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Monthly Planet

A PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS
ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



MAY

VOLUME 4
NUMBER 5

The People or the Pentagon: Where Should Our Tax Dollars Go?

by Denise Attwood

We are faced, at this time in our history, not only with an unprecedented military expenditure, but also with an economic situation which has left over 12 million people unemployed and many social services devastated. In an attempt to reverse this trend, Representative Don Edwards (D-CA) has introduced a resolution into the U.S. Congress which serves to dispel the myth that military spending promotes a healthy economy, reduces unemployment by creating jobs, and increases our national security.

The Resolution (HR 46) calls for "significantly reducing the amount of our tax dollars spent on nuclear weapons, foreign intervention, and wasteful military programs," and instead makes "money available for jobs and programs — in education, housing, health care, human services and other socially productive industries." It also calls for establishing a national "Jobs with Peace" week—a time for considering ways to create jobs and restore social services by reallocating military expenditures. It is hoped these proposed policies will promote a healthy economy, true national security, and jobs with peace.

Since WWII, the myth that military spending promotes a healthy economy has prevailed, and enormous sums of money have been allotted to the military-industrial complex. Promoted by both the government and industry, this myth has consistently helped justify increased military spending. However, in light of the Reagan administration's unprecedented military budget, many people are realizing that military spending does just the opposite: it generates unemployment, decreases money available for social services, and takes money out of the economy by creating war products not typically used by the general public.

In an article entitled "Neither Jobs nor Security", Marion Anderson of the Research Associates group states that "military spending at an annual rate of \$135 billion costs the jobs of 1,422,000 Americans each year". This is primarily because "military industries are considerably more capital-intensive than civilian industries".

President Reagan has proposed a budget for Fiscal Year 1984 which would increase military spending to \$280 billion while proposing \$30 billion in cuts to job-creating domestic programs. According to the Religious Task Force, a coalition of religious organizations working with the Jobs with Peace Campaign, this budget "will reduce the growth and actual level of education, job training and employment, welfare and food stamps and legal services."

In 1975 the Bureau of Labor Statistics released a report concluding that "if the goal is to provide jobs and employment opportunities then almost any category of civilian employment would produce more work per one billion dollars than Defense production". As an example, the Religious Task Force states that one billion dollars spent on the military provides 111,589 fewer jobs than if spent on health care, and 24,362 fewer jobs than if spent on construction.

The effect of military spending on social services is equally as severe. For example, it costs \$1.7 billion dollars to build one Trident nuclear submarine, or the same amount of money needed to restore full funding to the Food Stamps program. It costs \$5.6 billion to build two nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, which is enough money to restore the 1982 cuts in CETA public service jobs and training. As the co-sponsors



Spring

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inthesun
by noon
no trace
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lavender
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in starshine
try to tan
better things
to do inthe sun
try to live
atnight
as well as day
but never
keep interest
past two
crunch grass
sting feet
fly off
inthesun
spring into
the day
by night
itgoestoofast

--Heidi Hawkins--

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Ecological Marxism

Capitalism, Crisis, and Social Change

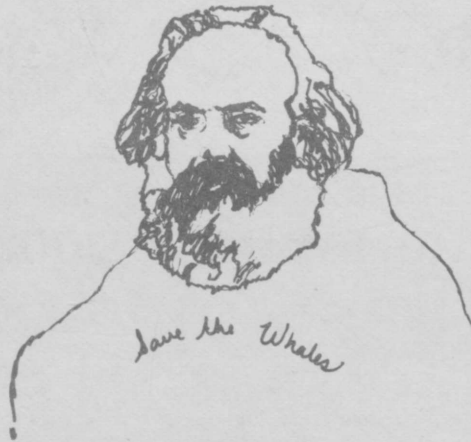
by David Goldsmith

Following a recent presentation to Western's Economics Department on "Marxist Economics," one student noticeably ill at ease with the topic, asked Fairhaven professor Connie Faulkner—"Why study Marxism?" For students used to rationalizations emanating from the contours of supply curves, the answer to this question (and others) must have been intensely disappointing. It necessarily entailed references to culture, politics, and consciousness—entities which are apparently too abstract to warrant consideration in traditional economics classes.

The question is an important one, but if the answer is not self-evident to an economics student, why belabor the issue in an environmental newsletter? Indeed, given the propensity for Americans to rebuff anything remotely associated with Marx and Marxism, why risk "alienating" readers by even discussing the issue?

Until now, I have avoided writing about Marxism for just this reason. After all, we do live in a capitalist society in which billions of dollars are spent to prevent the spread of socialism. We also live in a country which presumably thrives on the virtues of individualism, competitiveness, and free enterprise—virtues Marxism does not embrace as readily as other political philosophies. Furthermore, if our objective is to implement "realistic" solutions to ecological problems, why inject Marxism into the environmental movement?

If we take a moment to suspend our biases and preconceptions, I believe a strong case can be made for studying, and even applying, Marxist thought to the field of ecology. In fact, if you understand the relationships between environmental degradation and capitalism, you have found one good reason for exploring contemporary Marxist thought. If not, then that is perhaps an even better reason. As economist Peter Victor has observed; "Many environmentalists, for their part, do not presume that solutions are possible without far-reaching socio-economic changes, and this provides them with a common perspective with Marx on the need for societal change if not its inevitability."



Victor's intention, as well as my own, is not to add the Communist Manifesto to the repertoire of eco-literature. It is rather to help activists appreciate the value of Marx's method, not only as a critique of capitalism, but in order to formulate possible alternatives. The success of this effort will not be reflected in the emergence of socialism in Bellingham or elsewhere. The point is to provide a conceptual framework for analysis—one which enables students to see that the principle of interrelations or wholism (embodied specifically in Marx's philosophy of internal relations) lies at the heart of the Marxist method. In Volume I of Capital, for example, Marx explains that there is a dialectical relationship between people and nature. He says that "Man opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces...in order to appropriate Nature's production in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature." An understanding of this dialectical relationship should invariably form the basis for alternative forms of social, political, and economic organization.

While contemporary ecological Marxists draw upon this principle of interrelations, their analysis is primarily centered around his "crisis theory." But whereas Marx developed a model of economic crisis, these theorists suggest that revisions to his theory are necessary which will encompass the inevitable emergence of widespread ecological crisis. According to Ben Agger in his book Western Marxism,

"crisis theories today emphasize both the built-in structural contradictions in capitalism...and the tendency for advanced capitalism to deepen alienation and to fragment human existence as well as to pollute the environment and denude nature of its resources." For Agger and others, "large-scale social change in the 1980's may take the form of an 'ecological Marxism' that stresses the need to decentralize technology and its bureaucratic infrastructure and thus to return control of production and consumption directly to small groups of people."

Indeed, Marxian crisis-theory represents an attempt to organize these social change movements into "a concerted effort to transform the total social system." It is argued that radical change will result from attempts to regain control of our environment, workplace, and local communities. Agger explains that in this way ecological Marxism provides theorists with a utopian dimension, allowing them to see beyond capitalism towards new forms of social and economic organization. One tenet of this theory calls for decentralization, deconcentration, and direct workers control of the production process. As Agger states, this is "both in order to avoid ecological disaster via irrational overproduction and to put workers in touch with their essential competence to self-manage their own work- and leisure-lives."

There are essentially two analytical perspectives embodied in ecological Marxism. First, it examines the environmental implications of continued resource-depletion and the pollution generated as a result of the imperative for growth in capitalism. Second, it sets out to consider the ways in which human beings become emotionally dependent on the consumption of commodities, and as Agger observes, their attempt "to escape the authoritarian coordination and boredom of alienated labor." In effect, these perspectives reveal how ecological crisis will eventually compel capitalists to scale-down commodity production, and will encourage individuals to redefine their values

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The duty to produce destroys the capacity to create.

Anonymous

Northwest Action for Disarmament

IN A NATION WHERE
 THE PEOPLE ARE
 THE SOVEREIGN
 THE GOVERNMENT
 MUST BE
 RESPONSIBLE
 TO THEM

Two hundred miles up the Columbia River from Portland, the federal government is working feverishly to renovate a plutonium factory for nuclear weapons. It's called PUREX, short for Plutonium-Uranium EXtraction, and it's located at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in the Tri-Cities area of eastern Washington. By early 1984, the PUREX plant is scheduled to be producing lots of plutonium—enough to make thousands of new nuclear bombs within the next few years. And that's exactly what the U.S. government intends to do.

Oregonians and Washingtonians view the Columbia River as a precious natural resource. But along its banks, at Hanford, the federal government is preparing to restart PUREX as a major means of gearing up the nuclear arms race. The Reagan administration is intent on manufacturing about 14,000 more nuclear warheads during the 1980's—for weapons systems like the Pershing II, cruise, Trident, MX and the neutron bomb.

While basic human services are being cut to the bone and unemployment reaches outrageous new heights, the government is wasting billions of dollars in a nuclear weapons buildup that threatens to push the world over the brink of nuclear annihilation. Restart of PUREX is integral to those plans.

What can we do about it?
Plenty.

This spring and summer are crucial times for mobilizing opposition to the PUREX startup. (The PUREX plant has been inoperative for more than 10 years.) Federal officials are counting on passive acceptance here in the Pacific Northwest. But, instead, they will be encountering active resistance from people in communities throughout the region.

Along with output of plutonium that will make possible production of thousands of nuclear bombs during the next few years, a restarted PUREX facility will mean spewing even more radioactivity into our air, our soil—and, inevitably, into the Columbia River.

At least 25,000 nuclear warheads are already in the American arsenal—enough to destroy human life on Earth many times over—yet the Reagan administration is cranking up PUREX as an integral part of an enormous military buildup. It is very important that those of us who live in the Pacific Northwest join together to actively oppose the local hazard and global threat posed by PUREX. To facilitate this effort, Northwest Action for Disarmament (formerly the Ad Hoc Committee for Disarmament) is helping to coordinate a regionwide community-based campaign to prevent



PUREX plutonium production at Hanford.

If you are interested in helping to plan events for the weekend of May 21-22, contact Northwest Action for Disarmament for assistance.

NORTHWEST ACTION FOR DISARMAMENT
 P.O. Box 4212
 Portland, Oregon 97208
 (503) 222-7293, 241-7818, 653-8274

A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which humanity is always landing. And when humanity lands there it looks out and seeing a better country, sets sail.

-- Oscar Wilde

Hand-me-down Motor Oil

by Sally Toteff

It's 1983 and we all know the benefits of recycling. Many people have made it a habit and regularly stop by the local recycler with their old newspapers and beer bottles.

Used motor oil, however, can also be recycled, but people don't always realize this or don't know the consequences of throwing it away. Yet only ten percent of the 4.5 million gallons of dirty motor oil that do-it-yourself mechanics annually drain in their Washington driveways is recycled. The rest is poured down sewer drains, tossed in the trash, or sprinkled on the ground. In each case, the oil -

which has been contaminated with lead, other poisonous heavy metals, and many suspected carcinogens - can leach into groundwater, streams, rivers, lakes, or the ocean.

When recycled, used oil is purified back into high quality lubricant or reprocessed into cheap fuel. Recycling oil means saving energy because it takes more crude oil to yield a gallon of motor oil than to produce the same amount of re-refined oil. Whatcom County has two recyclers who handle old oil: in Bellingham, the WWU Associated Students Recycling Center, and in Lynden, Whatcom Recycling. We encourage you to use these facilities. *

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Mountaineering as Wilderness Education

A Literary Ascent

by Sue Pelley

Huxley is a college of environmental studies, so its curriculum is designed to provide "environmental enlightenment." The question is whether other departments at Western are also helping students understand and respect the environment that our society depends upon, or if concerns about human and environmental relations are unique to Huxley College.

In a recent interview with Fairhaven College professor Bob Keller, it became clear that environmental studies are being addressed through means other than the sciences, or political and economic theories. Indeed, the course Keller is teaching this spring, "History and Literature of Mountaineering," is an example of how literature can be used to study the wilderness, and the wilderness can be used to question individual and societal values.

"I can tell I'm getting old," Keller said, introducing himself to a class. "I used to teach 'mountaineering' courses; now I teach 'History and Literature of Mountaineering' courses." But his agile frame and pictures of a recent hike in the Grand Canyon don't reflect the age he professes. Moreover, his personal love and admiration for the mountains are brought to the classroom through critical analysis of literature and exploration of the human experience and challenge of hiking and climbing.

The twenty students enrolled in the class discuss a wide range of personal experiences in the mountains, but the class is not designed to merely promote mountain climbing. Keller's main inspiration for teaching the course is a belief that the challenge of climbing is worth studying through tales and literature, particularly because we all face difficulties when physical and mental stamina are tested.

One of these challenges is the competition which is so strongly emphasized in our capitalist society. Competition with nature, however, can be very healthy because it requires people to confront their own weaknesses: fatigue, fear, apprehension, and loneliness.

This competition is not a battle with nature so much as it is a striving to be compatible with the environment when, for example, searching for a safe route to travel. The personal and physical competition described in literature gives students an outlet to discover the competitiveness of their own lives.

The wide range of topics and writing styles found in this literature is one reason Keller feels the subject is also perfectly suitable for a handicapped person who may never have the opportunity to climb mountains. The course material allows people to imagine mountain experiences, and the personalities and challenges depicted in both fiction and non-fiction provide familiar topics so that people who are not closely aligned



with those experiences can still enjoy and learn from the reading.

Keller is not a "technical" climber who adorns the costly gear needed to scale rock or ice faces, but is interested in comparing the different experiences between technical climbers and pleasure hikers. The literature in the course can also bring the reader face to face with a rock slab for twenty minutes, or describe the panoramic views of a rolling mountain valley.

One distinction between these two wilderness-seekers is that the hiker can gain a broad perspective and sense of a region, in contrast to the climber who learns the beauty of a crack or foothold in but a small portion of a mountain. Keller makes no judgment about those two different experiences, but wants his students to be aware of

both. In this way, mountaineering experiences can provide a concrete example of the choices people make in other parts of their lives.

Another great value in studying mountaineering literature is the respect and understanding of the wilderness people can acquire. By contemplating the human elements involved in climbing, students can project themselves into positions of fear or awe when visualizing the sights and situations described in books. Keller also believes it is important for people to understand why wilderness areas are being protected so that they too might come to realize the importance of open-space.

There is always conflict, Keller explains, between building more roads to places where more people can enjoy wilderness experiences, while trying to limit construction so "environmental hikers" can enjoy sheer solitude. One way to avoid this problem would be to stop building new roads to wilderness areas and instead provide more information in public parks about the need to preserve secluded areas, as well to as maintain the available routes for the less mobile public.

Besides a collection of mountaineering articles and films on mountain ascents, Keller's class is reading *Mount Analogue* by Rene Dumont and *The Eiger Sanction* by Trevannian. Keller encourages students to read books that confront questions of human and environmental relations, and has compiled an extensive bibliography of mountaineering books to assist them. The class is from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. on Thursday evenings, and people are welcome to contact Keller if they would like to participate in some of the class discussions or see some of the films.✽

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BOOK REVIEW

The Official Government Nuclear Survivors' Manual

by Irene Friedman

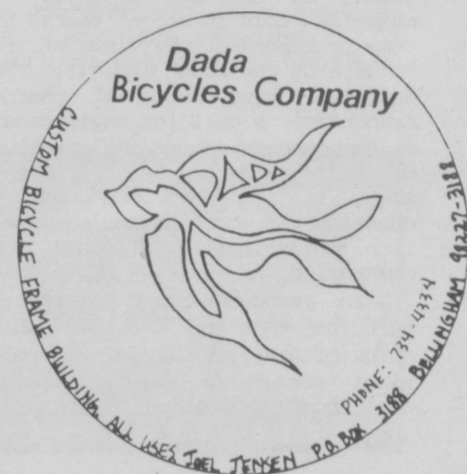


by Megan Barton

Sooner or later, bombs will fall...

This is the contention of Irene Friedman, and thus her motivation for compiling a manual with which "millions of Americans" can hope to survive the "inevitable" nuclear attack. Representing state-of-the-art research in civil defense, this book is an impressive compendium of everything that is known about effective procedures to follow in the event of a nuclear war. As such, its publication is a pragmatic response to the utter failure on the part of the United States and the Soviet Union to seriously negotiate a reduction or even freeze of nuclear arms.

In view of the prospects, then, the Manual constitutes a vividly informative catalogue of the myriad strategies our government has formulated by which we can survive a nuclear assault. Indeed, too comprehensive to adequately summarize in a mere review of the book, a few prime examples must suffice. In this regard, the following is perhaps the most notable.



When the Middle-of-the-Road Leads Nowhere

by Sarah Hamilton

What does the The New Republic, a leading "liberal" news magazine, suggest we do about the menace of nuclear war and the persistent mistreatment of the environment?

Charles Krauthammer, the magazine's Senior Editor, tells us in "The End of the World" (March 28, 1983), to "go about our daily business," to not concern ourselves with all this nuclear fuss. Krauthammer is attempting to discredit the anti-nuclear and environmental movements by labeling them the "secular counterparts" of Evangelical Christian millennialists like Jerry Falwell. And, by equating Jonathan Schell with James Watt, he is suggesting that these movements are nothing more than elite groups of fanatical extremists.

But because his arguments are based on the most superficial similarities between these two disparate groups, as well as outdated information (such as the 1972 report, Limits to Growth, by Meadows et al.), he is successful only in discrediting himself. He fails to see the more important distinctions which set these groups apart, the most obvious being that the environmental movement (including anti-nuclearists) is based upon, and calls for, individual action and social change, while the millennialists often exhibit only passivity and complacency.

However, it is not Krauthammer's poorly developed argument that is so disturbing, as much as the fact that his article is published in the New Republic - a magazine that in recent years has come to represent the views of the "middle of the road" liberal. The article forced me to ask whether Krauthammer's call for environmental complacency echoes the attitude of the magazine and hence its readers. If so, then one ought to question the worthiness of a position which implies "all things in moderation."

In response no doubt to the turbulent 60's and 70's, in which much of America's social and political structures were vigorously challenged, moderation seems to be the



motto of the 80's. This can be clearly seen among institutions of higher education, which have traditionally been centers for activism and social change. "Maintain the status quo," "don't ruffle the nation's feathers." This attitude has probably been a natural and expected one following a fifteen-year period of intense change and transformation.

Certainly, the value of analyzing politics from a moderate position lies in the ability to look at processes and problems from a number of points of view and to keep an open mind. However, when moderation turns to complacency and to self-righteous indignation towards anything left or right of center (as exemplified in Krauthammer's article and numerous others in the New Republic), then it is no longer constructive as a critique of our society. The center might instead be incorporating the strengths of the left and the right rather than excluding them in the name of moderation.

This country is gradually waking up to the alarming events taking place in the world today. Thanks to the bumbling efforts of the present administration, many conflicts are now coming to a head: U.S. intervention in Central America, nuclear missiles pointing in every direction, and intensified human rights violations in South Africa, not to mention the many backward steps we've taken in environmental protection. It is time to act, to ruffle some feathers. Standing in the middle and condemning progressive movements for nuclear freedom and environmental preservation will get us nowhere, except possibly an article in the New Republic. ❏

Man (Homo Colossus)

Dedicated to Ivan Illich

Man
builds tools
much larger
than men
and cannot comprehend
nor even can feel
their weight
as they make him still smaller
and flat
(and her smaller still
as she feeds him and irons his shirt).

But he knows something's wrong.
"More bigger!" he cries.
The tools make the rules,
they use him.
He runs faster and faster
(to where? who cares?)
trying to win
but to play is to lose
in this game.

Man makes slaves
of women and men,
of the people who skillfully
quote-unquote willfully
run his machine for a fee.
And the young ones he trains
to shoot and to kill
with electronic games
that they play for a thrill.
As for grown-ups, he keeps them
believing they're free
with microwave ovens,
mixed drinks and TV.

Is this what they mean by the American Dream?
Of course it is.
Wake up!

--S. Lansing Regan

Agitators are a set of interfering meddling people, who come down to some perfectly contented class of the community and sow the seeds of discontent amongst them. That is the reason why agitators are so absolutely necessary.

--Oscar Wilde

An Open Letter on Jobs

Editor's Note

In the January issue of Not Man Apart, Richard Grossman and Richard Kazis wrote the following article on jobs and the environmental movement. They explained that the movement "heads into 1983 with new strength, new political opportunities, and new responsibilities." For both strategic and moral reasons, they believe it is critical that environmentalists address "short-term strategies for assisting the unemployed; and long-range policies for job creation and economic recovery."

Grossman and Kazis are staff members of Environmentalists for Full Employment in Washington, DC, and are co-authors of the recently published book Fear at Work: Job Blackmail, Labor and the Environment.

by Richard Grossman
and Richard Kazis

During the past two years, the environmental movement has resisted administration and industry attacks on environmental laws, and held off private efforts to monopolize public resources and weaken enforcement by returning it to the states. Our organizations have grown in numbers, sophistication, and political will. The role of environmentalists in the November 1982 elections was clearly significant. Polls continue to show broad public support for strong environmental protections.

But deepening economic problems threaten our ability to maintain past gains and to make progress. Unemployment is still rising, and is at Depression-era levels in many parts of the country. Business bankruptcies are at a 50-year high. Evictions and foreclosures are increasing rapidly, as the unemployed run out of benefits and resources. Rising energy prices and utility shut-offs will subject tens of thousands of families to fear and suffering this winter. As the Wall Street Journal has reported, there is a new and growing class of the uprooted now roaming the land. People who have always worked, who want to work, who have always thought they would have work, are seeing their dreams and security shattered.

In the coming months, we should anticipate a rush of political responses to the unemployment and economic crises, some less cynical than others. The environmental movement, as European Green parties are doing, must now take responsibility for helping to shape industrial and employment policies. These, after all, are what determine resource use, and policy concerning the environment and public health.

The Short-Term

1. Today's job insecurity and the fear it creates render people who need to work increasingly susceptible to "jobs versus the environment" blackmail. In the last election, four of five state bottle bill initiatives were defeated, in part because of the effectiveness of business' job threats. In Massachusetts, the opponents of a nuclear waste initiative claimed that over 200,000 jobs in health care would leave the state if the initiative won. In Congress recently, the administration posed an either/or choice between increased appropriations for EPA or a HUD construction jobs package. Efforts to "streamline" regulations will continue. Corporate donors to Democratic candidates are already letting victorious candidates know their feelings on "overly stringent" environmental laws.

2. There will be attempts to enact emergency jobs and training legislation which will most likely relegate health and environmental considerations to low priority, if include them at all. With jobs uppermost in people's minds, it will be difficult to challenge just about any policies advocated in the name of jobs.

3. Attacks on workers and their organizations by powerful segments of the business community and the Reagan administration pose a direct threat to environmental protections and to labor-environmental, minority-environmental, and community-environmental alliances. Employers are taking advantage of today's climate of fear to drive down wages, eliminate benefits, change work rules, weaken worker organizations, pit city against city and region against region. Many unions - such as the Steelworkers, Auto Workers, and Machinists - which have vigorously supported key environmental measures, today are preoccupied with their own survival, and are under intense pressure to abandon environmental activism or give it less attention. Concessions in workplace health protections, coupled with this administration's crippling of EPA and OSHA, are resulting in more pollution in the workplace and more toxics in the community.

The Long-Term

Today's employment and economic problems are not simply part of a temporary cyclical downturn. The nation faces a complicated structural crisis which can be resolved only by major changes in investment and policy priorities - changes which should develop from democratic public debate free from economic coercion. Some major changes are already taking place, but without even a semblance of that debate. These include the elimination of hundreds of thousands of jobs in America's basic industries; shifts from high-wage industrial jobs in older cities to low-wage computer- and service-related jobs; and the creation of a significant body of people who have

continued page 9



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The President's Commission on Strategic Forces

Biases, Blinders, and Bombs: Perpetuating the Nuclear Standoff

by Megan Barton

For what seems like an eternity, the United States government has been embroiled in debate over nuclear arms, both within its own ranks, as well as with the Soviet Union. Proposals have been made and withdrawn, misinterpreted or disregarded, or refused outright—and still the nuclear arsenals remain and even grow. Now one more contribution to these antagonisms is a recently submitted report of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces.

Headed by Leut. General Brent Scowcroft, the Commission's responsibility was "to review the purpose, character, size, and composition of the strategic forces of the United States." Their conclusions, however - as made clearly evident upon reading excerpts from the report - were fundamentally predetermined by their perception of both U.S. security policy as "essentially defensive in nature," and of the Soviet Union as the proverbial "threat of aggressive totalitarianism." Thus, the Scowcroft Commission was premised on a commitment to deterrence - not to mention the commercial interests thriving on American militarism - from the very outset, thereby precluding sincere efforts to negotiate an arms reduction as being in the mutual interest of the superpowers.

With respect to U.S. perceptions (or delusions, as the case may be), it is extremely revealing to read excerpts from the report which address "Soviet Objectives and Programs," while keeping in mind the degree to which substituting "U.S." for "Soviet" is perhaps just as, if not more, accurate a description of the present state of affairs:

Effective deterrence and effective arms control have both been made significantly more difficult by Soviet conduct and Soviet weapons programs in recent years. The overall military balance, including the nuclear balance, provides the backdrop for Soviet decisions about the manner in which they will try to advance their interests. This is central to our understanding of how to deter war, how to frustrate Soviet efforts at blackmail, and how to deal with the Soviets' day-to-day conduct of international affairs. The Soviets have shown by

word and deed that they regard military power, including nuclear weapons, as a useful tool in the projection of their national influence. In the Soviet strategic view, nuclear weapons are closely related to, and are integrated with, their other military and political instruments as a means of advancing their interests. The Soviets have concentrated enormous effort on the development and modernization of nuclear weapons, obviously seeking to achieve what they regard as important advantages in certain areas of nuclear weaponry.

Historically the Soviets have not been noted for taking large risks. But one need not take the view that their leaders are eager to launch a nuclear war in order to understand the political advantages that a massive nuclear weapons buildup can hold for a nation seeking to expand its power and influence, or to comprehend the dangers that such a motivation and such a buildup hold for the rest of the world.

Although there is legitimate debate about the exact scope of Soviet military spending in recent years, it is nonetheless clear that the Soviet leaders have embarked upon a determined, steady increase in nuclear (and conventional) weapons programs over the past two decades - a buildup well in excess of any military requirement for defense.

In a world in which the balance of strategic nuclear forces could be isolated and kept distinctly set apart from all other calculations about relations between nations and the credibility of conventional military power, a nuclear imbalance would have little importance unless it were so massive as to tempt an aggressor to launch nuclear war. But the world in which we must live with the Soviet is, sadly, one in which their own assessments of these trends, and hence their calculations of overall advantage, influence heavily the vigor with which they exercise their power...



As Walter Cronkite concluded in the 1981 CBS documentary, The Defense of the United State, none of us can say with certainty who these Russians really are. But, "if their perception of America is as flawed as we believe it is then our preception of the Soviet Union just could be flawed too. In the absence of any real dialogue, the same old fears and doubts continue to dominate our relationship." Thus, as an example, the Scowcroft Commission's obvious bias has locked them into precisely the positional mentality which is so inherently destructive to any negotiation efforts between nations.

Indeed, two Russian dissident writers, Roy and Zhores Medvedev, also attribute the evolution of the strategic arms race since Hiroshima in large part to the "subjective perception of the intentions and world view of the other side." It is this "sincere belief" - as opposed to "clear knowledge" - that has entrenched the U.S. and U.S.S.R. into opposing and irreconcilable positions, and provided the basis for the "new cold war."

The Medvedevs also maintain, however, that it is the U.S. who has been the aggressor, as evidenced initially by the post-World War II period of American nuclear monopoly and buildup, and that in response, defense has been the "permanent obsession of the Soviet leadership." They further contend that "at every stage, America has been ahead, taking the technological lead and obliging the Soviet Union to try to catch up. This permanent dynamic has structured Russian responses deeply, creating a pervasive inferiority complex that has probably prevailed over rational calculations in the 1970's."

These assertions, and the Medvedev's more detailed analysis in their January '82 article for The Nation must be judged by the same standards applied to the Scowcroft report. At the very least,

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however, they provide a very different and very provocative perception of both leaders in the arms race - one obviously not adhered to by past and present U.S. administrations. But breaking free of the twisted and blinding constraints of our preconceptions in this way is the necessary first step to averting nuclear confrontation and final disaster.

Nevertheless, that first step has yet to be taken. Moreover, the very basic fact of our capability to annihilate each other - even at greatly reduced levels of nuclear armaments - is continually ignored while specialists quibble over numbers, reliability, accuracy, and warhead yield. And so the powers-that-be still play their war games, rattle and flash their swords (oh! that they were plowshares), and recklessly taunt each other from their respective corners of the world ring. Indeed, both seem oblivious to their common humanity.

Thus, we have reached the point where the arms race no longer needs to be couched in terms of Jonathan Schell's "ultimate ecological threat" to legitimize it as an environmental concern. It is humankind's concern - period. And to see beyond the stereotypes that have left us teetering on the nuclear brink means to carry us beyond the chasm of our ultimate defeat.*



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never worked.

Between now and the 1984 elections, powerful forces will advocate competing revitalization strategies. The environmental movement must join this debate in order to influence it. We must acknowledge to ourselves that environmental politics cannot be divorced from fundamental questions of economic control and political decisionmaking, and convince others that economic policy must integrate health, resource conservation, and environmental values. If we don't, we risk being presented with a fait accompli - reindustrialization strategies likely to be environmentally destructive and very difficult to oppose.

If the environmental movement does not bring its creativity and resources into the political struggle over jobs and economic recovery, we will be vulnerable to charges of elitism and callousness toward working Americans. And we will make it easier for those who would ravage public lands and reverse a decade of workplace and environmental improvements to do so in the name of progress and jobs. In 1975, when a liberal coalition organizing for full-employment legislation was formed, environmentalists were not invited to participate. Although some environmental groups eventually became involved, they did not play a very influential role. Without explicit environmentalist effort today, no one should expect a different scenario.

The Opportunity: We have the opportunity to use our organizing skills, our research and education capabilities, and our growing political muscle to help make people the cornerstone of economic revitalization; to help people derive greater benefit from the wealth they have helped produce; to help create a climate where "jobs versus the environment" threats are quickly exposed and discredited. The human toll of unemployment and economic despair should be morally

unacceptable to environmentalists - for whom conservation of resources, respect for all life, and concern for future generations are the highest priorities. To let business and administration forces continue to make people subservient to "growth," "expanded economy," and "good business climate," would be a tragic mistake.

Questions to Address: How should the environmental community respond to today's high unemployment? What kind of work do we want to see done? Where do we stand on the elimination of hundreds of thousands of organized, high-wage jobs in auto, steel, rubber, textile, and other basic industries, and the rapid growth of unorganized, low-wage jobs in services and computer-based industries? On plant closings, employee protections, retraining? The unrestrained mobility of capital? The responsibility of employers to communities where they have prospered - and polluted - for decades? What about free trade? Economic concentration? Overseas pollution havens? New technologies?

What about worker rights? Unions? Collective bargaining? Environmental and economic "balance"?

What criteria will we use to evaluate forthcoming emergency jobs legislation? Longer-range economic recovery proposals? Who are our potential allies on national revitalization? How do we go about negotiating with them to create plans we can jointly support and enact? Do we know where we stand as people begin to talk about a green party or a labor party?

...We do not suggest we have the answers to the above questions, or that we have the key to bringing disparate groups together around very complex issues. But we are convinced that the environmental movement must face these and related questions, and start exploring answers.*

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of HR 46 have aptly stated, "The financial cost of the military is causing tremendous harm to our national economy and an immeasurable price is being paid in human suffering."

We are at a point in our history when we must ask ourselves what this country truly needs. We can continue to base our future on a military economy with our security in bombs, or we can work to provide jobs aimed towards achieving a peacetime economy.

As Dana Jackson of the Land Institute said in her recent article on "Jobs, the Environment, and National Security," "the problem isn't thinking of useful things to be done. The problem is releasing the gargantuan grip of the military industrial complex on Congress and the Administration so money can be reallocated from missiles to jobs programs that strengthen communities and provide real national security."

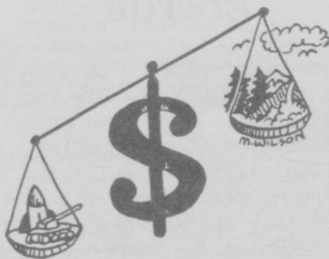
House Resolution 46 is an attempt to do just that. The cosponsors of this bill realize the enormous purchasing power of our taxes and believe there are many creative ways we could begin to use our tax dollars to build a healthy economy and create jobs with peace.

What you can do:

Call or write your congressperson today, (for those registered to vote in Bellingham, this is Al Swift, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515; 1-202-225-3121) and urge him to cosponsor HR 46.

For more information on this subject, contact:

1. The Religious Task Force, Mobilization for Survival
85 South Oxford St.
Brooklyn, NY 11217
2. Employment Research Associates
400 S. Washington Ave.
Lansing, Michigan 48933
3. Jobs with Peace Natl. Network
2940 16th St. Room 1
San Francisco, CA 94103



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...as centralization reaches such grotesque proportions that it denies people any sense of control over their destiny, as town and country become polarized against each other in a staggering ecological disequilibrium, as technology is mindlessly employed to undermine the very biochemical cycles indispensable for life on this planet - as all of these developments occur at a headlong tempo that is virtually beyond the comprehension of the most informed experts, we must seriously ask: who, in fact, are the mad "utopians" who have lost all contact with the reality of our times and who are the authentic realists?

- Murray Bookchin

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and needs. Agger believes one result will be that more people will pursue meaningful work and will hence be liberated from unnecessary and ecologically destructive consumption.

In the Limits to Satisfaction, William Leiss states that the goal of this type of scaled-down social order "is gradually to dismember the massive institutional structures of the industrialized economy and to reduce, so far as possible, the dependence of individuals on them." Much of the powerlessness and alienation which result from the immense institutions of our corporate society could be changed, Leiss contends, through the decentralization of the polity and economy, and by shifting away from high-consumptive lifestyles. This, he asserts, is no longer simply a matter of aesthetic education, but a question of biological survival.

Among the many writers who also subscribe to these ideas, Murray Bookchin, Ivan Illich, Paul Goodman, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse are the most well-known. Their approach to ecology and social change is profoundly compelling for a number of reasons, but perhaps the most significant being their ability to articulate conceivable alternatives. While many contemporary non-Marxist theorists like William Ophuls, Garret Hardin, and Willis Harmon tend to foresee a need for more authoritarian solutions to ecological crisis, the Marxian tradition reveals the potential for qualitative improvement throughout society. As Agger explains, a Marxian analysis can show consumers, for example, "that limits-to-growth need not be seen as a heavy social cost but can rather be viewed as a fortuitous opportunity to transform society in radical ways."

For most activists, however, it seems inconceivable that an ideology like this can grow on North American soil. Indeed, Marxism has never been a part of American political culture. Yet as Agger explains further, when "combined with

the traditional populist underpinnings of American life, which favors grass-roots democracy and political decentralization, Marxism can take on new life as an ideology that constructively confronts social and ecological crises with renewed vigor."

Wholism, transformation, and paradigm shifts are principles finding greater expression among students and activists concerned about social change. This symbolizes a growing awareness of not only the historical, political, and cultural context in which change will arise, but a need for directing change towards an ecologically sane future.

For indeed, ecological crisis impels us to re-evaluate our industrial lifestyles, and allows us to move towards more decentralized, scaled-down patterns of social and economic organization. This alone is one important reason for studying Marxian theory. At the very least, it will allow students to realize that ecological limits provide the opportunity for the kind of fundamental social transformation Marx himself envisioned.



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