BULLETIN

Vol.15 No.2 August 1995

President's Message

BY ERIC FAWCETT

"Big Governments and Little Analysts" is the title of an article in the June 1995 issue of Physics Today by Frank von physicist Hippel, a professor of public international affairs Princeton University. He served a year recently in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and experiences help him understand "why the analyses prepared by some NGOs are so often more well-researched and cogent than those prepared within government. The conditions under which non-government analysts work allow them to ... [use the resources available to them] ... much more effectively than the distracted government officials are able to".

Problems faced by White House officials (and we can be sure that the situation is similar in our own federal and provincial governments) include:

"a mode of operation that shreds time into almost useless bits; e.g., meetings on major policy issues are called on a few hours' notice, making it impossible to study and prepare properly";

"the interagency decisionmaking process is usually inconclusive, because decision on any significant new proposal cannot be made at the working level without consensus of the Failing departments. consensus, the issue can be pushed up to the next higher level in the government ultimately to the President";

"the greatest consumer energy at the upper levels of government is fighting over turf. In the short run at least, the perception of power in the government depends more on the size of one's policy domain than on what one does with that power unfortunate result is overwhelmed officials who need help are often unwilling to accept help because of fears that the 'helper' might end up seizing a piece of their turf. I often muttered to myself in frustration, 'they need help but they don't want help!".

Professor Frank von Hippel thus provides an explanation for the evident incompetence of government and the superior performance of NGOs in the cases that I referred to in the

April 1995 SfP Bulletin (vol. 15, No. 1). there are, of course, the other traditional reasons for bad government. Ontarians are presently suffering from bad decisions through genuine incompetence on the one hand, and on the other, a political agenda that favours one narrow sector of the population at the expense of the interests of the rest.

From the Editor

BY R. M. BAXTER

I have referred more than once in these pages to arrangement with Peace Magazine whereby we pay for publication of eight pages in each issue. Those of you who read <u>Peace</u> Magazine may often feel that the articles published in our section, while interesting and useful, usually have particular connection with the specific concerns of Science for Peace. The reason for this is that we are not very often offered articles dealing with these concerns. I am sure there are many Science for Peace members who have about particular knowledge matters of interest to the membership as a whole. If you are one of these, won't you please write a short article and send it to Peace Magazine? The address is 736 Bathurst St., Toronto M5S 2R4. Science for Peace is planning a campaign to recruit student members when the academic year begins. If you think you might be able to assist in this, you can call Jenny at the Science for Peace Office, 978-3606, between 1 and 5 P.M. on Monday, Wednesday or Friday.

Make Yours an SfP Project

BY ERIC FAWCETT

Members Activities: All members are encouraged to undertake research or educational projects on behalf of Science for Peace in consultation with the Executive.

Amnesty International Urgent Action Notices: Response appeals from AI (and other human rights organizations such as PHR, AAAS, PEN, etc.) on prisoners behalf of of is conscience much more effective if made on the stationery of an organization such as Science for Peace, than simply by an individual in his/her own name. Several SfP members to our knowledge respond regularly to AI Urgent Action Notices, and we urge them (and others) to consider forming a Science for Peace Working Group on Human Rights to coordinate their efforts and to enhance their effectiveness in this way.

Amnesty International and AAAS now send their notices on email, and I am willing to act as Coordinator to get the Working Group on Human Rights started by allocating these to members - though initiative to write a letter on behalf of a prisoner should in come general from individual member. We should decide what format stationery to use, with either the Advisory Council or Board Members listed with titles and affiliations on the front or reverse side.

If you are interested contact: fawcett@physics.utoronto.ca

Biotechnology: We received the following letter in May 1995:

Dear Science for Peace: In reading a back-issue of New Internationalist Magazine on biotechnology I came across the name of your organization. am a volunteer on the Board of Directors of the Conservation New Brunswick Council of provincial (CCNB), a environmental group. We are assembling a policy on the bovine growth hormone issue and since this is my first major consumer encounter with the growing influence biotechnology, I am trying to gather some information about this field of science and its possible implications. I would like to know something about your foundation, its focus, and possibly its point of view on the subject in question. (Name withheld)

All that could be said in reply to this letter was that Science for Peace may have expertise among its members on this and other questions relating to biotechnology, but we have no point of view, since none of our members has come forward with a proposal to study the issues.

do Ιf you indeed have expertise, please consider undertaking a study, at least to feel that you can write with some authority on behalf of Science for Peace to Parliamentary Committee reviewing the BGH issue, as we were recently asked to do by the Council of Canadians.

Contact: e-mail: pnicholl@spartan.ac.brocku.ca Fax: 416-978-7606 Landmines: As we pointed out in the previous issue of this Bulletin, uncleared antipersonnel landmines kill or injure tens of thousands of civilians every year. long-term adverse effects of landmines are reflected in, among others, human rights, development, socio-economic, refugee and displaced persons, social justice, peace environmental issues. As with chemical and biological weapons, public rejection of landmines as an acceptable method of warfare is vital to achieve effective controls and an eventual ban.

Action Canada Mines coalition of about 50 Canadian NGOs working on the landmines issue. Science for Peace is a member organization, but we have played no active role whatsoever, though in early July there was a U.N. Meeting on Mine Clearance in Geneva, there will another and be opportunity for participation in the upcoming review conference on the 1980 Convention on Prohibition [of Landmines | to be held also in Geneva in September 1995.

In order to speak on behalf of Science for Peace on this issue - you will need little expertise but some energy and initiative. We should really have a Working Group on Landmines, but in the first instance we need only one Member willing to take this responsibility.

Contact: e-mail: tdavis@trentu.ca

Fax: (416) 978-7606

Canada and Chemical Weapons: Science for Peace Testifies to the Biological and Chemical Defence Review Committee

BY ELLEN LARSEN AND WALTER DORN

Members of Science for Peace met with the Biological and Chemical Defence Review Committee (BCDRC) on 29 May 1995 in what has become a yearly discussion session. The Minister of National Defence set up the BCDRC in 1990 as an indirect result of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) concerns and reports in the media of past and possibly present nefarious activities of Canadian military, including testing of chemical agents on humans, stocks of tons of chemical weapons, ocean dumping of agents and general secrecy surrounding Canada's chemical and (CBW) biological warfare defence program.

The BCDRC is a panel of three academics, chaired by Professor Holloway (Chemistry, York) and escorted by a retired general, who generally defends the Defence Department at these meetings (though not the Foreign Affairs Department.) BCDRC is kind a oversight It committee. produces formal reports annually and has a mandate to act as a liaison with community groups to relate its findings. Science for Peace has been the consistent group providing the BCDRC with input.

The BCDRC reported that chemical warfare (CW) verification was recently placed under the aegis of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)

and this resulted in a drastic cut of defence research in the area. (The main research effort at the Department of National Defence [DND] has biological weapons detection, defence and antidote development). Apparently DFAIT will not allocate funds for DND researchers and DND will not take on an area in which it has The erosion of no mandate. expertise Canadian is result. Canada, through its DND research program, had a strong role in international efforts to detect CW agents. The cuts are a source of frustration to the military as well as to the members of Science for Peace. Science for Peace found itself in the unusual position of regretting cuts in DND programs.

An area of Science for Peace concern in the past has been the issue of public access to information about CBW agents quantities and under DND control. Ouantification important because Canada has international agreements carry out research on such agents for defensive purposes, e.q. how to identify the agents and protect personnel. Not only are such lists now available, but any contracts the military has with outside agencies with relation to work on CBW agents also subject to public scrutiny. Such documents were examined by the Science for Peace members. A continuing issue is that private sector personnel working such on contracts should be subject to high safety standards required by the military for such work.

In the biological research area, we were reassured that no

new pathogens are being created but that DNA_technology is being used to find more effective ways of identifying old ones. Other research relates to protective clothing for personnel working in contaminated environments.

DND participated in exercises to ensure that emergency teams and equipment can be mobilised quickly when needed. Because of the dispersal of equipment and personnel over the country, this requires planning coordination. However emergency response exercises have been carried out using staff with expertise responding to chemical and biological attacks. The need to remedy this deficiency highlighted by the recent gas attacks in Japan by a fanatical terrorist group.

One of our on-going complaints is that DFAIT is not moving on declassifying secret treaties and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) which Canada has with foreign countries relating to CBW research. In accordance with the UN Charter (Article international all agreements must be registered published by secretariat. There are no exceptions and Canada has an obligation to submit these treaties for publication.

We found encouragement in this year's meeting in that many of our previous concerns had been dealt with and there appears to be a climate of openness which was less evident previously. We note that the BCDRC is the only oversight committee of its type in the world (so far as we are aware) and is now in its 5th year. It seems to be filling

the role envisioned for it with good acceptance by the military and continuing liaison with the public.

On 6 June Walter Dorn appeared as a witness before the House of Commons Standing Committee Affairs Foreign International Trade. The bill implement the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was considered being by Walter proposed committee. strengthening the inspection regime.

George Gerbner Lecture: "Selling all the Stories: The culture of violence and what to do about it."

BY IAN RUSSELL

George Gerbner of the Cultural Environment Movement (CEM) spoke to an overflowing audience on violence in the media on July 14 in a session co-sponsored by Science for Peace and Canadians Concerned about Violence in Entertainment (C-CAVE). That he kept the group fully engaged on evening of a record high temperature day was a measure of how engaging the talk was. Mr. Gerbner discussed violence as a demonstration of power and the links to gender and race. He pointed out that violence is reflected in audience popularity but it appeals to the media, particularly the television media, because it is inexpensive to produce and is transportable to the global marketplace and thus highly profitable. There is clearly a de-sensitizing of people around In addition, violence. Gerbner pointed out that the heavy use of violence by the media is, in effect, a social training exercise which helps to define society's power relationships and that this is a major reason why white males grow up expecting to have power.

The proliferation of violent images in the media and their impact on our society is one aspect of CEM's broad concern that today's dominant storytellers are no longer home and community but rather global conglomerates whose primary interest is profit. They want to move toward a realistic democratic media to place media/cultural issues on the social-political agenda. Their approach involves building a new coalition made up of a wide range of individuals and groups with interests in the media, in the US and other countries. They will work to raise public awareness of the issues, to put pressure on governments for regulation, and with the media to make the necessary change itself. Those wanting more information on CEM can write to P.O. Box 31847. at Philadelphia, PA, USA (tel/fax 215-387-5303).

Science for Peace Summer Internship Program

BY DAVID MESSENGER

This summer, as in the past, Science for Peace is giving a number of students in Toronto the opportunity to engage in research and other activities through the Summer Internship Program. Under the supervision of Vice-President Walter Dorn, the majority of students are working on projects associated with the United Nations. As

well, a number of interns are assisting Science for Peace by contributing their time to administrative, fundraising, and other activities. Interns are working anywhere from 10 to 35 hours per week on their activities.

This year's interns are Baljeet Bhachu, Andrew Fulton, Ritu Khanna, David Messenger, Karl Michelazzi, Eric Mullerbeck, Shailini Rao and Apphrodite Sahlas. Their projects range from studies of early warning in the Rwanda massacre, to UN activities in Cambodia, to a comparison of fact-finding under the League of Nations and United Nations. For information about the internship program, please contact the office of Walter Dorn, (416) 978-1614.

Great is truth and mighty above all things.

It endureth and is ever strong. It liveth and conquereth for ever more.

The more thou searchest the more thou shalt wonder.

From the Apocryphal Book of Esdras (Inscription on the National Research Council Building, Ottawa, chosen by William Lyon Mackenzie King).

Book Review
BY R.M. BAXTER

Malicorne. By Hubert Reeves. Translated from the French by Donald Winkler. Stoddard Publishing Co., Toronto. 1993. 226 pp., cloth. \$28.95. ISBN 0-7737-2689-6.

Hubert Reeves is a Canadianborn astrophysicist who now lives in France, where he is Director of Research at the Nationale de la Centre Recherche Scientifique. His books explaining science for the general public have been very successful in the Frenchspeaking world, but recently he has been almost unknown in English Canada. He is clearly a man of very wide interests, and the book is dedicated to lovers of science and poetry. Malicorne is a small village in Burgundy, where the author lives on an old farm. During his rambles through the countryside he is in the habit of dictating his thoughts into a tape recorder, and subsequently transcribing them into notebooks. This book based on some of this material, and has a somewhat discursive tone, reflecting its origin.

The author begins with an experience he had early in his career, when he was working at Dominion Astrophysical Observatory in British Columbia. He was watching the sun set over the Pacific, when it suddenly occurred to him that the beautiful pattern of shifting light and colour represented nothing more than solution of Maxwell's equations. This thought caused acute distress, continued to trouble him for

many years.

Such thoughts have disturbed many people, more often perhaps lovers of the arts rather than scientists. They have never bothered me. I find that the sensual pleasure derived from experiencing something beautiful and intellectual pleasure of understanding it tend to augment each other rather than to conflict. any case, the author uses this experience as a starting point for a journey through a wide range of topics in science and the arts. A discussion of the nature of numbers leads to a consideration of memory and the human mind. He goes on to discuss thermodynamics, chaos theory, the expansion of the universe, and the nature of life. Memories of shopping in Archambault's music store in Montreal lead to a discussion of the creative process music, and in art in general. The sight of smoking factory chimneys in the Eastern Townships suggests the need to reconcile economic growth with the protection of environment, and the relation between natural and human laws. He concludes with a discussion of the relationship between science and religion. illustrates his points quotations from a wide range of authors, from Aristotle to the Acadian writer Antonine Maillet. Although he does not specifically state that found a solution to the problem that had troubled him so long, I hope he did and can now enjoy sunsets like the rest of us. I found this book interesting and stimulating, and it should give pleasure to anyone with an interest in ideas.

To be at Peace; Twenty-four small steps towards lasting, active, Peace-on-Earth

BY HUGH H. F. DOBSON

They say "Peace, Peace", when there is no definition of Peace.

A war-filled future would be: most tragic; so learn: Active Peace (a Happier Way).

Active Peace is not Perfect Peace; but Active Peace is Enough Peace.

Active Peace is : the Spirit in: Moderation.

Human Living is: Moderate Activity.

Harmony is: the Safe, Moderate, and Happy Interactivity of Things, Plants, Animals, and People, Day-after-Day

It doesn't matter what the issue is - there shouldn't be excessive conflict.

The Way of Peace is not always My Way - often the Other must have His-or-Her Way.

To anyone: your rules are not my rules. Yet we live together.

Fools do too much or too little.

Balance between: Gentleness, and Mild Aggression.

Each Day should have enough trouble, but not too much.

Excessive conflict destroys, but mild conflict creates.

Between boredom and war there

is: Mild, Happy, Harmless, Conflict.

Mild opposition strengthens us, but very strong opposition weakens us.

Our Life should be: not too boring, but also: not too violent.

Sometimes we require <u>a little</u> <u>bit</u> of <u>Mild Conflict</u>, to resolve a Problem.

There is no just war and no just civil war. Excessive fighting is evil; both sides are guilty.

About war-crimes: war (=excessive conflict) is the crime.

One accepted rôle of the nations is: to have wars. What lousy rôle models the nations are!

To strike back is escalation of conflict. If both sides strike back automatically, there is no Hope.

"All or none": The destructive powers of all the nations should be abandoned to secure all peoples' future.

Peace-on-Earth? - Now we have to work with existing systems, including the fact that the other nations are armed.

World-Disarmament will be difficult. We have to try. For the children.

Hugh F. H. Dobson works at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters, Burlington. Address: 426 Seneca Ave., Burlington, Ont L7R 3A2