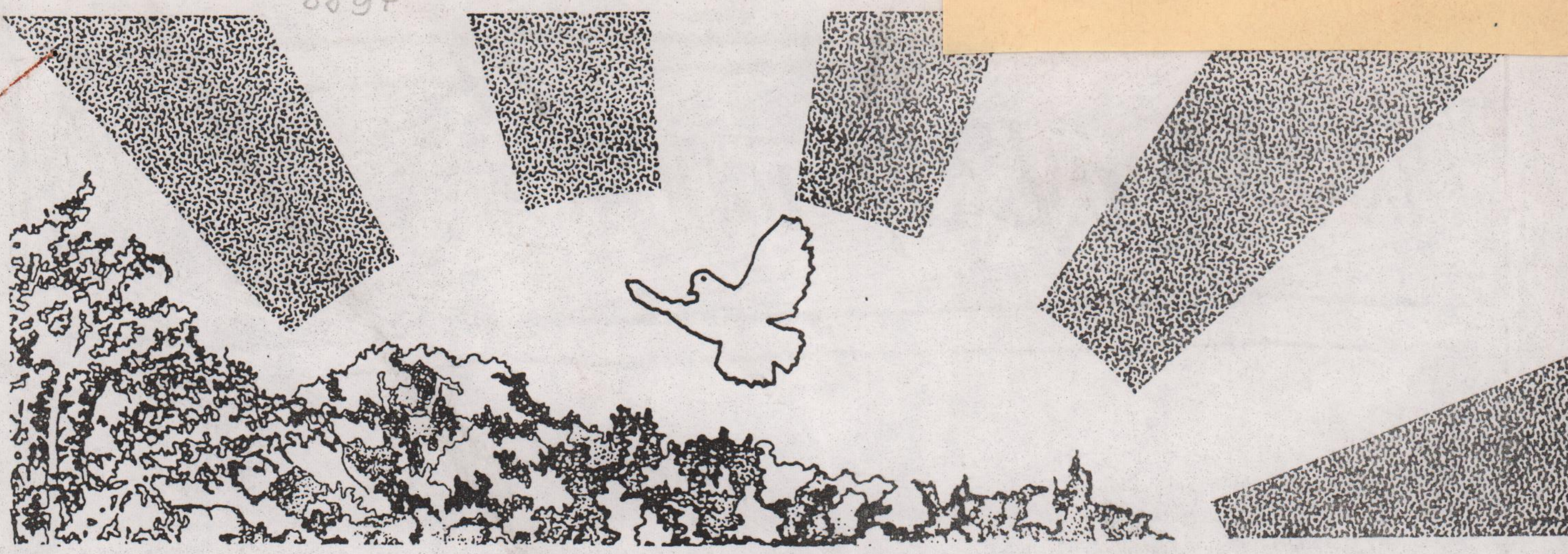


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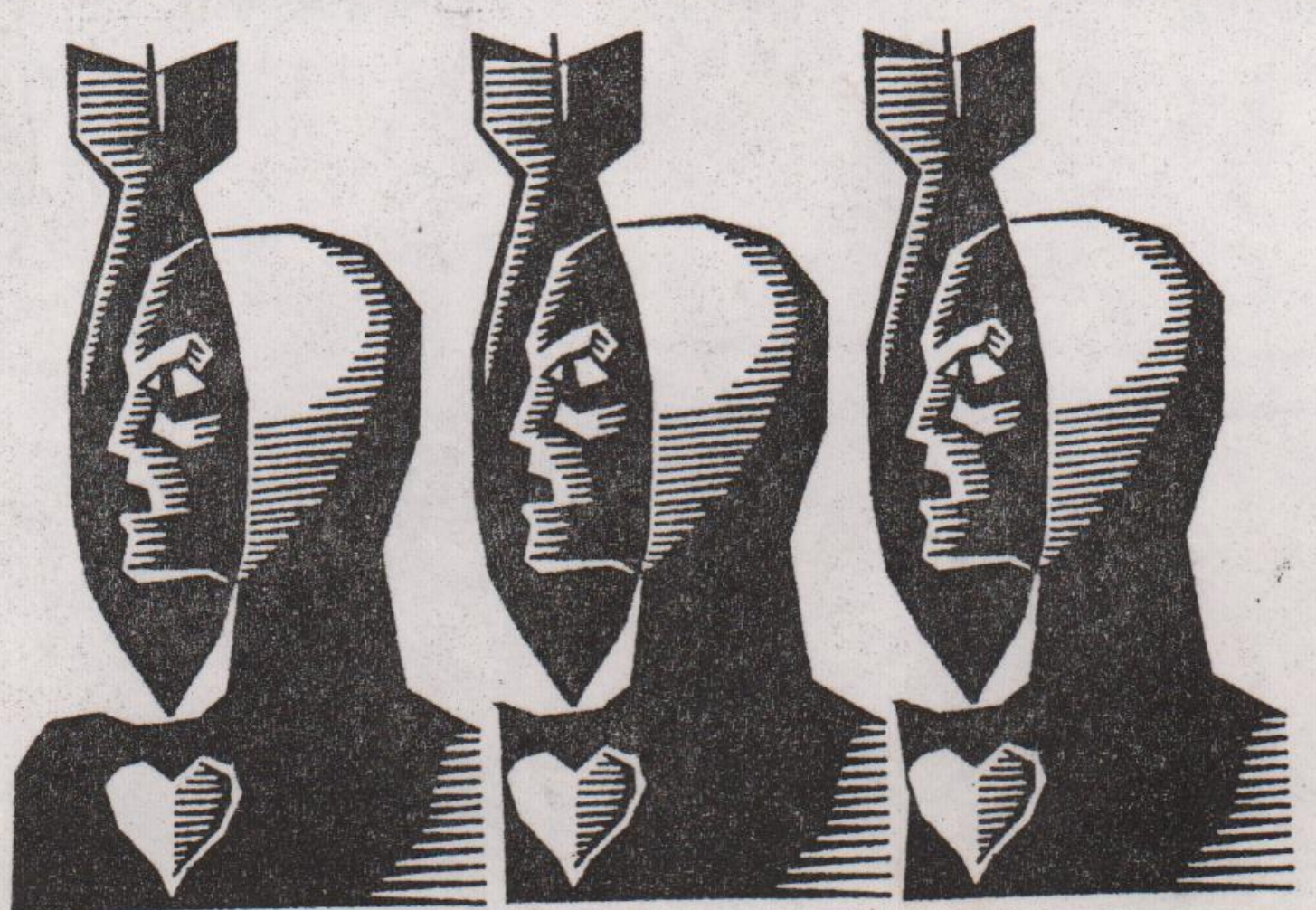


FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP APRIL 1988

RALLY ROUND YOUR HEALTH SERVICE

20P

**WELFARE
NOT
WARFARE**



IN A DARK TIME

B.C.

Part II of our continuing series, "FATES WORSE THAN DEATH" in which Kurt Vonnegut Jr. examines the arguments that the military use to justify their "defence" obsession.

SLAVERY What if the Joint Chiefs of Staff said that we would be enslaved if we did not appropriate enough money for weaponry? That could be true. Despite our world-wide reputation for sloppy workmanship, wouldn't some enemy get a kick out of forcing us into involuntary servitude, buying and selling us like so many household appliances or farm machines or inflatable erotic toys?

And slavery would surely be a fate worse than death. We can agree on that. I'm sure.

The equation which links a strong defence posture to not being enslaved is laid down in the stirring fight song, "Rule Britannia". "Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves; Britons, never never never shall be slaves". It may surprise some of you to learn what an old equation that is. The Scottish poet who wrote it James Thompson, died in 1748--one quarter of century before there was such a country as the United States of America. Thompson promised Britons that they would never be slaves at a time when the enslavement of persons with inferior weaponry was a respectable industry. Plenty of people were going to be slaves, and it would serve them right too--But Britons would not be among them.

So that isn't really a very nice song. It is about not being humiliated which is all right. But it is also about humiliating others, which is not a moral thing to do. The humiliation of others should never be a national goal.

There is one poet who should have been ashamed of himself.

If the Soviet Union came over here and enslaved us, it wouldn't be the first time Americans were slaves. If we conquered the Russians and enslaved them, it wouldn't be the first time they were enslaved.

And the last time the Americans were slaves, and the last time the Russians were slaves they displayed astonishing spiritual strengths and resourcefulness. They were good at loving one another. They trusted God. They discovered in the simplest, most natural satisfactions, reasons to be glad to be alive. They were able to believe that better days were coming in the sweet by-and-by. And here is a fascinating statistic: they committed suicide less often than their masters did.

So Americans and Russians can both stand slavery, if they have to--and still want life to go on.

Could it be that slavery isn't a fate worse than death. After all people are tough, you know.

But suppose enemies came ashore in great numbers, because we lacked the means to stop them, and they pushed us off our homes and off our ancestral lands, and into swamps and deserts. Suppose that they even tried to destroy our religion, telling us that our god was as ridiculous as a piece of junk jewelry.

Again: this is a wringer millions of Americans have already been through--or are still going through. It is another catastrophe which Americans can endure, if they have to--and still, miraculously, maintain some measure of dignity, or self-respect.

As bad as life is for our Indians, they still like it better than death.

Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

THE EYE BEGINS TO SEE

B.C.

PAGE 3 COMMENT

B.C.



"There is a link between Britain's industrial decline and high defence spending. On present trends Britain will, just after the turn of the century, be the poorest nation in the whole of Europe apart from Albania. But at least on present policy, it will have Trident to defend its increasingly run down and divided society."

In 1986, Britain spent £18 billion on defence, or 5.4% of the National Income. This amounts to £325 per year for every man, woman and child in Britain. - Just think what a fraction of this could do if it were used for helping people - the sick, the old or the homeless.

Despite 103,000 homeless families in Britain, military spending is three-and-a-half times more than spending on new houses. Military spending also eats up a great deal more than the national Health Service, while there are 679,00 patients on hospital waiting lists.

Public spending has been cut to the extent that vital equipment such as body scanners and kidney machines are paid for by sponsored walks and raffles. But the military budget is not questioned. No flag days are held for Trident, no collecting tins are rattled for Cruise.

Since the Tories came to power in 1979, the military budget has swollen by a huge 30 per cent in real terms. Over the same period, spending on housing and education has dropped.

Whilst many NATO countries refuse to have nuclear weapons, Britain maintains and pays for its own nuclear arsenal. Proportionately, Britain spends over two-and-a-half times as much on the military as other European members of NATO. It is a shameful fact that over half of the British Government-funded Research and Development Budget goes on developing more weapons of mass killing.

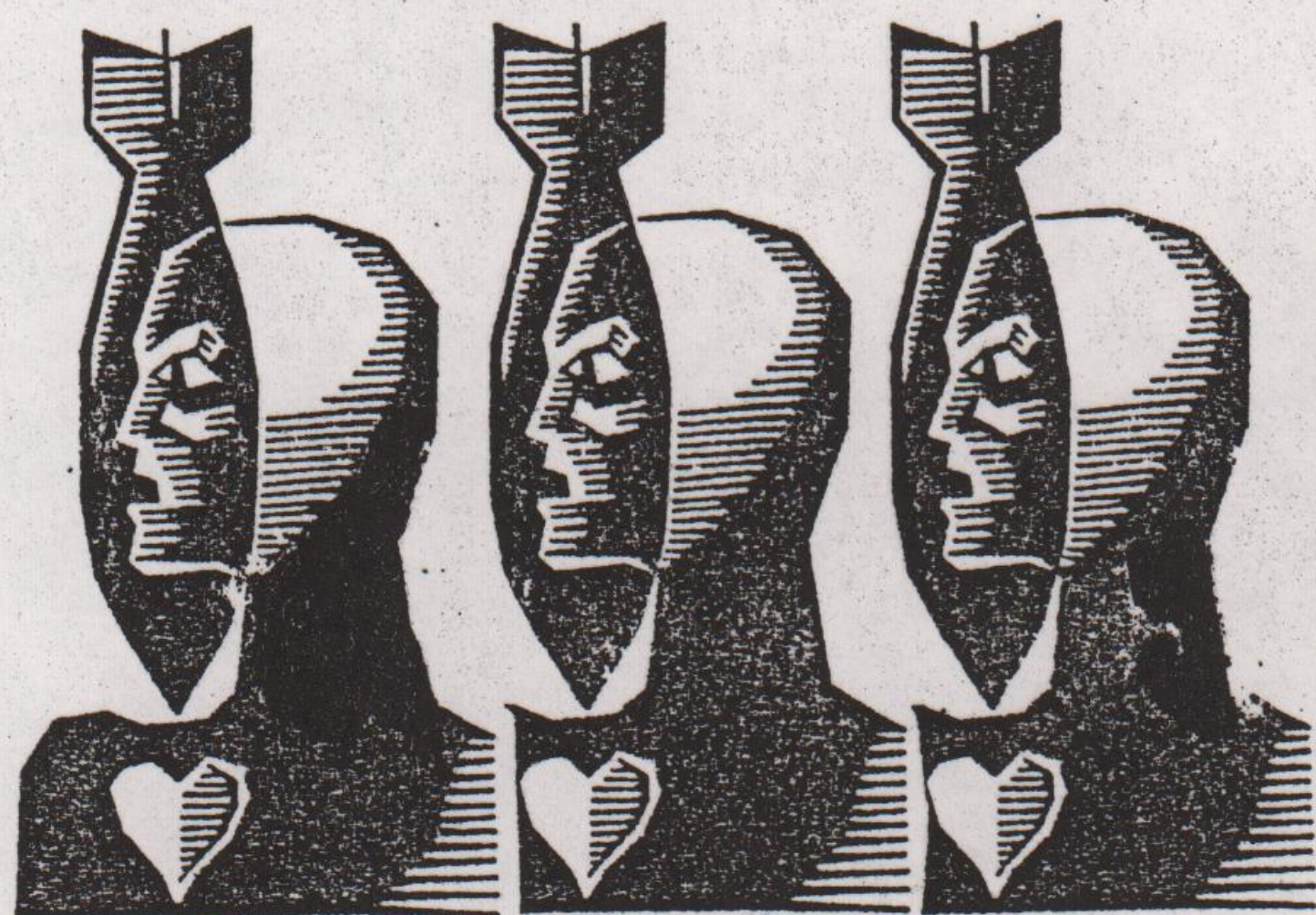
IT COULD BE DIFFERENT

Whilst devoting so much money to defence, the Government has ignored investment in basic services. The longer we fail to tackle our fundamental problems the worse it gets. Inner cities face despair, sewers are crumbling, hospital queues grow longer, the disabled are still suffering from lack of care, the elderly die of cold and hunger, families live in decaying homes and unemployment has become a way of life for millions.

But it could be different! For the cost of one submarine we could build 3,000 new homes. For the cost of one Harrier GR5 Aircraft we could build a new hospital!

This is what disarmament is all about. A peaceful world and a world fit for us and our children to live in. Countries which have not spent resources on weapons of destruction have been able to build up and maintain services. Britain has a long way to catch up after years of waste and neglect. We must stop it before it becomes too late.

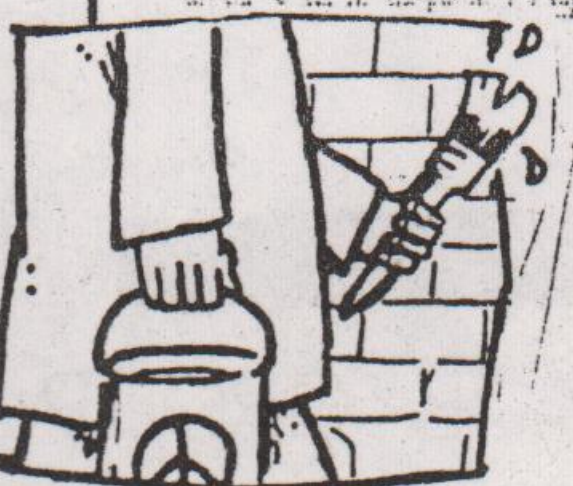
WELFARE



NOT

WARFARE

THEY GIVE YOU A FOUR MINUTE WARNING
- WE'RE TELLING YOU NOW -



SPECIAL FEATURE

FACE TO FACE... VALERY GRISHENKO and FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

Interview with VALERY GRISHENKO, Deputy Director of the Society for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Other Countries in MINSK, U.S.S.R.

FFPG We don't often have a chance here in Britain to speak to Russians. Can I begin by asking you some general questions about Soviet attitudes?

First, the INF deal—for us in Britain it seems like a significant step along the road to peace. How do normal Soviet People see it?

VALERY I am not a politician. I can only tell you my personal opinion. People in the USSR welcomed the agreement, but feel it must be seen as a first step. We don't like there to be missiles in other countries under US domination. The US and the USSR are the leaders of two blocs. But not everything that happens should depend on those two leading countries. If the agreement isn't supported, nothing good will come of it. The deal hasn't stopped the underlying dangerous processes of the arms race, and we shall continue to struggle for full disarmament, and particularly against Star Wars. Star Wars is very dangerous. We could get rid of all the nuclear weapons in the world but if there were still weapons in the cosmos, we should have achieved nothing. We want people to do their best to scrap nuclear weapons. The INF agreement may be a good example. Perhaps its real significance is that it represents a revolution of attitudes; of ideology.

FFPG Do people in Russia really trust Ronald Reagan?



VALERY The first point is that it is wrong to just talk about Ronald Reagan. He is just one man. We must deal with whole systems, whole countries. Secondly, I say that it is like me talking to you now. There must be trust. I must trust that you will write down truthfully what I say in your newspaper. It is the same with treaties and negotiations. There must be trust.

FFPG The USSR made far more concessions in the INF treaty than the US. You scrapped many more of your missiles. There are fears in the British peace movement that the US and NATO will continue to re-arm. (We have heard rumours that Cruise will be brought back in as air-launched systems.) If that's true, are the Soviets prepared to carry on making concessions, or will the USSR go back to trying to achieve "parity".

VALERY We don't want to disbelieve or mistrust. If we cheat, they will cheat. If we think they are cheats, they will think we are cheats. This is the only way we can carry on. We want to believe.

FFPG Can we move away from questions of peace now and talk about the reforms in the USSR? There has been much interest here about what is happening. Will Gorbachev carry on or will he be stopped?

VALERY No one can stop these reforms. All Soviet people wanted them to happen. Gorbachev is the leader who started perestroika (reform), but Gorbachev is not the only one who makes it possible. He rules with the help of the people.

CONTINUED... ☆ SPECIAL FEATURE ☆

FACE TO FACE... VALERY GRISHENKO and FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

There is no political opposition. There are people who want perestroika and know how it works, and there are people who want it and don't know how it works. Sure, there are even some who don't want perestroika. Who are they? They are people who live well. But not a real political opposition.

FFPG There is much support among people in Britain for the reforms, because they see them as progress. But might not the reforms to the Soviet economy lead to unemployment?

VALERY Our five-year plan includes 500,000 new jobs, and there are 15,000 new workers. Why? After the second world war, many people were killed, and so many children weren't born, and their children weren't born and so on. It is like a wave of labour shortage. It is impossible for us to have unemployed people.

FFPG The reforms might have to tackle the question of food subsidies, which now I think are equivalent to one month's wages per worker. If the reforms take away the subsidies, will we see another Poland?

VALERY When a horse runs, it must not change direction too quickly, or it will fall down. Changes will be in the general direction of helping people. There is much open discussion (glasnost) of pricing policy. The Commission of the Supreme Soviets has asked for suggestions, and there are many letters about this printed in the newspapers.

FFPG Changing the subject once again, I'd like to now ask about Afghanistan. On the news here, we have heard that the Soviets are planning to withdraw from Afghanistan. How has the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, and this expected withdrawal, been viewed in the USSR?

VALERY Public opinion does not differ from government policy, because it corresponds to the interests of Afghan people. Our task is to help them stop the war. We send money, food, specialists....you mustn't think we only send troops. That is only a small part of our friendship relations with the Afghan people. We will naturally be glad when our children don't die in Afghanistan. You all seem to me to be internationalists. So are we. We try to help other countries and fulfill our international duties.

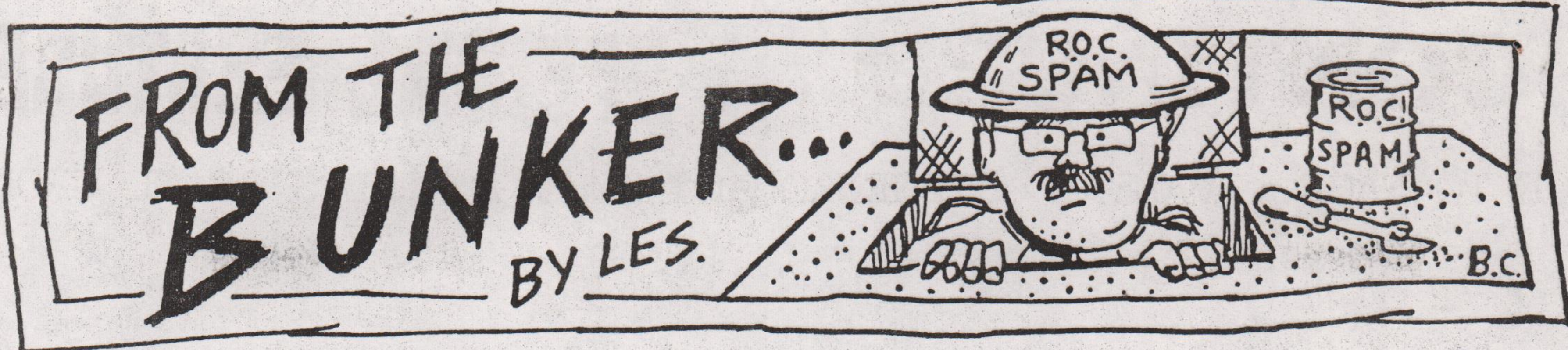
FFPG The reason I ask is that the Soviet presence is seen here as being very similar to Vietnam. When the US left Vietnam, the North Vietnamese Army united the country. Do you think a Soviet withdrawal will leave the Afghan government or the rebels in charge?

VALERY I think the Government will survive. They gave Afghan people rights, they help the majority of the people. Every day they are gaining popular support.



FACE TO FACE... VALERY GRISHENKO and FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

FACE TO FACE



A few months ago the American writer, Gore Vidal, was interviewed on television and gave a chilling account of the state of his country. He saw a republic that had become a global empire, a modern Roman Empire, but with unparalleled power and awesome nuclear might. He saw a violent, decadent empire, destroying both itself and the world it sought to control and subjugate. Vidal's message was clear—if the Empire was not abandoned, it would probably destroy the world.

Vidal located the roots of the American empire at the beginning of this century, connecting it with the emergence of a new kind of newspaper, under Randolph Hearst, that did not report news but manipulated and shaped public opinion. (Thatcher's newspapers have learned their lessons well.) But the Empire really took off at the end of the second World War, when President Truman dropped the first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Vidal dismisses claims that these ruthless nuclear bombings of civilians were "necessary" as being rubbish—the real target was Stalin's Russia. Truman wanted to condition people to see Russia as the evil empire, on the brink of wiping out freedom in the West. This too was an outrageous and absurd lie—Russia was a war-ruined country, with 20 million war dead and an army needing to resort to horses to move its heavy artillery—but that did not matter because the "Russians are coming" became the American excuse to begin to make an empire of the world, and that has been the story since 1945.

The only hope for the future lay in Americans recovering their sanity and morality and abandoning the obsession with empire, and in the controlled countries refusing to remain part of the destructive American Empire.

A few days ago a British writer, Martin Amis, threw more light on the dangers posed by the American nuclear empire, and in particular Reagan's "Star Wars" or S.D.I. plans. As Amis noted, every objective analysis showed that Star Wars could not work, was an impossible, sick dream. But the point was that it had emerged at the same time as Reagan had launched a fresh wave of attacks on the U.S.S.R. as the evil empire, and also launched the biggest, costliest military build-up in world history.

During this build-up Reagan has foreclosed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and broken out of the SALT II agreement: and S.D.I.

would break the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the Outer Space Treaty and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

The message is chillingly clear—STAR WARS does not pave the way for significant arms control, as claimed, but precludes it. It points to more not less, as space is filled with light speed weapons that make a pre-emptive first strike all the more likely, exposing what has always been the terrible flaw in deterrence theory. In Amis's words: "If the nuclear moment ever approached, there would never be any point in going second". A first strike would defeat S.D.I.: STAR WARS makes nuclear conflict closer.

America is sticking with STAR WARS—that is the real legacy of Reagan's presidency and the INF agreement is insignificant in comparison. Reagan's nuclear planners always knew the Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe were of no military significance. The STAR WARS obsession brings nuclear apocalypse closer and, like Gore Vidal, Amis reminds us of Reagan's association with the right-wing American Christians' belief in the "reality" of apocalypse of Revelation and Ezekiel, when the evil will perish and the good prevail!!

Amis and Vidal give a dire warning

in their accounts of apocalyptic insanity in a deadly global nuclear empire. Far from heeding that warning the British government has just given an "honorary knighthood" to Caspar Weinberger, former U.S. defence Secretary, the man who oversaw the unparalleled military build-up in the 1980's. Thatcher's government has made Britain no more than a militarised outpost of the American Empire, to be sacrificed if and when necessary, the most obedient member of America's NATO club. We remain attached to the apocalypse empire because Thatcher has bribed and conditioned a large enough minority to stay in power. She controls most of the media, and the British people are told to applaud the insignificant INF treaty while STAR WARS plans continue and treaties are broken at will.

Thatcher is in power: but no mainstream political party challenges Britain's subjection to America as one of the U.S. Empire's NATO pawns. But some people—like Vidal and Amis—can still see and speak the truth—BRITAIN'S FIRST STEP TOWARDS PEACE, AWAY FROM THE NUCLEAR NIGHTMARE, IS TO LEAVE THE AMERICAN NUCLEAR EMPIRE AND ITS MILITARY CENTRE, NATO.

The British people have been no less totally conditioned since 1945. That truth may frighten many people. Others will say the people "are not ready" to break free of the U.S. and NATO, that "the time is not right". But we should know by now that the nuclear state will never be ready for peace, that there will never be a right time. And if we are not ready for peace, and the truth, then does it mean that we are ready for STAR WARS, that we are ready for the nuclear Armageddon? Or do we really believe, even after all these years of lies, that the unleashed nuclear weapons will only kill the "commies"

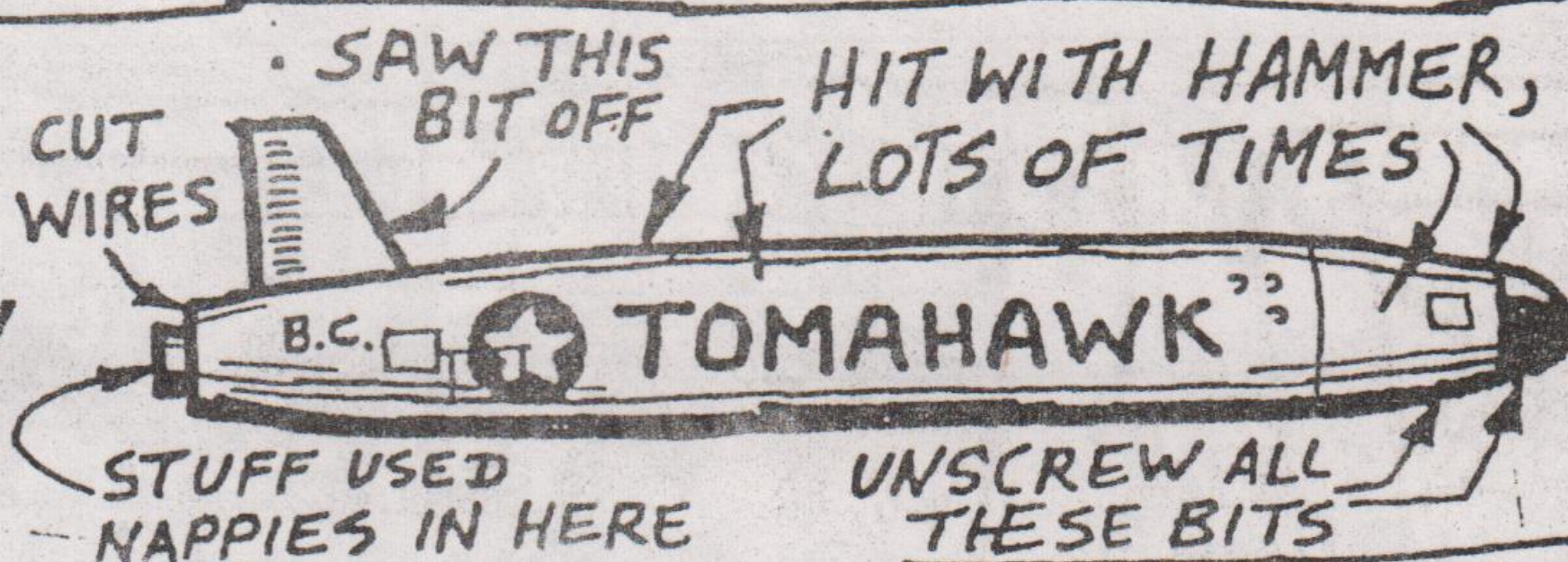
Vidal was amazed that Britain had allowed itself to be swallowed up by this world-greedy empire, to become no more or less than a militarised U.S. "aircraft carrier". The Empire itself, he said, had, like all empires, destroyed freedom and self-development wherever it could. And the continuing American obsession with controlling the world, reflected in the astronomical military budget, was crippling the country economically, socially and morally, and had already made the biggest debtor nation in world history. It had allowed itself to become controlled by a president who shared the right-wing fanatical "christian" view that the world was heading towards a final conflict, literally a nuclear apocalypse, between the forces of "good" (America) and "evil" (Russia).

Les Parsons. February, 1988

THE APOCALYPSE EMPIRE

DOUBLE-UP FOR FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

GET UP STAND UP!



Exclusive!! FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP SOARS!
QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE! MAGGIE CLAIMS "I'M NOT WORRIED".
CRISIS LOOMS FOR GOVERNMENT.

The membership of Forest Fields Peace Group has shot up, practically overnight, by 100%. The group had numbered about 150 members for several years, and had recently seen a pleasing, but extremely modest, trickle of new members joining the group.

However in April of this year, the situation changed dramatically, when membership of the group shot up to 300! It is widely believed that FFPG's April DOUBLE-UP CAMPAIGN was responsible for the membership boost. Every member was asked to recruit one other person who was already sympathetic to the aims of the group, but had not got around to joining. Every single member consequently went out and asked friends, neighbours, family, work-mates to join the group,.....with amazing results.

The Conservative government is naturally concerned about this remarkable situation. Privately, senior Tory figures have said that they confidently expected the peace movement to fade away over the late '80s. None of them were prepared to comment officially, but it is understood that discussions have taken place at Cabinet level in an attempt to find a way of stemming the tide of dissent.

Mrs. Thatcher has long been particularly concerned about the dangerous influence of Forest Fields Peace Group. She was once heard to remark:- "As long as organisations like that continue to exist, and to campaign against our policies, we shall never have a completely free-hand. We shall always be looking over our shoulders. They must be stopped."

The news of the membership increase for FFPG is bound to send a shiver down the Prime Minister's spine.

DOUBLE-UP FOR FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

Please ask a friend, or a member of your family, to join FFPG this month. Just give a few minutes of your time to talk to them, and give them this membership application for. The issues are still just as clear as they ever were. We are living on the brink of absolute destruction. The government insists on "modernising" (sick) it's mass slaughter machinery. We have to keep on the struggle. We mustn't give up now. Please get a friend to join us, now.

DOUBLE-UP FOR FFPG!!

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE.....

Yes. I would like to join Forest Fields Peace Group. I enclose £.....

(payable to FFPG)

£1 unwaged

£2 waged NCND member

£3 waged non-NCND member

Please return to Doreen Gower, 38 Austen Avenue, Forest Fields, Nottingham.



THURSDAY APRIL 21ST

FFPG Business Meeting
69 Wiverton Road
7:30 pm

THURSDAY APRIL 28TH

Mayday '88 night of acoustic and solo music
with a transcontinental line-up

FRIDAY APRIL 29TH

Mayday '88 Urban Music International

SATURDAY APRIL 30TH

Mayday '88 "Free University"...an afternoon of
free workshops where groups will discuss their
experiences of self-determination

SATURDAY NIGHT/SUNDAY MORNING.....Mayday '88 all-nighter

SUNDAY--MAYDAY AFTERNOON.....Mayday '88 Open Air Picnic

MONDAY MAY 9TH

FFPG Discussion Meeting
(Subject and Speaker to be announced)
69 Wiverton Road
7:30 pm

THURSDAY MAY 19TH

FFPG Business Meeting
69 Wiverton Road
7:30 pm

FOREST FIELDS PEACE GROUP

JOIN US

I would like to join the Forest Fields
Peace Group.

I enclose my membership fee of
£1.00 unwaged
£2.00 waged NCND member
£3.00 waged non-NCND member

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....TEL.....

Please make all cheques/postal orders
payable to Forest Fields Peace Group.
Return this form to the address below.

BOX 5

69, WIVERTON ROAD

FOREST FIELDS



708459

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

FOREST FIELD PEACE GROUP IS A
NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP OPEN TO EVERYBODY IN
THE FOREST FIELDS AND HYSON GREEN AREAS
OF NOTTINGHAM, AND TO ALL OTHERS WHO
SHARE THE GROUPS' AIMS. THEY ARE-

1. TO OPPOSE NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AND ALL
OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.
2. TO WORK FOR UNILATERAL NUCLEAR DIS-
ARMAMENT IN BRITAIN.
3. TO SUPPORT CND AND ALL OTHER GROUPS
ACTIVE IN THE STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE A
NUCLEAR WEAPONS-FREE AND PEACEFUL
WORLD.
4. TO REJECT THE DANGEROUS MILITARIST
POLICIES OF BOTH AMERICA AND RUSSIA,
AND WORK FOR A NON-NUCLEAR BRITISH
DEFENCE POLICY, OUTSIDE NATO.
5. TO SUPPORT ALL NON-VIOLENT PROTEST,
INCLUDING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, IN THE
BELIEF THAT THE THREAT TO USE NUCLEAR
WEAPONS IS BOTH IMMORAL AND ILLEGAL.