designing policy, that is, of paying due attention to what is, or is not, likely to bring success in the pursuit of power. The claim is unfounded, because the fundamental difference between individual and collective rationality is ignored. This difference manifests itself whenever several actors pursue their individual interests by apparently rational means but where the total result turns out to be bad for all. In these situations, the effectiveness of an action depends crucially on how many other actors engage in similar actions. To see this, consider the person driving to work in the morning and listening to a broadcast which informs him of traffic conditions. Some thoroughfares are crowded; others relatively free. The rational thing seems to be to choose the less crowded thoroughfares. But if many motorists
make this choice, these thoroughfares will become crowded, and the advantage will be lost.

If one state has a monopoly on some "ultimate weapon," it can be said to have an advantage in the game of power politics. Therefore it seems rational for a state to develop such a weapon when no other state has it. But what is "rational" for one is rational for all. When every state has the "ultimate weapon," none is more secure than any other. In fact, in general, every state is less secure than it had been when no one possessed the weapon.

These two shortcomings of political realism, namely, the failure to recognize the addictive nature of power and the failure to recognize the dialectic opposition between individual and collective rationality make it appear that continued adherence to Realpolitik has contributed to madness as a chronic condition of the human race, as it is manifested in its collective behaviour. Let me reiterate. By madness I mean a form of behaviour that is both bizarre and destructive. Destructive means causing large scale misery; bizarre means based on concocted fantasies substituted for observable reality.

I will cite a few examples of bizarre reasoning. I often cite my favourite whipping boy, the late Herman Kahn, because he exhibited in his writings bizarre reasoning at its crassest. Kahn attracted wide attention with his magnum opus, On Thermonuclear War. The title is an obvious take-off on Clausewitz's important work, On War, a classical treatise on the implications of Realpolitik for military science. On Thermonuclear War was partly offered as an updated version of that treatise. The message of On Thermonuclear War, subsequently repeated in Kahn's later Thinking about the Unthinkable and On Escalation, is that imagining nuclear war as a sort of final spasm resulting in the end of everything is a panic reaction unworthy of rational beings. Nuclear wars, Kahn teaches, come in many sizes, and decision makers can make intelligent choices among them in accordance with how well a particular form of nuclear war can best serve national interest. War plans should include also bargaining strategies, which can be put into effect not only during the warm-up preceding the hostilities but during the hostilities themselves. Kahn lectured widely across the U.S. to lay audiences, including, as he reported, a broad cross-section of American society. He felt that his audiences learned something from his lectures, became less panicky and more composed, that is, adopted a problem-solving stance appropriate to rational beings. Thus, he contrasted the reactions of his audience of some years back with later ones to one of the questions he used to put to them to start a discussion going.

"What do you think would happen, or, in your opinion, should happen," he would ask, "if a single hydrogen bomb fell without warning on New York City?"

In the early days, Kahn relates, the prevailing response was that the US should wipe the Soviet Union off the face of the earth by a devastating attack with nuclear weapons. Some years later, however, the reactions to this hypothetical event were quite different. Usually someone would suggest that first the nature of the event should be ascertained, e.g. whether it might have been an accident (presumably, if it was, there was little to get excited about). It was suggested that the President of the United States should call up his opposite number in the Soviet Union and ask "What gives. Was it an accident? Specifically, why was only one bomb dropped? Where were the others? If it was no accident did the Soviet Union wish to convey a message to the United States by dropping a hydrogen bomb on New York City? If so, what message?"

Then Kahn would elaborate. He would explain that the bomb was not an accident, that indeed a message was intended, namely, an indication of what the Soviet Union could do to the US if the US refused to do - or to refrain from doing - such and such.

This explanation would start a lively and productive discussion. The audience would continue to ask for more information. What were the relative sizes of US and Soviet nuclear arsenals? And so on. Generally there would be agreement that US should retaliate in kind but not in the form of an all-out attack, a "spasm war" as Kahn used to call such an attack, sometimes referring to it naughtily as a "wargasm," but a measured response - a punishment to fit the crime. Someone would suggest that in return for NYC, the US should 'take out' Moscow. To this someone might reply that no, this would be overreacting. Moscow is, after all, more important to the Russians, being their capital, than New York is to the US. Perhaps a bomb on Leningrad would be a fair quid pro quo. If Leningrad were not enough, perhaps Leningrad and Kiev would be a fair exchange for New York City. Once the score was evened, negotiations could start on how to proceed with the contest.

Another example. The point of departure of Realpolitik is that war is a normal phase in relations among states - a continuation of politics by other means to cite Clausewitz's immortal aphorism. In the spirit of political realism, however, the costs of war should be weighed against its projected benefits. In the old days when war deaths were confined to soldiers, generals calculated the projected casualties and weighed them as costs against the benefits of winning a battle, a campaign, or the war. In the nuclear age, everyone is a potential victim. The mode of thinking of Realpolitik, however, has not changed. Now civilian war deaths can enter the cal-
calculations of costs and be weighed against projected gains. At this point, however, a troublesome question might occur to someone not completely locked into the mode of thought characterizing political realism. Namely, what possible benefits could accrue from a ‘victory’ in a nuclear war? This question is answered implicitly by Kahn in the way he poses the problem of ‘How many civilian casualties resulting from a nuclear war would be just acceptable to the US as a price for ‘standing up to the Russians.’ Incidentally, similar questions were asked in the days preceding January 15. Americans were asked whether they would favour going to war in the Gulf if it meant 1000 American casualties, 5000, 10,000 etc. I recall that the percent of negative responses rose rather steeply with the number of casualties projected. If I recall correctly, it dropped to less than 50% already with 1000 casualties. These were not the results Kahn obtained in the 1950’s with his ‘quick and dirty’ survey. You get the picture - the scenario as the strategists call their fantasies. The Russians have just presented an ultimatum, threatening a nuclear war if their demands are not met. ‘Standing up to them’ means rejecting the ultimatum, thus risking nuclear war. The question asked is what is the upper bound of ‘acceptable’ casualties?

In his book *On Thermonuclear War*, Kahn tells how he estimated this figure. He asked a number of people, possibly colleagues at the Rand Corporation where he worked, what they thought was a reasonable upper bound. Some said 10 million, some 20 million, some 100 million. The numbers clustered around 60 million, which Kahn took for his working figure.

In describing this form of behaviour as ‘bizarre’, I am using Kahn’s own term. Only he applied it to the situations depicted in his scenarios rather than to taking these situations seriously. He evaluated the discussion about hypothetical nuclear exchanges as responding ‘rationally’ to the threat of a nuclear war. I, on the other hand, regard the invention of the scenarios in which cities with millions of inhabitants are represented by poker chips as bizarre. This poker metaphor is also Kahn’s. He often began his lectures by asking his audience to regard the US and the USSR as two poker players each initially in possession of 200 poker chips representing so many cities. He would then go on to describe complicated, eminently rational, ways of playing the game with these chips as resources. These exercises had a well defined educational goal. According to Kahn (1965) ‘... almost everyone in the US who has any interest in these problems or is even modestly well informed, has, as a result of both serious and fictionalized discussions, learned that there are possibilities for control in such bizarre situations.’

Henry A. Kissinger presented similar bright prospects for ‘taming’ nuclear war, that is, subjecting it to control so as to make it a useful instrument of foreign policy. He wrote (Kissinger, 1957):

‘In these circumstances it is possible to conceive of a pattern of limited nuclear war with its own appropriate tactics and with limitations as to targets, areas and the size of weapons used. Such a mode of conflict cannot be improvised in the confusion of battle. However, the limitation of war is established not only by our intentions but also by the manner in which the other side interprets them. It therefore becomes the task of our diplomacy to convey to our opponent what we understand by limited nuclear war, or at least what conditions/limitations we are willing to observe ... If the Soviet leadership is clear about our intentions ... a framework of war limitation may be established by the operation of self-interest - by the fear that all-out nuclear war and by the fact that new tactics make many of the targets of traditional warfare less profitable.’

So much for bizarre behaviour. The misery directly resulting from this mode of thinking is equally conspicuous. A most interesting article by Christopher Hitchins appeared in the January issue of Harper’s Magazine, in which he traces the intrigues of the US in the Middle East beginning with the early attempt in 1972 to get the Shah of Iran to ‘destabilize’ the Baathist regime of Hassan Bakr in Baghdad. At that time, the US was supporting the insurgent Kurds. However, the aim was not to help the Kurds achieve autonomy or independence. Rather, their insurgency was encouraged to sap Iraq’s resources. When Iran and Iraq signed a treaty temporarily ending their border dispute in 1975 American aid to the Kurds was abruptly cut off. Apparently an appropriate signal was sent to Saddam Hussein, now master of Iraq, who on the very next day launched search and destroy operations against the Kurds, which have continued ever since. The poison gas attack on Haladjan made history in 1988 - the first time a government used poison gas against its own unarmed citizizens.

Is it in the 1970s then, that Saddam became the Hitler of the Middle East? Not at all. There was no consternation about Iraq’s attack on Iran in 1980. During that war, according to Hitchins, the United States supplied both sides with arms. Hitchins cites an excerpt from Oliver North’s diary (later subpoenaed) for May 15, 1986: ‘Cunningham running guns to Baghdad for CIA; then weapons to Teheran. Second running guns to Iran.’

This is Realpolitik. *International politics is a game. Countries, their populations, their resources*
are the werewuthal of the game. The stakes are avenues of influence, development of clientele among the national security forces of other nations, a veto power over the emergence of any rival power, markets for weaponry, the most lucrative trade of our times, rivaling the drug trade.

There remains the task of showing the break of the thinking that accompanies this activity with reality, where, by reality, I mean those aspects of the world that we can experience directly without recourse to a mind set that has created its own universe. I should like to emphasize that this sort of break with reality, as I have just defined it, is quite common in human experience. It is by no means always symptomatic of mental aberration, or 'madness' as all kinds of mental aberrations are labeled colloquially. In fact, sojourn in a universe of free fantasy unrelated to what we have called 'reality' may be quite salubrious. Children spend much time in imagined worlds. Adults create exceedingly sophisticated fantasy worlds. As an example, take chess. It is in every respect an imaginary world with its own peculiar but absolutely rigorous rules governing events. And I submit that, aside from some far-fetched comparisons to strategically conducted war, which need not be taken seriously, the world of chess is completely cut off from the world of ordinary experience. That is to say, the triumphs and frustrations of chess can be experienced only by the initiated in contrast to the joys and sorrows, fears and hopes attending human lives that everyone at one time or another experiences. An even more dramatic example is mathematics, a mental activity originally directly convertible into everyday business, such as land measurement (hence geometry), trade, and so on, later an adjunct of the natural sciences (physics, astronomy). But aside from these links, which still exist, vast areas of mathematics are entirely autonomous. They are a world of pure cerebration unrelated to anything that can be identified in space or time. In my opinion, the ability to create these worlds of fantasy and to escape into them is part of the fun of being human.

I submit that the world or Realpolitik is also a world of fantasy, meaningful only to the initiated. There are links between that world and the world of common human experience, but the results of this linkage are horrendous. The reason for this is that the institution of war with all the horrors that it produces has acquired a raison d'etre of its own, quite independent of the alleged functions that this institution is supposed to serve.

To see this, suppose we engage a chess master in a conversation about chess. He or she, if inclined, will give us intricate and sometimes fascinating explanations of the moves of an analyzed game; how each move serves some immediate or distant goal; how the goals are, in turn, steps toward an ultimate goal — that of winning the game or avoiding losing it. Suppose, however, we push our inquiries a step further and ask why anyone should want to win or avoid losing. This question can be answered tautologically. The situation classified as a won game is by definition more desirable than one classified as a drawn game, and the latter is more desirable than one classified as a lost game. As to why that should be so, or why the game should be played at all, the chess master regards such questions as senseless. The concern is only with how a game should be played, not with why it should be played.

The situation with the war planner or the realpolitiker is different. Like the chess player, the warrior and the virtuoso of power politics may give cogent answers to questions why this or that manoeuvre should or should not be undertaken. When, however, we raise the ultimate question — why a war should be fought at all, or why the game of power politics should be played, he will not declare this question to be senseless. He is more likely to refer to some extrinsic goals to be served by these activities. But these goals have no relationship to the fears or hopes or predilections or aspirations of the vast majority of human beings. The expertise of the military planner and of the realpolitiker serves only the aspirations of the people who live in the world of fantasy created by themselves. For most of the remaining humanity, their activities generate untold miseries.

Unlike the chess master or the mathematician who need only modest support to be able to exercise their expertise and derive satisfaction from it, the realpolitiker needs solid political support, or at least the acquiescence of a large sector of the society in which he pursues his activities and, of course, a substantial portion of its resources. He acquires this support, and through it taps the resources, by a sort of mass hypnosis, exercised through reflexes elicited by what are called the 'buzz words': defence, security, deterrence, modernization, and so on. They are the successors of the shibboleths that have been worn out, such as God, king, country, glory, and so on.

It would be doing the realpolitiker an injustice to accuse him of deliberately brutalizing the population by means of these shibboleths. For the most part, he believes in his own fantasies. The real motivation behind the deception is to keep the institution of war alive after it has become obsolete. The institution provides satisfaction for a wide range of occupations, professions, social strata, etc.: for the business man contracts, for the worker well-paying jobs, for the scientist and technician challenging problems, opportunities to exercise ingenuity, and a sense of being near the centres of power; for the politician —
political support.

In this way Realpolitik has constructed a world of its own – a world of fantasy which remains without links to the lives of ordinary people, except indirectly by its insatiable appetite for the world’s resources, but only as long as those fantasies and scenarios remain fantasies and scenarios. This is what I mean by bizarre modes of cognition and bizarre patterns of behaviour – symptoms of mental aberration. As soon, however, as those fantasies and scenarios are translated into action, they become obscene orgies of destruction, murder, and mayhem, for which no sanely defensible justification can be given. They then become the embodiment of pure evil. Together the mental aberration and the evil it generates constitute madness.

Note: The above forms the text of a lecture given on January 24, 1991 as one in a series of ‘University College (U of T) Lectures in Peace Studies.’ The lectures are co-sponsored by University College and Science for Peace.

E-Mail and the Gulf War

The following letters concern the Gulf War. The major exchange, arranged chronologically, is clustered around the dates January 20–23, and begins with the letter of David Josephy. Other matters treated after this exchange deal with the Gulf War as nuclear non-proliferation, a response to David Parnas’ ‘Images of War’, and cancellation of CBC programmes.

I have been very disillusioned with the Science for Peace group because there has been a plethora of talk and no action. I hope you can reorient yourselves and set some more practical and realistic objectives. To win the cause, you must convince the public that it is going to cost them much more than it will ever benefit, that those costs will be ones that affect their paychecks, or bills, or taxes directly. As a whole, they do not care about the cost in suffering to the Arabs, or potential environmental catastrophes, only what affects them and their children directly.

Bonnie Blackwell, Geology Department, McMaster University, January 8

Presuming that you are concerned to prevent or at least postpone a military conflagration in the Persian Gulf, I would like to urge you to phone or telegraph the US Senate urging that congressional authority be used to prevent the onset of US attack on or soon after January 15, and that economic sanctions be given the chance to force the Iraqi military out of Kuwait and to bring down the Hussein government.

Yesterday, Senator George Mitchell (Democrat, Maine), who wields considerable political power as President of the Senate, gave a speech pointing out that the sanctions were conceived and presented by the Bush administration as the ideal means of dealing with the crisis, that no evidence or argument has been presented to repudiate that policy, that the CIA has presented strong evidence that sanctions are taking effect, and that should violence eventually be necessary, the longer the sanctions are in place, the less potent is the Iraqi defence. There is no need (for) and no advantage to war on Wednesday. A war will destroy Kuwait not save it. A war will destroy the oil production, not save it. A war will destabilize regional security, not save it.

Seeing the US Senate as perhaps the best point of leverage on US military decision, I would urge you to phone Senator Mitchell’s office to voice your support of him (202-224-5556) and to minority senate leader Robert Dole (202-224-3135) to urge support of Mitchell. Dole is himself a wounded war veteran and might be most responsive to appeals to not unnecessarily and recklessly put US service men and women in jeopardy (I have called both numbers and know that they work and that the call is well received.)

Hopefully many small actions and tears may rise to a flood of such volume (as) to drown the war rhetoric and stall the momentum for war.

Floyd Rudmin,
Queen’s University, January 11

*We do not know how many acted on this advice
- Editor

Sunday, January 20, 1991

Dear Science for Peace People:

I have followed the many messages distributed through the E-mail network concerning the Iraqi war.

...Turning to the central question of the present crisis: was war justified on Jan. 15? I respect the honest and heart-felt convictions of those who oppose the Coalition action. But I cannot support a pacifist response to the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. I understand the culpability of those nations - notably the USSR, France, and Kuwait itself; also, undoubtedly, the USA - who contributed to the crisis, by arming and giving financial support to the
Iraqi regime. But the clock cannot be turned back. The world faces the threat of Saddam Hussein now, and I believe that he has made war the only option.

Saddam’s threat to the region and the world is appalling. Hussein - virtually single-handedly - is responsible for (i) the savage repression of human rights in Iraq; (ii) perhaps the most barbaric military adventurism of recent decades, in the instigation and prosecution of the insane war with Iran; (iii) the use of chemical warfare against the Kurds; (iv) the invasion of Kuwait itself, an act of conquest and aggression that must be reversed, if international order is to emerge from the post-Cold war era; (v) the cynical and despicable terror attacks on Israel. Does anyone doubt that he would have used chemical and even nuclear weapons in these attacks, had he been able? As with Hitler, Hussein’s own speeches reveal his plans, and naive people of good-will refuse to believe them.

In the past few days, I have heard many well-meaning statements of opposition to the war. Many of these have been made by persons for whom I have the greatest respect, and with whom I have normally stood in solidarity. But I have found the common theme in these statements to be opposition to armed conflict and a complete absence of credible alternative actions. I cannot agree that economic sanctions should have been continued ad infinitum. Such sanctions would have taken years to ‘bite’. Although Iraq was economically crippled by the sanctions, this had no impact at all on Hussein’s determination to remain in Kuwait, and little effect on his preparedness for hostilities.

Suppose we had maintained such sanctions for another year, or two years. Hussein would have continued to use this time to fortify his military position. By the time that the sanctions caused unacceptable hardship to the Iraqi population (a year? two years?): (i) the destruction of Kuwait and its people would have been completed; (ii) the Iraqi military position would have been stronger - for example, more SCUD warheads would probably have been constructed; (iii) Hussein would have garnered more sympathy and support from many quarters, especially the people of Moslem and Arab nations such as Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania, Pakistan, etc. Indeed, his popular support in Iraq itself might have increased, in the face of the ‘common enemy’.

There are absolutely no grounds for optimism that he would have yielded to diplomatic efforts, any more than Hitler had the slightest genuine interest in political negotiations over the status of Austria or Czechoslovakia.

Finally, if the sanctions held to the point of causing intolerable hardship in Iraq, Hussein would then have opened hostilities against the nations enforcing the embargo, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey ... and we would then be in the same war - but years later, on Saddam’s timetable, and probably on much less favourable military terms.

The consequences of war can never be predicted with certainty, but we must make real decisions based on judgement of the strategic situation. We have recently heard facile remarks that ‘war can never solve problems.’ But the present war can solve many problems: (i) Hussein’s intolerable reign of terror will come to an end. (ii) The principle of the integrity of nations, against aggression and conquest by powerful neighbours, will be upheld. (iii) I am disturbed by the often-heard comments that Kuwait has, somehow, less right to nationhood because it is ... far from a model democracy, selfishly rich, oppressive of its non-Kuwaiti residents, and so on. Are we to prepare an ‘A’ list and a ‘B’ list of nations, with the latter ‘fair game’ for predation? Can even Canada stand guiltless of the [kind of] charges levelled against Kuwait? (iv) The awful threat hanging over Israel, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Turkey, etc. will be removed.

It is further possible that the war will have beneficial effects beyond our expectations. (i) The example of Coalition action to repel aggression will deter other potential aggressors. (ii) The remarkable new impetus of democracy, which swept Eastern Europe and is now driving progressive change in Africa, may spread to many Arab one-party states, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen ... even Iraq. Democracy is the strongest bulwark against regional conflict. (iii) The stage may be set for a comprehensive settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. Many of Israel’s most dangerous enemies (Iraq, Libya, the PLO) will have lost (militarily or politically). The more moderate nations, with which negotiation is possible (Egypt, Saudi Arabia) will have won. Israel’s right to exist and defend itself has, implicitly, now been accepted by Saudi Arabia and even Syria. Israel has also gained great respect for its present restraint. Facing a common enemy has overthrown previous hostility (most dramatically between Syria and the USA). All of these factors will increase the chances for a successful comprehensive international diplomatic solution in the Middle East.

I am also disturbed by the tendency of many opponents of the war to accept, implicitly a ‘moral linkage’ between the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, even while rejecting explicit diplomatic linkage. Ironically, one commentator on the CBC even stressed that Israel attacked first in 1967! (How dare they!) Of course, if Kuwait had taken reasonable action in its own defence (e.g. accepting the sanctioning of a small American ground force) when it was under explicit threat from Iraq in June/July - as Israel defended itself by forestalling an imminent attack in 1967 -
we would probably not now be at war. This is not in any way to defend the intransigent Israeli position vis-a-vis the West Bank and Gaza. But it is a wild distortion of reality to admit any comparison between the Kuwait and West Bank occupations. Israel is surrounded by hostile nations whose declared aim is its destruction. If Iraq is now surrounded by hostile nations, this is only because Saddam has created them. And all of these nations are firm that they are opposed to Saddam, not to the existence of Iraq as a nation. Any objective observer would concede that the West Bank, Golan Heights, and Gaza are strategically important to Israel, and could not be surrendered without firm guarantees of national security. No such considerations applied to Kuwait, until Saddam created the present crisis.

Yes, the cost of war will be great. Soldiers and civilians will die. Economies will suffer, and the needs of human developments will languish while resources are poured into the war. And yet, militarily, this may be one of the most effective and least savage conflicts of the century, since the astonishing accuracy of bombing has clearly spared civilian targets. As Saddam refuses to yield, and the Iraqi army fails to depose him, the death toll from attacks against Iraqi troops will mount. (I think that there is some basis for hope that the Iraqi ground forces will disintegrate and run before complete devastation from the air is required.) We all hope that the successful end of the war will come as soon as possible.

I believe that I continue to support the principles of Science for Peace. I sincerely hope that the organization does not now adopt an unrealistic policy of absolute pacifism in the face of aggression; if it did so, I could no longer remain a member.

David Josephy,
University of Guelph, January 20

From the ‘Origins and Focus’ of Science for Peace, from our most recently published brochure, re David Josephy’s letter of January 20 -

Science for Peace ... (is) concerned with preventing mass military destruction whether by accident or design, and also with averting global starvation, poverty, and environmental disaster.

With this in mind, it is not easy to see how Science for Peace could take any position other than that of seeking every possible means to avert the Gulf War, seeing that modern wars never mean just clashes between professional militaries, but inevitably damage innocent civilians of all ages, cause starvation, increase poverty and produce environmental disasters. As for the notion of Science for Peace adopting an ‘unrealistic policy of absolute pacifism in the face of aggression’, it is pretty clear that a majority of members would not endorse such a position. It seems more likely that most would accept the necessity of military action in defense of Canada and also would be willing for our forces to contribute to a United Nations peacekeeping force - duly constituted, and operating more or less in the ‘old way’ to help separate warring states and maintain ceasefires and the security of state boundaries.

As for ‘pacifism’, Webster’s defines it as: ‘opposition to war or violence of any kind’ or ‘the principle or policy of establishing and maintaining universal peace or such relations among nations that all differences may be adjusted without recourse to war.’ Thus, while absolute pacifism in the face of aggression may not be acceptable to many in Science for Peace, pacifism as construed in the broader sense, and as an ideal towards which all should strive, would surely fit our definition of our organization and its hopes for the world.

Editor, Science for Peace

The only reasonable argument in favour of the war is that there is no reasonable alternative. This is the position taken by David Josephy in the message that you circulated.

Although the message was eloquent and well thought out, I cannot accept the assumption that there were no other alternatives. Two reasonable alternatives, one from Paul Nitze, the other a reported plan of some Arab states, were reported on in the last issue of the Manchester Guardian that appeared before the war started.

The fact is that the question of whether or not war was necessary at this time is a difficult one about which one can have a reasoned debate. The more important problem is why this difficult decision could be made by the leader of one country with less than 6% of the world’s population.

David Parnas,
Queen’s University, January 21

To David Parnas:

I greatly appreciated David Josephy’s letter and your reply. The necessity of the war is an impossible question to ask or to answer in times of censorship and chaos, and I am a bit shocked by the hubris of all who say that they know the answer. History
will judge, and different historians will have different arguments - but what is clear is that not enough was done over the last ten years to prevent it. Where were we when France sold Iraq Mirages and reactors, Germany sold chemicals, Canada and the US sold arms, to make Iraq the fifth largest military power in the world - a threat to many, and a disaster to Iranians, Kurds, and now raining missiles down on Israel?

Where were we when last September the Israelis begged the Americans for Patriot anti-missile missiles, only to be told that they could not have them then, as it would offend the other members of the 'coalition'? Peacemaking starts long before war erupts, and is least effective after hostilities have been allowed to begin.

Michael Steinitz,
St. Francis Xavier University, N.S.,
January 21

Michael Steinitz claims that the US denied Israel Patriot missiles. My understanding is that Israel had them before the war broke out but had not trained people to use them. In fact, the Patriot is of limited value because each launcher can only protect a rather small area (70 km maximum radius) and Iraq could select alternative targets for its terrorist attacks. The situation in Saudi Arabia is different because there are specific facilities that are considered vulnerable and Patriot missiles can be stationed at those facilities.

David Parnas,
Queen's University, January 22

It is my understanding that the Israelis received one battery and that their personnel were in Texas on a protracted training program to learn to use them. One battery is clearly inadequate, as you indicated. It may be expensive, but in a country the size of Cape Breton one could protect a fair segment of the populace. A 70 km radius seems very large to me, in fact, and would extend over all of Tel Aviv and large parts of the West Bank if it were true. The radius protected is probably much smaller, but some protection can certainly be achieved. It is certainly not very effective, as we learned last night, but may be expected to work some of the time in the future.

Here are my views on the suggestions of diplomatic alternatives to the war, as raised by David Parnas in his recent letter ...

I accept your correction, pointing out that Science for Peace has not made a formal public statement of opposition to the war. Nevertheless, it seems clear (from the many e-mail articles) that the sense of the executive is strongly 'anti-war'. I have had several replies to my letter, from other members of Science for Peace, who had the same impression.

Of course, none of us is 'pro-war' - but the question is not 'war or peace'. War began when Saddam annexed Kuwait. The question is how the international community should respond to the war which Saddam started.

I have now looked at the articles you referred to as 'reasonable alternatives' to war. These are (1) the plan suggested by Paul Nitze and Michael Stafford in the Washington Post, reprinted in the Guardian Weekly (Jan. 13, page 17; the 'N-S plan'), and (2) the 'Arab proposal' reported on p. 18 of the same issue. I want to discuss these plans carefully, since, as you and I both agree, the critical issue is: what alternative existed to the war on Iraq?

(1) The 'N-S plan'. I am rather surprised that you raised this plan as an alternative to war. The authors state (my emphasis added):

'We are rushing headlong into all-out war ... There is an alternative ... Continued reliance on the UN embargo - possibly augmented by air strikes - promises a much more favourable result ... Over the next 6 to 12 months, it may become evident that a blockade by itself will not do the job. In that case, we would favour supplementing the naval blockade with selected but powerful air strikes ... modern air-delivery systems can inflict great damage on the Iraqi war machine and the economy. Combined with the naval blockade, a well-directed air assault could force Iraqi capitulation. and if, over months, it did not achieve its goal, there remains the possibility of a later ground attack against greatly weakened Iraqi forces.'

In my view, this 'N-S plan' is essentially the strategy which Bush and Schwartzkopf implemented last week, and continue to follow: embargo, air strikes, but no ground war unless unavoidable. The only real difference is that N-S suggests giving Saddam 6 to 12 months more time to consider withdrawal; this is a difference in timing, rather than a difference in policy.

(2) The 'Arab' solution. This is much less well defined. The article is a long report on various plans which had been floated by various groups of nations involved in the crisis ... the sources are all anonymous. The journalist, T. Robertson calls it 'an intri-
cate diplomatic puzzle.’ The essence seems to be ‘to restore Kuwait’s sovereignty in exchange for guarantees that Kuwait and the international community would later address Iraq’s pre-invasion grievances. [The sources] warned, however, that the complexity of such a formula, coupled with the unpredictable behaviour of Iraqi’s leadership, makes this scenario tenuous at best.’ (My emphasis added.)

What is wrong with this approach? Everything. First, the plan’s very authors describe it as ‘tenuous at best’. Second, the plan sets the awful precedent of rewarding Saddam for his invasion of Kuwait, by allowing him to negotiate from a position of strength, and, implicitly, forcing Kuwait to make territorial and economic concessions. Third, the plan naively implies that an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait would restore the ‘status quo ante’; it ignores the consequences of Saddam’s brutal regime of murder and looting of Kuwait. International order is weakened if such crimes go unpunished – even rewarded. How could Kuwait agree to such a proposal, which forces Kuwait to negotiate on its knees, and leaves the Iraqi threat in place? So, finally, the greatest failing of this plan is that both Iran and Kuwait have repeatedly and categorically rejected such ‘solutions’ for the past six months.

(It is also interesting to read, in this report, that (despite claims of USA intransigence): ‘In Washington, a senior administration official, asked about the diplomatic efforts, said Bush’s position, public and private, continues to be “If you want to try to settle this peacefully, have at it.” ... any proposal that is acceptable to the Kuwaitis ... is “almost certainly” going to be acceptable to the US, if not publicly embraced.’)

I welcome your reactions to my analysis of these diplomatic scenarios. I continue to doubt that they offered any reasonable alternative to the terrible outbreak of war.

David Josephy,
University of Guelph,
January 22, 1991

To David Josephy: I think it is quite obvious that the position of Science for Peace should be that no reasonable alternative exist before we turn to war to resolve a dispute. It seems an appropriate use of our fora to carry on a discussion of whether or not an alternative to the horrors of war existed, but went untried. It is quite predictable that those who do not like the present policy will be the first to use these fora. The reaction of those holding your position to the statements of those who feel differently is an essential part of our debate. The reason that you felt a bias in the first messages is that you, and those who feel as you do, were not driven to express your views until other views had been expressed. We need this discussion before Science for Peace takes an official decision and you are playing an important role in our deliberation. You should remember that all executive and board meetings are open and that your organization will take more effective actions if more of our members participate. In my role as this year’s President, I want your participation.

It happens that my personal opinions are different from yours. My years of working within the US military establishment give me quite a skeptical view of their trustworthiness and great doubt about information that I get from them. I think that the situation in Kuwait has been painted in quite a misleading light because powerful forces in the US wanted to attack Iraq long before Iraq invaded Kuwait. Having, at times in my life, worked for both the CIA (very briefly) and the DoD I have the greatest respect for their skills and ability to make quite devious plans. This may explain why you and I view this situation so differently.

I watch in shocked amazement as commentator after commentator equates the incredibly strict sanctions against Iraq with the appeasement of Hitler. It is by this rhetoric that people talk as if the choice were between appeasement and war. I listen in puzzlement as people claim that if Iraq were to withdraw from Kuwait with the promise of a conference or a just settlement of some dispute that it would have gained from its criminal invasion. That action has cost Iraq far more than it has won. It is now unable to sell its oil, it can no longer buy weapons, the countries that used to support it will never do so again. Its economy is failing apart and nobody will help it to get back together until its internal system has changed drastically. It will be a pariah in the international community until its system of government changes. Even without this war, Iraq has not gained by its aggression. Without the war, Saddam would have lost face. With the war he has become a hero in the minds of many Arabs in and out of Kuwait. By creating the false impression that if a Peace Conference for Palestine is held, it is a victory for Saddam, the propaganda machine has created the impression that we must chose between rewarding Saddam and going to war. That’s not clearly true.

My reading of the Nitze plan was quite different from yours. As I read it, their article was a warning against just what is happening now and a plan for a far less destructive approach. I was not convinced by the N-S article for several reasons, but I do think that it was one of the many alternatives to war that had not been explored. The Arab plan was another alternative that could not be explored because of the premature recourse to all-out force.
I have others that I like better. The statement by Bush that you quoted is one example of the cleverness that so dismays me. Bush was willing to consider any plan acceptable to the Kuwaiti Emir but he said ‘Kuwaitis’. He knew that the government in exile would not agree to anything of the sort, but none of us knows what the Kuwaiti people would want if given a choice. Bush has denied them any voice in their own future. I suspect that they would prefer many things to the sounds and fears of war.

I believe that all of us in Science for Peace share two opinions. The first is that Iraq must not gain from its invasion of Kuwait. The second is that war should be the absolute last resort. However, I think that we need to think very hard about what would constitute ‘gain’ and whether there were alternatives. I believe that there were quite reasonable alternatives that were blocked by the Bush administration and that these involved no real gain for Iraq. I also believe that war was Saddam Hussein’s best chance for survival and gain. I look forward to hearing more of your views.

David Parnas,
Queen’s University,
January 23, 1991

I understand your concern at the direction events are taking. We in the ad hoc ‘peace’ group here at Brock are also worried that some actions may prove divisive. But we feel that something must be done. Is this the crisis that merits Canada’s combat involvement for the first time since the Korean war? Is this the crisis that merits losing Canada’s reputation for peacekeeping as opposed to ‘peace-making’? Is this not the first opportunity, now alas lost, to show that if everyone agrees upon sanctions a military action can be reversed? Of course we did not expect that Saddam would withdraw within the first few months. But over the same period of time that Ian Smith in Rhodesia was allowed, the losses to Iraq in terms of oil revenue alone would have been massive. If Saddam had not found a way out would he not have stood a chance of being deposed? And currently, in some quarters, he is a hero.

Specific points: Cancellation of the Air Farce, if done out of sensibility, should have been announced as such. But are Mulroney and Clark now to be immune from criticism? How, in any case, do we justify cancellation of the House?

Secondly, does the world face a threat from Saddam’s forces? The population of Iraq is less than that of Canada. All possible troops have been called up. When the B-52s go over Kuwait and its borders, many of the bombs are falling on those we would consider children, probably 14-15 year-olds. Some of those dropping bombs are not much older. They have not even been trained to resist brutality upon capture. How far could Saddam go? He could not even get very far in Iran. Hardly analogous to Europe in 1939. His barbarism is not a reason for going to war. Pinochet has fallen (I think) from power in Chile. He had colleagues of a Chilean colleague of mine beaten to death wrapped in barbed wire. Did this country consider war with Chile? Pol Pot may or may not have fallen from power in Cambodia. Members of the so-called coalition continue to support the Khmer Rouge – containing groups in Cambodia against the Vietnamese puppet regime. Indonesia continues to occupy west Irian. Are we going to expel them? Our choice of Saddam, Iraq and Kuwait is clearly geopolitical in origin. The USSR has chosen this moment to start killing people in Lithuania and Latvia, two other illegally occupied countries. Are we going there next?

Thirdly – Kuwait’s national status is not as secure as that of some other nations. There are A, B, C, etc., nations. Our own nation is unlikely to survive in its present form over the next ten years. Kuwait was set up when Iraq was invented by the British to counterbalance the situation in a rich area of the Gulf. It was part of Irak-Arabi which was all under the Ottoman empire. It was claimed by Iraq from the beginning and defended by the presence of UK troops. It is not a democracy.

Finally – the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza strip by Israel cannot be ignored. The circumstances of the occupation may be different but there is an occupation and an illegal one. It is a source of tension in the Middle East and any long-term solution must include solution of the West Bank/Gaza status. What possible outcomes of the present crisis that are creative and just can be foreseen? All other consequences seem to me to be likely to be destabilizing and negative in the long run.

Peter Nicholls,
Brock University,
January 22, 1991

Now that war has started, it is probably unrealistic to think that doves can have much influence on the way it is conducted. Is it not time to begin to plan for and focus on what should be our policy and plans for the postwar period? What concrete acts can be taken now? I can make a few small suggestions.

1. Ask your local newspapers and radio stations to give a sample of editorial comment from sources in the Islamic world. I think it is important for us all
to know how it looks from the other side of the fence. Quite apart from the potential terrorists, there are a lot of sad and embittered people out there whose view of the world is very different from ours. These are the people we will have to live with for the next generation and their concerns will have to be addressed if there is ever going to be a rapprochement with the West.

2. Write to all your colleagues in Islamic countries. Moderates and internationalists will be under pressure from the fundamentalist side. They need your support. Tell them how it actually is here, the level of sadness and discouragement about the war. The level of opposition. Madness has prevailed again, but the forces for peace must not lose touch with one another.

What should our plan be for afterwards? Again, no wisdom, just a plea for ideas:

1. Throw out the governments who allowed widely supported UN sanctions to be turned into a licence for war.

2. Promote a post-war regional settlement which addresses the needs of everyone in the region, including the Palestinians and the other poor and dispossessed people. Yes, this will likely mean putting pressure on the conservative Israeli government.

3. Do whatever little we outsiders can do to encourage independent representative democratic governments among the Arab nations of the area. The main thing here is to keep the Western nations from interfering with internal processes. People have to have time to build their own institutions. Mistakes will be made. But, in the end, the best guarantee of stability and economic progress is locally made institutions. We don’t need client states.

4. Strengthen the UN. It was misused this time after what many of us saw as a promising start. Let us not abandon it; let us learn to use it.

5. Work to prevent or moderate the inevitable new arms race in the area.

Let us see if we can develop a program and some plans for action. Peace.

Michael Wortis,  
Simon Fraser University,  
January 22, 1991

[I am (as you might suspect) taking (to some extent) a ‘devil’s advocate’ approach, so as to force us all (including myself) to think things through very carefully. (That was a ‘disclaimer!’)]

1. Peter Nicholls compares the time allowed for sanctions to Ian Smith versus Saddam. I think this overlooks important differences. It’s a matter of personal judgement, but I find it hard to think of Ian Smith and Saddam Hussein in anything like the same terms. Perhaps this is just cultural/racist bias. But S. Rhodesia was some kind of democracy, although, obviously, a racist one. (History shows that a peaceful transition to majority rule was, in the event, possible ... and sanctions may not have been decisive in achieving it.) Did S. Rhodesia pose the sort of horrible threat to its neighbours that Iraq does? Last night’s tragic attack on Tel Aviv is one more piece of evidence, as if it were needed.

Certainly, I agree that sanctions are in no way appeasement. But could sanctions have worked to get the Iraqis out of Kuwait? Or would they have slowly crumbled under economic considerations, sympathy for starving civilians in Iraq, smuggling ... Look at how quickly relations with China have (almost) resumed pre-Tien-an-Mien ‘status quo’ status ... China, too was a ‘pariah’ nation ... a year ago!

2. Re the CBC cuts: it seems like the schedule is now more or less back to normal, after the initial reaction which was, perhaps, an over-reaction. Still, I view the CBC as having acted in good faith, not out of sinister motivations. They have given plenty of coverage to the anti-war position.

3. Yes, we did not intervene in Chile or Cambodia, and will not (militarily, anyway in the Baltic states. (i) Past inaction proves hypocrisy, but does not necessarily mean that present action is wrong. (ii) Obviously, one should not intervene militarily unless one has a chance of winning militarily, without causing WWIII. So, is it not beside the point that we are not ‘bombing Moscow to get the Russians out of Latvia.’? Additionally, of course (although one may object to this judgement) the West regards Gorbachev as amenable to diplomatic and economic pressure, in a way which Saddam Hussein appears not to be.

4. Peter, you say that there are ‘A, B, and C’ nations. How can we hold such a position without openly inviting the conquest and annexation of those unfortunate on the ‘C’ list? Is not freedom of nations from invasion a general principle of international order, to be upheld in all cases?

5. Many people have said that Canada would do better to take a peace-keeper position. I think that I agree. Canada’s military contribution is negligible anyway ... it would have been better to take a position like the USSR: moral support, but not military...
involvement. Of course, this is a very important debate in Canada ... but my thoughts have been concentrated on the global situation – the over-riding question being the Coalition strategy, sanctions vs. war.

I look forward to more comments from many directions!

David Josephy,
University of Guelph,
January 23, 1991

I greatly appreciated David Parnas' 'Images of War'. I do feel that some of the images need comments, and further questioning, and these follow. I have kept those of his paragraphs on which I wished to comment, and enclosed my comments between groups of three asterisks (***) comment (***)

'At a basketball game in the Southern US, play is interrupted by the announcement that the 'Liberation of Kuwait' has begun. Both the players and the audience cheer and dance.' *** Was our attitude as cynical when Canadian troops began the liberation of Holland, or are we so cynical that we would make an equivalence between whatever failings the pre-war Dutch government had and the oppression the Dutch suffered under the Germans? ***

'In his home country, poor people, people who were not able to leave, cower in fear as they hear aircraft and bombs exploding. They have heard that the 'liberation' of their land has begun but, never having been free, they can't imagine what it means. They just wish that the frightening noises would stop.' *** The judgement that Kuwaitis have never been free is an incredible statement, no matter how awful their government may have been, if it is made in an effort to equate their lack of freedom before and after the invasion, or to equate their lack of freedom with that suffered by the people of Iraq.***

'Thousands of tons of munitions explode on Kuwait and Iraq. People wait and try to live normally, knowing that they have absolutely no voice in what happens to them. Nobody ever asked them what they wanted.' *** At some level all governments govern with the consent of the governed, even if that consent is at the point of a gun. ***

'President Bush says that he will not compromise Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein says that he will not compromise with the Satan in the White House. Both men eat a good dinner in safe surroundings.' *** It is a monstrous calumny to make a moral equivalence between these two, no matter how much one dislikes Bush. ***

'A local religious leader appeals to his congregation to “live with normalcy” thereby denying victory to the enemy.' *** And a local religious leader in Alberta calls for a ‘holy war’ against the United States. ***

'In Palestinian camps, parents who have never known normalcy hope that a heroic saviour will let their children live normal lives. We who have ignored their suffering for 40 years shake our heads in disbelief and disapproval.' *** But the 'heroic
savior' is one of those politicians most responsible for denying them 'normalcy' and we acquiesce in his propaganda, making him a 'saviour'.

Michael Steinitz,
St. Francis Xavier University,
January 29, 1991

I very much appreciate Michael Steinitz's comments on my attempt to communicate my own feelings about this war. There are only two points that I want to emphasize in response.

• I know from my time in Holland that the Dutch felt that the government before the invasion was one that they had chosen and wanted. On the other hand I know that the government of Kuwait was not freely chosen and that many Kuwaitis had pictures of Saddam Hussein in their homes. I simply believe that those people should be given a chance to chose their government and they have not had that chance. We have had a chance to chose our leaders and form of government. Why shouldn't they?

• I was not saying that Saddam Hussein is a saviour for the Palestinians, on the contrary. However, I do understand why, in their desperation, they grab at straws and try to view him that way. When people lose hope they will turn anywhere for help.

David Parnas,
Queen's University,
January 29, 1991

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NORAD

In the fall of 1990, Science for Peace presented the following document to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade. The initiative for this came from John Valleau and Jean Smith, who also prepared this submission.

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THE NORAD AGREEMENT

A submission by Science for Peace to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade

The NORAD agreement is meant to provide a joint Canada-US structure for two purposes:

(i) provision of aeroepace surveillance, especially for early warning of missile or air attack on North America, and

(ii) interception and retaliation in the event of such an attack. We argue here that this structure is not now appropriate to the security interests of Canada and the rest of the world, and that it carries unacceptable risk for Canada. We therefore recommend that the NORAD agreement not be renewed.

The two purposes referred to above require somewhat separate consideration:

I. We consider first the second of them, which concerns mobilization of forces to repel an attack and retaliate. According to the 'Principles' of the NORAD agreement (sections (a), (b), (c) and (f) of those principles in the letter of agreement of 11 March, 1981), NORAD operates under a unified command. An implication of the structure is that the Commander-in-Chief (CINCNORAD) has the power to mobilize Canadian forces into combat without requiring the authorization of the Canadian Parliament or even the Government. (This interpretation was confirmed by the events of the 'Cuban missile crisis', when our forces were put in battle-readyness by CINCNORAD regardless of the opposition of the Prime Minister and prior to the approval of the Defence Minister.) We view this as an entirely unacceptable surrender of our sovereignty. There is no more grave national decision than that to go to war, yet the NORAD agreement allows this decision, de facto, to be taken by the US, in their interests and without regard to ours.

Such a surrender of sovereignty should surely not be found acceptable unless in extremis, for example under the perceived threat of sudden major attack. There is no nation in the world from which a manned air attack is in the slightest degree likely. The command structure of NORAD is clearly a relic of the perceptions, right or wrong, of the Cold War. There is no justification for the tacit surrender of our sovereignty at this time, and consequently the command structure under which NORAD operates is unacceptable.

A further concern is the apprehension that during the 1980s, through NORAD, Canada has become associated with SDI and the Air Defence Initiative. The 1981 removal from the NORAD agreement of prohibition of anti-missile defence systems is frequently interpreted along these lines. These developments are widely interpreted as destabilizing, as being part of a war-fighting infrastructure rather than enhancing international confidence. It is not in Canada's interests to be perceived as contributing to such developments.

II. The other chief NORAD role, that of surveillance, is very different in character, for by itself it can be seen as building confidence by enhancing 'deterrence'. There is a very real question whether the deterrence for which it was designed, that of US-USSR strategic confrontation, retains any relevance today.
What is clear is that if surveillance is to serve the wider purpose of deterrence and confidence-building it should look in more than one direction, and the data that result should be available to all. Otherwise the surveillance facilities will be regarded, with some justice, not as a contribution to Common Security, but as a projection of the military structure of a single power. This perception is strengthened by the possible use of the facilities in connection with the forward 'defence' aspects of ADI and SDI.

It is time to make a new evaluation of the contribution to world security of a system of surveillance facilities in Canada's North. A decision on this matter should only be reached through consultation with the UN and especially with all our neighbours around the Arctic (Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the US and the USSR). We believe that such a system would contribute to world security if, and only if, its data are immediately and equally available to any nation which wishes them, and to an (eventual) UN monitoring agency; the openness of such a system would create trust and confidence and contribute to the common security of the world.

Such a system, if it is deemed desirable, should be operated in one of only two ways:
(a) financed and operated entirely by Canada, or
(b) operated under the control of the UN with our cooperation. What is no longer acceptable is that it should be operated under a bilateral agreement that makes it function as a tool of one superpower. Clearly, such a change would have to be carried out in a way which was not perceived by the US as a short-term threat to its security. If that proves to be in question, we must be willing to welcome foreign observers, including of course those of the US, to monitor our methods of data acquisition and distribution. (It may be that this is not in fact a US concern, since it appears that modern technology probably permits adequate long-distance detection from the US without relying on our cooperation [2].) If the system were to continue to be based on land radar stations, then we would presumably seek to recompense the US for the 60% share they have paid for the North Warning System; we would have to examine however the possibilities of using instead satellite-based systems which might be more useful in simultaneous domestic monitoring of our own coasts.

In summary, it is our view that
(i) the organization of the confrontational aspects of NORAD under a unified command structure is completely unacceptable due to the associated surrender of Canadian sovereign control over our involvement in war, and
(ii) surveillance activities in the interests of common security must be brought under international and cooperative control, so they cannot be seen as projections of hegemonic power.

Both considerations lead to the firm conclusion that the NORAD agreement has exhausted its relevance and should not be renewed. We have proposed above some initiatives with regard to confidence-building surveillance alternatives.

We see the discontinuance of NORAD as opening also the possibility of broader cooperation, especially among the Arctic nations. Steps toward demilitarization of the Arctic and its environmental protection have been proposed by the Scandinavian nations and notably by Mikhail Gorbachev in his Murmansk proposals of 1 October 1987. There have also been suggestions that a permanent conference on the Arctic be established, along the lines of the CSCE. Canada has failed to respond adequately to such initiatives, in part because of its involvement in a bilateral defence agreement. Replacing NORAD with an all-Canadian or internatinal surveillance system would be an important step to this kind of cooperation.

Footnotes
[1] These purposes are embodied in (b) and (c) of the three 'primary objectives' of NORAD as described in the letter of agreement of 11 March, 1981. The agreement also lists '(a) to assist each nation to safeguard the sovereignty of its airspace', although this seems to have no executive expression in the 'principles' which follow. We argue that (a) is in fact to some extent inconsistent with the structures created to address (b) and (c).

NORAD ... continued
On October 25, 1990, John Valleeau and Alan Weatherley of Science for Peace were witnesses at the proceedings of the House of Commons Sub-Committee on NORAD. Other witnesses were: Ernie Regehr, Research Co-ordinator, Project Ploughshares; Ken Lewis, President, Aerospace Industries Association of Canada; John Killick, Senior Vice-President, Canadian Marconi Company; Joanna Santa Barbara, President-Elect, Canadian Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War; Bill Erasmus, National Chief, The Dene Nation; Kevin O'Reilly, Executive Assistant to Bill Erasmus; C.R. Nixon, Individual.

The evidence given by John Valleeau and Alan Weatherley and discussion arising is reproduced below from the official record published under authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons.
The Chairman: I turn now to testimony from Science for Peace and John Valleau. You might like, John, to introduce others who are with you.

Mr. Jean Valleau (Director, Science for Peace): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Alan Weatherley is sitting next to me, and Mrs. Robena Weatherley and Jean Smith (John Valleau's wife) are also here.

I hope you had a chance to read copies of our short submission. In a moment I will remind you of some points we make, some new suggestions that have not been covered in the testimony so far. Like others, I feel compelled to say something about the context in which we are considering the future of NORAD.

Our view is that we are in quite a new world, that the Cold War really is over. We got through it; we lucked out. We could take up that argument again, but we feel it is time to take a new look at Canada's place in the world because these are times when everything is changing. The Cold War period had a certain simplicity to it. The world was divided into two blocs. The perceived threat was attack by the other bloc, and the US and Canadian defence interests were essentially identical. NORAD's role made some kind of sense in that context.

The new situation seems to us quite different. There is little threat of an immediate direct attack on North America. I do not say it is zero, but I will come back to that. Realistically there is little threat. I agree with Mr. Nixon that the world elsewhere is now unstable and confusing compared to the situation we have faced before. We will see new and different threats arising. In that context the identity of the United States and Canadian interests is no longer certain.

We have to ask ourselves whether the kind of arrangements we have made will still make any sense. Our familiar ways can have a terrible blind moment. We all have vested interests in going ahead with them, but this is a time of tremendous opportunity and we have to seize that opportunity. It is in this context that we are concerned with the matters before us today. There are two principles I want to stress in what I say.

One is the preservation, or to some extent the restoration, of Canada's freedom of action - call it sovereignty, if you wish. The other is the contribution we now have an opportunity to make to the stability of the world in the form of confidence-building measures in the spirit of common security. I believe we have a real opportunity now to move in that direction without in any way threatening our own security.

With these two things in mind, let me come to some specific points. The first point our submission raises concerns the NORAD Agreement itself and, particularly, the provisions for response to an attack on North America, because we see there a most serious threat to Canadian sovereignty. There is no more grave national decision than to go to war. Yet, as we read the document, we find ourselves in danger of our forces being mobilized into a war situation without requiring Canadian government authorization. This appears to us to have been confirmed by the Cuban missile crisis. It really became clear that the United States would not let concern for the sensibilities of an ally stand in the way of carrying out its immediate wishes.

It seems to us there is no present risk to Canada that could justify such a surrender of our sovereignty. This is especially true, of course, in the confused situation that ... I have mentioned with the dissolution of the bloc structure and the real possibility that situations may arise where our interests are not so clearly coinciding with those in the United States. One has only to think of relationship with Latin America and so on. The point is that the surrender of sovereignty that appears to be implied is totally unjustified.

The topic we have mostly talked about in connection with NORAD is the surveillance edge, but this is a somewhat two-edged sword, as has already been mentioned, and I want to consider the two edges separately. One of them is that there is an increasing perception here and elsewhere in the world that there is an association of NORAD with the activities connected with the American nuclear war fighting strategy. This has to do with SDI and ADI and our participation in the Strategic Defence Architecture 2000 discussions and so on.

The perception is that we are sliding through NORAD into complicity with a certain class of United States plans that are dangerous, and to the extent that this perception is true, it is no longer true to say that NORAD is purely defensive, as was said earlier. One would like it to be purely defense, but we fear that to the extent there is any truth in these perceptions, it is no longer true. The combination of anti-missile defence, anti-air-breathing weapon defense and modern accurate counter force missiles is seriously destabilizing because it raises fears of first strike options in others.

People ask, why does the USSR still have weapons if peace has come? Of course, the same question could be asked, why does the US still have weapons too? The answer is because everyone is scared, and they are scared because of destabilizing things like this. Developments along those lines seem to be totally destructive to us and are associated with intimidation rather than reassurance. Therefore we believe Canada should have nothing to do with them. We should eschew them, and publicly, as Ernie Regehr suggests.
The other aspect, the good edge of the sword, is that surveillance itself can build confidence because it can support deterrence. It can give people the reassurance that they know what is happening, and it has, indeed, increased our security over the years because we have had these warning systems. It can go on doing that, but if the surveillance facilities are really to be truly confidence-building in the world, they must not be associated with only a particular single function like that. They ought to look both ways. They ought to look every way. They ought to be providing the information widely in every direction. This is the way, if these are confidence-building measures, that you use them to build confidence.

The present North Warning System, which is our principal contribution to NORAD, simply does not function in that way, and it can be seen instead, and is seen instead elsewhere, as a projection of US military power rather than as a stabilizing contribution to the world. This seems important to us. It does not simply mean that we should immediately cut down the radar antennae, but it does mean that we should be, as rapidly as possible, converting it to this kind of confidence-building systems that it could be.

Of course, in the long run one has to admit it is not clear whether a land-based radar system in northern Canada will be the important contribution we might make to world surveillance and security. That has to be examined. But in the meantime, with the present system as it evolves and with whatever new contribution along the surveillance lines we make, we urge that these should be under Canadian direction alone - on Canadian soil. Alternatively, they should be very broadly based.

We favour United Nations operation of such a surveillance system, as an alternative to a purely Canadian operation, but very broadly based. Conceivably, of course, there could be something like a CSCE for the Arctic nations. But it must be seen as broadly based. In any case, data must be available to all those who wish it.

Of course, we also must not upset the magistrates while we make that evolution, and therefore we must be willing to accept observers to make sure the techniques do not fall short of their present expectations and so on. We have to consider satellites and so on as alternatives. But in the short run, these should be brought under our own control or a broadly based international control, and should not be seen as part of a threatening system.

All these steps taken together make us think that now is the time to bring the NORAD Agreement to an end as rapidly as possible, not by weakening our security or the United States security, because we will keep on with the surveillance techniques as long as they are pertinent, but by moving to confidence-building measures that cannot be misinterpreted as dangerous to the world.

The Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Vallee.

A discussion of matters raised by the panelists resulted, to which John Vallee contributed the following:

John Vallee in later discussion: I would like to say a couple of words about Mr. Nixon's comments. One of them concerns the sovereignty issue. I am afraid I cannot grasp what he is getting at.

The question of sovereignty we raised was a specific one, the right of a country to decide whether or not to go to war. I think this is not an aspect of sovereignty we want to play around with. If we are still a nation, this is something terrifically basic that we do not give up easily.

As to being isolationist, there is no suggestion of that. On the contrary, the whole thrust of our document was precisely that we should become more internationalist. We should not be linked up with narrow interests. Instead, we should try to use what capabilities we have for a very broadly based internationalist thrust of co-operation in the world. I really do not think that what you are saying is to the point of what we were saying.

I would like to say a word about the military industry. I am sure we will come back to that. It is true there are spin-offs as people have said. The question is, can we afford those spin-offs? Are they worth it?

I suppose you will have read analyses of this in terms of other countries. Seymour Melman is a famous case. He has spent years making this analysis. His analysis is very discouraging for this thesis. It would say that the net effect on one's industrial base is negative. In fact, it finally debilitates one's industries.

The objective evidence, such as we have, is in the same direction: Japan and Germany, who were forbidden from having major defence industries, are the countries that have most rapidly advanced in technical industry. The USSR, which has been caught up in high-tech weaponry, has crippled itself and destroyed its system by doing that. It is quite possible that the United States is doing the same thing. That is not such a clear case, perhaps.

The other thing I want to raise is that there is a moral dimension here; it does not seem to have been mentioned. We could argue that there is a serious risk to the world in basing part of your industrial well-being on the export of dangerous arms. I think it unconscionable that we should offer such a risk to the world as a prop for our economic system. We simply cannot go on doing that. We see an example in Iraq at the moment, where we are upset about
chemical weapons. Essentially, they got the chemical weapons from the west.

So we have to get out of the idea that we can go on propping up our economic system on this, as I see it, immoral kind of activity. I am not saying we should suddenly put everybody out of work. Clearly we have a tremendous amount of competence that must be converted to useful ends. We have competent workers who must be eased into more useful things, and the Canadian government has the responsibility to design an economic conversion program that will allow that to happen.

The Chairman: Thank you very much. Now I am going to ask Members of Parliament to put some questions, and then again you could make some notes of those to which you might like to respond.

John Vallee and Alan Weatherley contributed to the lengthy discussion that followed these remarks:

Mr. Vallee: There are a number of questions (that have been raised) here. I will address some of them.

The question of the US reaction to cancellation (of NORAD) is of course something we do not really know until we ask, I suppose, but it clearly depends on the US apprehension of their current threat. I do not think it is quite clear that they, like we, have resolved that issue entirely.

I may say there has been a lot of rumbling in the United States, in congressional hearings and so on, about the fact that it is very possible that we are not needed for the surveillance capabilities they require. They have been developing Over-The-Horizon radar very extensively; they are now using it on ranges of 3,000 kilometres. There are some problems because of behaviour of the ionosphere in the high Arctic that they have been trying to remedy. How far they have got I do not know, but it seems very likely that the kind of surveillance we are offering could be provided by the Americans for themselves, without our help, without great difficulty. The use of satellites is increasing and is probably more useful in some ways, and so on.

A few years ago, as I understand it, there was an approach to the United States with regard to the possibility of an essentially maritime version of NORAD, which was nicknamed NOMAD, which the Americans simply turned down. They saw no need for that. We do not know, as I say, but my perception is that the Americans might not be greatly perturbed by it.

On the question of whether NORAD can turn only with surveillance, the answer to that is no. If you look at the document itself, point c, of the objectives is:

c. should deterrence fail, to ensure an appropriate response against attack by providing for effective use of the forces of the two countries available for air defence.

That means that in the event of hostilities of some kind, some kind of attack on North America, Canadian forces can be mobilized against that attack. That was the point we made earlier, that can have the effect of precipitating us into war without due deliberation. So the answer is no, I think very clearly.

The renewal-cancellation thing is rather complicated. The way I read the treaty is different from the interpretation we were just given, but I am not a lawyer.

In any case, the point that I think Mr. Brewin was raising seems like an important one. It was raised elsewhere, that there must be some lead time, and that one must know what one is doing. I would have supposed that what was important from our own standpoint would be to announce that we were reconsidering the NORAD arrangement, that we were considering providing the kind of surveillance security that was wanted in other ways, and therefore we would renew for a year only with that intention. That seems like a reasonable procedure to me. One would hope to see the ABM clause restored to the document for that year as another item of reassurance.

About the UN supervision of surveillance, we have already made our position clear. So I need say nothing, I suppose.

The question of Arctic co-operation is more difficult. Why have we not responded more readily to the various initiatives that have been offered by the Scandinavian nations and by the Soviet Union with respect to more concerted cooperation on environmental matters, resource development matters, demilitarization matters, and so on? One does not actually know. At least, I do not know the answer to that question, but one suspects that the fact that Canada and the United States are joined by a bilateral defence treaty initially aimed against another member of the Arctic region, and have remained in that bilateral treaty, has been an inhibition perhaps on proceeding with such negotiations. At least, that may not be true, but something has inhibited what ought to be going ahead full steam as far as I can see. There is co-operation on a scientific committee and there are some other items of co-operation, but much, much more could be done.

Mr. Alan Weatherley ([Bulletin] Editor, Science for Peace): I was grateful for remarks by Mr. Nixon about the admission that defence industries do not necessarily produce very good dividends or things of direct utility to civilian populations in times that are not war times.

I think we can take that a little further. The most significant scientific and technological discov-
eries and inventions of the last 100 years or so that have, whether we like it or not, transformed all our lives seem to be medical discoveries and trains and dynamite and telephones, cars, cinema, aircraft, radio, nuclear energy, television and computers. All of these have been essentially or mostly pacetime civilian discoveries and developments that have been utilized and/or perverted by military activities.

Of course, Alfred Nobel is the famous example of a pacetime inventor who was so horrified by what uses his invention of dynamite was put to that he instituted a series of prizes of which the Peace Prize is the most significant.

I would like to know really what military industries have invented or produced in the way of things that are comparable in the impacts on society for its own good, including its profits, that could possibly compare with the list I have given there. I have no doubt there are some spin-offs, but I think they are mighty insignificant when you take the whole panoply of things that have been developed over the course of the last century that have changed our society.

In one concluding remark I would like to say this. It is true that there may be rich industrial contracts resulting from defence industry activities. We know that. And it is true that many people may lose their jobs associated with these industries as societies become converted to pacetime activities. This has been mentioned. It is not true, at least I think it is very arguable, that industrial technology, except in specialized ways, progresses more rapidly as a result of defence industrial activities.

I do not think it is true, if people in defence industries receive appropriate retraining and if governments are dedicated to seeing that they find useful and productive roles in peaceful industry, that there need be a net loss either of such people from the ranks of a company's work force, or of a company's overall industrial productive capability in pacetime. I think these arguments are somewhat spurious and a little beside the point. They are popular arguments and they have been mentioned again and again, but I do not think they stand up very well to analysis in depth.

I have one last point. People have been asking about the contribution mentioned in the NORAD report of 1986. It is right there in table 2. Canadian fiscal costs for the fiscal year 1984-85 were $664 million, against about 10 times that amount in the US. They would be upscaled by now.

The Chairman: I want to thank all our panelists for being so forthcoming and helping us weigh these issues. We will ask our research staff - and we will also share this testimony with the panel - to review all the briefs that come in, and we will be meeting further with them. We may be in touch with you to follow up some of the issues on the table today. Thank you, again.

We are adjourned.

'TEACH-IN' AT U of T

On Wednesday, February 13 a non-partisan teach-in was held at University of Toronto entitled 'War in the Gulf: The University Reflects.' The purpose was to consider the background, causes and implications for the future. The teach-in was endorsed by the University of Toronto Faculty Association and Staff Association, graduate and undergraduate student associations, Campus Chaplains, and by Science for Peace. The basic idea for a teach-in came from John Valleau, and in the many hectic meetings of the planning committee John Valleau, Jean Smith, Eric Fawcett, Chandler Davis, Terry Gardner, Schuyler Lighthall (National Co-ordinator), and Robena and Alan Weatherley were involved to a major extent. Indeed the basic pattern of the teach-in was very much according to the plans of Science for Peace, though many other people made major contributions. The committee also received much help from the University of Toronto President's Office, in the persons of Trish Bongard, Peter O'Brien and John Kirkness, and also by way of funding to the amount of $2,500. The morning session of the teach-in was held in Hart House, the afternoon session in Convocation Hall. Joan Foley, Provost of the University of Toronto, formally welcomed participants and audience to the afternoon session.

Despite the unexplained absence of a representative of the Department of External Affairs, whose presence as a speaker in the final afternoon section had been promised, the teach-in provided a very useful forum for broad discussion of a great range of Gulf War issues, with plenty of opportunity for audience participation. Despite some slightly rancorous disputation, most participants, whether speakers or audience, treated the teach-in as an opportunity for serious dissection of the problem and as a chance to learn more concerning the historical, political, economic and human background.

If there was a major regret by the organizers it was that the maximum audience attending was about 400, and that fell off to about 150 by the end of the afternoon. An historian who recalled a U of T teach-in on the Viet Nam War stated that the Gulf teach-in was a far superior event for quality of speakers and content, but 6,000 attended the former at Varsity Stadium. In post-mortem it was suggested that general public apathy over the Gulf War was a contributing factor to the somewhat disappointing attendance, but also (an important lesson) that
WAR IN THE GULF; THE UNIVERSITY REFLECTS

Wednesday, 13 February

The University of Toronto is holding a non-partisan teach-in on the war in the Gulf, its background, its causes, and implications for the future. (Endorsed by UTFA, UTSA, GSU, SAC, Campus Chaplains' Association, Science for Peace.)

Morning Session in HART HOUSE THEATRE

9:00 a.m.: The Destructiveness of War. Moderator: Metta Spencer, Sociology/Erindale, U of T, editor, Peace Magazine.

(1) The Human Cost. Aida Graff, Arab Canadian Women's Network; Frank Bialystok, education consultant on interethnic relations; Dawn Roach, student, Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Committee.


(3) The Economy. Joyce Kolko, author; Keith Krause, Political Science and Centre for International and Strategic Studies, York.


Afternoon session in CONVOCATION HALL

12 noon: Musical interlude. Peter Lutek, U of T.

12:15 p.m.: Introduction. Moderator: Bob Shantz, University Chaplain, U of T.

Welcoming Remarks. Joan Foley, Provost, U of T.

Remember the Victims: The Morality of War. Ursula Franklin, Metallurgy and Materials Science, U of T.

12:40 p.m.: The Historical Background. Moderator: Bill Graham, Philosophy/Scarborough, U of T.

(1) The Region. James Reilly, Middle East and Islamic Studies, U of T; Atif Kubarsi, Economics, McMaster University; Paul Rose, History, Haifa University (visiting York); Gideon Gera, Dayan Institute of Tel Aviv (visiting Centre for International and Strategic Studies, York).

(2) This War. Edward Herman, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania; John Harbron, journalist, Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies; David Goldberg, History, York, Executive Director, Canadian Professors for Peace in the Middle East.

3:30 p.m.: A Thoughtful Look Ahead. Moderator: Kenneth McNaught, History, U of T.


6-8 p.m.: Workshops on: Restoring and Preserving the Peace; Political Action in the Search for Peace; Israel and the Palestinians; Oil and the World Economy; The War and the Environment; Military Alliances; The Role of Pacifism.

From the Media - Notes and Matters Arising

The Winners and the Losers

The Editorial of The Globe and Mail, February 28 ('Tallying up the war's winners and losers') lists those nations who will profit from the result of the war with Iraq and those who will not. The 'winners':

1. 'The United States is the ultimate victor. Certainly President George Bush has won the admiration of many for his resolve, not only in refusing to be swayed from his objectives but in maintaining the breadth of international support the action enjoyed.'

2. Kuwait. It is liberated.

3. Egypt. '...President Hosni Mubarak (has gained) the strong and lucrative support of the United States and Saudi Arabia. With Saddam Hussein vanquished, the mantle of Arab leadership will be the Egyptian leader's alone.'

4. Saudi Arabia, 'to the point that Riyadh may now attempt to use its economic clout to influence thinking in other Arab capitals.'

5. Syria. '...the United States has already signalled its hope that Syria's demand for the return of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights will soon be put on the negotiating table.'

6. Iran, for which 'Arab and Western leaders already forsee a new regional security arrangement that views Tehran more as an ally than a threat.'

7. Turkey, which 'has not enjoyed such favourable international attention since the demise of the Ottoman Empire.'

8. Israel, whose 'policy of restraint (and its role as victim) won it considerable stature and empathy.'
9. Britain, France and Canada, who ‘emerge as the most loyal of the coalition’s Western members. Prime Minister John Major and Brian Mulroney ... should experience increased popular support.’

10. The Soviet Union. ‘Its attempts to broker a peace agreement appear ... to have been genuinely intended to force Iraq’s compliance with UN resolutions while triggering as little instability in the region as possible.’

11. ‘The World economy will be a big winner of the peace. Not only will business confidence be buttressed and oil prices stabilized, but the massive resuscitation program required in Kuwait, Iraq and the horribly contaminated waters of the Persian Gulf will mean tremendous gains for Western contractors and for millions of the workers in the regions who have been displaced by the war.’

12. The UN Security Council. ‘Throughout the crisis, the UN provided an invaluable forum for modulating its response. Its resolutions, representing broad international concerns (albeit driven by US convictions), became the goals of the war. Because of that, soldiers knew what they were fighting for and how to tell when the war was over.’

The ‘losers’:

1. Iraq

2. The PLO – because of ‘Arafat’s support for Saddam Hussein.’ ‘At the same time ... Palestinians can take satisfaction in knowing that their legitimate grievances have been elevated in international prominence.’

3. Jordan, because King Hussein attempted ‘the role of mediator, but paid the price of losing the confidence of ... the winning side.’

4. Kuwait! Not only because of the devastation and brutality experienced but because their ‘privacy has now been surrendered, and the world will have much to say about the nature of their government, for example, for years to come.’

A cold-minded accounting indeed. How realistic is it? Perhaps quite realistic in the short run, in a world now seemingly ready to be driven by a military-powered political and economic hegemonic bloc headed by the USA. But it also implies a perspective which cynically assumes that the Gulf War has served to begin a process that has eluded the Middle East for 50 years - sorting out its chaotic political relationships.

It is true, of course, that the rich and powerful Western members of the coalition may now be more inclined to ‘help’ less powerful coalition members in terms of arms, loans, technical training, etc. Some of this ‘help’ could actually prove useful to the recipients. But The Globe and Mail list is simple and categorical, and suggests a continuation of the simple-minded, patronizing attitude towards the people of the region that has bedevilled dealings with them for so long.

The people of the Middle East are probably as varied and distinct in their life styles and aspirations as any other large collection of human beings inhabiting a geographically identifiable region of the globe. The best way the coalition’s leaders could help them would be to take a serious and really long-term interest in their societal aims, respecting even those that run counter to their own. If money is to help them it should be used in peace to aid the struggles for self-sufficiency and self-determination that are everywhere apparent. If the great powers expect to use their influence in more games of ‘divide and conquer’ and other passtimes of ‘balances of power’ they will simply continue to feed the massive injustices, inequalities and thwarted nationalist struggles that have so long tormented the region.

METAPHOR AND WAR

Printed below are extracts from a 7000 word article received by Science for Peace on January 13, 1991. The article, though it contains much excellent material, was judged too lengthy to reproduce in full. Those interested in the full manuscript should apply directly to the author. As an aid to would-be readers of the whole, the article's headings are as follows:

The state-as-person system; Rationality is the maximization of self-interest; The fairytale of the just war; The ruler-for-state metonymy; The experts' metaphors; The causal commerce system; Risks; Risks are gambles; The mathematization of metaphor; Rational action; Rationality as profit maximization; International politics as business; War as violent crime; War as a competitive game; Is Saddam irrational?; Kuwait as victim?; What is victory?; The Arab viewpoint; What is hidden by seeing the state as a person?; Energy policy; The 'costs' of war; America as hero; Things to do.

Extracts from METAPHOR AND WAR: THE METAPHOR SYSTEM USED TO JUSTIFY WAR IN THE GULF

George Lakoff, Linguistics Department, University of California at Berkeley

Metaphors can kill. The discourse over whether we should go to war in the Gulf is a panorama of metaphor. Secretary of State Baker sees Saddam as 'sitting on our economic lifeline.' President Bush
sees him as having a ‘stranglehold’ on our economy. General Schwartzkopf characterizes the occupation of Kuwait as a ‘rape’ that is ongoing. The President said that the US is in the Gulf to ‘project freedom, protect our future, and protect the innocent’, and that we must ‘push Saddam Hussein back.’ Saddam is seen as Hitler. It is vital, literally vital, to understand just what role metaphorical thought is playing in bringing us to the brink of war. Metaphorical thought, in itself, is neither good nor bad; it is simply commonplace and inescapable. Abstractions and enormously complex situations are routinely understood via metaphor. Indeed, there is an extensive, and mostly unconscious system of metaphor that we use automatically and unreflectively to understand complexities and abstractions. Part of this system is devoted to understanding international relations and war. We now know enough about this system to have an idea of how it functions. The metaphorical understanding of a situation functions in two parts. First, there is a widespread, relatively fixed set of metaphors that structure how we think. For example, a decision to go to war might be seen as a form of cost-benefit analysis, where war is justified when the costs of going to war are less than the costs of not going to war. Second, there is a set of metaphorical definitions that allow one to apply such a metaphor to a particular situation. In this case, there must be a definition of ‘cost’, including a means of comparing relative ‘costs’. The use of a metaphor with a set of definitions becomes pernicious when it hides realities in a harmful way. It is important to distinguish what is metaphorical from what is not. Pain, dismemberment, death, starvation, and the death and injury of loved ones are not metaphorical. They are real, and in a war, they could afflict tens, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of real human beings, whether Iraqi, Kuwaiti, or American.

The State-As-Person System

A state is conceptualized as a person, engaging in social, relations within a world community. Its land-mass is its home. It lives in a neighbourhood, and has neighbours, friends and enemies. States are seen as having inherent dispositions: they can be peaceful or aggressive, responsible or irresponsible, industrious or lazy.

Well-being is wealth. The general well-being of a state is understood in economic terms: its economic health. A serious threat to economic health can thus be seen as a death threat. To the extent that a nation’s economy depends on foreign oil, that oil supply becomes a ‘lifeline’ (reinforced by the image of an oil pipeline).

Strength for a state is military strength. Maturity for the person-state is industrialization. Underdeveloped nations are ‘underdeveloped’, with industrialization as a natural state to be reached.

Third-world nations are thus immature children to be taught how to develop properly or disciplined if they get out of line. Nations that fail to industrialize at a rate considered normal are seen as akin to retarded children and judged as ‘backward’ nations.

The Fairy Tale of the Just War

The fairy tale has an asymmetry built into it. The hero is moral and courageous, while the villain is amoral and vicious. The hero is rational, but though the villain may be cunning and calculating, he cannot be reasoned with. Heroes thus cannot negotiate with villains; they must defeat them. The enemy-as-demon metaphor arises as a consequence of the fact that we understand what a just war is in terms of this fairy tale. The most natural way to justify a war on moral grounds is to fit this fairy tale structure to a given situation. This is done by metaphorical definition, that is, by answering the questions: Who is the victim? Who is the villain? Who is the hero? What is the crime? What counts as victory? Each set of answers provides a different filled-out scenario. As the Gulf crisis developed, President Bush tried to justify going to war by the use of such a scenario. At first, he couldn’t get his story straight. What happened was that he was using two different sets of metaphorical definitions, which resulted in two different scenarios: the Rescue Scenario: Iraq is villain, the US is hero, Kuwait is victim, the crime is kidnap and rape. The Self-Defense Scenario: Iraq is villain, the US is hero, the US and other industrialized nations are victims, the crime is a death threat, that is, a threat to economic wealth. The American people could not accept the second scenario, since it amounted to trading lives for oil. The administration has settled on the first, and that seems to have been accepted by the public, the media, and Congress as providing moral justification for going to war.

The Ruler-For-State Metonymy

There is a metonymy that goes hand-in-hand with the State-as-Person metaphor: The Ruler Stands for the State. Thus, we can refer to Iraq by referring to Saddam Hussein and so have a single person, not just an amorphous state to play the villain in the just war scenario. It is this metonymy that is invoked when the President says ‘We have to get Saddam out of Kuwait.’ Incidentally, the metonymy only applies to those leaders perceived as rulers. Thus, it would be strange for us, but not for the Iraqis, to describe an American invasion of Kuwait by saying, ‘George Bush marched into Kuwait’.

30
War as Violent Crime

To bear in mind what is hidden by Clausewitz’s metaphor, we should consider an alternative metaphor that is not used by professional strategists nor by the general public to understand war as we engage in it. War is violent crime: murder, assault, kidnapping, arson, rape, and theft. Here, war is understood only in terms of its moral dimension, and not, say, its political or economic dimension. The metaphor highlights those aspects of war that would otherwise be seen as major crimes. There is an Us-Them asymmetry between the public use of Clausewitz’s metaphor and the War-as-Crime metaphor. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is reported on in terms of murder, theft and rape. The planned American invasion is never discussed in terms of murder, assault, and arson. Moreover, the US plans for war are seen, in Clausewitzian terms, as rational calculation. But the Iraqi invasion is discussed not as a rational move by Saddam, but as the work of a madman. We see the US as rational, moral and courageous and Them as criminal and insane.

War as a Competitive Game

It has long been noted that we understand war as a competitive game like chess, or as a sport, like football or boxing. It is a metaphor in which there is a clear winner and loser, and a clear end to the game. The metaphor highlights strategic thinking, team work, preparedness, the spectators in the world arena, the glory of winning and the shame of defeat. This metaphor is taken very seriously. There is a long tradition in the West of training military officers in team sports and chess. The military is trained to win. This can lead to a metaphor conflict, as it did in Vietnam, since Clausewitz’s metaphor seeks to maximize geopolitical gains, which may or may not be consistent with absolute military victory. The situation at present is that the public has accepted the rescue scenario of the just war fairy tale as providing moral justification. The president, for internal political reasons, has accepted the competitive game metaphor as taking precedence over Clausewitz’s metaphor: If he must choose, he will go for the military win over maximizing geopolitical gains. The testimony of the experts before Congress falls largely within Clausewitz’s metaphor. Much of it is testimony about what will maximize gains and minimize losses. For all that has been questioned in the Congressional hearings, these metaphors have not. It is important to see what they hide.

What is Victory?

In a fairy tale or a game, victory is well-defined. Once it is achieved, the story or game is over. Neither is the case in the Gulf crisis. History continues, and ‘victory’ makes sense only in terms of continuing history. The president’s stated objectives are total Iraqi withdrawal and restoration of the Kuwaiti monarchy. But no one believes the matter will end there, since Saddam would still be in power with all of his forces intact. General Powell said in his Senate testimony that if Saddam withdrew, the US would have ‘strengthen the indigenous countries of the region’ to achieve a balance of power. Presumably that means arming Assad, who is every bit as dangerous as Saddam. Would arming another villain count as victory? If we go to war, what will constitute ‘victory’? Suppose we conquer Iraq, wiping out its military capability. How would Iraq be governed? No puppet government that we set up could govern effectively since it would be hated by the entire populace. Since Saddam has wiped out all opposition, the only remaining effective government for the country would be his Ba’ath party. Would it count as a victory if Saddam’s friends wound up in power? If not, what other choice is there? And if Iraq has no remaining military force, how could it defend itself against Syria and Iran? It would certainly not be a ‘victory’ for us if either of them took over Iraq. If Syria did, then Assad’s Arab nationalism would become a threat. If Iran did, then Islamic fundamentalism would become even more powerful and threatening. It would seem that the closest thing to a ‘victory’ for the US in case of war would be to drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait; destroy just enough of Iraq’s military to leave it capable of defending itself against Syria and Iran; somehow get Saddam out of power, but let his Ba’ath party remain in control of a country just strong enough to defend itself, but not strong enough to be a threat; and keep the price of oil at a reasonably low level. The problems: it is not obvious that we could get Saddam out of power without wiping out most of Iraq’s military capability. We would have invaded an Arab country, which would create vast hatred for us throughout the Arab world, and would no doubt result in decades of increased terrorism and lack of cooperation by Arab states. We would, by defeating an Arab nationalist state, strengthen Islamic fundamentalism. Iraq would remain a cruel dictatorship run by cronies of Saddam. By reinstating the government of Kuwait, we would inflame the hatred of the poor toward the rich throughout the Arab world, and thus increase instability. And the price of oil would go through the roof. Even the closest thing to a victory doesn’t look very victorious. In the debate over whether to go to war, very little time has been spent clarifying what a victory would be. And if ‘victory’ cannot be defined, neither can ‘worthwhile sacrifice.’

What is Hidden by Seeing the State as a Person?

The State-as-Person metaphor highlights the ways in which states act as units, and hides the inter-
nal structure of the state. Class structure is hidden by this metaphor, as is ethnic composition, religious rivalry, political parties, the ecology, the influence of the military and of corporations (especially multinational corporations). Consider ‘national interest’. It is in a person’s interest to be healthy and strong. The State-as-Person metaphor translates this into a ‘national interest’ of economic health and military strength. But what is in the ‘national interest’ may or may not be in the interest of many ordinary citizens, groups, or institutions, who may become poorer as the GNP rises and weaker as the military gets stronger. The ‘national interest’ is a metaphorical concept, and it is defined in America by politicians and policy makers. For the most part, they are influenced more by the rich than by the poor, more by large corporations than by small business, and more by developers than ecological activists. When President Bush argues that going to war would ‘serve our vital national interests’, he is using a metaphor that hides exactly whose interests would be served and whose would not. For example, poor people, especially blacks and Hispanics, are represented in the military in disproportionately large numbers, and in a war the lower classes and those ethnic groups will suffer proportionally more casualties. Thus the war is less in the interest of ethnic minorities and the lower classes than the white upper classes. Also hidden are the interests of the military itself, which are served when war is justified. Hopes that after the cold war the military might play a smaller role had been dashed by the president’s decision to prepare for war. He was advised, as he should be, by the national security council, which consists primarily of military men. War is so awful a prospect that one would not like to think that military self-interest itself could help tilt the balance to a decision for war. But in a democratic society, the question must be asked, since the justifications for war also justify continued military funding and an undiminished national political role for the military.

**America as Hero**

The classic fairy tale defines what constitutes a hero: it is a person who rescues an innocent victim and who defeats and punishes a guilty and inherently evil villain, and who does so for moral rather than venal reasons. If America starts a war, will it be functioning as a hero? It will certainly not fit the profile very well. First, one of its main goals will be to reinstate ‘the legitimate government of Kuwait’. That means reinstating an absolute monarchy, where women are not accorded anything resembling reasonable rights, and where 80% of the people living in the country are foreign workers who do the dirtiest jobs and are not accorded the opportunity to become citizens. This is not an innocent victim whose rescue makes us heroic. Second, the actual human beings who will suffer from an all-out attack will, for the most part, be innocent people who did not take part in the atrocities in Kuwait. Killing and maiming a lot of innocent bystanders in the process of nabbing a much smaller number of villains does not make one much of a hero. Third, in the self-defence scenario, where oil is at issue, America is acting in its self-interest. But, in order to qualify as a legitimate hero in the rescue scenario, it must be acting selflessly. Thus, there is a contradiction between the self-interested hero of the self-defence scenario and the purely selfless hero of the rescue scenario. Fourth, America may be a hero to the royal families of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, but it will not be a hero to most Arabs. Most Arabs do not think in terms of our metaphors. A great many Arabs will see us as a kind of colonial power using illegitimate force against an Arab brother. To them, we will be villains, not heroes. America appears as a classic hero only if you don’t look carefully at how the metaphor is applied to the situation. It is here that the State-as-Person metaphor functions in a way that hides vital truths. The State-as-Person metaphor hides the internal structure of states and allows us to think of Kuwait as a unitary entity, the defenseless maiden to be rescued in the fairy tale. The metaphor hides the monarchical character of Kuwait, and the way Kuwaitis treat women and the vast majority of the people who live in their country. The State-as-Person metaphor also hides the internal structures of Iraq, and thus hides the actual people who will mostly be killed, maimed, or otherwise harmed in a war. The same metaphor also hides the internal structure of the U.S., and therefore hides the fact that it is the poor and minorities who will make the most sacrifices while not getting any significant benefit. And it hides the main ideas that drive Middle Eastern politics.

**TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN**

Review of a special number of *Arms Control Today* (November 1990).

Until the Gulf War began to dominate the headlines, the progress of the START (Strategic-Arms Reduction Talks) negotiations between the USA and the USSR was very much in the news. Here for the first time was the prospect of some reduction in the numbers of the long-range nuclear-armed missiles which threatened to destroy the world.

That the superpowers could indeed bring themselves to voluntarily destroy their own weaponry had
been shown to be possible by the successful conclusion of the INF Treaty in 1987, which led to the elimination of an entire class of nuclear weapons, the intermediate-range missiles deployed in the European theatre (implementation of this treaty continues on schedule, and most of the missiles concerned have already been destroyed). In any case, measures to limit the numbers and types of strategic weapons go back to 1972 with the signing of the SALT I Treaty, which even if it did not require the actual destruction of any weapons at least brought the nuclear-arms race under some sort of control. The sequel, the SALT II Treaty of 1979, would indeed have led to the destruction of some Soviet missiles, had the USA ratified.

But in addition to these direct attempts to curb the nuclear-arms race simply by imposing numerical limits on various categories of weaponry, two quite different indirect approaches to nuclear-arms control have also been followed. The first of these is embodied in the ABM Treaty, signed in 1972 as part of SALT I; essentially, by forbidding both sides to develop defences against strategic weapons one incentive to build more offensive weapons was removed. The initiative behind this treaty lay entirely with the Americans, and it represented a complete break with all conventional military wisdom, recognizing as never before the unique nature of nuclear weapons. Convincing the Soviets of the validity of the new thinking must surely be regarded as one of the triumphs of American diplomacy. (For this reason, one was all the more shocked by SDI, but that is another story.)

The other indirect approach to nuclear-arms control dates from as early as the middle 1950s, when a number of proposals were made to ban all testing of nuclear weapons. There was considerable public support for such a ban, primarily because of the growing concern over radioactive fallout from atmospheric testing. Moreover, it is realized that even though a test ban could not, of course, do anything to limit the numbers of weapons deployed, it would still brake the nuclear-arms race, to the extent that the development of new types of bombs would be significantly frustrated. This, it should be remembered, was a time of rapidly growing sophistication of nuclear weapons, and there was a recognition that the arms race was being fuelled not only by political considerations but also by the technological imperative.

However, a comprehensive test ban (CTB), i.e., a total ban of all forms of testing, eventually floundered on the issue of verification. There was no problem with the detection of atmospheric tests - these were all too conspicuous - but underground testing was now possible, and this was far more difficult to detect. Even so, by 1958 a conference of American and Soviet experts had agreed that seismic monitoring outside the borders of the testing country, followed by a number of on-site inspections, would be able to establish with 90% certainty all underground explosions greater than 5 kilotons (the Hiroshima bomb was about 12 kt). Nevertheless, there was considerable opposition from the American weapons establishment to a CTB, with the result that the number of on-site inspections that the Americans demanded was too high to be acceptable to the USSR.

The final compromise adopted was the so-called Limited Test-Ban (LTB) Treaty of 1963, which outlawed all nuclear tests other than underground ones. Since this certainly addressed the fall-out problem, public concern over nuclear weapons declined dramatically and remained dormant for some 15 years. In the meantime, the nuclear-arms race continued on its merry way, with virtually no constraint being imposed by the requirement that testing had to be conducted underground.

However, even if nuclear testing was now out of sight, it was not completely out of mind, and successive US governments have been under continuing pressure, both from American arms-control specialists and the Soviet government, to accede to a CTB. The general reaction to this pressure has been somewhat reminiscent of St. Augustine's attitude towards chastity: a CTB is recognized as a desirable long-term objective, but reasons can always be found for evading it in the present.

For many years the objections of American governments to the CTB were two-fold: i) verification procedures were inadequate to ensure against Soviet cheating, and ii) testing was necessary anyway to maintain a credible deterrent. The first objection became less and less plausible as seismicological techniques were refined, and collapsed altogether when the USSR dropped its traditional opposition to all but the most limited of on-site inspections. As for the second objection, it was always absurd, since a near-total confidence in one's weapons is necessary only for a first-strike capability. On the contrary, the credibility of one's deterrent will fail only if one's weapons are totally defective, and the adversary knows this with certainty. But as the old objections fell new ones took their place and at the present time it is 'safety and security' that provide theraison d'êtrefor nuclear testing.

Now when the reasons proffered in defence of a particular course of action change so frequently one may be fairly sure that the real reason lies elsewhere, and it is a fair guess in the present case that we are witnessing a fairly desperate attempt of the weapons community to save its skin. But, we may ask, given the way in which the danger of war between the superpowers is receding, does it really matter what
the weapons people do? The answer here lies in another danger that has always been lurking in the wings, and now is becoming ever more prominent: nuclear proliferation.

When the non-weapon signatories to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) accepted a second-class nuclear status, they did so on the clear understanding that the nuclear-weapons states would ‘pursue ... effective measures relating to a cessation of the nuclear-arms race at an early date ...’ (Article 6). One such measure, specifically spelled out in the preamble to this treaty, is the agreement in principle by the weapons states to a CTB. Now the NPT is due for renewal in 1995, and at the conference reviewing the treaty late last summer in Geneva it was made fairly clear that unless a CTB is made a reality by the nuclear powers, this renewal cannot be taken for granted. Moreover, in January of this year a conference was scheduled in New York between the signatories of the LTB Treaty to exploit a provision of this treaty that allows it to be amended to a CTB treaty.

It was therefore particularly appropriate that between these two conferences ‘Arms Control Today’ should devote an entire issue to the question of a CTB. Three excellent articles cover all the essential points.

J. Carson Mark, a former Los Alamos theorist, argues persuasively that testing is indeed superfluous to the maintenance of a basic deterrent; he thus concludes that opposition to a CTB is rather a reflection of the neverending development of new weapons. The verification issue is dealt with by Gregory E. van der Fink, who expresses the belief that it should be possible to monitor with some certainty explosions down to one or two kilotons, while admitting that below that threshold there could be problems. However, he still feels that a CTB would be preferable to a low-threshold ban, since even for very low-yield explosions there is always the possibility of detection, and the fear of being caught out should outweigh any military advantage that might accrue.

Gerard C. Smith, former chief US strategic-arms negotiator, eloquently establishes the connection between testing and proliferation. There are two aspects to this connection: the technical and the political. In the first instance, Smith makes the obvious point that without testing it is impossible to develop sophisticated weapons, but quite rightly does not insist too much on this aspect, doubtless recalling that at Hiroshima the USA did a tremendous amount of damage with a weapon that had never been tested at all. Rather, it is the political aspect that Smith emphasizes: when the nuclear powers conduct endless testing, the message being broadcast is that critical security benefits are being achieved, which can only encourage others to follow our example’. Smith draws our attention to the fact that while six of the ‘threshold’ states, Israel, India, Pakistan, South Africa, Brazil and Argentina, have refused to sign the NPT, they are all signatories to the non-discriminatory LTB; he thus believes that they would be likely to accede to a CTB. Having reminded us that President Bush regards nuclear proliferation as ‘one of the greatest risks to the survival of mankind’, Smith concludes by calling on the president to ‘extend the world leadership he has shown in the Gulf to leading the way to a CTB’.

There is a very depressing sequel to this appeal. The January conference in New York to amend the LTB treaty into a CTB ended with a veto by the USA and the UK. Bush may have disposed of the threat of an Iraqi bomb, at least for a few years, but what about all the other would-be nuclear powers? Does he intend to deal with all of them in the same way? The implications of this veto are immense, and it is incredible that it went almost entirely unreported in the press. Of course, it was eclipsed by the Gulf war, but in view of the importance that was attached to the nuclear threat from Iraq one might have expected that the media would have made the connection with the wider question of nuclear proliferation in general. Even if there is now no prospect of an Iraqi bomb for the foreseeable future, the month of January surely marked a net set-back for the cause of nuclear non-proliferation.

J.M. Pearson, Université de Montréal

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Book Review

‘The Art of War’, Geoff Butler, Stone House Publishing, N.S., 1990, 104 p., $35. This handsomely produced little book (paintings, text and publishing by Geoff Butler) bears on its cover a colour reproduction of a painting that illustrates a chapter named ‘Follow me: I’m behind you all the way.’ The painting, rendered in the incongruously softly glowing colours characterizing Geoff Butler’s work, shows a stiffly goose-stepping crowd including children, elderly women, agricultural workers, armed thugs, soldiers, and a wealthy-looking elderly gent in morning coat, striped pants, carrying a briefcase (a diplomat?) There is even a one-legged man on crutches. This group is led by a white duck clad in red military regalia. Its title is ‘Following the quacks.’

This sets a keynote for the book. It is a fairly unsubtle, but bitingly satirical review of images of war in all its most absurd and vainglorious, mindlessly slaughterous and vilely hypocritical moods.

Geoff Butler mordantly explores all the classic absurdist themes of wars and warmongers (‘For

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LETTERS ON THE GULF WAR

Various letters and telegrams were sent by Science for Peace members to the Prime Minister, the Minister of External Affairs and other politicians during the past few months. Some of these received no answers, to others the answers scarcely addressed the issues raised and usually consisted of recitations of recent international events familiar to all, and to restatements of well-known government positions. It seems that a sense of responsibility towards attempting to answer serious, detailed letters of enquiry or criticism of government policy or action is not strongly in evidence among government members. This regrettable attitude undermines one's confidence in the credibility and responsibility of politicians, and contributes to the growing public disenchanted about the operation of democratic processes in this country.

November 18, 1990

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Mr. Mulroney:

The members of the Executive of Science for Peace are concerned that Canada is changing its role in international affairs from that of peacemaker to that of peacekeeper. A peacekeeper attempts to intervene between warring parties, whereas a peacemaker may exercise force to subdue one of the parties that it deems to be at fault. We believe that as a middle power Canada's most effective role is that of peacekeeper and we should avoid involving ourselves in peacemaking operations.

Historically, the role of 'peacemaker' has often been abused. In most international disputes, there is some truth on both sides. By picking one side, the 'peacemaker' ignores the other and loses moral authority. In many cases the 'peacemaker' is seen to be acting in its own economic and political interest, and becomes just another participant in the dispute. Except in those rare cases where the 'peacemaker's' military force is truly overwhelming, no peace results from such intervention; instead what we see is a prolonged bloody war that benefits none of the original disputants.

Signs of a major shift in the Canadian Government's attitude received first utterance in 1987 when Perrin Beatty as Defence Minister reiterated (and Joe Clark has continued to stress) the seriousness of the threat to world peace and security by the USSR at a time when the USA and others were markedly reducing their own anti-Soviet rhetoric. In the current crisis, External Affairs Minister Joe Clark warned Canadians of the growing likelihood of direct military action by Canada against Iraq and its cost in Canadian lives, even before US President Bush and Secretary of State Baker had told the American people that use of force against Iraq was becoming increasingly likely.

Canada's ability to act as a promoter of peace in the world has been weakened by its repeated refusal to insist on strict adherence to international law. When, for instance, the United States mined harbours in Nicaragua and invaded Grenada these actions were condemned around the world and in the United Nations; indeed, the International Court of Justice proclaimed the mining of Nicaragua as illegal. In spite of this, the response of the Canadian government was confined to expression of formal regrets at these acts. Canada recently joined the OAS (the Organization of American States) which promises under Article 20 of its charter that

The territory of a State is inviolable; it may not be the object, even temporarily, of military occupation by another State, directly or indirectly, on any ground whatsoever.

The United States, also a member of OAS, invaded Panama. Canada's justification for accepting this flagrant violation of OAS principles clearly showed how, by accepting one illegal act, we open the door to others. In a letter to Professor Eric Fawcett and John Valleeau of the University of Toronto, excerpts of which appeared in 'Science for Peace Bulletin' of August 1990, Joe Clark explained that

The lives of American citizens who were stationed in Panama by right of treaty were
demonstrated to be in jeopardy ... the Government of Canada accepted the United States Government's explanation of the need to resort to force and expressed regret that the situation has deteriorated to the extent that force was required. We acknowledged that the use of force presented a dangerous precedent, but recognized that the situation in Panama prior to the United States' intervention was unique.

We observe that this justification, with trivial textural substitutions, could be used to justify intervention by any party, anywhere, at any time. By legitimizing the invasion of Panama, this statement can be used to justify any invasion by a power that claims that its citizens in a foreign country are in jeopardy.

The extent of the change in the Canadian Government's policies was made clear when Canadian Forces were committed to the military confrontation in Iraq, not as part of a United Nations Peacekeeping Force, but – in the United States' style – by the decision of the government of one sovereign state (Canada) to confront another sovereign state (Iraq).

It now seems clear that our present Government is intent on the progressive transformation of Canada's traditional approach to foreign affairs to one whose political and philosophical bent is much closer to that of the United States and at variance with our former role as a peacekeeper. In other words, without parliamentary debate, and without detailed presentation of its plans to the Canadian public, the Government is embarking on a major realignment of its foreign policy.

The new foreign policy for Canada is especially unfortunate because our country, a member of the Security Council of the United Nations, has the responsibility to strengthen the UN peace agenda. In their implementation of the provisions relating to economic sanctions,

Member States of the UN were required to coordinate their actions, using as appropriate, mechanisms of the Military Staff Committee (with) application of the rule of law in safeguarding the sovereignty, independent and territorial integrity of Member States. (Report of the Secretary-General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, September 1990).

Contrary to popular belief, the United Nations has not approved the use of national armed forces to invade Iraq. We are ignoring the UN's request that we work through UN bodies. We fear that loss of Canada's former reputation for moral independence and integrity and for cool evaluation of international crises could be disastrous in these extremely turbulent times. The world needs Canada as an effective peacekeeper, not as a major contributor to the forces preparing to initiate a war with Iraq.

The Canadian people are entitled to a full and detailed explanation of the meaning behind what is occurring. We request that you begin by replying to this letter and by allowing full and open debate in Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. David Parnas,
President of Science for Peace

Prof. Eric Fawcett,
Vice President, Science for Peace

Prof. Alan Weatherley,
Director, Science for Peace

The following letter, with copies noted, has been sent to the Prime Minister. Both Mulroney and Clark were sent the letter via FAX with copies to follow by Canada Post.

January 7, 1991

Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney
Prime Minister
Ottawa, Ontario K1A OA6

Dear Prime Minister:

Science for Peace wishes to express its concern about the Government's decision to support the recent Security Council resolution authorizing the use of 'all necessary means', including war, in the Persian Gulf. It is clearly urgent for us all to clarify our thoughts on the very grave challenge posed by the situation in the Gulf. We offer here some propositions on the matter and request your responses to some questions that follow from them.

It is chilling to hear once again the mild-mannered euphemisms that have always preceded the horror of war: 'use of force', 'all necessary means', 'surgical strike', and so on. What are really being discussed are bleeding, mangled bodies, men and women gassed or burned alive, and orphaned children. Anyone who facilitates these tragedies becomes responsible for them. He or she has the duty to explain clearly and explicitly how such suffering, imposed on others, is less evil than the alternatives. Faced with the horrifying nature of modern warfare and weaponry, it is imperative that we learn to resolve disputes in less violent ways. We know you share that understanding and conviction.

We see no responsible argument for the threat of war at this time. Situations could arise in the future however in which the UN would feel obliged to
apply military means to enforce international law. In such a case it is essential that the purposes of the action be clearly defined and severely delimited, and that the absolute minimum of military activity be employed. It is also essential that the action be seen as the even-handed enforcement of law, and in particular that it cannot be seen as serving the interests of only one or a few nations. To ensure these things it is clearly required that the UN itself retain the direct control of any such application of force.

In light of these general concerns we seek your responses to the following specific questions:

1. In the Gulf we are faced with a situation in which there is every prospect of a successful non-violent resolution through the patient use of trade sanctions and negotiation; in many ways it is an ideal case for testing and demonstrating the effectiveness of non-military methods. The government seems nevertheless immediately willing to accept war instead of the pursuit of peaceful methods. Why?

2. No realistic observer expects sanctions to work instantly. That would be absurd, for the very idea of trade sanctions is that they bring gradually increasing pressure to bear; the best estimates have always suggested that in the present case 12 to 18 months would be required. To have appeared to support the UN trade sanction policy and then to join in setting an unrealistic schedule of deadlines for their success appears to us hypocrisy. How can Canada accept such a position?

The view which we are almost universally being offered by the media is that of the US Executive, according to which that Executive is free to decide unilaterally, at a time of its own choosing, that the ‘necessary means’ of the Security Council resolution are to be interpreted as military attack. To accept this is to grant the US carte blanche to react as it sees fit, with its own interests in mind. To us this appears to violate the very principles of the UN, which must rest on preventing the arbitrary exercise of national military power. Yet the Canadian Government has not publicly challenged this view, and indeed its statements seem implicitly to accept it. Why would Canada agree to abandon the essential principle that international law must be enforced under international supervision?

Yours sincerely,

Prof. David Parnas,
Department of Computing and Information Science
Queen’s University,
President, Science for Peace

Prof. James King,

Department of Physics,
University of Toronto,
Secretary, Science for Peace.

Copies:
Rt. Hon. J. Clark,
Secretary of State for External Affairs

Hon. W. McKnight,
Minister of National Defence

Hon. A. Mclaughlin, Leader, NDP

Hon. J. Cretien, Leader Liberal Party

Mr. Y. Fortier, Ambassador to the UN.

This letter was sent to some Maritime newspapers

December 17, 1990

Dear Editor:

For many Maritimers this year, Christmas, Hanukkah and other religious holidays will be spent thinking of friends and relatives on duty in the Persian Gulf. We are reminded of this by Halifax television with the daily messages home from Navy personnel in the Gulf. The conflict is now almost certain to lead to bloodshed in January. It is therefore becoming increasingly important to consider the ramifications of having nuclear weapons, and where the vested interests of the scientific-military-industrial complex are leading us.

According to current estimates, Iraq will have nuclear weapons in about five years. Although the US does have oil interests in Kuwait, the nuclear weapons may be a more significant reason for an immediate military confrontation. The US does not want to save Kuwait, so much as use it as a pretext to attack Iraq’s nuclear industry.

The official word is that NATO’s nuclear weapons are strictly for deterrence (although there are presently over 450 nuclear warheads in the Gulf ready for use). Throughout the Cold War this was a necessary precaution against the Soviet Union’s nuclear arsenals, into which both countries poured billions of dollars annually.

But the Cold War ended, and the ‘Peace Dividend’ began to look promising. Turn back some of those tax dollars; build better highways; fund real human needs. As it turned out though, economic conversion was not in the interests of the military-industrial complex, and the Gulf War started before the Peace Dividend paid one cent. And now even though we don’t need much of a nuclear deterrent
for the USSR, the possibility of Iraq going nuclear has led to the possibility of a new type of Cold War standoff or possibly another Viet Nam.

The superpowers and their allies are aggressors here as much as Iraq - all have their vested interests. If the North American scientific-military-industrial economy had not profited all along from weapons production and sales internationally, Iraq would not be in the position it is now. This includes Canada: in the 1988-89 fiscal year alone, our federal government spent $249 million in tax dollars through the Defence Industry Productivity Program on just the production of military equipment to export.

It is almost certainly too late to prevent an attack on Kuwait and Iraq. But we do not have to accept a military economy in future. For Canadians getting paycheques to develop and maintain weapons systems, reliance on a military economy may be worth having continuous military conflicts. Especially in the Third World, far from Atlantic Canada. But from time to time it may mean risking the lives of hundreds of Navy men from the Maritimes, as well.

Violence in Kuwait and Iraq may seem justified now, but it wouldn’t be necessary if we had not profited to prepare for it.

Board Members, Science for Peace:

Michael Steinitz,  
Department of Physics,  
St. Francis Xavier University

Craig Summers,  
Department of Psychology,  
Mount Allison University

Francis Weil,  
Department of Physics,  
Université de Moncton

Anne Cole, Computer Science,  
SUNY at Plattsburgh

Comment: Better still, let’s have weapons that nobody can use against anybody. (Ed., SFIP)

NOTICES

The Elmwood Institute

The Elmwood Institute is a membership-based ecological think-tank founded by Fritjof Capra (The Tao of Physics, The Turning Point), with Ernest Callerbach (Ecotopia), Hazel Henderson (Politics of a Solar Age), Randy Hayes and others. Its purpose is to help facilitate the cultural shift from a mechanistic, patriarchal world view to a holistic, ecological view. Programs include a Global File of ecological practices in business; symposia and dialogues; and Elmwood Circles around the US. Its forum is the Elmwood Newsletter. Send $25 for one year’s membership to POB 5765, Berkeley, CA 94705. Tel: 415-845-4595.

Conscientious Objection Anyone?

Perhaps to the soldier, the civilian is the man who employs him to kill, who includes the guilt of murder in the pay-envelope and escapes responsibility.

Graham Greene

For forty years Canadian Forces personnel have played a major peacekeeping role. We have won worldwide respect as a kind and gentle nation. Our Forces have maintained peace by bravely standing between warring peoples.

Many Canadians are now dismayed that our Forces personnel have been put into aggressive combat. Canada’s peacekeeping reputation is damaged by our country’s stance in the Persian Gulf.

To be against this war is not to be unpatriotic. To be against this war is to support Canadian military personnel, many of whom disagree with the Prime Minister’s position.

Conscientious objectors who are concerned about Canada’s participation in the Gulf War, please contact Dick Perrin at Conscience Canada, #505, 620 View Street, Victoria, B.C., V8W 2P3, Telephone (604) 384-5532.

If you are a member of the Forces having personal difficulty with this issue, we want you to know that there are people who understand and care.
NEWS RELEASE

Conscientious Objection
February 20, 1991
Victoria, B.C.

I am Jason Miller and until last week, I was an Acting Sub Lieutenant in the Navy. I am a conscientious objector. I was released from the Canadian Forces on February 11, 1991, and this was an honourable discharge.

I choose to bring my story to public light so as to further raise the issue of conscientious objection in Canada.

I began military service when I was 18 years old when I enrolled in the Regular Officers Training Plan in Calgary. I studied at Royal Roads Military College, and the Royal Military College of Canada. On graduation I received a degree in Political Science and a Queen's Commission.

When I originally took the Oath of Allegiance upon enrollment, I believed that it would be an honour to serve Canada in protecting the security and sovereignty of the country, and that this was a contribution to world peace. Through my experience in the military, I found that my understanding of the world changed - I no longer could say I was a strong supporter of all of Canada's defence commitments, but the time for voluntary withdrawal from the CF had long passed. I became, however, even more enthusiastic about the peace keeping roles Canada had performed for the United Nations and hoped that these would become more important in the future.

During the Naval Officer's training courses after graduation, I realized that opportunities for peace keeping postings were very limited, that Canadian defence priorities were not changing, and that I was bound up with policies which I did not support. Classroom discussions of professional ethics encouraged me to clarify my ethical position. In August 1990, I submitted a memorandum requesting that my training be ceased and that I be released from the CF.

After this, I was no longer training aboard destroyers but employed ashore at CFB Esquimalt. I was told the following by superior officers that:

I was free to believe what I wanted, but would have to complete my four years of Obligatory Service, and that anybody under any other type of CF contract would have been released if they made a similar request on similar grounds.

For the time being, I was satisfied that I was not being trained for a combat role and that some of the work I was doing at the base was constructive and positive. However, I was still wearing the uniform and saluting, and those who serve in the military must believe that what they do is right.

Since the Oka crisis of 1990, I have resolved to act for non-violent ways for resolving the political, social and economic conflicts of Canada. I re-initiated proceedings for my release in November 1990, and was released this year as I witnessed with horror the brutal death of many human beings and the ravaging of the planet in the Middle East.

I thank the Canadian Forces for recognizing that my values and beliefs are fundamental to what I do and for releasing me from further service. The United Nations Commission of Human Rights resolution of March 1989, recognizes that:

conscientious objection to military service derives from principles and reasons of conscience, including profound convictions arising from religious or similar motives.

The resolution recognizes the right of everyone to have conscientious objections to military service as a legitimate exercise of the rights of freedom of thought, conscience and religion as laid down in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These rights are affirmed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Conscientious objection has been recognized in Canadian law in the past. It is my hope that the Canadian Armed Forces will treat any other cases of serving members who have come to object to the violent response to conflict, or to a particular policy, such as the current military intervention in the Gulf, as they have treated me recently.

I love this land and its many peoples and I hope that future generations will find a world where different peoples can talk and share and live on a healthy Earth.

Information: Dick Perrin, Conscience Canada
(604) 384-5532

1991 'PEACE FROM SCIENCE' AWARDS:

This year, chiefly because of a change in Youth Science Foundation policies, Science for Peace is offering awards consisting of signed certificates and book prizes at all Regional Science Fairs (RSFs) rather than one national award. Thus it becomes even more imperative that we offer input to the organizers of Science Fairs at the regional level (even in the past most of the nominations for the national award came from local RSF rather than the Canada-wide Science Fair). Consequently, we are urging Science for Peace members across Canada to offer their services as judges to accessible science fairs in their localities. Whether they avail themselves of such
offers remains the decision of the local organizers, but the reminder that the awards exist can only be helpful and might lead to future involvement. As well one might be asked to participate in the awards ceremony.

To assist our members in offering their service, preferably before the end of March, a list of Regional Fairs, names and telephone numbers of chairpersons follows.

Jim Neelin, Ottawa

Agassiz RSS, Lawrence Larsen, (204)268-2423
Alberta Central East, Dale Brown, (403)377-3564
Algonquin RSS, Gerald N. Blackwood, (780)775-4173
Baffin Island RSS, Peter Stumpell, (819)774-5601
Battleford RSS, John McEachern, (306)445-6114
Bruce County RSS, Rushville Shipley, (519)354-5548
Calgary Youth RSS, Margaret Prior, (403)269-2013
Cape Breton RSS, Tom Murphy, (902)564-8289
Central Interior of BC RSS, Lynn Boonhower & Teresa Saunders, (604)562-5581
Central Newfoundland RSS, Clarence Brown, (709)672-3855
Central Okanagan RSS, Alfred Terpening, (604)762-2841
Chinook Country RSS, Mr. Terry Wilderman, (403)864-3667
Colchester East Banks RSS, Michael Price, (902)698-2255
Cote Nord, Christine Jaouen, (418)962-9059
Durham RSS, Jim Reid, (418)726-7315
East Keenengay RSS, Ian Johnson, (902)426-4872
East Point Sound RSS, Pat Jackson, (709)396-2387x31
Eastern Newfoundland RSS, Kevin Brewer, (709)576-3407
Edmonton RSS, Mr. Kay Johnach, (403)834-6756
Est du Quebec, M. Jean-Marc Vincent, (418)723-5444
Estrie, Jacques Beland, (819)569-3732
Fort McMurray RSS, Steve Montgomery, (418)743-5800
Fort Smith RSS, Mike Jones, (418)782-7350
Fraser Valley, Jim Hage, (604)562-6849
Grey County RSS, Mark Sopkow, (519)364-2910
Halifax-Dartmouth and County, Charles Blain, (902)864-6565
Hamilton District RSS, John Steeny, (416)377-5092x373
Haron RSS, Wayne Stewart, (419)482-5428
Ilnivik RSS, Chuck Little, (418)379-7179
Ilnulit, Robert W. Blanchard, (819)793-2803
Kent RSS, Mr. Charles D. Labrairie, (519)352-3100x272
Kings County RSS, Berth Crouse & Terry Rock, (902)542-5137
Kingston & District RSS, Bill Anderson, (613)544-3901x125
Kuujjuaq RSS, Dr. Jean Marc, (418)356-5181
Labrador RSS, John Russell, Wabush, NL
Lambton County RSS, Rick Alexander, (519)352-1410
Leader RSS, Ernest Sweeney, (506)382-3881
Lethbridge RSS, Gail Holland, (403)326-7342
London District RSS, Dan Thonoly, (519)352-2023
Lunenburg County RSS, Anne Walker, (902)543-7311
Mainline - Cariboo, Leo S. Treichel, (604)256-7346
Manitoba Provincial Science Symposium, Bob Glanter, (204)747-1492
Mauricie, Dominique Lebel, (819)374-0970
Metro Toronto RSS, Ken Oudianski, (416)953-3180
Montreal District, H. O. C. & A. M., (514)251-7636
Moncton (CLS), Marie-Helene Deneault, (506)251-7636
Montreal RSS, Rocco Iaffaldana, (514)351-8922x229
Moose Jaw RSS, Debbie LeFevonat, (306)963-7507
Mooseomin RSS, Dennis Thiessen, Rocanville School,
Munskua RSS, Bill Dickinson, (780)465-4498
New Brunswick RSS, Dr. Brian T. Newbold, (506)856-4593
Niagara RSS, Bob Malcolmson, (416)227-2971
North Bay RSS, John Paige, (705)747-2800
North Channel RSS, Roy A. Romanoff, (705)356-7775
North East Saskatchewan RSS, Victoria Elliott, (306)805-2204
North Eastern Ontario RSS, Antoine Garwah, (705)267-1491
North Okanagan Shuswap RSS, John Baining, (604)855-9751
Northern B. C. RSS, Sukrit Parmar, (516)762-4113
Northern Manitoba RSS, W.C. Pauly, (204)367-7500
Northumberland & Newcastle RSS, Annie Onishchuk, (416)7475-040x24
Northwestern Ontario RSS, Jean Crow, (807)767-7258
Norwood RSS, Lorne Ferrie, (204)237-0212
Ottawa RSS, Lea Gagne and Alisatia Miller, (613)727-6640
Ouacuaull, Marquis Cadieux, (819)370-4012 x02
Pacific Northwest RSS, Ken Hamilton, (604)624-5031
Parkland RSS, Raymond Dukasew, (204)734-3385
Peace River RSS, Mr. Joan King, (403)855-5600
Peel RSS, Dave Taylor, (416)623-8777
Perth County RSS, Claran Hood, (705)921-2250
Peterborough PRR, Christopher D. Macfie, (705)748-3357
Pictou District RSS, Dorothy Long, (902)752-5600
Prince Albert N.R. RSS, Bruce C. Goetschin, (306)722-6446
Prince Edward Island RSS, Geraldine & Tony Glencross, (902)367-2042
Quebec, Brigitte Boulianne, (418)585-1426
Quinte RSS, W. Layton Shoelidice, (613)352-2165
Regina RSS, James Longen, (306)343-1787
Renfrew County RSS, B. Wayne Campbell, (613)582-3652
Riding St. Lawrence RSS, Aubert Perreault, (416)745-0660x3291
Rive-Nord, Marie-Helene Deneault, (514)251-7636
River East RSS, Tim Percey, (204)668-6249
Saguenay/Lac St. Jean, Yvon Roy, (418)549-5205x528
Saskatoon, RSS, Marie Spencer, (306)242-7979
Scarborough RSS, Reni Barton, (416)396-6160
Simcoe County RSS, John Todd, (705)449-8301
South Eastern Albert RSS, Guy Smith, (403)356-3016
St. James Assiniboia RSS, Roger Lacroix, (204)837-8381
Sudbury RSS, Mr. John Celestia, (705)367-4803
Sundre RSS, Mr. Ron Beales, (705)737-3480
Swift Current, Brian Woot, (306)773-2601
United Counties RSS, Mr. Ken Johns, (519)347-2441
Vancouver Island North RSS, Tina Manke & Mary Waite, (604)856-4434
Vancouver Island RSS, Sylvia Roach, (604)478-5501
Vancouver/Loen Mainland RSS, Douglas Hayward, (604)228-3266
Victoria County RSS, Sue Demers, (705)796-5293
Waterloo-Wellington, Viace Campolongo, (519)224-2290
West Keentay RSS, Alec Dergozouf, (403)864-6344
Western Manitoba RSS, Doug Potter, (204)277-3763
Western Newfoundland RSS, Doug Sheppard, (709)955-2515
Windsor RSS, John Renaud, (519)256-4092
Winnipeg Schools' RSS, Brian Burridge, (204)486-7090
Yarmouth RSS, Burns Thompson, (902)742-5088
Yellowknife RSS, Chris Ballard, (867)920-2112
York RSS, David Tetley, (416)741-6122
Yukon RSS, Mr. Conrad Boyd, (603)667-7623

LETTERS

The following letter was sent to Science for Peace, dated December 18, 1990:

I'm glad that you are definitely forgiving when it comes to ignoring letters concerning membership renewal; however, I probably shouldn't try to test your definition of infinity. I have been more than ignoring your letters. I have been trying to decide whether I should, in fact, continue my membership. For what does membership really mean to a member outside of the Toronto/Vancouver centres? It means paying dues and reading a Bulletin that is largely concerned with the activities of a few in those two centres.

When I joined Science for Peace, I had hoped that it would encourage and support scientists like myself to use our talents in exercises such as the Nuclear Winter calculations. I had hoped that the Bulletin would contain the type of articles such as appear in the Bulletin of Nuclear Scientists where facts are presented and conclusions argued in a logical rational framework. Instead much of it is usual rhetoric and emotion that I read in the newsletters of Project Ploughshares and the now departed Operation Dismantle.

If I were in Toronto or Vancouver, then I would have likely shown up at several of your meetings and pounded the table and tried to make a change. But outside academia and outside of Toronto/Vancouver I was planning to slip out of your organization as quietly as I slipped in a few years earlier; unnoticed by anyone except for the treasurer.

I had not really decided when I began this letter whether it would be a letter of explanation about why my renewal was late or a letter of resignation.
of my membership. It is the latter since I can neither say that your organization contributes to society more than many other organizations which are asking for my charitable dollars or see that I can effectively work through your organization to help society better understand the scientific and technical realities behind the decisions that they and their elected representatives must make.

Concerning this last point, I was particularly disappointed in the proposal to study the hazards associated with Nuclear Power. The provided documentation seemed to show no familiarity with the vast body of material available on this subject from the UN and its agencies. Many scientists such as myself have been asked over the years to sit on international panels and to review the evidence on all aspects of the nuclear power cycle. In spite of going into these exercises often with the hearts and emotions of the environmental movement, most of us leave believing the industry is honestly discussing the risks involved.

In spite of the fact I am leaving you, I would like to leave you with my best wishes, I really do hope that I will read of your activities in the magazines and newspapers over the coming years.

R. Allyn Clarke
Halifax, Nova Scotia

As for your feelings about the Bulletin I am limited by my own experience and competence in commenting on whatever aspects of science and technology that bear on the central tenets of our organization. Other than this, I am limited by the scope and relevance of the articles, reviews, letters and other materials people send me and which I decide are appropriate for publication. It is from critics like yourself, with expertise and points of view on Science for Peace questions, that articles and reviews, suggestions for projects and the like could add greatly to the repertoire of the activities of the organization and the qualities of the Bulletins.

There are, in fact, a number of active members in the Maritimes. If they could find ways to associate with one another or recruit additional members, perhaps some of your understandable feelings of being marginalized might be overcome.

I hope that you will either reconsider your decision to leave Science for Peace, or at least not lose track of us in case you should find our activities become more to your liking in the near future.

Alan H. Weatherley, Editor

Science for Peace Bulletin

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Letters

The editor welcomes letters on all science and peace matters for possible publication in future numbers of the Bulletin. When submitting manuscripts by computer diskette, it would help if the word processor produced the text as simple ASCII text (e.g., the Doc Text option in Word Perfect) without device-specific formatting control characters.

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Science for Peace is a charitable organization with local chapters across Canada.