BY MEL WATKINS

I’ve had, I confess, only a tangential connection with Science for Peace over the years but it has been a fruitful one. Early on, Terry Gardner, who was my colleague at University College, University of Toronto, persuaded me, as an economist, to become conversant with the issue of economic conversion. That whetted a continuing interest: two years ago I filed a brief on behalf of the Innu with an environmental assessment panel looking at the impact of low-level flying in Labrador; the case was made that the cancellation of these flights did not have to result in the closing down of the base at Goose Bay if planning for conversion began now, and citing examples of how this had been done successfully in the United States.

I was frankly surprised when I was asked to become President, but I certainly felt most complimented and, after a decent interval, accepted. I am what the media likes to call a "veteran" political activist who just recently retired from formal university duties, and Science for Peace is veteran-friendly while manifestly dealing with issues that cry out for political activism.

I knew that Science for Peace had become more involved of late in issues of "globalization" such as MAI (Multilateral Agreement on Investment) and I could be useful there. However, testing of the Bomb in the Indian sub-continent (in the week after our AGM) has returned the issue of nuclear disarmament, the abolition of nuclear weapons, to the centre of the political stage.

I find I have an anxious feeling in my gut that I have not experienced since Ronald Reagan was elected to the American presidency for the first time, and I am full of fury against those who imagine that escalating terror is a secure basis for peace. It has certainly got my term as your president off to a fast start.

Some of our members are already talking about the need for something like the international teach-ins of the 1960s to involve today’s young people in the dominant "anti-war" issue of these times. That would be no easy matter; still, Canada may be the country best situated to take an initiative. We are part of the G-8; we are a non-nuclear weapons state; we have just been part of a successful initiative against landmines; we appear to have a Minister of Foreign Affairs who knows that to preach non-proliferation without preaching nuclear disarmament is almost surely to be ineffectual. Our campus base makes Science for Peace a logical candidate to take a leadership role, while we ourselves are urgently in need of an infusion of youthful energy.

Much is being made these days of the economic depression (no other word will do) sweeping Asia and threatening to spill around the world. But
there is a second "Asian crisis" and it is yet more
grave. For every commentator who sees the
India-Pakistan feud-plus-the-Bomb as signalling
a new Cold War — which is bad enough — there
are two who tell us that it feels more like the
lead-up to World War I with nuclear weapons
tossed in.

A global impact is inevitable: if nuclear war is
avoided now, as we must surely hope, we are still
left with the awful alternative that further
proliferation is legitimized and nuclear holocaust
— somewhere, sometime — merely delayed. We
are back to where, as Science for Peace, we
started: insisting on the necessity for abolition.

This job of mine is turning out to be even more
relevant and preoccupying than I’d imagined. I’m
sufficiently long in the tooth to remember vividly
the radio announcement of the dropping of the
Bomb on Hiroshima and the horror I felt. I want
that feeling to go away.

From the Editor

BY R.M. BAXTER

After a lapse of a over a year, we are hoping to
resume the publication of this bulletin at
approximately quarterly intervals. It will contain
reports of past events of interest to SfP members,
announcements of forth-coming events, and other
material as appropriate.

We expect to publish the next issue in December
or early January. Anyone who has any
contribution should send it to the Science for
Peace office not later than December 1.

Happy Equinox

From the Membership Committee

BY SHIRLEY FARLINGER

Science for Peace has 360 members of whom 214
were paid-up in mid-July. All members received
a letter in March asking them to renew and email
requests were sent by Eric Fawcett. The
membership committee is phoning those who still
have not sent their dues. Please assist the
committee and thus strengthen Science for Peace
by responding to the membership appeal. Also,
please help this organization grow by telling
others about Science for Peace:

Report of the Meeting on Issues

BY DEREK PAUL

The year 1997-98 year concluded with an
"issues" meeting, held in the Physics Department
of the University of Toronto on 9 May 1998 prior
to the AGM. It was chaired by Professor Alan
Slavin of Trent University. The reports of the
Coordinator and of seven Working Groups were
discussed. These reports are available in the
Science for Peace office. The following
summarizes the reports of each working group:

Working Group Coordinator’s Report (Derek
Paul)

Discussion focused on the MAI, particularly the
agenda of the Alternatives Committee of PAMAI
(People Against the MAI). In answer to a
question John Valleau explained that, far from
looking for a replacement Agreement on
Investment, the Alternatives Committee was
exploring the host of social and political understandings that should underpin the whole progress of investment, business, and commerce so as to steer globalization away from its simplistic objectives of profit and power that presently are undermining so much human welfare and environmental protection, and even threatening democracy itself.

Working Group on Scientific Cooperation with Cuba (Tanya Zakrisen)

The focus was primarily on the need to raise awareness of the special needs of Cuban scientists and students who find themselves very much cut off from their colleagues in other countries. Tanya has been able to raise the awareness of students and at least one professor in her field of studies at the University of Toronto.

Working Group on United Nations Reform (Hanna Newcombe)

Discussions centred mainly on getting the USA to pay its dues. It was agreed that the StP Board should be asked to send a letter to Lloyd Axworthy, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, congratulating him on his speech delivered recently at the Kennedy School, Harvard University, on the occasion of a conference on UN Reform, in which he stressed the vital importance of the United States making its mandatory contributions to the UN in full and on time.

It was mentioned that the USA has recently indicated readiness to pay its dues, subject to one condition. Hanna Newcombe reminded us that the UN dues are mandatory under the UN Charter, and are not subject to conditions.

In response to a question on international interventions, Hanna said that the UN record, though far from perfect, is much better than that of interventions by individual countries.

There was a brief mention of the excellent report on the activities of the General Assembly of the UN for 1997, by Newton Bowles. The report was written for The Group of 78, and can be obtained from Hanna, at the Peace Research Institute, Dundas.

Working Group on Landmines (Patience Abah and Tom Davis)

Patience and Tom responded to many questions on the Mines Action Canada program on Landmines removal, to wit, a competition that is at present directed primarily to engineering students and faculty. There will be several prizes of $5,000 each. It was felt that it should be opened to all post-secondary contestants. The competition focuses on new technical ideas for getting rid of the millions of landmines now covering so much of the land in many countries.

Specific information was requested on the $100,000,000 that the federal government has promised for demining the world; how was this money to be distributed? It was pointed out that the moneys actually granted should be monitored, because the stated sum could be little more than rhetoric, if past experience in analogous cases is any guide.

Working Group on Genetic Manipulation and Cloning

In a brief discussion it was stated that all uses of biotechnology to enhance pathogenicity were unethical and that research on these avenues should be discontinued everywhere. It was noted, however, that there can be beneficial results of such research. There is a need for a social framework within which to decide what to do with this technical advance.

Working Group on Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (Alan Phillips, Shirley Farlinger)

Alan added three items to his working group's report on Abolition of Nuclear Weapons. These were 1) the statement of Ambassador Moher at the UN Preparatory Committee for the Review of the NonProliferation Treaty, to the effect that the
nuclear-weapon powers should be negotiating to reduce their stockpiles of these weapons to zero; 2) an article in the New England Journal of Medicine on the appalling effects of an inadvertent launch, and 3) the report of an official British think tank that stated that elimination of nuclear weapons has entered the mainstream of security discussion.

Terry Gardner mentioned Doug Roche's planned across-Canada tour in the fall of 1998.

A brief discussion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) led to the conclusion that, although the USA has found ways around the Treaty by exploding subcritical devices that do not violate the word of the Treaty though they certainly violate its spirit, there were diplomatic and other merits in the Treaty itself and in maintaining it.

**Working Group on Energy (Helmut Burkhart and Peter Shepherd)**

All members of the working group recognize the ultimate need to move to renewable energy sources in all phases of energy usage. However, the immediate predicament of Ontario requires pragmatic thinking and action. Myron Gordon defined the electrical generation problems as follows: on the one hand there is the question of whether nuclear electricity is appropriate for Third World countries. On the other hand no new nuclear reactors will be built in North America in the near future. This is particularly significant in the context of Ontario Hydro's aging reactors and large debt.

Other discussants recalled that in the report "Energy after Rio" nuclear power was stated to be "prohibitively expensive" (all aspects of cost being included).

The working group's proactive stand on sustainable energy does not leave many options in view of the urgency of Ontario's supply problem and the determination of the Ontario Government to pursue its privatization agenda.

Derek Paul said that a present objective of the working group is to establish suitable contacts with the Ontario Ministry of Energy, and to extend contacts at the federal ministry, Natural Resources Canada, in Ottawa.

**Working Group on Climate Change (Derek Paul)**

Questions and answers focused mainly on the job opportunities (360,000 new jobs over 10 years) that had been projected by the Sierra Club's Rational Energy Program.

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**Science for Peace Discusses South Asian Nuclear Tests**

**BY ALAN PHILLIPS**

The nuclear weapon tests by India on 11 and 13 May brought a flood of pious and hypocritical criticism from several of the nuclear weapon states and their allies together with threats of sanctions, stories that the Indian tests took the CIA by surprise, that the whole thing was a plot between the Indian government and the CIA, that some of the tests were actually of Israeli weapons, and an unlikely tale of immediate radiation sickness in a village near to the test site in the Rajasthan desert.

Despite U.S. threats, Pakistan exploded six bombs on 28 May. In both countries news of their countries' tests were received with jubilation.

A spate of e-mail descended on those who read peace organization listservers. The mail initially had stock phrases such as: "...dangerous and irresponsible act..."; "...our shock and anguish..."; some gave the address of the Indian High Commission and added "Please send messages condemning today's tests".
But there were more thoughtful comments: "This development should not come as a surprise"; "The fault in the India test lies less with India than with the nuclear-arms states"; "India’s error in doing nuclear bomb tests is simply the error of following in U.S. footsteps"; from the French Syndicat National des Chercheurs Scientifiques: "President Chirac and the French Government, along with the USA and Great Britain bear a large responsibility in the Indian nuclear tests"; from the Dalai Lama: "As long as some of the major world powers continue to possess nuclear weapons, it is not right to outrightly condemn India’s action".

There has been a lot of discussion as to whether and to what extent the Canadian sale to India of their first nuclear reactor (the CIRUS) was responsible for development of the bomb. I consider that discussion pointless. We, the people of the world, have by various errors put ourselves in a situation of terrible danger from nuclear weapons. The only thing that matters now is to get ourselves out of it before the weapons destroy us.

It is becoming clear that the wish of the majority of nations and people of the world to eliminate nuclear weapons has been greatly stimulated by these events. The Japanese government, and the Foreign Ministers of eight nations led by Ireland, have made public statements in favour of abolition.

The Science for Peace executive held a special meeting on 5 June to plan our response. Other members were invited to the meeting, and in all 16 members attended. Mel Watkins, President of Science for Peace, summarized some main points made at two recent meetings. The first was a special meeting in Toronto called by Project Ploughshares with invited speakers Prof. Arthur Rubinov and Douglas Roche, O.C. Several SfP members attended. The second was the regular meeting of the Canadian Network for Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (CNANW), in Ottawa. Arthur Rubinov said that if effective sanctions were not applied the Indian action would encourage other nations to acquire nuclear weapons, and actual use of them would inevitably follow. Douglas Roche said that the NPT was in jeopardy; Canadian foreign policy was at a point of decision, whether to continue to accept the alleged protection of nuclear weapons or to follow international law and renounce their protection; Canada should join like-minded nations in putting pressure on the Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) to undertake to eliminate these weapons from their arsenals. Voter pressure on the government and Lloyd Axworthy is needed. Some speakers at the Ploughshares meeting said that a nuclear stand-off between India and Pakistan would bring stability to the region. Alan Phillips said that the south Asian governments had political justification for a nuclear arms race, following the precedent of U.S.A. and USSR. The reason not to start one is that it was the biggest mistake in human history.

In open discussion, the first point made was that ridiculously little media attention had been given to the results of the CPA poll, which had showed Canadian public opinion opposed to nuclear weapons by a large majority. With the Canadian government trying to sit on the fence, this information ought to be used to push them the right way. The public must make it politically impossible for Canada to follow the U.S. and NATO line that nuclear weapons are required for our security.

The main dangers of nuclear disaster that the world faces can be tabulated, in ascending order of magnitude:

- Local or regional radiation pollution — military or civil nuclear reactor accident or bombing, or failure to contain the used fuel.
- Local destruction and pollution — a single nuclear explosion by terrorists or by accident.
- Regional disaster — a small nuclear war.
- World disaster — a major nuclear war due to accident or false alarm, or by intention.
A likely result of the South Asia proliferation is a small nuclear war. Further "horizontal proliferation" can be expected, and further nuclear war somewhere in the world could become inevitable.

These messages have to be disseminated widely by all available methods to mobilize public opinion. The following ideas were suggested and supported as worth pursuing:

1) Circulate to all SFIP members a list of main points to make, and ask them all to write to their newspapers.
2) Hold a teach-in or International Conference (Franklin Griffiths, Mel Watkins, Joe Vise and others will explore this and hope to organize something within a year).
3) Support Physicians for Global Survival’s nuclear abolition campaign ("NO NUKES" bumper stickers, pamphlet, personal declarations).
4) Work through CNANW and support the efforts of co-sponsoring organizations. (Eric Fawcett and John Valleeau will contact VANA.)
5) Support Doug Roche’s "Middle Powers Initiative" and press the government to join it. (Mel Watkins will write to Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.)
6) Contact media to cover the issue, at every opportunity (Carolyn Langdon has media contacts and would like to hear from SFIP members who would make use of them.)
7) Participate in Hiroshima Event on Sun. Aug. 9 at Toronto City Hall Peace Garden.
8) Bring members of local Indian and Pakistani communities together with peace activists. (Alan Phillips is working with PGS to arrange an early meeting in Hamilton.)
9) Send a letter from Science for Peace on this nuclear crisis to members of the academic community throughout Canada with help from our members in various universities.
10) Take every opportunity to have a presence at public festivals and events. (Margaret Vanderbrouche and Shirley Farlinger will contact some Toronto festival committees.)
11) Consider arranging a special public event in Toronto.

Y2K and Accidental Nuclear War?

BY ALAN PHILLIPS

Several thousand nuclear weapons in Russia and U.S.A., and several hundred in four other nuclear weapon states are still on full alert, with warning systems and some aspects of their launch and control systems run by computers. The world has survived all the false alarms and computer malfunctions in 40 years with this disaster waiting to happen, by a combination of luck and good management.

Little change has been made since the Cold War ended, despite statements by U.S. and Russian presidents about "de-targeting". Bruce Blair of the Brookings Institute referred in testimony to U.S. Congress to: "...the serious false alarm in January 1995, triggered by the firing of a Norwegian scientific rocket, which for the first time in Russian history triggered a strategic alert of their LOW [launch on warning] forces, an emergency nuclear decision conference involving their President and other national command authorities, and the activation of their famous nuclear suitcases."

From 1 January 2000 the operation of all computer systems with a 2-digit year in it anywhere, will be uncertain. Expert "fixes" cannot be certain to work under every combination of circumstances. Could there be a malfunction that could trigger an accidental nuclear war? No expert can guarantee that there could not. Satellite navigation for cruise missiles and intercontinental rockets is one example where a date input is required. Could a test rocket
flight, or a cruise missile launched by the U.S. military against terrorists, land in quite the wrong place — or appear to a computer-operated early warning system as if it were going to?

I know of no way of estimating whether the increased risk will be large or small, but it must be an increase. My interest in this matter is not so much the actual increase of the risk — there has been an unacceptable risk of accidental war throughout the nuclear deterrence era — as that this threat could become the trigger which makes governments of the nuclear powers listen to the concerns of their citizens, and abolish the risk.

The way to make the risk zero is to remove all warheads from their delivery systems. Computers can issue warnings or even command a launch, but they cannot bolt warheads back in position, and that gives everybody time to stop and think. A major degree of "de-alerting" would go some way towards achieving the same result. These things can be done quickly, and are verifiable. Fixing all possible computer bugs is going to take much longer than the 15 months that are left, or however long they may have been working on it, and can never be guaranteed.

We need an international campaign based on well-informed statements. The question was discussed by SfP Board last week, and we plan to talk to Pugwash for a start. Physicians for Global Survival will discuss it with International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War and affiliates in many countries.

To make the NWS governments change policies needs a strong public and NGO movement. For a start we need a powerful statement by respected computer experts. David Parnas, former SfP president, has given a private opinion that there is a real problem, with no guaranteed computer solution. Are there other computer experts in SfP, or colleagues of readers of this note, who would be willing to correspond with me or SfP Board on this matter? Please contact the Science for Peace Board at sfp@physics.utoronto.ca or Dr. Alan Phillips at aphil@icom.ca.

Recent Email Notices

We list the titles of recent SfP member network e-mailings, to inform members not on e-mail (and to remind those who are). Please contact the SfP office if you would like a hard-copy.

- Richard Falk, Democracy Died at the Gulf (s4p-1)
- Anatol Rajeport, The Motto "Science for Peace" (s4p-2)
- US Nuclear Strategy & the Third World (s4p-3)
- Indian Environmental Work for Sustainable Development (s4p-4)
- Spread of AIDS Exposes Poverty of Current Policy (s4p-5)
- US Plans to Thwart the International War Crimes Court (s4p-6)
- The Meltdown in Canada’s Polar Research (s4p-7)
- Russian Academician Warns of After-effects of Nuclear Testing (s4p-8)
- A Poem for Nagasaki Day in Toronto (s4p-9)
- The Agony of Iraq — a poem (s4p-10)
- Iraq — A Lost Generation (s4p-11)
- Kosovo War was NOT a Failure in Prevention — It was in the interests of many of the actors (s4p-12)
- NAFTA [soon MA!] MMT-Ethyl (Canada) & Metaclad (Mexico) (s4p-13)
- Noam Chomsky The Poor Always Pay the Bills of the Rich (s4p-14)
- Titan-4 Rocket for Pu-RTG Cassini Probe Explodes on Launch (s4p-15)
- Scandal of Third World Debt: IMF as Corporate Welfare (s4p-16)
- Japan & China Brace for New Banking Crises (s4p-17)
- US Attacks on Khartoum & Afghanistan (s4p-18)
- US Bombs Scare Russia: extract from CDI Russia Weekly (s4p-19)

The Science for peace web page is at www.math.yorku.ca/sfp/ — email is sfp@physics.utoronto.ca
A New Book from Metta Spencer

Separatism: Democracy and Disintegration
Edited by Metta Spencer Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998

As the millennium approaches, the world is experiencing civil wars exclusively, half of which are being waged over the issue of secession. Separatism offers a comparative view of nine historic separatist movements, some of which have achieved the breakup of an empire or a state and others that to date have not. Contributors also analyze the implications of separatism and look at other possibilities for reconciling particularistic identities with the more universal goal of citizenship.

"A powerful, practical demonstration of the unacceptably high human, social, economic, political, and military costs of separatism and partition through wars of secession. The book proposes political alternatives to promote democracy and protect minority rights through non-territorial electoral constituencies and weighted referendums. Valuable to scholars in many fields and highly recommended as supp-

lementary college reading, the book is also vital to anyone in the media and the public concerned with multicultural conflict and current international events."

Andre Gunder Frank, University of Toronto

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The Ottoman Case by Yildiz Atasoy
Who or What Broke Up the Soviet Union? by Feodor Burlatsky
The Breakup of Yugoslavia by Metta Spencer
The Partition of Czechoslovakia by Petr Pitard & Metta Spencer
Chechen Separatism by Victor Kogan Iasnyi & Diana Zisserman-Brodsky
Negotiating Autonomy: Tatarstan, Asymmetrical Federalism & State Consolidation in Russia by Edward W Walker
The Tamil Secessionist Movement in Sri Lanka by M.R.R. Hoole
Quebec: A Unique Case of Secessionism by Reg Whitaker
Conclusion

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