

BRIAN MARTIN

# Uprooting War

FREEDOM PRESS



# **UPROOTING WAR**



# UPROOTING WAR

Brian Martin

London  
Freedom Press  
1984



First published in 1984 by  
Freedom Press  
in Angel Alley  
84b Whitechapel High Street  
London E1

© Brian Martin and  
Freedom Press

ISBN 0 900384 26 3

Printed by  
Aldgate Press  
in Angel Alley  
84b Whitechapel High Street  
London E1

## Contents

*Acknowledgements, vi*

*Introduction, vii*

- 1** Limitations of standard antiwar methods, *1*
  - 2** Principles for antiwar strategies, *12*
  - 3** Social defence, *21*
  - 4** Peace conversion, *51*
  - 5** Self-management, *63*
  - 6** Grassroots mobilisation, *86*
  - 7** The individual, *98*
  - 8** The state, *112*
  - 9** Bureaucracy, *135*
  - 10** The administrative class, *161*
  - 11** The military, *184*
  - 12** Patriarchy, *195*
  - 13** State socialism, *209*
  - 14** Other factors, *227*
  - 15** Nuclear extinction?, *238*
  - 16** Nuclear war: prevention by  
political preparation, *258*
- Terminology, 272*
- References, 276*
- Index, 278*

## Acknowledgements

This book would not have been conceivable or possible without the experience, insight and support provided by many activists over the years, especially members of Canberra Peacemakers and Friends of the Earth (Canberra).

Many of the ideas presented here were raised in or stimulated by books and articles I have read or conversations with researchers and activists, and detailed attribution is impossible.

Quite a number of people read portions of the draft of the book and offered useful comments. Comments on individual chapters or specific points were given by Godfrey Boyle, Barbara Clark, Hugh DeWitt, Mark Diesendorf, Dave Elliott, Fred Emery, Ulf Norenus, Meredith Petronella, Hans Sinn and Trevor Williams. Extensive comments on several or all of the chapter drafts were provided by Phil Anderson, Cheryl Hannah, Janet Hunt, Val Plumwood, Rosemary Walters, Ian Watson and John Zube. It should go without saying that none of these people necessarily agree with all my views.

The editors of *Social Alternatives*, *Journal of Peace Research* and *Bulletin of Peace Proposals* kindly gave their permission to use material of mine previously published in their journals. I greatly thank Robert Griew, Janet Hunt and Rosemary Walters for their contributions in chapter 7.

---

## Introduction

---

War is one of the major social and political problems facing humans. Everyone from school students to generals agrees that war is horrible. That is not the issue. The question is, what should be done about it?

Governments prepare for war, and also negotiate about how to prevent it. But disarmament negotiations have been a continuing failure for many decades. The reason is that a permanent end to the threat of war is not compatible with the state system. States are based on centralised power, especially centralised control over the use of organised violence which is claimed to be legitimate. It is futile to appeal to state elites as a primary avenue for ending war, since their actions and attitudes are premised on the continuation of the state system.

This book is based on the assumption that action to end war must come from individuals, small groups and local communities, in short from the grassroots. Grassroots action against war has a long and inspiring history of protests, campaigns and initiatives. Unfortunately, most of this activity has had little impact on military races because it has relied on influencing elites, which is the least promising avenue for such efforts. Moreover, many antiwar actions have been symbolic protests with little connection with a long-term strategy to end war. And the protests are mainly against symptoms of the problem, such as nuclear weapons, rather than directly tackling the roots of modern war.

What are the roots of war? They are not the weapons or the soldiers or the political or military elites. Take these away and new ones would soon take their places. The roots of war are the institutions which maintain centralised political and economic power, inequality and privilege, and monopolies over organised violence to protect power and privilege. Some of the key roots of war are the state system, bureaucracy, the military and patriarchy.

When I refer to war, I refer to 'modern war': the organised violence of professional military forces on behalf of states. 'War' is not a timeless and unchanging category: it reflects historical and institutional conditions, such as the prevailing forms of technology and the gender division of labour. In addressing the modern war system it is necessary to concentrate on the contemporary institutions most implicated in it.

Most antiwar campaigns have not focussed on changing such institutions. The state system, for example, is usually seen as an inevitable part of the

social and political landscape, rather than being addressed as a dangerous institution in need of replacement.

To tackle such pervasive and entrenched institutions as bureaucracy and the state, a strategy is needed. This requires an idea of what the major problems are, of what sort of alternatives are worth working towards, and of methods to challenge the existing institutions and build alternative ones. A grassroots strategy requires in addition an understanding by the people involved of how long-term goals are connected with their day-to-day activities. My focus here is on strategy: not on why things should be changed or on how they should be changed, but on how to develop programmes of action for changing them. Little is included here on the horrors of war, the burden of military spending, the desirability of disarmament or the virtues of nonviolent human interaction. Rather, my focus is on what individuals and groups can do to help transform the institutions underlying war.

Chapter 1 outlines some of the weaknesses of the usual ways of tackling the problem of war. The purpose of this critique is to show the need for other ways to tackle the problem of war. In chapter 2 some of the principles underlying a grassroots strategy against war are presented, including nonviolence, participation and changing structures as well as individuals. Chapters 3 to 5 treat three key components in a grassroots strategy against war: social defence, peace conversion and self-management. Social defence provides a nonviolent, grassroots alternative to military defence. Peace conversion is the process of transforming war-oriented social structures. And self-managing political and economic structures are necessary as a basis for a world without war. As well as describing these components, I outline how they can form the basis for campaigns.

Chapter 6 treats a key area in grassroots action: organisation and mobilisation. How are people to be brought together and motivated to take action for structural change in society? In chapter 7 several individuals describe their personal relationship with social action campaigns.

Chapters 8 to 14 deal with strategies for challenging and replacing some of the key institutions underlying war, with particular focus on the state, bureaucracy, the administrative class, the military, patriarchy and state socialism. These key institutions are interconnected in many ways: for example, bureaucracy is a basic building block of the state. Likewise, campaigns against these institutions are interconnected, and I emphasise the role of social defence, peace conversion and self-management as well as other approaches.

In looking at institutions such as bureaucracy or patriarchy, I focus mainly on their role in the war system. Examination of other aspects of these institutions would be important in considering different social problems, such as the alienation of workers and the oppression of women

within the family, which are not my main concern here. Also, my emphasis on particular institutions, especially the state, is due to their central importance in the war system. In dealing with different social problems, other institutions would deserve more attention, such as the role of capitalism in creating poverty in the Third World.

Finally, chapters 15 and 16 treat a controversial area: antiwar strategy during and after a nuclear war. One implication of a long-term strategy built around institutional change is that it cannot be guaranteed of success before a major war breaks out. Neither can any other strategy! To be a viable strategy, postwar problems need to be considered. This has been resolutely avoided by antiwar activists, and indeed is one reason for the lack of strategic thinking along the lines of institutional change.

At the end of the book are some comments on my choice and use of terms — such as ‘strategy’ and ‘war’ — and also selected references with annotations.

It is a common view among those who support fundamental social change from the grassroots that such change cannot or should not be planned in any detail, but rather should be left to those who are creating the change. For example, Kirkpatrick Sale in his mammoth book *Human Scale* gives endless examples of the hazards of bigness and centralisation in every realm of society and nature. But he openly refuses to give any suggestions about how to get from present society to society on a human scale, arguing that this would pre-empt the actual change. I disagree with this stance. Without detailed ideas of methods and alternatives, most people will rely on the models with which they are most familiar, such as existing large-scale bureaucracies, decisions by elites and advice from experts. Presenting ideas for how social change might be achieved does not necessarily pre-empt local initiatives. The result instead can be to stimulate local initiative and foster widespread discussion of strategy and action. After all, ideas do not cause social change. Rather, social change is caused by people who can use the ideas, adapt them or reject them, and take action.

The usual procedure in studies of social problems is to devote most space to analysing what is wrong and to tack a few conclusions about ‘what to do’ at the end. I have partly reversed this emphasis and ordering. I treat the issue of what to do about the roots of war in the early chapters — especially 3 to 7 — and only afterwards look in detail at the roots of war themselves, in chapters 8 to 14. There is a logic to this: working out the general methods and goals beforehand allows the analysis of institutions and sources of opposition to be undertaken with a specific purpose in mind, namely to provide insights for pursuing a certain type of social transformation.

In collecting ideas and experiences relevant to grassroots strategy for uprooting the institutional underpinnings of war, I have found many strengths but also many weaknesses and gaps. There is an enormous amount of academic knowledge about bureaucracy and the state, for example, but precious little about alternatives, and next to nothing about strategies. Some of the gaps in both academic and activist understanding are quite amazing, and reflect the lack of ongoing interaction between the theory and practice. This is also a consequence of lack of any widespread thinking about grassroots strategies. I have tried to emphasise not only positive alternatives and promising campaigns but also weaknesses and omissions, of which there are many. The existence of such weaknesses and gaps need not be a source of depression. Activists are bound to encounter them if they are genuinely moving ahead rather than just repeating old campaigns.

My main focus is on grassroots strategy for activists in liberal democratic societies, where there are opportunities for significant open social action without immediate government repression. Many of the examples and many of the research studies drawn upon come from English-speaking countries, especially Australia, Britain and the United States.

In several chapters I give examples from the experiences of groups in which I have been involved. This is not because the experiences of these groups are necessarily significant in themselves, but rather because I can be more confident about drawing lessons from the experiences, and in particular about spelling out weaknesses and failures. It is easy to go astray in reading accounts of experiences elsewhere, which are often made to sound more promising or successful than the reality. For example, one of the most inspiring books about locally controlled institutions is *Neighborhood Power* by David Morris and Karl Hess, which tells about the Adams-Morgan neighbourhood in Washington DC. Having read their book, I was interested to read Karl Hess's later book *Community Technology*, which discusses further developments in Adams-Morgan. But then I read a very critical review of *Community Technology* written by David Morris presenting an entirely different view on the matter. Given conflicting accounts, it would be easy to accept uncritically the interpretation that accords with one's preconceived views.

The same problem applies even more acutely to events in different cultures, such as the Chinese Cultural Revolution which has been glorified and condemned, usually according to the preconceptions of the observer. This problem cannot be overcome entirely. I have tried to maintain both a degree of openness and a degree of scepticism.

Another reason for including examples, especially ones in which I have been personally involved, is to give a better idea of the sort of experiences on which my generalisations are based. Grand generalisations and over-



arching theoretical frameworks often owe a lot to the necessarily limited and individual experiences of the generaliser or theorist. I prefer to expose at least some of the experiences underlying my own interpretation of social reality.

Finally, with examples from personal experience I have tried to bridge some of the gap between long-term strategies and the day-to-day efforts by individuals and groups. Until grand theory and everyday practice meet, neither is likely to be very successful.





---

## Limitations of standard antiwar methods

---

Over the centuries many methods have been used to prevent or oppose war or reduce its severity. A few examples of these methods are the establishment of powerful military forces to deter or defend against attack, negotiations between governments, protests by community groups against particular weapons systems such as nuclear weapons, and refusal by individuals to be involved in any military-related activity. To what extent do methods such as these merely treat symptoms of the war system, and to what extent do they contribute towards eliminating the institutional underpinnings of war?

The answer to this question of course depends on an analysis of the war system. This task I leave for later chapters. For now I take the war system to be an interlinking set of institutions including the state system, bureaucracy, military forces and patriarchy, among others. The symptoms of the war system include particular weapons systems such as neutron bombs and individual elites such as the heads of the governments of the Soviet Union and the United States.

I discuss here five approaches to the problem of war: military defence, social revolution, convincing elites, influencing elites via public pressure, and symbolic nonviolent action. Choosing only five approaches simplifies the actual diversity of thought and action on the issue. My aim is not to survey all antiwar methods, but to critically examine some standard approaches with an eye towards their limitations in the task of confronting the roots as well as the symptoms of the war system.

Although my comments here on these methods are mostly unfavourable, that does not mean the methods are useless. Applying pressure to elites, for example, may not be enough to end war, but it can still be a useful part of an antiwar strategy. Since many people have used and promoted these methods, my aim is to present a bit of the other side of the picture. Pointing out the inadequacies as well as the strengths of standard methods is essential in building a sound strategy against war. The criticisms here also provide a rationale for the grassroots strategy outlined in later chapters.

### Military defence

Military defence can provide a deterrent against the outbreak of war. But military defence provides absolutely no basis for eliminating the war

## 2 *Uprooting war*

system, and indeed helps to perpetuate it. Among those who argue the need for military defence, there is no attention to strategies for eliminating war permanently. Essentially, war is seen to be an inevitable, if undesirable, feature of human society. War is seen to be a lesser evil compared to weakening national sovereignty, or compared to allowing the dominance of socialism, capitalism or some other real or imagined enemy or evil.

Who are those who accept military defence without fundamental questioning? Military planners, of course, but also just about everyone else. Large numbers of those in 'antiwar movements' do not question military defence in any fundamental way. Some thinkers in peace movements favour a reduced number of nuclear weapons: 'minimum deterrence'. Even among those who want to eliminate nuclear weapons entirely, there is widespread, though usually unstated, support for conventional military defence.

### **Revolution first**

Some revolutionary groups, such as some Trotskyist parties in Western countries, consider that abolition of war is something that will happen after 'the revolution'. But even the victory of revolutionary parties in countries throughout the world would be no guarantee of a world without war. Every variety of state socialism so far, including the Soviet, Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese models, has resulted in an increased role for the military. Military confrontations, occupations and wars between socialist states — Soviet Union-Hungary, Soviet Union-China, Soviet Union-Czechoslovakia, China-Vietnam, etc. — are quite common. The proponents of socialist revolution led by vanguard parties have no programme for abolishing war. Far from achieving this end, their revolutionary success would more likely mean an even greater militarisation of society.

Although Marx, and particularly Engels, took a keen interest in military matters, they did not seriously address the problem of eliminating war. Marxist theorists since then have continued to avoid this topic. Marxists focus on class relations — assessing classes by the relation of social groups to the economic mode of production — as the source of the major problems in society. When class dynamics are not the primary driving force behind a particular social problem — and this is the case for sexism, racism and environmental degradation as well as war — those with a strict class analysis perspective are hard pressed to say something useful about the subject, much less formulate a strategy for eliminating it.

For example, by focussing on the role of the economic mode of production, there is a downgrading of the role of the state as an institution in its own right rather than just a tool of the capitalist class or the site for class struggle. This downgrading is related to the failure of basic assumptions

in the Marxist perspective for socialist revolution, such as the assumptions of the international character of the capitalist working class and of the withering away of the state after socialist revolution. Rather than exhibiting transnational solidarity, working class groups in particular countries have more often supported the policies of their own state, especially military policy. And rather than socialist revolution and the abolition of capitalist ownership being followed by the withering away of the state, the power of the state — and especially of the military — has become even greater under state socialism.

Despite its limitations, class analysis does focus on key structures in society and fosters thinking in terms of roots rather than symptoms of social problems. By contrast, liberal theorists and activists are less likely to think or act in terms of the dynamics of fundamental social, political and economic structures, and are more likely to see possibilities for reforming existing structures. This latter focus leads to the following methods for influencing elites.

### **Convincing elites**

National political, economic and military elites are nominally in control of the processes that lead to war, such as military spending, development of military technology, and foreign policy. Could these elites be converted by logical or moral argument to the view that it would be in the interests of the people as a whole for governments to simultaneously reduce military spending, expand the role of international law and settle disagreements by nonmilitary means? This is the hope of many who have worked inside and outside governments to restrain military races. To illustrate this I will use one example out of many, the arguments of William Epstein.

Epstein in his 1976 book *The Last Chance* gives a comprehensive account of the various treaties, conferences and other official steps towards nuclear disarmament. Given the actual course of the continuing arms race, such an account cannot provide much cause for optimism, and Epstein is indeed rather pessimistic. His only hope, the 'last chance' out of the predicament of the nuclear peril, lies with two priorities: improving and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and creating a moral and political climate in the world which would eliminate the need for nuclear weapons.

For Epstein the point of strengthening NPT is to gain some time to cope with the problem of the spread of nuclear weapons to more and more states. The trouble with Epstein's approach here is that there is little hope that the NPT as a legal document will stop this proliferation of nuclear weapons without a change at the same time in the institutional pressures promoting proliferation, such as the power and prestige enjoyed by state elites in

countries acquiring nuclear weapons and the profits to be made in exporting nuclear power technology. Even if proliferation could be slowed or halted, the nuclear arms race between the superpowers (the governments of the United States and of the Soviet Union) would remain as a basic problem.

This leads to Epstein's second priority, creating a world climate which would remove the desire by governments for nuclear weapons. This would take place, according to Epstein, on three fronts: arms control and disarmament, a more equitable distribution of the world's wealth and a strengthened world organisation. These are admirable goals, but Epstein does not outline how they will come about, except to imply that elites will pursue them because of the urgent necessity to avoid nuclear war. But the history of the nuclear arms race demonstrates the irrelevance of arguments based solely on welfare, and Epstein's own account illustrates the virtual futility of achieving fundamental changes through negotiation. Epstein says of disarmament, "The two superpowers must, of course, lead the way". But what will make them do this? Epstein relies on the power of knowledge and logic to convince elites of the folly of their government's policies. But this does not come to grips with the institutional forces promoting the nuclear arms race, not to mention non-nuclear arms races.

The main public forum where national elites deal with the problem of war goes under the term 'negotiations'. The history of disarmament negotiations is a record of one failure after another. Why do these negotiations fail? Johan Galtung has given a whole list of answers, including the impossibility of attaining comprehensive military balance when the forces on either side are not identical in type and vulnerability, the catch-up mentality in military blocs and the power motive in national security bureaucracies. Furthermore, Galtung argues that disarmament negotiations actually perpetuate the arms races, by keeping the management of arms buildups under control of the strongest military powers, by providing opportunities for eavesdropping at the venue of the negotiations, and by providing an illusion of the possibility of disarmament which dampens public concern.

So much for leaving the problem to the elites! The fundamental difficulty with the approach of convincing the elites is that the power, privilege and position of national elites depends on the very institutional forces which promote war. State elites are continually pressured by the institutional environment in which they work; this environment shapes their perceptions and, more importantly, constrains their actions.

The elites are entirely well-intentioned. They are just as concerned about war and its prevention as anyone. It is just that, due to their position in society, they see the problems and solutions differently.

The difficulty lies not in the elites themselves but in the institutions

in which they operate. For example, if a capitalist were convinced to produce goods for social use rather than profit, there is a good chance the company would fail. The good intentions would merely lead to personal catastrophe rather than a change in the system. The problems due to capitalism will not be overcome by convincing capitalists to behave differently. Rather, the focus must be challenging and altering the patterns of social interaction on which capitalism is based, such as the position of the worker as hired labour power rather than equal co-producer.

Similarly, government and military elites from their position see mainly the dangers of disarmament such as instability, aggression and war. Furthermore, they are often relatively powerless – and feel powerless – to take steps which diverge radically from standard policies. Those who dissent on fundamental matters know they will lose their influence on the inside. For these reasons, the approach of influencing elites through logical argument is by itself quite insufficient for dealing with the problem of war.

### **Influencing elites via public pressure**

Rather than convincing elites of the logical or moral importance of disarmament – to which most of them give lip service anyway – a more promising approach is to use the force of ‘public opinion’ to influence elites. This approach recognises that it is political pressure rather than logical argument that influences the behaviour of elites.

To illustrate my argument here, I refer to some works by Richard Barnet, who has made some of the best analyses of arms races and their institutional aspects. He presents a masterly explanation of the massive spending on war preparations, of the operations of the military-industrial complex and of the psychology and bureaucratic dynamics of the national security managers. But when he comes to say what to do about the situation he has so brilliantly explained, his proposals are disappointing.

It is probably unfair to Barnet to expect from him a full-blown and watertight strategy, since he has other aims in his writing. But it is precisely because he goes further towards spelling out a strategy based on influencing elites via public pressure that an analysis of his prescriptions is illuminating. Most other analysts deal even less with strategy.

In his book *The Roots of War*, Barnet lists three main roots for the case of the United States, and suggests how they might be eliminated. His first root is the military bureaucracy, which he says should be shrunk in size and reorientated towards healing rather than killing, controlled much more by the US Congress, and structurally changed to introduce the principle of personal responsibility for official acts. These are all worthy goals, but how are they to be achieved? Barnet gives no hint. He implies



that the logic of the case along with knowledge will be the basis for change.

Barnet's second main root of war is the state capitalist economy and its dependence on profits and growth, especially from overseas investments. Barnet notes the need for a shift in government expenditure away from the military and from private goods towards health, education, transportation and the environment. He suggests that such changes might be possible under some modified form of private ownership or mixed economy, but gives no idea of how this would come about.

The third main root of war according to Barnet is the ease with which the public is manipulated on national security issues. He sees a need to awaken and express "the deep but inarticulate aspirations for peace of the American people", which if achieved would lead to support for a political party with a foreign policy of peace. Once again, Barnet presents no plan for how this would come about. The implication is that with knowledge, the people would become aware of the necessity for change, which would provide support for the political victory of a party with an antiwar platform.

In an earlier book *The Economy of Death*, Barnet spells out in more detail what he sees as the role of various groups in the community in opposing war. Here are some of his suggestions:

- \* students: do research on the military-industrial complex; present seminars.
- \* leading scientists and technologists: undertake a critical education campaign about national security.
- \* business leaders: look for profits in nonmilitary production.
- \* members of Congress: promote moves away from militarism.
- \* clergy: explore the psychology of violence with congregations.
- \* labour unions: undertake an educational campaign about war spending and personal security.
- \* citizens: become personally educated about military spending and the military-industrial complex; put pressure on the US Congress; work to establish antiwar stands by local political organisations; undertake door-to-door educational campaigns; write to the Pentagon demanding the truth.

The strategy behind these suggestions seems to be that widespread public concern and pressure will influence elites to take serious steps to dismantle the war system. Is this sound strategy? There are two parts to it. First is the problem of creating antiwar public opinion, and second the problem of using this concern to influence elites.

The first problem is that of creating antiwar public opinion. In a way, the job of convincing people about the dangers of war is already complete. Most people agree that war is a horrible thing. But going from there to questioning the *necessity* of war and preparations for it is a big step. The

point of promoting an 'antiwar public opinion' is to discredit assumptions about the necessity or inevitability of war and the military and thereby undermine the legitimacy of arguments and groups supporting the war system.

By Barnett's own analysis, the changing of public opinion about arms races is a difficult task in the face of massive bureaucratic control over information and over creation of perceptions about public policy, in the face of a media captive to state and corporate interests and in the face of massive handouts to military contractors. For most of the time, the bulk of the populace accepts the military as necessary to prevent foreign domination, communism, anarchy or some other danger. Even those who are sympathetic to the aim of controlling the war bureaucracies usually feel powerless to bring about any change.

Assume that these obstacles are overcome and that public outcry over war preparations reaches deafening levels. This occasionally happens, as in the early 1980s. What next? Does this influence policy-making elites?

There are several ways in which elites can act to dampen crescendos of public concern over war. One way is just by doing nothing, by carrying on as usual. This is the usual procedure. Surges of public concern based on outrage are easily becalmed. The solid core of committed people in a social movement must be quite substantial, well motivated and ready for long term struggle, otherwise business-as-usual policies by governments will outlast the periodic waves of public concern.

Another way in which elites dampen social movements is by entering government-to-government negotiations. Negotiations give the appearance of government concern and action, and a focus on them can drain social concern. Prior to the 1982 United Nations Second Special Session on Disarmament, many antiwar groups around the world put enormous effort into focussing attention and citizen concern on the conference, which turned out to be a dismal failure.

In terms of demobilising public concern, even more effective than negotiating failures are minor negotiating *successes*. The treaty in 1963 which banned tests of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere was a major contributing factor to the decline in public concern over nuclear war which had been heightened since the late 1950s by antiwar activists. The treaty had little impact on the ongoing nuclear arms race, since the nuclear weapons establishments had made ample preparations to continue, and indeed expand, nuclear testing programmes underground.

The election of a reform government is yet another potential dead end for antiwar efforts built around mobilising public opinion. Ralph Miliband in his book *The State in Capitalist Society* argues that reform governments elected in Europe since World War Two almost invariably have served to



dampen and contain the radical social and political demands of the people who elected them. If this applies to such issues as redistributing social wealth and increasing the power of workers vis-a-vis employers, it is even more true in relation to military issues. In many countries the major political parties have virtually indistinguishable policies on military issues. But sometimes a party, typically a social democratic party, will adopt certain antiwar policies when not in government, usually as a result of pressure from a strong antiwar movement with strong influence in the party. But once in government, any such policies which call into question the institutional role of the military are unlikely to be taken seriously.

For example, in December 1972 in Australia, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) was elected to government and as promised immediately abolished conscription and hastened withdrawal of troops from Vietnam. The ALP at that time had as part of its platform opposition to the existence of foreign military bases in Australia. Three United States bases in particular are central to the Australian government's global political alignment and military posture. During the ALP's term of office not a single step was taken towards fundamental re-examination of the bases. For in spite of its important stands and action against conscription and against participation in the Indochina War, the ALP would not take any step threatening the military alliance between the Australian and US governments.

A focus on helping elect a reform government can be very disempowering for social movements. Effort is put into influencing the electoral and parliamentary processes, and activists and supporters come to look to political party elites for bringing about change rather than looking to themselves to build the skills, understanding and alternatives of the social movement at the level of individuals and local groups. After the 1972 ALP victory, the antiwar movement in Australia rapidly collapsed. It had been built mainly on mobilisation of public opinion without any strategy for challenging the institutions underlying war.

Nigel Young in his penetrating book *An Infantile Disorder?* argues that the strategy of the leadership of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) in Britain in the late 1950s and early 1960s, namely to influence the policies of the British Labour Party, was one reason why the antiwar movement of that generation failed to achieve any lasting change. Not only did the Labour Party resist adopting or implementing any policy challenging the military status quo, but the effect on CND was to emphasise political compromise and de-emphasise moral concerns and radical initiatives at the grassroots.

A fourth way in which elites dampen social movements is through engaging in military confrontations and wars. Prior to World War One, widespread public opposition to war was voiced, for example through

petitions and huge demonstrations. This activity was aimed at influencing elites through expression of public concern and raising the possibility of mass resistance in the event of war. But after the war broke out, populations quickly lined up behind their respective governments. The antiwar movement was almost completely destroyed.

The strategy of mobilising public opinion to influence elites to take action against war is thus limited in several fundamental respects. First, it is difficult to develop and maintain a high degree of public concern in the face of the manipulation of public opinion by state bureaucracies and the media. Second, in the face of public pressure, elites can defuse the situation by doing nothing, by entering negotiations, by making mild reforms or by engaging in military confrontations. Finally, a focus on influencing elites channels social activism into appeals to the elites or into electoral activities, thereby diverting efforts from alternative strategies primarily geared to strengthening grassroots initiative and laying the basis for institutional change. The approach of influencing elites via public pressure is therefore inadequate for eliminating the problem of war.

### **Symbolic nonviolent action**

A yet more promising approach to the problem of war is to use nonviolent action to mobilise people against war. This approach goes beyond reliance on public opinion, which is easily manipulated, to the use of nonviolent action not only to testify to others about deep concern, but also to provide meaningful and motivating experiences for those involved in the nonviolent action.

Nonviolent action has a long history. For example, the book *The Power of the People* is an inspiring account of nonviolent action in the United States history, including campaigns against slavery, for women's suffrage and against exploitation of farm workers. Not least among nonviolent campaigns have been those focussed against war, such as anti-conscription campaigns. Although *The Power of the People* does not explicitly pronounce on strategies for facing the problem of war, a clear picture of the advantages of nonviolent action is presented. Nonviolent campaigns expressing opposition to war have included: meetings, talks and other educational efforts, demonstrations and protests, antiwar marches of up to continent length incorporating educational activities, refusal to be conscripted and support for this refusal, hunger strikes, entering nuclear test zones and blocking nuclear vessels, and drenching military files with blood.

These campaigns are in my opinion highly important. The problem is that they have apparently been ineffective in fundamentally altering the institutional forces which promote war. Reading *The Power of the People* and other similar accounts has been for me a troubling as well as an

inspiring experience. While feeling encouraged and proud over the deep concern shown by many social activists over the years, and by the appropriateness of the nonviolent means used to the ends sought, there was also my awareness that these efforts had been far too few and weak to restrain arms races and prevent wars.

A sizeable portion of symbolic nonviolent action is aimed directly at elites, in an attempt to prick the consciences of individual elites. This use of nonviolent action suffers the same defect as other methods of influencing elites: the institutions of the war system are not addressed, but rather reaffirmed through a focus on the decision-making role of those at the top.

More important is the role of demonstrations, vigils and acts of civil disobedience in bringing the issues to the attention of the public. The actions show that a deep moral concern is felt by at least some people, and that public opposition is an available option. But these techniques do not, or at least have not yet, become part of the lives of the bulk of the populace. The act of protesting is something that may happen today, but if not institutionally anchored it may well be gone tomorrow. Furthermore, protest and civil disobedience may not in themselves overcome the powerlessness felt by many individuals nor allay the fears of foreign attack felt by many others.

Another problem with many nonviolent action campaigns is that there is no clear underlying conception of how disarmament will be achieved through convincing the public of the necessity to act against war. Will the public swamp the government with letters opposing war and elect antiwar candidates? Or will workers in arms factories and soldiers go on strike for peace? To bring about the end of war, it will be necessary to dismantle military and military-related establishments and to create new social and political institutions which make impossible the regrowth of similar establishments. Without some fairly clear and generally understood picture of how disarmament and institutional reconstruction can take place, it is unlikely that nonviolent antiwar actions can achieve anything like their full potential.

The net effect of much nonviolent action is to contribute to mobilising public opinion, which can then influence elites to take action against war. To the extent that this is the main effect of nonviolent action, as a strategy it suffers from limitations similar to those of other ways of applying pressure to elites.

Bob Overy in a thought-provoking essay entitled *How effective are Peace Movements?* makes the point that many activities undertaken by peace movements — including writing letters, holding public meetings and demonstrations, and undertaking civil disobedience — may serve more to help the participants express their personal values and show that they are

taking a stand than the activities do to effectively deal with the problem of war. Peace movements can become moral crusades testifying to good intentions but achieving little beyond that. As John Zube wrote in a letter to me; the expression of mere wishes will not suffice. It is like fire fighters who, lacking water, pumps and hoses, organise themselves to chant "H<sub>2</sub>O!, H<sub>2</sub>O!"

It is a strength of nonviolent action that participants can publicly testify to and internally strengthen their personal commitment against war. In addition, participants can gain a clearer picture of the driving forces behind war, for example in being exposed to the repressive force of the state. But it is a potential weakness of nonviolent action that participants may gloss over questions of effectiveness in the course of undertaking a personally satisfying stand against war.

### Summary

What methods used to oppose war have any chance of removing the institutional roots of war? Military defence and revolutionary capture of state power are not solutions, since they strengthen rather than weaken the institutional basis for war. An approach based on directly persuading elites is pretty hopeless, because most elites are tied to, if not actual products of, the very institutions which promote war: military and national security bureaucracies and economic interests in military spending and growth of state power. An approach based on influencing elites by public pressure is more promising because it addresses members of the public, who are less tied than elites to the war system. But this approach still does not provide a basis for attaining mobilisation of the public except through persuasion based on knowledge and logic, and also depends ultimately on the implausible task of changing institutions by influencing elites. Finally, an approach based on involving people in direct action themselves is more promising still because it is based on methods which do not depend on influencing elites. But this approach lacks a way of involving a large fraction of the population in their day-to-day lives in activities which challenge the roots of war. Also, symbolic nonviolent action is seldom developed as part of a long-term strategy for social and political transformation, except via the approach of mobilising public opinion to influence elites.

What is needed is a strategy based on campaigns or activities which can involve people in their daily lives, which encourages learning and provides positive stimulation in terms of doing something and at the same time challenges in a fundamental way the underpinnings of war.

---

## Principles for antiwar strategies

---

What principles should underlie antiwar strategies? When taking action to oppose war, it is useful to examine principles. This helps to avoid lurching from action to action — or to inaction — without any basis for knowing what to do next, and how. In formulating an antiwar strategy, principles are important to help avoid inconsistencies and compromises which can be devastating at a later stage. Looking at principles can be helpful in sorting out priorities in ongoing campaigns.

Here I outline several principles which I think are important for antiwar strategies. These are not meant to be dogmatic, everlasting, universal principles. Rather, my aim is to suggest the sort of principles which can be considered in developing strategies to remove the roots of war. Whether these are the most appropriate ones will only be determined by the test of political practice.

### Institutional change

If all the military weapons in the world suddenly disappeared, this would not eliminate the problem of war. For if current institutions — such as states and other systems of political and economic inequality — remained, then it would not be long before armaments were built up again to the previous level. Nor would the problem of war be solved if disarmament were decreed and carried out by a dominant institution, such as a world government. It would be easy for resisting groups to hide weapons, including nuclear weapons, or to make new ones with presently available knowledge and resources. Disarmament as a goal is not enough for confronting the problem of war. It is also necessary to transform the structures that lead to war.

War cannot be eliminated while leaving the rest of society as it is — by freezing the status quo. Yet that is what is assumed in efforts to stop war by appealing to elites. The structural conditions for war need to be removed — not reinforced as appeals to elites may do — and superseded by alternative structures which do not lead to war.

In what direction do dominant social institutions need to be changed? In very general terms, the direction needs to be towards greater political, social and economic equality, towards greater justice and freedom, and



towards greater control by people over the decisions which influence their lives. Methods for moving in these directions are discussed in later chapters.

The principle of institutional change is a far-reaching one. The focus of peace movements in the early 1980s, as it was in the late 1950s and early 1960s, has been *nuclear* war. But even accepting the unlikely possibility that state elites would ever dismantle their nuclear weapons, eliminating nuclear weapons would not eliminate war, nor would it prevent the creation of weapons more deadly than nuclear weapons. The goal needs to be more than disarmament, and certainly much more than nuclear disarmament.

Social institutions shape people's attitudes, and people's attitudes shape the creation of institutions. I take it for granted that an antiwar strategy must involve changing people's attitudes. To form the basis for a social movement, there must be some people with critical views of the present situation and visions of an alternative. The question is not whether people's attitudes should be changed, but whether this should be a primary focus for social action, or a consequence of other actions.

There are dangers in two directions. Focussing on changing attitudes by persuasion can leave unexamined the structures which shape attitudes, such as the state, employer-worker relations and the media. But focussing exclusively on changing structures also has its limits: if people's attitudes are not changed, alternative structures can quickly revert to the old ones. The ideal is simultaneous institutional and personal change.

Personally I think it is much more important that strategies be based on promoting institutional transformation. Participatory campaigns with this goal will promote changes in attitude as they proceed. Given the present emphasis of many people in the antiwar movement and elsewhere on changing attitudes, there is little chance that individual change will be neglected.

### **Social change is seamless**

Focussing on the institutional roots of war, such as political and economic inequality, suggests a first principle for antiwar strategies. It is that war should be seen as only one of a range of social problems, and that the elimination of war must go hand in hand with the elimination of other problems. In terms of strategies, this means that war should not be given undue attention compared to other social problems. Campaigns to oppose sexism, heterosexism, economic exploitation, racism, poverty, political repression, alienation and environmental degradation are also a contribution to the overall antiwar effort in as much as they are orientated to challenge and replace oppressive social institutions.

An implication of this principle is that campaigns of different social

movements should be linked at the level of strategy, and should be mutually stimulating and provide mutual learning. This already happens to some extent, for example when feminists emphasise the fostering of aggressiveness in men as a factor in war, or when antiwar activists support environmentalists opposed to nuclear power.

On the other hand, antiwar movements, like other social movements, often adopt strategies or demands which have little relevance to other social problems. One example is the demand promoted since 1979 in the United States for a nuclear freeze: a demand that the United States and Soviet governments halt new developments in or additions to their nuclear arsenals. This demand has little immediate relevance to other social problems. This is no coincidence. The nuclear freeze campaign, which is based on influencing state elites by public pressure, has worked through existing structures rather than attempting to transform them.

To claim that the problem of war — or nuclear war in particular — is so pressing that it should be given priority over other issues is bad politics. It cuts the antiwar movement off from other social movements vital to opposing war-linked institutions. And it often leads to strategies such as the nuclear freeze which do not address the institutional roots of war. The aim should not be to set up hierarchies of oppression, but to link social issues and movements in theory and action.

An orientation towards structural change is often connected with awareness of the connections between social issues. For example, the British journal *Peace News*, which has the subtitle 'for a nonviolent revolution' and is oriented to structural change, features articles on Third World problems, feminism, workplace democracy and many other issues.

### **Means and ends**

A broad principle for antiwar strategies aiming to transform institutions is that the means used for transformation should be compatible with the end desired. If means and ends are not compatible, it often happens that structures are not really transformed but just given a new appearance. For example, military coups almost never lead to an equitable or nonviolent society, but rather replace the old rulers by a new but similar group.

The compatibility of means and ends is a longstanding principle of anarchism. This principle distinguishes anarchism from Leninism, which is based on achieving the Marxist goal of a classless and stateless society by very different means, namely capture of state power by a vanguard elite.

The principle of keeping means compatible with ends has been taken up by many groups and individuals in social movements since the 1960s. Students opposing bureaucratic university administrations attempt to use participatory democracy in their own organisations. Feminists confront

the sexist power dynamics in their closest personal relationships. Environmentalists attempt to live their own lives in an environmentally conscious way. Opponents of exploitation of animals become vegetarians. This is what is meant by 'living the revolution'. This basic principle has many implications for different aspects of antiwar strategies.

## **Nonviolence**

The aim of any principled antiwar strategy is a world without organised violence. If means are to reflect ends, antiwar strategies must be based on a renunciation of violence. Indeed, it is simply incongruous to use violence to eliminate the need to resort to violence. World War One was called by some 'the war to end war'. This illusion has been less common since, but its implications are not so often acted upon.

The use of violence or the readiness to use it has several consequences for a social movement. It often causes suffering. It abdicates moral superiority and alienates potential supporters. It requires secrecy and hence leads to less democratic decision-making. And if successful, it can lead to a violent and authoritarian new ruling elite. For example, the introduction of communism in Russia, China and Vietnam this century in each case was based on a violent seizure and maintenance of power. It can be argued that this — in addition to the specific historical conditions of these revolutions — has contributed to the continued militarisation of these societies.

Nonviolence is often adopted as a provisional tactic by social movements in Western countries. For example, most Western communist parties oppose violence as counterproductive in the present political circumstances. But they do not rule out violent methods in principle, and consequently it is not surprising that communist parties, however progressive their policies in other areas, have devoted little attention to the problem of eliminating war.

Nonviolence as a principle rather than as a tactic for antiwar strategies has had its greatest strength within the Gandhian movement in India. It is also a key principle for some Western individuals and social action groups, such as many pacifists.

In the West, nonviolence is seldom taken as an inviolate religious principle, but rather is adopted on more pragmatic grounds. A strong case for nonviolence results from considering the effects of acceptance of violence by a social movement on itself, such as increased secrecy, reducing public sympathy and support, and more centralised decision-making.

The use of nonviolent methods helps transcend the dilemma of comparing existing structural violence — poverty, exploitation, preventable



illness — with the human costs in promoting violent revolution. In practice such comparisons are probably seldom carried out by Third World guerrilla fighters, whose involvement in liberation struggles is as much a reaction to state violence and oppression as it is a consciously decided strategy. But to the extent that a social movement has a choice of options and the opportunity to carefully consider them, a decision to promote the use of violence requires a certain confidence — perhaps arrogance — and an assumption of correctness that justifies inflicting direct physical harm. Nonviolent methods do not avoid this problem entirely, since they can lead to lost income or prestige for those acted against. But nonviolent action on behalf of an unjust cause or as part of a misjudged campaign at least minimises immediately caused suffering.

The issues of violence and nonviolence have been the subject of considerable discussion and debate within social movements. This examination is important in determining to what extent nonviolence is or should be a principle in itself and to what extent it is or should be a matter for pragmatic consideration.

### **Participation**

The structures underlying war are ones of centralised power, which allow elites to make the most far-reaching decisions. Alternative structures would allow much more participative and decentralised decision-making. Such structures also need to be the basis for social change in this direction.

The way in which social movement organisations are structured is a decision with strong implications for strategy. Hierarchical organisations, in which a few people at the top exercise formal power, are effective in interacting with other hierarchical organisations. This is how the war system operates. If social movement organisations are also hierarchical, they will fit in with and reinforce hierarchy elsewhere, and have little potential for affecting dominant social institutions. Just as it is futile to leave the problem of war to state elites, so it is futile to leave it to elites in opposition groups.

The principle of participation also implies that social change should proceed at the rate that people want to take it, not at a rate determined by elites in established institutions or in revolutionary or social action groups. This principle does not rule out strong advocacy or concerted action within social movements, but it does rule out unilateral decision-making or manipulation from the top.

There should be little worry that full participation in social movements will reduce social activism. Historically, formal leaders of social movements have more often served to hold back than to push ahead the rank and file. The trade union movement is a case in point. In any case, a participatory

social movement is a much more solid base for sustained action than a hierarchical movement where all the key decisions emerge from the top.

### **Long-term struggle**

Fundamental transformation of states, bureaucracies and social inequality is not something that can happen overnight. Even if formal structures were overturned quickly, considerable learning and adaptation by people would be necessary before alternatives could be established. After all, most people learn to live in and accept bureaucracies and the state — through experiences in school, work and exposure to the media — and learning different modes of interaction and identifying with different goals is not an easy matter. Therefore a strategy to remove the roots of war must be a long-term strategy.

The goal is a world without war and which remains without war. The goal thus is for a society which is stable and resilient with respect to not using organised violence. The means compatible with this goal are not ones of cataclysmic revolution, but of patient and resolute efforts towards desired social goals.

Gradualist strategies are not popular with many social activists. Indeed the desire for quick change is one reason why appealing to elites is such a popular method: only elites seem to have the power to act quickly. Leninist parties hope for a rapid seizure of power. Many anarchist groups also look toward a quick revolutionary change, putting their trust in the instincts of people to create non-hierarchical institutions more or less spontaneously. There is some basis for this belief, such as the experience during the Spanish Civil War beginning in 1936 in which communities collectively organised production, distribution and services. But in most such crisis conditions, past experiences and traditions and available ideas and resources make a big difference. Anarchists had played a strong and active role in Spain for many decades before the Civil War. In contrast, for example, when the Saigon regime in South Vietnam collapsed in 1975, there was no spontaneous creation of self-managing institutions. Instead, the North Vietnamese army took power. The experience of many other collapses of major social institutions also shows that trust cannot automatically be put in crisis and spontaneous responses to it as the solution to the problem of institutions underlying war. Similarly, attempts by groups to live communally often have failed because they were poorly planned, allowing old habits to fill the vacuum left by the inadequacy of supposedly beneficial spontaneity.

The principle of long-term struggle means that antiwar strategies should not be premised on the inevitable breakdown of capitalism, state socialism or any other major institution. Campaigns against these structures must

be consciously planned and promoted. Yet, crisis should not be ignored! A long-term strategy should include preparation for taking advantage of crises.

### **Who will lead the way?**

The goal of a world without war is for a world without privileged or dominating groups which find organised violence useful in protecting their privilege or power. To incorporate this goal in the methods for social activism means allowing and encouraging all social groups to participate in efforts to eliminate the roots of war. This means that soldiers, police, corporate executives, top bureaucrats, weapons researchers and elites of all kinds should be considered at least potential contributors. Neither these nor any other group should be relegated to the status of enemy.

For any social movement, the choice of which types of people to try to mobilise is a strategic decision. By potentially appealing to all groups, the task of building support is made more difficult. On the other hand, it is much harder to discredit a movement which is not tied to particular sections of the community for its support.

It is vitally important to distinguish between people and institutions. It is the institutions which need to be changed, and if anything is the 'enemy' it is these institutions, not the people in them. In moving towards a world without war, people will need to change too. But this is not promoted by labelling any types of people — generals, presidents or bomb designers — as enemies.

Blaming the 'enemy' and not distinguishing between people and institutions is very common. Proponents of military defence look benignly on their own government's military preparations while pointing the finger at the 'enemy'. Many members of peace movements also see the world as polarised and look upon the military and political establishments in their own countries as the 'enemy'. In each of these cases, salvation is perceived to come from only a section of the population: from one's own government's military establishment, from the proletariat and its intellectual leaders, or from antiwar activists and other concerned citizens.

Even though all kinds of people can be made welcome as part of a social movement, some types of people will be poorly represented, such as state bureaucrats or military officers who would jeopardise their careers by participating overtly in social protest. Others whose social locations make social activism more feasible, such as students, are likely to be over-represented.

Openness to all types of people in a social movement does not mean an 'open door' policy is required in every movement group. Some groups by

their nature will be limited in their variety of members, such as groups formed from members of trade unions or professional associations. Others may explicitly specify exclusiveness, such as separatist feminist groups. Yet all can participate in an antiwar movement if links are maintained between groups and also with individual activists who are not group members.

### **Truth**

One desirable goal for a world without war is a concern for truth: open and widespread involvement in attempts to understand social realities. If this goal is to be part of the methods to attain it, then antiwar activists need to be open about and come to grips with truths about war which may be unpleasant. For example:

\*There may be (just as there may not be) a genetic influence on the expression of aggression in some aspects of human interpersonal relations.

\*For many ex-soldiers and also civilians, wartime provided their greatest experiences of solidarity, meaningful activity and appreciation of life.

\*Nuclear war may kill 'only' a small fraction of the world's population, leaving a partially devastated world in which antiwar efforts are even more necessary.

\*Antiwar movements have had little effect on the course of arms races and the incidence of war.

In my opinion, rather than denying such statements out of hand, it is far better to investigate the subject and come to grips with any apparently unpleasant conclusions that arise. A social movement may delude itself, and even delude many others, but this is not a solid basis for building strategies for removing the institutions that underlie war.

### **Principles are important**

Underlying the foregoing presentation of principles is another principle, or rather a meta-principle: principles are important. But without clear, open and widely understood principles, social movements are much more vulnerable to manipulation, cooption or repression by governments, by opportunistic sectarian groups, or by their own leaders. Principles need not be fixed and inviolate. They can be the subject of careful study and heated debate.

Decisions about principles are often among the easier decisions made by social movements. The hard part is deciding on what they mean in practice. Is our group doing enough to share tasks and leadership skills? How does our planned rally fit into a long-term strategy? What should we

say about the role of civil defence in saving lives? Principles by themselves do not provide answers to such questions, but they are valuable in providing a general framework for working out solutions.

\* \* \*

I turn in the next several chapters to some areas which I think are important for building campaigns to strike at the roots of war: social defence, peace conversion, and self-management. While I think these areas are important, this selection is not meant to seem exclusive. Other campaign focusses are also vital, and it is likely that many significant and potent campaigns in the future will be built around ideas that are unknown today.

In discussing social defence, peace conversion and self-management, I assume the continuation of most of the standard methods that social action groups use in trying to build a mass movement, including self-education, canvassing for support, writing letters, holding public meetings and protests, organising in a variety of constituencies, and maintaining movement networks and communication channels. In short, this is grassroots organising.

Also I assume that social action groups will use many of the available methods for increasing participation, commitment and solidarity, including methods for consensus decision-making, participative meeting procedures, overcoming internal sexism and racism, discussion and mutual learning rather than competition, and sharing of skills and tasks.

Methods for grassroots organising and for promoting egalitarian group dynamics are not obvious or simple to carry out. But there are some good treatments of how to go about doing these things, and considerable practical experience in these areas. There are several useful accounts of grassroots organising, such as Si Kahn's book *Organizing*. There is also valuable material on how to foster egalitarian group dynamics, especially publications from the Movement for a New Society. In my opinion the skills and practices represented in such writings, and understood and used by many activists, are an essential basis for antiwar strategies. But rather than discuss them here, my focus is on some general areas for building campaigns, towards which grassroots organising and egalitarian action groups can be mobilised to confront the roots of war.



---

## Social defence

---

The standard, often repeated goal of most peace movements is disarmament: getting rid of weapons and armies. Yet the call for disarmament as a demand is severely flawed. The flaw can be presented in the form of a question: "Without military defence, what can we do against armed aggression?"

In some cases, it can be argued that aspects of military defence are totally ineffective or counterproductive, as in the case of a government which acquires strategic military installations and whose population thereby becomes a nuclear target. But in most cases, military forces do provide a defence against military attack, however undesirable the other effects of military forces are for a society.

What is needed for a strategy against war is an alternative to military defence. Disarmament by itself is quite inadequate.

Alternatives are almost always of vital importance in the efforts of social movements. For example, opponents of nuclear power have been met time and time again with the claim that nuclear power is essential, and that without it people would freeze and starve in the dark. This sort of pro-nuclear fear-mongering has little logical basis, but it influences quite a few people. An effective response is the elaboration of an alternative energy strategy based on energy efficiency, use of renewable energy sources, and changes in current social practices such as planned obsolescence which institutionalise unnecessary energy use. This alternative provides a powerful basis for arguing the case against nuclear power, and it also provides a basis for organising people to act themselves to bring about the alternative energy future.

The idea of military defence has an amazingly powerful grip on most people's thinking about war. The possibility that there could be an alternative is not even imagined. This is true also for most people in peace movements. Few peace groups build strategies with wider goals than stopping the latest weapon system or removing nuclear weapons. To the question, "If our government disarms and then our country is invaded, what do we do?", few peace activists have a convincing answer.

One alternative to military defence is social defence, which in short is nonviolent community resistance to aggression. After describing social defence briefly, I will focus on its key characteristics as a part of a strategy

for eliminating the roots of war. Then I will discuss ways of promoting social defence as part of a grassroots strategy against war. Finally, I will raise some of the problems and limitations of social defence.

### **What is social defence?**

Social defence is nonviolent community resistance to aggression as an alternative to military defence. It is based on widespread political, economic and social noncooperation in order to oppose military aggression or political repression. It uses methods such as boycotts, refusals to obey, strikes, demonstrations, and setting up of alternative social, political and economic institutions.

Social defence is based on the principle that no regime — whether democracy or military dictatorship — can survive without the passive support or nonresistance of a large fraction of the population. Since social defence relies on resistance by large sections of the population, it can be considered to be the nonviolent equivalent of guerrilla warfare.

Social defence acts as a deterrent by reaching out both to enemy soldiers and to the civilian population in the aggressor country. This appeal is bolstered by the broad base of support required for social defence, by its nonviolence, and by the justice of its cause. The methods of social defence aim to promote disunity and to weaken morale in the aggressing forces and country.

Social defence is not automatically successful, just as military defence is not automatically successful. Its effectiveness can be improved by planning and practice in advance. Although social defence is based entirely on nonviolent methods, violence and suffering caused by the aggressors are still likely. Social defence is not an easy alternative.

The methods of social defence can be divided into three types, following Gene Sharp's classification: symbolic actions; noncooperation; and intervention and alternative institutions.

#### **Symbolic actions include:**

- \* formal statements (speeches, letters, petitions);
- \* slogans, leaflets, banners;
- \* demonstrations, protest marches, vigils, pickets;
- \* wearing of symbols of opposition (such as the paper clips worn by Norwegian civilians during the Nazi occupation);
- \* meetings, teach-ins.

#### **Noncooperation includes:**

- \* social boycotts, stay-at-home;
- \* boycotts by consumers, workers, traders; embargoes;
- \* strikes, bans, working-to-rule, reporting 'sick';
- \* refusal to pay tax or debts, withdrawal of bank deposits;

- \* boycotts of government institutions;
- \* disobedience, evasions and delays;
- \* mock incapability ('go slow', 'misunderstandings', 'mistakes').

**Intervention and alternative institutions** include:

- \* fasts;
- \* sit-ins, nonviolent obstruction and occupation;
- \* sabotage (such as destruction of information and records);
- \* establishment of alternative institutions for decision-making, communications, transport, welfare, health and education.

There are several historical examples which suggest the potential of social defence.

**The Kapp Putsch.** In 1920 in Berlin a coup d'état (or putsch) led by the right-wing Dr Wolfgang Kapp and backed by several army officers was defeated by nonviolent action. The coup was an attempt to overthrow the new Weimar Republic (the Ebert government) which had already faced many difficulties such as economic dislocation, military unrest and attempts at revolution. The coup was rather amateurish, but despite their limited preparation the Kappists occupied Berlin without military resistance, and the Ebert government fled to Stuttgart. The German states were instructed by the government to refuse all cooperation with the new Kapp regime. When the Kappists took over two government newspapers, all the printers went on strike. Thousands of other workers spontaneously went on strike all over Berlin.

Following this, a call for a general strike was issued, and was supported by workers of all political and religious groups including government bureaucrats, all of whom refused to head ministries under Kapp. Workers tried to influence Kappist troops. The Kappists could not even cash cheques at the banks, since the bankers refused to honour cheques without appropriate official authorisation, and no ministry officials would provide the necessary signatures. Typists refused to type the proclamations of the Kappists.

After only four days the limited power of the occupiers became obvious, strikes spread, military commanders resumed loyalty to the government, and leaflets entitled 'Collapse of the Military Dictatorship' were showered over Berlin from a plane. All this served to further weaken the regime, forcing Kapp to resign and flee, followed by the troops who were now under the order of the Ebert government.

The coup was thus defeated and the Weimar Republic preserved, providing a good illustration of the potential of nonviolent collective action. If it had not been for the immediate intervention and noncooperation of the people, the military takeover might well have been successful.



**Czechoslovakia 1968.** In the 1960s, a number of reforms were made in Czechoslovakia which reduced the repressive aspects of state socialist rule. These moves — so-called ‘socialism with a human face’ — were strongly supported by the Czechoslovak people and government, but bitterly opposed by the Soviet rulers. In August 1968 a Soviet military invasion of Czechoslovakia was launched, with the expectation of quickly installing a pro-Soviet government. There was no military resistance to the invasion, and it has been estimated that such resistance could only have been sustained a few days anyway.

But the Czechoslovak people, from the political leadership to the work-force, were unified in spontaneous nonviolent resistance to the occupation and this slowed and obstructed the Soviet occupation considerably. The radio network played a crucial role. It convened the Extraordinary Fourteenth Party Congress of the Czechoslovak Community Party, called strikes, gave tactical instruction on street confrontations, requested rail workers to slow the transport of Soviet jamming equipment, cautioned against rumours, and counselled nonviolent resistance. Due to the unified civilian resistance, to the lack of a pro-Soviet government and to the demoralisation of Soviet troops, directives were issued from Moscow offering reforms and other concessions.

The Czechoslovak leadership considered these offerings and consequently adopted a more cooperative stance than had the previously unified defence network. Further noncooperative acts were now without official sanction and as the Czechoslovak position weakened, the Soviet forces consolidated the occupation, removing the ‘unnecessary’ concessions.

Because Soviet economic and political interests in Czechoslovakia were so strong, long-term resistance, either military or nonviolent, would have been very difficult to sustain. The nonviolent Czechoslovak resistance was successful in delaying and frustrating achievement of Soviet aims, with very little loss of life. Furthermore, the resistance and its nonviolence made it clear throughout the world who was the aggressor, and this greatly weakened Soviet influence over communist parties in Western countries. But the reforms achieved in Czechoslovakia prior to August 1968 were lost, partly due to unwise cooperation with Soviet rulers by Czechoslovak leaders.

**Algerian Generals’ Revolt, 1961.** Until 1962, Algeria was a colony of the French government. Beginning in the mid-1950s, an armed independence struggle was waged by Algerian nationalists against French settlers who were supported by French military forces. By 1961, moves were under way by the French government, led by de Gaulle, to grant independence to Algeria.

Leading sections of the French military in Algeria, who were strongly

opposed to Algerian independence, staged a coup on 21-22 April 1961 in the city of Algiers. It was rumoured that there would be an invasion of France by the French military leaders in Algeria in order to topple the French government and institute a strict colonialist policy.

The population in France demonstrated its solidarity against such an invasion. French airports were shut down, trade with Algeria ceased and a one-hour strike was held by ten million workers. Dissident elements within the army in Algeria performed noncooperative acts, largely by adopting an attitude of mock incapability.

After four days the coup disintegrated. Large-scale violence was avoided and thus many lives were saved. It was largely the force of community resistance which deterred the threatened invasion of France and caused the collapse of the short-lived Algerian Generals' regime.

**What about severe repression?** Social defence may sound promising when used against aggressors who must pay attention to 'public opinion', as in most Western representative democracies. But can it work against really ruthless attackers? Can it work against repressive regimes such as the dictatorships of Hitler and Stalin? This is one of the most often raised and difficult questions concerning the viability of social defence.

If it is assumed that an aggressor is completely ruthless, and is willing to torture and kill unlimited numbers of people with little or no provocation, then most of the methods of social defence are useless or counterproductive. But is this assumption realistic? Robots might be programmed to be completely ruthless aggressors, but short of this can humans behave this way themselves? A few historical examples suggest they seldom can if sufficient community awareness and resistance can be mustered in the country attacked or in the country from which the aggressor comes.

On 1 September 1939, the day of the Nazi military invasion of Poland, Hitler launched a programme of 'euthanasia' for the insane and incurably ill. The programme depended on voluntary participation by doctors. News of the highly secret programme leaked out. Public protests were made by prominent Catholic Church figures, leading to the termination of the programme in 1941.

Effective nonviolent resistance to the Nazi occupiers occurred in the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway during World War Two. For example, the Nazi regime in Norway run by Quisling tried to force the schools to teach Nazi doctrines. The teachers publicly refused, and many were arrested and sent to concentration camps. But they continued to resist, and finally the Quisling government – worried about angering the Norwegian people too much – released the teachers. The schools were never used for Nazi propaganda.

Even in Nazi Germany itself, nonviolent resistance was effective in

some cases. In 1943 in Berlin, thousands of non-Jewish wives of Jews arrested by the Gestapo demonstrated outside the detention centre. Eventually the prisoners were released.

More generally, extermination of the Jews and other groups by the Nazis was held back in countries where major groups of the population, and especially influential groups and individuals such as church leaders, refused to collaborate with or to remain silent about arrests and deportations. For example, Hungary was an ally of Germany during the war, but the Hungarian government refused to agree to any deportations of Jews in spite of pressure from the Nazis from 1942 to 1944. Only after the Hungarian government was overturned by the Nazis in 1944 did deportations begin which led to the killing of hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews at Auschwitz. And even at this late stage the extermination programme was greatly aided by the Hungarian Jewish community leadership, which cooperated with the Nazis and helped organise the Jews for deportation.

It is also significant that the extermination programme was kept secret. If the programme had been widely publicised in Germany and elsewhere, significant forces within Germany and Nazi-occupied countries would have been aroused to oppose the Nazi regime. The important general point is that the success of many Nazi initiatives and programmes — including programmes of racial extermination — depended to a considerable extent on acquiescence or cooperation from large sections of the population.

Indeed, no government in history has been so powerful that it could function without a fair degree of popular consent or acquiescence. In the modern world, unrestrained violence against innocent victims is widely condemned. In this popular antagonism to unjustified repression lies the weakness of open and unrestrained violence and the strength of nonviolent resistance. Not a single one of the many governments which use torture and murder as instruments of state repression openly admits to doing this. The success of Amnesty International in opposing torture by the 'simple' means of openly expressing opposition to it demonstrates this significant point.

These examples and arguments suggest that social defence *can* be successful against severe repression. But the methods and tactics used need to be specially chosen if repression is harsh. For example, more use can be made of quiet 'mistakes' in carrying out tasks and 'misunderstandings' of orders. When support for the resistance is widespread, more open defiance becomes possible.

Perhaps the most dramatic success yet achieved by nonviolent action against severe repression is the Iranian revolution in 1978-1979. The Shah's regime at that time was one of the most repressive and brutal in the world. The government had an overwhelming military and police

arsenal. Torture and killing were used routinely against opponents of the regime, and more or less random arrest and torture was used by the state to terrorise the population. The Shah's regime was supported by all major governments, including the governments of the United States, the Soviet Union, the Arab countries and Israel.

The leaders of the main opposition to the Shah, based on Muslim fundamentalism, explicitly opposed the use of violence. Their strategy was based on mass mobilisation including fraternisation with troops. Before the Shah's regime was toppled, something like 40,000 defenceless people were shot dead in the streets during nonviolent demonstrations. One need not be a supporter of post-revolutionary Iran — personally I am deeply opposed to much of what has happened there — to appreciate the enormous power of nonviolent action demonstrated during the revolution. Although the human cost in overthrowing the Shah's regime was enormous, experiences elsewhere suggest that revolution by armed struggle would have resulted in far more deaths.

**The keys to successful social defence.** Social defence is more than a collection of nonviolent techniques of resistance. It must be based around defending basic principles and around a sound strategy.

The principles to be defended are those which are understood by people as basic to their way of life, and may include democratic institutions, freedom of speech and religion, and economic justice.

The key to successful nonviolent strategy is maintaining the unity and morale of the resistance. Decisions about demonstrations, strikes and other actions should be made with careful consideration of their effects on unity and morale.

Success also depends on persistence. Nonviolent resistance is not guaranteed to succeed quickly, any more than violent resistance is. In a long struggle, tenacity is vital.

Finally, training in the use of nonviolent methods is important, just as it is with violent methods. Most historical uses of nonviolent resistance have been spontaneous, as in the cases of the Kapp Putsch, Czechoslovakia 1968 and the Algerian Generals' Revolt. With thorough preparation, the chance of success is increased. People can learn about what to do and train in the use of methods and principles of nonviolent action.

In summary:

- \* defend basic principles;
- \* maintain unity and morale;
- \* be persistent;
- \* prepare in advance.

### Characteristics of social defence

Social defence is not just an alternative to military defence. Many of the characteristics which make it effective are ideally suited for undermining the roots of war.

**Participation.** By necessity, successful social defence must be based on wide participation. It cannot depend exclusively on leaders or professionals. Therefore social defence as a mode of community organisation is contrary to and subversive of the bureaucratic, military and professional modes of social organisation which are important roots of modern war.

One of the most ingrained ideas about defence is that it is something that is done by someone else, namely the military professional. Personal involvement has been reduced further and further as technology and bureaucracy increasingly dominate the organisation of war. Social defence puts responsibility for defence on every individual, and reasserts the importance of making a personal contribution.

By the same token, neither social defence nor a nonviolent society can be built with compulsory means. State conscription for social defence is virtually a contradiction in terms. To be effective, social defence must be based on people voluntarily defending what they consider important in society.

**Community against the state.** Social defence, as its name indicates, is defence of the social fabric. It requires community interaction and coordination. Organising for social defence thus both builds on and provides for a strengthening of community networks and solidarity, and helps to counter the weakness and isolation the individuals feel when confronted alone by massive organisational forces.

Since social defence is founded on common community values and solidarity, it potentially provides a countervailing power to the state. The state is a key root of war, being based on a monopoly on what is claimed to be the legitimate use of violence, and is intimately linked with military forces. Social defence, to the extent that it puts the power of resistance in the hands of local communities and withdraws power from the professional military forces of the state, is subversive of the state system and the associated war system.

It is clear from the methods of social defence and from historical examples that nonviolent community resistance can be used not only against foreign invaders but also against military coups and authoritarian regimes. The resistance to the Kapp Putsch and to the Algerian Generals' Revolt are two excellent examples. Social defence thus provides an answer to the question, "Who guards the guardians?". One of the most severe but seldom discussed problems with military forces is their potential and



historically frequent use against their own citizens. Social defence, as a grassroots alternative, provides the answer to this threat.

**Nonviolent struggle.** The nonviolence of social defence has several important justifications and consequences. First, it reduces suffering. Not only is massive destruction and killing unsuited for overcoming social defence, but it is difficult for an aggressor to gain support for large scale and indiscriminate violence against a nonviolent resistance.

One of the justifications for oppressive institutions is that any attempt to change them would cause disproportionate violence and suffering. Many proposals to restrain war — cease-fires, negotiated settlements, mutual disarmament — are doomed to failure because they leave intact the status quo with all its attendant injustices. Many people simply do not want 'peace' if it means continued exploitation or injustice.

The methods of social defence allow passionate social struggle to continue without requiring grassroots activists to use organised violence and widespread killing. Nonviolent methods keep the social costs of social change to a much lower level than does the use of violence as a key means. More than this, experience in preparing for social defence provides knowledge, tools and an organisational basis for other social movements, such as campaigns against sexism, racism and exploitation of workers. These campaigns confront many of the same institutions that underlie war. Social defence thus can both provide support to and receive support from other nonviolent movements for social transformation of the institutions that promote sexism, racism, exploitation of workers, and war.

**Social attack.** Social defence can only be successful to the extent that people wish to defend a social system against an aggressor. In a dictatorship the introduction of social defence would never be supported by elites since the methods of nonviolent resistance could be used against the rulers themselves. Social defence is thus a tool which is easy to use for the preservation of equality and freedom but hard to use to prop up privilege and repressive power. Indeed, the ideas of social defence are themselves quite subversive when circulated among the people in a repressive regime.

This feature of social defence provides one of the key methods of social deterrence and resistance: communicating with people in an aggressor country, especially when those people are misled or oppressed themselves. Letters, radio and personal contact with the people in an aggressor country can be used to explain the nonviolent resistance and the justice of the defenders' cause. Such contact is potentially subversive of authoritarian regimes.

Such contact can also be used in the absence of overt aggression. The enterprise of promoting nonviolent resistance to repressive regimes



elsewhere can be called social attack or, alternatively, nonviolent liberation. Symbolic actions, noncooperation, boycotts, intervention and alternative institutions can be used in an offensive as well as a defensive way against foreign regimes both to directly challenge the regime's power and to encourage and support internal opposition. Examples are boycotts of the regime's goods, protests by visitors to the country, and broadcasting messages by radio. Social attack provides one way of confronting dictatorships without the automatic resort to violence.

Social attack, unlike military attack, is inherently limited in terms of its potential harm. If the cause being promoted is not widely supported, social attack is very unlikely to succeed, and the cost in death and suffering will be relatively small.

Social defence is apparently impotent against nuclear attack, as indeed is military defence. But there are good reasons why governments would refrain from nuclear destruction of a community relying on social defence. Since the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki, no government has yet used nuclear weapons against even a violent or threatening opponent, in good measure due to the expected repercussions on the domestic and world political scene. These repercussions could be greatly extended through social attack, namely by mobilising support and sympathy among the population of the political aggressor country, by making known the methods of social defence to them, and by doing the same elsewhere in the world. A nuclear attack against a nonviolent community in these circumstances could help undermine the aggressor regime.

One advantage of preparing for social attack is that many people can see the urgency of intervening nonviolently in crisis areas or situations, such as Northern Ireland or El Salvador. The international peace brigades — groups trained in nonviolent techniques for intervening in international conflicts as third parties — rely on this sense of urgency. Mobilisation towards this sort of international nonviolent intervention can then provide skills and perspectives for social defence at home.

**Self-reliance.** Social defence has a greater chance of success if a community is self-reliant in being able to use its own skills and resources to exist and thrive. Communities which are self-reliant in energy and resources, food, education, health and transport, are better able to resist political and economic pressure from the outside. Indeed, social defence is based on community self-reliance in opposing organised aggression.

Community self-reliance in many areas provides the basis for alternatives to bureaucracies, large corporations and professional services, and thus provides a basis for alternatives to the institutions underlying war. Social defence can both promote and gain strength from other initiatives towards community self-reliance.

### Who will lead the way to social defence?

Social defence is a new idea. The general idea of nonviolent resistance as an alternative to military defence was raised by several writers closely familiar with the nonviolent campaigns led by Gandhi in India in the 1920s and 1930s. But the first fully articulated exposition of the idea was by Stephen King-Hall, an author and retired British naval officer, with the publication of his book *Defence in the Nuclear Age* in 1958. Since then there have been a number of excellent treatments and developments of the idea of social defence, by authors including Johan Galtung, Theodor Ebert, Adam Roberts, Gene Sharp, Anders Boserup and Andrew Mack.

Most of this intellectual work has been concerned with how social defence would work, relevant historical experiences, the strengths and limitations of social defence, social and political conditions conducive to social defence, and why social defence would be an improvement over military defence. There has been relatively little attention to the problem of how to make social defence part of a strategy to eliminate war. Furthermore, in most of the writing on social defence, there is an implicit strategy for promoting it: convince state elites of the merit of social defence. In other words, social defence has been seen as something that will be introduced through decisions by elites made at level of the state, perhaps with the pressure of public opinion to push the change along.

One reason for the adoption of this approach has been the important role that intellectuals — academics in particular — have played in developing the idea of social defence. Professional intellectuals as a class tend to look for change from the top.

In the case of the campaigns led by Gandhi and his associates in South Africa and India, the practice of nonviolent action developed in close conjunction with the theory, and in many ways political practice led or inspired the associated ideas. But with social defence so far, practical development has not begun and theoretical development is forced to rely on 'unplanned experiments' such as the 1968 Czechoslovakian resistance.

This approach to governments by leading social defence advocates has had a mild degree of success. A few governments have supported studies of social defence. It is significant that it has been the more socially progressive and least repressive governments — in particular the governments of Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands — that have shown any interest at all. But even in these cases no substantial moves have been made to initiate adoption of social defence.

This is not surprising. As I argued in Chapter 1, it is futile to expect challenges to the roots of war to occur as a result of intellectual persuasion of elites or even from public pressure on elites. In as much as social defence challenges the state monopoly on violence and social control, it is hardly

conceivable that any government or military would introduce it voluntarily.

The focus on encouraging the introduction of social defence at the state level has had other side effects. It has meant that many of the characteristics of social defence which are most crucial in challenging the roots of war have been watered down or compromised:

- \* there has been relatively little emphasis on the participative features of social defence, which are at variance with its promotion at the state level and at variance with any level of compulsion;

- \* there has been a strong emphasis on social defence of the state against foreign attack, rather than defence of the community, and almost no mention of social defence as a tool for communities against the state;

- \* the role of social defence in providing tools for workers, feminists, minorities and others for promoting their interests has been left unmentioned;

- \* the idea of social attack against authoritarian regimes has not been developed.

Rather than an emphasis on the more radical implications of social defence, there has been a strong emphasis on the pragmatic value of social defence, 'pragmatic' as seen from the point of view of elites. Gene Sharp in particular argues for social defence as a 'functional substitute for military defence' and as a realistic, workable alternative mostly within the context of existing institutions in Western societies. I have no quibbles with pragmatism, and indeed I think the effectiveness of social defence is one of the most important grounds for arguing for it. But I think the other and more far-reaching characteristics of social defence should not be lost in the emphasis on pragmatism and appealing to elites.

Another problem with academic studies of social defence is that research tends to become too separated from practical problems. Specialisation, detailed documentation and scholarly critiques all have their place, but their place will become irrelevant to practical problems unless a strong connection is maintained between research and social action. After all, this sort of connection is what makes military research such a thriving and serious business. Social defence research institutes would be a mixed blessing. Far better than more research by itself would be an interaction between research and social action on social defence.

Whatever reservations may be held about the key figures who have set out and developed the idea of social defence, their contributions in raising and keeping the idea alive have been immense. Peace movements have been slow to take notice. In English-speaking countries the concept of social defence has been virtually unheard of until recently. In the peace movements in several countries in Western Europe, the idea of social defence has considerable currency. But even there, so I am told, social

defence is used more as an argument than as a basis for organising communities.

If social defence is unlikely to be promoted by elites, then the obvious place to turn is to the other end of the political spectrum: the grassroots. Social defence can be an organisational focus for local communities, factory workers, office workers, feminists, gays and many others. Preparing themselves to resist aggression gives such groups something to do by themselves and for themselves, without appealing to elites or depending on top level agreements or negotiations. People in their own local group or movement can do something that provides a basis for an alternative to military defence, which provides skills for resisting political repression, and which can tie in nicely with their own campaigns for protection from crime, rape or police harassment, for promoting industrial democracy, and so forth.

If a social problem exists, it is important to be able to formulate an alternative. If a desirable alternative can be formulated, one way to help bring it about is to turn it into a campaign or a movement. If nuclear power is a problem, local energy self-reliance can be more than just an argument: it can also be a focus for organising people to take action. If centralised decision-making is a problem, participatory democracy and consensus decision-making are not just desirable goals but also principles for groups of people organising to challenge the centralised decision-making. One great advantage of turning an alternative into an organising focus is that the discrepancy between means and ends is minimised.

### **Experiences in Canberra Peacemakers**

How then can social defence be turned into a campaign or organising focus? In principle this doesn't sound so hard, but at the level of individual people, current events and everyday life, the problem is not so easy. To illustrate some of the difficulties, cul-de-sacs and successes that are possible, I describe here a number of the experiences of Canberra Peacemakers, a small antiwar group in which I have been involved.

In early 1979 a small group of people, who had been involved in the anti-nuclear power movement, in Quakers or who were otherwise interested in peace issues, joined to form Canberra Peacemakers. Until 1982 it was the only specifically antiwar group in Canberra. It has always been a small group, with typically 4 to 6 people attending weekly meetings. In the first year we mainly discussed issues among ourselves, and helped organise Hiroshima Day activities. By 1980 we had agreed on two main areas of emphasis: nonviolent action training and social defence. Social defence was the area I advocated as an area for our activities.

For those unfamiliar with the idea of social defence, it may sound

strange and be hard to grasp. Before we could start promoting social defence, we had to come to grips with it ourselves. One way used to do this was holding workshops for speakers. In a couple of hours with half a dozen people, we would plan a short speech about social defence. First we would brainstorm points to be included (that is, toss out ideas without discussion) and then clarify and discuss them. Individuals would then prepare a one or two-minute description of social defence, then practise it with one other person and then before the entire group. In other sessions we would prepare responses to difficult questions about social defence. The nonviolent action training techniques of facilitation, mutual support, evaluation and games were used for these sessions.

These self-learning sessions were valuable. Although we did not visit many other groups to speak about social defence, we used our skills on many occasions, for example when a friend asked what social defence was or a new person came to a Canberra Peacemakers meeting. It is all very well to learn about social defence from books, but this is not a substitute for using the ideas oneself.

We found that some people, on first hearing about social defence, had automatic objections, clearly stemming from deeply held assumptions about the way the world must be. For example, "It wouldn't work against Hitler" or "People will always use violence". Such responses, often reflecting gut reactions, often require more than a 'logical' answer.

Group learning about social defence is also vital to overcome dependence on one or two 'experts' in the group. Inequalities in knowledge and experience can never be entirely overcome, but spreading knowledge and skills — such as speaking — is essential if social defence is ever to become part of a change at the grassroots.

Another thing we did to spread the idea of social defence was to write and produce a broadsheet of some 3,000 words and many graphics. Four of us — Claire Runciman, Sky Hopkins, Frances Sutherland and I — wrote sections, commented on each other's work, solicited comments, arranged for typesetting, selected graphics, did the layout and arranged for printing.

In writing a broadsheet, we depended quite a lot on existing accounts, for example on Gene Sharp's classification of types of nonviolent action. We also became aware of some of the gaps and weak points in the arguments for social defence. In some areas — such as describing 'what people can do' — we were very much on our own. The standard writings say nothing about how to go about organising for social defence in local communities, factories and so forth.

The experience in collectively writing and producing a broadsheet was a valuable one, and worthwhile even though it meant a delay of some 6 months. Still, there were some difficulties. In particular, differences in



knowledge, experience and confidence were a problem. Having read more about social defence and having had more experience in writing, it was difficult for me to provide constructive comment without dominating the writing process. On the basis of these and other experiences, I think that inequalities of knowledge, experience and confidence are likely to remain a difficult problem for action groups. Group processes and activities need to be designed which encourage experienced and knowledgeable members to share their understanding and which encourage other members to actively participate and acquire skills. Some possibilities are egalitarian study groups, speaking or organising in pairs with one experienced person and one 'apprentice', and collective writing on topics which a less experienced writer knows most.

Until Canberra Peacemakers began promoting the idea, social defence was virtually unheard of in Australia. The broadsheet was very useful in raising the idea with potentially sympathetic people and groups, the first step towards wider awareness. We sent copies to antiwar groups around the country, and distributed copies at various conferences and meetings. The favourable response, including letters from various parts of the country, was very encouraging. It was apparent that many people were quite conscious of the lack of an alternative to military defence, and readily recognised the role of social defence in an antiwar strategy.

Besides publicising the *idea* of social defence, we also wanted to see what could be done to organise groups around social defence. How could preparation for social defence be made an integral part of the activities of a school, a food co-op, a trade union, telecommunications workers, or government office employees? Initially we decided we could only tackle one such project, and after some consideration we decided to approach workers at the community radio station 2XX.

We chose 2XX for several reasons. Radio played a big role in the Czechoslovak resistance to the Soviet invasion in 1968, and radio could play a key communications role in any military or political crisis in Australia. As a community radio station, 2XX allows and encourages community groups to run radio programmes. All those involved in the station learn how to operate the equipment, and can participate in station decision-making. Finally, one of our members, Sky Hopkins, ran a programme on 2XX, and we knew several others at the station.

We decided to hold a weekend workshop in December 1981 for members of Canberra Peacemakers, 2XX and for anyone else interested, to consider how members and supporters of 2XX could respond to a military or political emergency. We organised the weekend like a typical nonviolent action training exercise, using brainstorming, small group and large group discussions, role playing, games and evaluations. The highlight



of the weekend was a role playing simulation of a crisis in which the police came to shut down 2XX. The mix of Canberra Peacemakers familiar with social defence and workers at 2XX, some of whom were not convinced of the advantages of nonviolence, caused some problems, but generally the weekend went well. When we returned to our homes we heard on the radio of the military coup in Poland, and of the virtual blackout of news from that country!

At a later meeting, a sheet was drafted about how 2XX workers could respond to a political or military crisis. The final version of the sheet that resulted is presented here, with a few explanatory notes in square brackets for non-Australian readers.

### IN CASE OF POLITICAL OR MILITARY CRISIS

#### Suggestions for action at 2XX

(Canberra Peacemakers is an activist group working for peace and social change through grassroots nonviolent action. The following suggestions emerged from a weekend workshop in December 1981 involving members of Canberra Peacemakers, some 2XX workers and other interested people. The suggestions are for preparation and nonviolent action to keep 2XX operational during a crisis in which attempts might be made to close the station.)

#### Some possible crises

- 1) Elections or parliament are suspended indefinitely following a political coup (such as 1975). [In November 1975 the Governor-General — the representative of the Queen in Australia — turned the elected Labor government out of office and installed the opposition party, a move of dubious constitutionality. Elections were called shortly after, but the incident caused enormous political uproar.]
- 2) Police powers are greatly extended following an alleged (or real) terrorist attack or threat (eg after a Hilton bombing type incident). [In 1978, while a number of leaders of other countries were visiting Australia for official talks, a bomb exploded outside the Hilton Hotel in Sydney, killing three people. Emergency powers were invoked and troops called out. Responsibility for the explosion is yet to be made public.]
- 3) Martial law is declared after a nuclear attack on Pine Gap or some other military installation. [Pine Gap, Nurrungar and North West Cape are three highly important US military and intelligence

bases in Australia which are prime targets in the event of nuclear war.]

#### **Before the crisis**

- 1) Prepare and practise decision making procedures for a crisis, including how to handle rumours and infiltrators.
- 2) Prepare tapes about nonviolent resistance.
- 3) Promote community awareness of methods of nonviolent resistance through broadcasts, leaflets and training workshops (eg simulate defence of the station).
- 4) Forge links with unions, community groups, other media and particularly with CB operators. Strengthen the internal network of 2XX workers and supporters.
- 5) Broaden skills and knowledge about radio to provide technical backup (eg knowledge of the location of the land line). [A land line of several kilometres length connects the major 2XX studios with the 2XX transmitter.]

#### **During the crisis**

- 1) Broadcast accurate information about the crisis and about nonviolent methods of resistance such as strikes, demonstrations, boycotts and noncooperation with orders. Keep broadcasting as long as possible. (Use pre-recorded crisis tapes if available.)
- 2) Appeal for information on resistance activities and on activities of the aggressors. Invite resistance groups to broadcast.
- 3) Provide links between resistance groups and with other media centres. Coordinate resistance activities such as meetings and bans.
- 4) Liaise with Telecom workers [Telecom Australia is a government body which runs telecommunications], other media groups and CB radio groups to ensure continued transmission.
- 5) If the 2XX studio or transmitter is threatened: call for people to come to the station and to protect the land line and transmitter. Prepare studio evacuation if necessary. Record everything that's happening.

Produced by Canberra Peacemakers, GPO Box 1875, Canberra ACT 2601. Phone (062) 473064. February 1982

Our goal was to have this sheet posted in 2XX studios. Therefore we

attended the next general meeting of 2XX. After some attempts to remove our agenda item were thwarted, we were given an opportunity to present our request. Here is where our speaker training paid off. There was some hostility expressed to social defence and to our proposal. It was gratifying to us that a couple of 2XX workers who had attended the weekend workshop gave strong support for the proposal. A compromise motion allowed us to post up the sheet as we wished.

There are several lessons from our experience with 2XX. First, getting direct personal involvement in planning and preparation for social defence is much more effective than just communicating ideas. Involving 2XX workers in our workshop was a learning process for both those from Canberra Peacemakers and from 2XX. By comparison, when later we sent an account of the 2XX experiences and information about social defence to all community radio stations in Australia, the response was limited.

Second, we had not thought out a long term programme in relation to 2XX or other radio stations or media. After the 2XX general meeting and posting up our sheet, we did almost nothing to follow up this initiative. Part of our lack of follow-up was due to other projects — including the social defence broadsheet — and to severe internal conflicts in 2XX.

Third, the project with 2XX, although it involved a few 2XX workers, still depended too much on continuing initiative from Canberra Peacemakers. In addition, the main ideas for the workshop and the follow-up — namely, the simulation and the emergency sheet — came from the Peacemakers. For a social defence campaign to snowball, we needed to develop a campaign in which others would take the initiative.

Another project undertaken by Canberra Peacemakers was development of a leaflet about social defence specifically aimed at government employees. Canberra is the national capital of Australia, and a high percentage of its workforce are government bureaucrats, usually called 'public servants'. We organised in late 1982 a meeting to brainstorm ideas about how government employees could resist a political or military takeover. A number of public servants we knew said they were interested, but only two actually attended the meeting. (Those public servants who showed the most interest were ones who had previous experience in social action groups with methods or goals similar to those of Canberra Peacemakers.) From the results of the brainstorm we developed a draft leaflet, on which we solicited comments from public servants.

The idea behind the public service leaflet was to circulate copies to various government departments via friends, unions, and by handing them out. If the leaflet struck a resonant chord, public servants would take the initiative in distributing it. If not, we had not invested an overly large effort in producing the leaflet, so not too much was lost.

Production and distribution of the public servant leaflet did involve quite a few public servants. But a limitation of this project was that — like the 2XX project and the social defence broadsheet — most of the demand for knowledge and initiative fell on members of the Canberra Peacemakers. Also, production of a leaflet is mainly an intellectual exercise, and there was little opportunity for involvement of people using other skills.

The response to the public service leaflet was one of moderate interest by a few people in the public service. We had tried to make the leaflet relevant to public servants, but nonetheless we suspect the low interest was mainly due to the low perceived relevance of the issues raised to the day-to-day activities of public servants. To try to overcome this, we might have — but did not — linked distribution of the leaflet with other initiatives on social defence, such as organising seminars, putting motions at union meetings or running workshops. For us the leaflet was more a trial balloon than part of a more systematic approach to government bureaucrats.

Our next project was an attempt to overcome these limitations. We wanted to interest people in promoting social defence on their own terms, in ways that did not necessarily require a strong intellectual orientation. We decided to focus on local community groups and social movements in Canberra. If social defence is to be successful as part of a programme to change war-linked institutions, it will depend on grassroots understanding and involvement in nonviolent resistance. It seemed suitable to look at grassroots groups in developing, adapting and spreading the idea and practice of social defence.

We organised in April 1983 a one-day workshop, inviting individuals from several groups or movements in inner Canberra. The people approached included members of feminist groups, residential Christian communities, environmental and alternative technology groups and the gay community. In the workshop, people from four different areas met separately to work out the relation of social defence to their own group or movement and to develop a small project to promote social defence in their own way. At the workshop the groups presented their developing ideas and projects to other groups for feedback. Here are the four groups and how their projects fared:

- 1) Christian communities group. This group of eight or nine people from several residential Christian communities and social justice groups did not get to the stage of developing a project, since they felt they needed to learn more about social defence themselves. They resolved to do this, but without an organised procedure, nothing resulted in the short term. However, two members of this group have continued to be active in promoting peace issues in their Catholic community.

- 2) Screen printing collective. Three members of the Megalo screen

printing collective attended the workshop. They had already produced a poster about social defence, and they planned to continue producing further such posters. They also planned to establish a register of political artists, and this project has proceeded reasonably well.

3) Community self-reliance group. Half a dozen people involved with environmental issues developed a project to promote community self-reliance by surveying a small neighbourhood to find out people's capability and willingness to share resources and skills. The idea was to raise the idea of social defence in a local community context after some degree of community interaction had been fostered. This group became quite active in developing and pursuing their project, independently of Canberra Peacemakers.

The group developed and circulated a written questionnaire about growing and using food, willingness to join a co-op for bulk buying of goods, sharing transport, joining a babysitting group and sharing practical skills. There were only a few responses to the questionnaire. But a limited door-to-door follow-up showed that there was considerable interest from those who had not returned the questionnaire. So the group decided to hold a 'street party' to help people get to know each other better and to float some of the ideas about community self-reliance.

While this project stimulated more interest and action than any other, one problem was that promoting local community self-reliance is such a big task in itself that it is not very suitable as a preliminary to introducing social defence. One lesson is that, at least in the medium term, it will often be more effective to promote social defence in existing groups rather than to directly promote the community solidarity on which social defence thrives.

4) Peace movement group. Three of us arranged to conduct 'in depth' interviews about social defence with key people in the wider Canberra peace movement, to understand better what were perceived as its strengths and weaknesses. Those interviewed expressed differing perspectives and goals regarding peace and the peace movement. The major problems perceived concerning social defence were how it would work under severe repression, and how it could ever be implemented in the face of established and hostile social arrangements.

These projects are only examples of what might be done in beginning to relate social defence to the needs and campaigns of religious groups, artists, environmentalists, feminists, telecommunications workers, factory workers, office workers, computer programmers, suburban communities, gays, students, the unemployed and many others.

It is clear that in Canberra Peacemakers we are only in the early stages of promoting social defence. Our projects are on a small scale. They are



rather like experiments, allowing us to learn what approaches are successful and unsuccessful, both in terms of spreading ideas and encouraging action and in terms of generating enthusiasm within our own group.

Assuming that social defence becomes more widely understood and promoted in the future, there are a lot of unanswered questions about how a grassroots social defence movement would operate. There are many things groups could do: run workshops and simulations, compile inventories of relevant community resources, organise decision-making procedures for crisis situations, redesign technologies and social systems, practise controlling production in factories, and set up decentralised food distribution networks.

What should the priorities be? How much emphasis should be put on spreading ideas, and how much on practical involvement? How should social defence groups be coordinated? To what extent should social defence planning and preparation be undertaken within present social structures such as bureaucracies? To what extent should more radical social demands be involved, such as workers' control? The directions taken in the early stages of social defence organising, before mass involvement develops, will have a big impact on the organisation of social defence efforts on a larger scale. There are no simple or automatic answers. My own preference is to try and promote social defence in a way that retains those characteristics which most fundamentally challenge the roots of war, and in particular to keep social defence out of the hands of professionals and experts and keep it closely linked with other social movements.

There are many social movements with which social defence organising can usefully interact. Here I give a few examples.

**Community security.** One grassroots response to the problem of robbery, vandalism and violence against individuals in local communities is for people to establish or reestablish community networks for communication, information and mutual support. In places like Detroit where professional police are unable alone to stem the high level of street crime, associations of neighbours, by getting together, sharing information and making arrangements for observation and protection, have led to a greatly reduced incidence of local crime. Efforts towards social defence tie into such 'community policing' initiatives in several ways: in relying on and promoting community solidarity, in preparing to deter or resist potential violence, and in connecting personal and group security with collective local organisation. Similar connections can be found between social defence and the initiatives of feminist groups to increase the security of women against violence by 'taking back the streets'. (Of course, it is also



necessary to act against and provide alternatives to the deeper roots of street crime, including poverty, inequality and patriarchy.)

**Workers' control.** In a well-organised social defence programme, workers would be able and ready to shut down production. (Johan Galtung has reported the brilliant idea that factories could be designed so that vital and difficult-to-replace parts can be easily removed and if necessary destroyed, with duplicates kept in a safe place, perhaps in another country.) Workers should also be able to keep production going by themselves, and be able to produce different products if desired. The necessary shop-floor knowledge and decision-making procedures to enable this responsibility and capacity, and the preparation to be able to take independent action should management be forced or bribed into cooperating with an aggressor, means that workers would be much better prepared to resist exploitation, defend jobs and job skills, and promote greater worker control over what is produced and how workers are organised to do it. Indeed, in the workplace social defence and industrial democracy are natural partners. By the same token, many managers are likely to resist the industrial implications of social defence.

**Lesbians and gays.** In times of military domination and political repression, lesbians and gay men are often targets of repression. For example, in Nazi Germany, gays were one of the groups singled out and sent to concentration and death camps. Even in times when open declaration of homosexuality is less of a handicap, the possibility remains of a reversion to severe stigma and repression, or worse. Preparation for social defence can provide for lesbians and gays both nonviolent resistance skills and stronger links with other groups which would help to counter repression after an invasion, military takeover, or a sudden change of political climate.

Several people in Canberra have carefully considered the connection between gay issues and social defence, and have introduced these ideas to sections of the gay community. This has not been particularly easy, as they have encountered an underlying commitment to violence among many gay men, even though in practice violence has been used primarily against rather than in support of gay interests. In relation to violence and other issues, consideration of social defence can offer some thought-provoking perspectives for gay activists. In the other direction, involvement of gays is important to the success of social defence: to the extent that communities are divided along the lines of sexual preference, the community solidarity important for the success of social defence will be impaired. A similar connection can be found between social defence and community divisions along the lines of religion, race or lifestyle.

**Nonviolent action training.** Training in skills and attitudes for nonviolent social struggle — including training in consensus decision-making, developing strategies, group dynamics and nonviolent direct action — have been used in campaigns for example against racial oppression, nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Nonviolent action training is an important tool for preparing for social defence. Techniques standardly used in nonviolent action training can be used for drawing up community social defence plans, developing decision-making procedures for crisis situations, and providing role-playing experience.

Furthermore, use of nonviolent action training in other social campaigns provides experience highly relevant to social defence. In Canberra Peacemakers we have found that those people with experience in nonviolent action training and nonviolent direct action are the quickest to grasp the idea of and to sympathise with the goal of social defence. Clearly the social basis for social defence is being indirectly promoted by nonviolent action training and related activities in social movements.

### **Problems and limitations**

Social defence is not an automatic or easy road to a world without war. There are great difficulties facing a switch to social defence. Just raising the idea with friends is a good way to provide a taste of the possible range of objections, reservations and antagonisms facing acceptance of social defence even by those without a vested interest in military defence. Here I will discuss only some of the problems and limitations of social defence as part of a strategy to transform the roots of war, emphasising some of the sticky long-term issues rather than the standard objections.

**When violence erupts.** Nonviolent action is much more effective before a conflict reaches the stage of violence. Once violence erupts, it may seem too late for a nonviolent response. Just like military defence, social defence is a better solution when war is prevented rather than being fought. It is not surprising that some of the most persistent objections to social defence are along the lines "How could it possibly work against Hitler or Stalin?". Nonviolent resistance did have some successes against the Nazis. And it should be remembered that military means only succeeded against Nazi military might after one of the greatest mobilisations of human resources in history, and that military approaches did little to prevent or restrain Stalinism. It remains to be seen what social defence could do against such repressive regimes. But while comparisons are all very well, the problem remains that as a prescription for the problem of war, social defence is better as prevention than cure. One implication for antiwar strategy is to emphasise nonviolent deterrence and preparation for

social defence, and not to promise short-term successes before social defence is widely adopted.

**Scenarios.** In studying historical examples of nonviolent action and in preparing for social defence, there may be a tendency to study and prepare only for scenarios suited for the success of social defence. This is similar to the problem faced by military planners who are accused of preparing for the previous war. Social defence will be less attractive superficially, but tougher and more resilient, if it is developed with an eye towards the most difficult and challenging situations.

**What about El Salvador?** One of the most commonly raised problems with social defence is often voiced through the question "What about El Salvador?" or "What about Afghanistan?" or "What about East Timor?" or "What about Palestine?". Such questions refer to situations in severely repressive regimes — sometimes colonial-type occupations — in which an opposition movement is relying upon violent means. Usually it is assumed that the opposition movement is on the side of greatest justice or freedom. For example, violent liberation movements usually aim to remove exploitation by landlords and foreign capitalists.

The question "What about El Salvador?" does not explicitly raise any problems about social defence. But implicit in the question are several important reservations and criticisms about social defence.

First, El Salvador and other places like it are situations in which people are undergoing severe repression, often including murder, torture and other forms of state terrorism. As noted before, the problem of severe repression is one of the most commonly raised reservations about the effectiveness of social defence.

Second, in El Salvador and other places like it, resistance is being mounted against state repression. Social defence is often confused with passive resistance and so may seem at variance with actually occurring resistance.

Third, and most significantly, an important part of the resistance in El Salvador is violent. Social defence is nonviolent. There seems to be a conflict between supporting violent liberation struggles and supporting social defence. In particular, those who support violent liberation struggles may assume that support for social defence — or even the idea of social defence — is an implicit criticism of liberation struggles. Is this the case?

The differences between social defence and liberation struggles are not as great as might be thought at first. There is actually a considerable overlap in methods. Liberation struggles using violent methods almost always use nonviolent methods as well, ranging from ostracism, emigration, strikes, boycotts and other forms of noncooperation. Guerrilla warfare relies on

mobilising people at the grassroots, ensuring widespread participation in resistance, encouraging defections of enemy soldiers, implementing measures of social justice such as land redistribution, and building up alternative and more participatory social systems. All of these methods are quite in line with a grassroots strategy against war and would be important components in a social defence campaign. It is not for nothing that social defence is called the nonviolent analogue of guerrilla warfare. Where the approaches diverge is in the use of armed force by liberation movements.

Another consideration is the importance of resisting rather than not resisting. Gandhi and others have said that it is better to resist oppression violently than not to resist at all. Social defence advocates need to make it quite clear that they are not counselling nonresistance.

Nevertheless, there is still a degree of inevitable conflict between social defence and violent liberation movements. Social defence presents the basis for an alternative strategy for liberation: nonviolent liberation. To raise this possibility explicitly or implicitly is to raise doubts about the moral superiority of violent liberation movements. This is unacceptable to some of those who support those movements, who think that the methods adopted by these movements — because of the justice of their cause, because of the suffering of the people for whom liberation is sought, and because of the sacrifices made in the liberation struggle — should not be questioned by outsiders. In their view, solidarity and unanimity are required, and anything that threatens this is undesirable or dangerous.

I sympathise with the sentiments behind this line of thought, but disagree with the conclusion. Uncritical support for any movement is undesirable, in my opinion. Sympathetic criticism can be useful in eliminating poor tactics, broadening support, and considering new directions. Why should support for a courageous and difficult liberation struggle have to be unqualified and uncritical?

It should not be forgotten that violent liberation movements can be and have been responsible for murder, torture, exploitation, sexism, racism, and elitism. In many cases this can be explained if not justified by the repressive and regressive institutional frameworks in which social movements, no matter how progressive their goals, remain locked. The question is whether liberation movements should be openly criticised for any of their activities, since this often plays into the hands of the counter-revolutionary forces. I would agree that it is hard to know where to strike a balance in making criticisms. But I would argue that to avoid criticism altogether is to weaken the potential for true liberation in the long and often the short term.

Raising the possibility of social defence is not necessarily to criticise violent liberation movements. It should be seen as another option, for

careful and open consideration. Raising an option does not force people to adopt it, or necessarily imply criticism of them if they do not adopt it.

On the other hand, advocates of social defence need to be careful not to condemn out of hand violent liberation struggles. Social defence needs to be developed, prepared for, implemented, tested and shown to be effective in helping oppose oppression and repression. Until then, it is only to be expected that other methods, including violent methods, will be used.

**Destabilisation.** Another criticism is that a successful social defence campaign could have a destabilising effect on the usual military 'balance'. For example, a community that developed social defence preparations and threatened to reduce its military defence might thereby invite attack. Of course, this accusation will be laid against social defence by those who oppose it. Attack against a region switching to social defence may in reality become more likely because of the perceived social and political dangers to state and military elites. This would be similar to the attacks made on those practising alternative lifestyles – for example, police raids on rural communes.

One good way to help prevent such attacks would be to try to involve people from all sections of society in moving towards social defence, including people in the military, the police and the government. This would help reduce the threat from antagonistic groups within a society. To help reduce the threat from without, considerable attention would need to be devoted to communicating information about social defence to potential antagonists and to the general population in the areas hosting the antagonistic forces, and also building up capacities for social attack. The threat from without would be reduced to the extent that social defence is developed in several regions simultaneously, rather than being an isolated phenomenon.

**Opposition and cooption.** Energy efficiency and small-scale decentralised use of renewable energy sources is the 'soft energy path' alternative to large-scale centralised energy production. The powerful corporate and government interests which promote the latter 'hard energy path' can pursue one or both of two methods of dealing with the 'soft path' initiative: opposition or cooption.

Opposition means pressing ahead with large-scale use of nuclear power, coal and petroleum fuels, overriding citizen protests, and squashing attempts to promote a soft energy path. Cooption has taken the form of allowing or encouraging moves towards energy efficiency and renewable energy utilisation at an individual or local level within the framework of present institutions, funding of renewable energy technology research and development – usually the more technologically sophisticated forms – by



corporations and governments, and maintaining the infrastructure of large-scale energy production and use. Cooption thus involves accepting some of the technological features of the alternative, such as increasing energy conservation in vehicles and buildings. At the same time, the structural basis for large-scale centralised control of energy is maintained: road transport and conventional urban planning, military expenditure, planned obsolescence, and centralised production for mass consumption of individualised commodities (including solar hot water heaters and energy-efficient refrigerators). The result of cooption of the soft energy path is a combination of soft energy and hard politics.

Strategies of opposition and cooption can be found in the responses by government and industry to many social movements, including the labour, feminist and environmental movements.

Campaigns for social defence are likely to be ignored or treated benignly when they are small. Once they reach a significant size organisationally or ideologically, opposition or cooption or both are likely to be encountered. Opposition is the less difficult problem from a strategic point of view: it is easy to recognise, and the techniques of social defence themselves are ideally designed for dealing with it. Coopting responses are likely to appear on the surface to be tolerance or support. They might include:

- \* acceptance of social defence as a component of national defence;
- \* organisation of social defence by military or government planners or trainers;
- \* setting up of a state-funded social defence training school;
- \* compulsory state-run training in social defence techniques;
- \* involvement of leading social defence figures in planning national defence.

These possibilities are not necessarily undesirable in themselves. The danger in them is that the key characteristics of social defence for challenging the roots of war — including widespread participation, community rather than just national defence, and links with social movements — may be compromised or obscured. Both the long-term overcoming of the problem of war and the long-term effectiveness of social defence are jeopardised if these coopting responses are accepted as a substitute for a more radical programme of social defence.

**Left groups.** Marxist groups in the West which still have some long-term aspiration for seizing state power — such as Trotskyist groups like the International Socialists — are likely to be among those groups most hostile to social defence. (Certainly this is what is suggested by experiences in Canberra Peacemakers in presenting social defence to other groups.) This is because such militant groups want to retain the legitimacy of using violence to capture state power. This would cause no special problem except that



these groups often are heavily involved in Western peace and other social movements, especially when the demands of these movements begin to develop mass support. Most Western Marxist groups accept nonviolence as a tactical measure, but are not attracted to movements premised on nonviolence.

One danger is that militant left groups might attempt to manipulate the mass mobilisation made possible by a successful programme of social defence or nonviolent action, especially if they could convince people with the claim that while nonviolent methods had taken a campaign to a certain point, "now it is necessary to use violence to go further". To help prevent these and other possible problems, a broad understanding of the principles of nonviolent action is vital to prevent manipulation of social movements from the top. Also important is dialogue with members of militant left groups, both to communicate the principles of social defence to them and also to learn from their perspectives.

**Decentralisation and guerrilla warfare.** The use of violent methods to promote revolutionary goals in modern urbanised and industrialised societies is a futile exercise, as argued by Martin Oppenheimer in *The Urban Guerilla* and shown by the counterproductive terrorism of the Red Brigades and the Irish Republican Army. In a society with a high division of labour, centralised production and powerful military and police forces, there is no secure geographical or occupational base for a people's movement to stage a violent revolution. Successes of revolutionary guerrilla warfare have usually occurred when there is a considerable degree of local self-sufficiency due to lack of industrialisation (as in the cases of the victories by Chinese and Vietnamese communists) or favourable geographical conditions (as in the Yugoslavian resistance to the Nazis).

The conditions in modern industrialised societies suggest that social defence is likely to be a more effective alternative to conventional military defence than is guerrilla warfare. But if in moving towards community-based social defence, changes towards decentralisation and self-sufficiency in economic and political organisation were made, this could also lay the basis for more effective guerrilla warfare! Would this necessarily be a bad thing?

**Openness.** A campaign for social defence resolutely based on grassroots organising and involvement may avoid problems of cooption only to fall into another trap: the development of a closed shop of social defence planners. The danger is that social defence organisers may think that they and the community they are organising have all the answers, and not approach potentially hostile groups for criticism and exchange of ideas.

People are more likely to commit themselves to defend a community to

the extent it is worth defending: to the extent that it is just, equal, free, prosperous, secure and stimulating to live in. Such a society is unlikely to be dogmatic and closed to contrary ideas. Similarly, campaigners for social defence need to encourage openness to the ideas of others about social defence.

Canberra Peacemakers made approaches to the Department of Defence in Canberra to talk to individuals potentially interested in social defence. There are only a few people in the Department involved in long-term planning and willing to even think about such alternatives. But talking to such individuals, as we have done, is very valuable in overcoming prejudices, learning about other points of view, and also in helping us focus on inadequacies in our campaigns or presentation of social defence.

Especially in early stages of promoting social defence, when aims and methods are being clarified, there is much to be gained by contact with people with greatly different views and values. There is potential strength in being vulnerable to other ideas.

There is another important reason for promoters of social defence to keep channels of information open with elites and potentially hostile groups. Roland Vogt pointed out to me that one reason the Czechoslovakian government leaders in 1968 did not put up a stronger resistance to Soviet government demands is that they did not realise the strength and impact of the nonviolent resistance happening in their own country: it seemed to them that there was no real resistance. Even if few elites will help promote social defence, keeping them aware of its potential and of community preparedness to undertake it can at times be vital in helping them react in a more knowledgeable way in crises. This could be either to support grassroots nonviolent resistance against external aggressors or to restrain attacks against nonviolent resisters at home.

**Confrontation versus cooperation.** Social defence by its nature is confrontationist. It assumes the existence of social conflict and provides nonviolent rather than violent means for dealing with it. In many cases confrontation cannot be avoided and social defence is entirely appropriate. But a confrontationist method sometimes can obscure the possibility of cooperative resolutions. In the hypothetical long term when social defence has superseded military defence throughout the world, will structures for waging social defence pose an obstacle towards moving further towards a cooperative future? To the extent that social defence is fully participatory and linked with other social movements, it should be more of a help than a hindrance towards creating a cooperative society.

**The wrong goal.** Social defence is not a 'neutral tool': to be effective it both requires and fosters equality, participation and community solidarity.

Nonetheless, the use of social defence, social attack and, more generally, nonviolent action, does not *automatically* make a group's cause morally superior. Social defence can be used to defend 'the wrong goal'. For example, the aims of the Ku Klux Klan would not become more acceptable if they were promoted only by nonviolent methods. Moral fervour may be made more effective when backed by nonviolent methods, but it may also expand out of touch with original constructive goals. To be sure, nonviolence is usually better than violence when pursuing the wrong goal, since harm and suffering are minimised. But nonviolence is not an automatic road to truth.

A related problem is knowing what balance to strike between social defence as a pragmatic protection of the status quo and as part of a programme for challenging oppression and injustice. In using nonviolent methods against the Kapp Putsch and the Algerian Generals' Revolt, people were united in defending political systems against a turn for the worse: military takeover. This is an important aspect of social defence, one which potentially can mobilise wide sections of the population. In linking social defence with social movements such as feminism, environmentalism and workers' control, activists and members of those movements may be mobilised but some support for social defence as defence of the status quo may be lost. What is the best way to reconcile these two roles of social defence?

**Transition problems.** How will mass expansion of preparedness to use social defence occur? What happens after the idea becomes popular? How is social defence to be institutionalised? How are decisions to be made in a large social defence network? What are military workers to do? (Be unemployed? Be social defence activists? Be trained in social defence as part of military training?) Who will handle negotiations with government and military elites in struggles to switch from military to social defence? These and other unanswered questions show that the development of social defence is at a stage where much more analysis, discussion and practical experience is needed.

---

## Peace conversion

---

Peace conversion means changing from military production to production for nonmilitary uses. Equipment used to produce bullets is adapted to produce nails. Scientists designing missiles turn to designing mass transit systems. Machinists making military aerospace components switch to making heating systems for the poor. Psychological warfare experts turn their attention to helping people learn how to recognise and resist propaganda.

It is not enough to assert that an alternative to military production exists. A way of moving towards this alternative needs to be spelled out as well.

Peace conversion involves carefully analysing the material and human resources involved in war-related production, formulating an alternative use of these resources, and making the shift towards the alternative. Peace conversion focusses on transformation away from war, overcoming the fixation on the horrors of the present and the seeming idealism of long-term alternatives.

Not everything can or should be converted for nonmilitary uses. There are some facilities and products of the war system which must be abolished or destroyed, such as supplies of napalm, skills in torture and plutonium factories.

Peace conversion as a concept and as a practice has several characteristics which are subversive of the roots of war.

**Questioning of production.** The concept of peace conversion invites searching scrutiny of current priorities of production. If military production and related activities are to be questioned, then why not question other harmful or wasteful practices such as planned obsolescence, promotion of cigarettes and other harmful drugs, mass advertising, centralised energy production, high-technology curative medicine, and stultifying schooling and working conditions? The idea of peace conversion challenges the myth that the economic system, whether the economy works on alleged market principles or by bureaucratic planning, is automatically beneficial. In its place is put the idea that workers and members of local communities should be directly involved in deciding on economic priorities.

Just as important as the concept of conversion is the practical experience

gained in conversion campaigns: experience in analysing economic production, formulating alternative directions, mobilising support and confronting vested interests. This experience cannot help but provide support to and gain strength from other social movements seeking changes in political, economic and social priorities.

**Worker-community control.** Peace conversion is a natural component of campaigns for worker and community control of production. The key roots of war — including bureaucracy, military establishments, and states — are forms of social organisation which channel power into the hands of elites. Worker and community control involves workers and members of relevant communities actively participating in, controlling and implementing decisions about how production should be organised, including both economic production and the wider supports for it such as child care, schooling, medical care and consumption of goods. Worker-community control thus presents a fundamental alternative to and fundamental challenge to the hierarchical structures underlying war.

The goal of and struggles for worker and community control lay the basis for successful peace conversion. And the goal of and struggle for peace conversion contribute to the extension of worker and community control.

**Spreading of skills.** Conversion of military production to less harmful production is aided by the spreading of knowledge and skills in how to dismantle and reconstruct production systems, and also the products such as bombs already made. Military preparations depend to a fair extent on secrecy in areas such as weapons design and intelligence information. There is also an extensive division of labour, from the computer specialists designing missile trajectory programmes to the machinists making missile components. Only a few top planners can gain a comprehensive picture of military production. The spread of skills in questioning, analysing and redesigning production systems helps undermine the power of elites that is strengthened by secrecy and the technical division of labour.

The spreading of knowledge and skills is a strong support for peace conversion. Once workers and communities know what is happening, know about alternatives and know how to make the change, they are ready for direct intervention to change production systems, for example by directly shutting down military production and setting up for nonmilitary production.

More widely, preparation for peace conversion can be seen as part of wider preparation for running the economy at the level of local communities. This preparation can be the basis for a campaign to change the economy, or serve as a reserve capacity for self-managing production to be invoked in a social crisis. Learning how to run the economy clearly is a



threat to the power of economic and political elites and hence to the war system. Of course, to prepare to run the economy in a more locally self-reliant way requires considerable preparation and also models of alternative economic and political organisation, which as yet are not well developed.

**People's disarmament.** Even if governments were to agree to completely disarm and major steps were made towards this goal, the whole process could be undermined by one or more governments hiding a few key weapons, nuclear weapons for example. The possibility of such recalcitrance is routinely invoked as an excuse for not disarming in the first place. Furthermore, even if complete disarmament were achieved, current and future knowledge in weapons construction — for example, possible breakthroughs in laser enrichment of uranium for making nuclear weapons — would mean that even small governments or non-government groups could produce powerful weapons secretly.

The conventional solution to this problem is inspection. Yet the usual degree of inspection envisaged would not be enough to uncover a few hidden nuclear weapons or to prevent the manufacture of biological weapons in ostensibly nonmilitary research laboratories. But if inspection systems were powerful and pervasive enough to thwart such problems, the inspection operation would be the equivalent of a powerful secret police.

The alternative to inspection by outsiders is people's inspection and people's disarmament. Everyone in every context would be responsible for making sure that previous weapons were dismantled and that no new weapons were produced. Anyone becoming aware of weapons or weapons production would as a matter of course notify others and help organise community action to expose and stop this. People's inspection and disarmament would need to become a common and well-established social expectation, voluntarily undertaken, rather like support for relatives or neighbours during natural disasters. This approach has the great advantage that the people cannot readily be bought off or fooled, unlike small contingents of official inspectors.

The reality of people's inspection and disarmament is a long-term goal. It would require considerable erosion of knowledge barriers embodied in professional specialisation, otherwise for example a small group of technologists could possibly hide a weapons project. And clearly people's disarmament would be difficult to sustain in the face of repressive state force: social defence would need to be well advanced.

People's inspection and disarmament is a natural extension of peace conversion. The capabilities, participation and motivation for these processes are very similar.

### Relevant experiences

Is peace conversion possible in a technical sense? Can machinery and skills be redirected without massive expense and disruption? The answer to these questions is yes, according to the evidence. Both at the beginning and ends of wars, national economies — for example the United States economy before and after World War Two — have shown a remarkable capacity to retool for different products in a short period of time. The major obstacles to peace conversion are not technical but political in the widest sense, namely the vested interests of corporations and state bureaucracies in particular types of production.

The idea of peace conversion has a long history, as the slogan 'from swords into ploughshares' suggests. Typically, peace conversion has been presented as a demand by peace movements, bolstered by logically argued cases prepared by sympathetic researchers. The limitation of presenting peace conversion as a demand is that conversion is seen as something implemented from the top, in particular by governments. The idea seems to be that once a government agrees with the necessity or desirability of disarmament, then peace conversion plans will be brought out of closets and used in implementing the government's programme, thereby minimising economic disruption. At the same time, peace conversion plans serve to discredit some of the excuses offered for not disarming, namely that the economic disruption would be great and that the economy depends on war production for stability.

Peace conversion as a logically argued case and as a demand presented to governments is fine as far as it goes, but as I have argued in chapter 1, it is futile to expect more than superficial changes towards eradicating the structures underlying war to be implemented by those in the elite positions within those structures. Furthermore, by concentrating on the narrow economic logic of peace conversion — an economic logic which is closely tied to prevailing institutions — many of the characteristics of peace conversion most subversive of the roots of war tend to be avoided or glossed over. In particular, by focussing on peace conversion implemented from the top, the connections with worker-community control, spreading of knowledge and skills, and people's disarmament are submerged.

To have some chance of success in the long term, peace conversion needs to be developed as a grassroots campaign that involves workers and local community members in planning for, preparing for and implementing conversion. Several initiatives around the globe are beginning to show what is possible in this direction.

The University of California Nuclear Weapons Laboratories Conversion Project (UCNWLCP) was one example. This organisation focussed on the two United States nuclear weapons design laboratories, Lawrence Livermore

National Laboratory and Los Alamos National Laboratory, both nominally under the supervision of the University of California. The UCNWLCP was based in the San Francisco region in which the Livermore lab is located. It had a small but active membership, and drew support from several local organisations such as the War Resisters League. The UCNWLCP researched the activities of the nuclear weapons labs and the skills of their workers, and formulated a set of suggestions for nonmilitary use of the facilities and skills found in the labs. Its activities generated a considerable amount of publicity and drew attention to the role of the lab managements in opposing a comprehensive nuclear weapons test ban treaty and in fostering technological initiatives which stimulate the nuclear arms race.

In 1981 the UCNWLCP in effect disbanded, and a new group, the Livermore Action Group (LAG), was quickly formed with many of the same people and some new ones. Many of the efforts of the UCNWLCP are being continued by the LAG, but with much more emphasis on large-scale demonstrations and civil disobedience. There have been several demonstrations with thousands of people, and over 1000 people were arrested in a civil disobedience action in 1983. These efforts are aimed at directing public attention and mobilising people against the weapons labs. One reason for the shift from the UCNWLCP approach to the emphasis on direct action by the LAG was a feeling that under the Reagan administration conversion was an unrealistic goal, at least in terms of being achieved by means of research, persuasion and publicity. But within the LAG there has been considerable discussion about the emphasis to be placed in civil disobedience and the emphasis to be placed on community organising and developing political skills and understanding.

In Toronto, Canada, the Cruise Missile Conversion Project (CMCP) has been pushing for the conversion of the Litton Industries plant in nearby Roxdale, which produces guidance systems for cruise missiles. The core of the CMCP is an affinity group of 8 members which operates by consensus procedures, sharing of all tasks, sharing of feelings, and discouragement of hierarchy and especially of domination of men over women. Members of the group have regularly distributed leaflets to workers at the Litton plant, have spoken at public meetings and done door-to-door canvassing in the neighbourhood. With the support of other groups, the CMCP has organised rallies of up to a thousand people, and also organised civil disobedience actions focussed against the plant.

Both the UCNWLCP/LAG and the CMCP are good examples of peace conversion campaigns. Both have questioned the economic and human priorities embodied in military research and production. Both have seen the necessity of gaining the support of at least some workers in weapons labs or factories, although this has been one of their greatest difficulties.

It has been a great advantage to the UCNWLCP/LAG that a few researchers at Livermore have taken a public stand against some of the priorities and activities of the labs. For quite a few years the only Livermore researcher to do this was Hugh DeWitt. Because of his outspokenness, DeWitt has come under severe pressure from Livermore management, and it is probably only because of the many individuals and groups in the wider community that support him that he has not been sacked.

DeWitt is an exception: he is one of the very few Livermore workers sympathetic to conversion. Both the UCNWLCP/LAG and the CMCP have tried to encourage the establishment of networks of supporters of peace conversion inside the weapons labs or factories. And they have sought advice from workers in developing their campaigns. But the degree of active support from inside the labs and factories for peace conversion has been low. Before looking at some of the reasons for this, another example is worth some discussion.

Lucas Aerospace in Britain is a large corporation whose main production item is aerospace components. In the mid 1970s, shop stewards at Lucas Aerospace were apprehensive about major cutbacks to the workforce. The shop stewards had come together from 13 different trade unions and 15 different sites in Britain to form the Lucas Aerospace Combine Shop Stewards' Committee, which had had some success earlier in opposing retrenchments. The Combine adopted a strategy of drawing up an alternative corporate plan, to protect jobs and job skills and involving a shift to production of more socially useful products such as road-rail vehicles, heat pumps and devices for remote handling rather than components for military aircraft. The alternative corporate plan was developed by the Combine with the involvement of many workers in collating information on skills and equipment and in contributing ideas on alternative products. Implementation of the alternative corporate plan has been resolutely opposed by Lucas management: the plan clearly represents a threat to their power and prerogatives. In addition, little support for the alternative plan has come either from the Labour Party (when it was in government) or the trade union hierarchy.

The Lucas Aerospace workers' initiatives have been widely publicised and have been highly influential in stimulating similar initiatives in many other parts of the world. The Lucas experience is well described and analysed in *The Lucas Plan* by Hilary Wainwright and Dave Elliott. Here I only raise a few points in relation to peace conversion.

The alternative corporate plan for Lucas Aerospace has been presented as a logical argument: as a way to protect jobs and job skills and to provide social benefits. As part of the bargaining package, the plan included profitable socially useful products as well as non-profitable but socially



useful products; the Combine was basically interested in 'social profitability', not narrow corporate profitability. It is not surprising that taking the plan to Lucas management — the elite group with the greatest vested interest in the status quo — led nowhere. Taking the plan to other elites — government elites or trade union bosses — has fared only a little better. The plan has received the greatest acclaim and support from community groups, especially the peace movement and the alternative technology movement. This experience adds support to the approach of promoting peace conversion through grassroots campaigns rather than by appeals to elites.

In each of the three examples above, a key priority of the main organising group has been to gain some support from workers. The ideological task is probably hardest at the nuclear weapons labs, since most scientists identify themselves as professionals and resist organising for collective action but instead do their technical work for whoever is the paymaster. In addition, professional scientists typically have more years of schooling and are more conditioned to bureaucratic environments and operating within the system as it exists. For the factory workers at Litton Industries at Rexdale, there is likely to be more responsiveness to attempts to organise for conversion. The primary obstacle there is jobs and livelihoods: a serious obstacle indeed. In both these cases, the primary initiative has had to come from outside groups.

The shop stewards who have promoted the alternative corporate plan for Lucas Aerospace also have made gaining support from workers a top priority. Their efforts have been more successful than elsewhere. Partly this is because the Lucas workers are highly skilled and involved in small batch production, giving them both relative freedom at work and solidarity. This has meant they were more able to envisage and carry out a conversion plan. But most importantly, the plan was established and was always designed to protect the workers' jobs. In many ways the Lucas workers were in an especially favourable situation for supporting a conversion initiative. By comparison, the workers at Livermore and Litton Industries quite reasonably see conversion as a threat to their jobs: if military production is cut back, retrenchment rather than conversion is more likely. (Ironically, the threat of retrenchments at Lucas receded when British military aircraft production picked up in the late 1970s.) Another problem is the lower level of worker solidarity and union radicalism in North America compared to Britain and other European countries.

But even if significant numbers of workers at Livermore or Litton Industries were to support conversion plans, what next? The lesson of the Lucas plan is that more is needed than worker and community support. Most management and governments will oppose conversion, and they have an array of methods to help them do so, including stalling, dismissals of



key activists (as in the case of Mike Cooley at Lucas Aerospace), harassment, use of spies and provocateurs, transfer of production, and shutting down production. Here are some possible directions for campaigns on peace conversion.

**Making alternative products.** Instead of waiting to convince elites to implement conversion, workers or communities could go ahead and start making the alternative products both inside and outside existing factories. If done carefully and competently, this could serve as a demonstration of the viability of the alternative, and at the same time mobilise those involved in practical activity that challenges military production. Lucas workers did a bit of this in developing prototypes of some of the products which they had proposed in the alternative corporate plan. But this could be carried much further, by trying to develop a regular programme of alternative production, even if on a small scale. Of course such a programme would come under heavy attack from managers and governments. But if developed, it would have the great advantage of being a going enterprise that had to be attacked, rather than being prevented from being implemented. That is the advantage held by military production presently. It is also the reason why antiwar movements are more successful in opposing new initiatives in the arms race (such as the antiballistic missile) than in opposing established weapons and in shutting down existing production facilities.

**Spreading knowledge.** Knowledge about production processes is presently monopolised by managers and hired technical experts. This knowledge includes knowledge about the technical organisation of production, personnel management practices, criteria for investment decisions, contracts and other interactions with corporations and governments, and marketing arrangements. Collecting and making this knowledge available to workers and members of local communities would be a vital advance in challenging military production. The knowledge could be used to challenge prevailing patterns of production, to plan alternatives, and to develop tactics taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of management. For workers or outsiders to gain knowledge normally restricted to management often shows the incompetence or superfluosity of management, and gives confidence to workers and communities to challenge managerial prerogative. Spreading knowledge is also essential to developing a participatory challenge to military production.

**Preparation for direct disarmament.** If people's disarmament is to occur, then it must be prepared for. This means learning about how weapons and weapons factories can be disabled (as well as converted) and about the likely methods that would be used by elites to oppose this. It means spreading information about direct disarmament not only at home but also

in 'enemy' countries. It means organising groups to be ready to undertake these tasks. The requirements would not be very great. Disconnecting power circuits or if necessary smashing vital machinery will often be the most that is required, and wrenches, screwdrivers and wooden sticks may be the only equipment needed.

The opportunity to carry out direct disarmament would probably not arise except in exceptional circumstances, such as conditions favouring social revolution. But the preparation itself would be valuable in focussing attention on the requirements for people's disarmament and in challenging the sacredness of military facilities. Of course, this sort of activity would be ruthlessly opposed and claimed to be spying and subversion against the 'national interest'. The extreme response to the Berrigans and others who have taken token but nevertheless unmistakably direct action against military equipment is indicative. This response is also indicative of how important it is to elites that workers and communities restrict their antiwar activities to verbal dissent and symbolic action.

**Taking over production.** If conversion is not implemented from the top, then it will come about through people's direct action to take over and convert production. Peace conversion campaigns can aim to provide information and stimulate organisation and initiative for the long-term aim of direct action to take over production. As in the case of direct disarmament, this is likely to happen only in a crisis situation. But organising with this possibility in mind is a good way to move in a direction which provides maximum challenge to the roots of war.

### **Difficulties and limitations**

Peace conversion, though simple in conception, must confront a number of theoretical and practical difficulties. Here a few of these are outlined.

**Limited involvement.** Peace conversion has had the most appeal in areas where obvious and major military-related production is taking place. In regions far from major military production, such campaigns may seem much less relevant. Another problem arises in areas totally dominated by military production, where the social basis for opposition is weak. The community-based UCNWCLP/LAG campaign is based in the San Francisco metropolitan area, near the Livermore lab. In Los Alamos, a small town dominated by employment in the Los Alamos lab, no strong community-based campaign is evident. By the same token, the parts of peace conversion campaigns involving community action and support are vulnerable to geographical removal of military production or military installations to remote regions.



**Worker vulnerability.** Workers involved in conversion efforts are very vulnerable to reprisals. Hugh DeWitt is an exception in being able to speak out and retain his job in spite of low support for his position within Livermore. In many cases outspoken or socially active workers will simply be fired unless they have the strong support of the whole factory, workshop or lab staff. In some cases even whole workplaces can be dismissed. There is a need for:

- \* willingness and preparation to support individual dissenters who are victimised;

- \* means for workers to support conversion efforts without becoming too vulnerable, such as by low-key liaison with outside activists and by collective action on the job;

- \* preparedness of workers in other factories or industries to take industrial action to support victimised workers.

**The alleged necessity of military production.** Peace conversion campaigns are usually based on an argument for disarmament, and thus are vulnerable to attack based on real or alleged military threats from enemies and all other arguments against disarmament. This can be partly overcome by linking peace conversion with social defence. Social defence plans and preparations would give workers and local communities knowledge and skills for pursuing nonviolent action campaigns towards peace conversion. And peace conversion plans and campaigns would provide the basis for converting military production once social defence became a well planned and prepared method for resistance.

**Work organisation.** Peace conversion campaigns usually focus on what is being produced: missile components or bomb designs rather than insulation or models for participatory town planning. There is a danger that conversion of *what* is produced will not be accompanied by conversion of *how* things are produced. Will workers continue to work in narrow roles under the arbitrary authority of managers and bureaucratic planners? Or will they be involved in collectively organising their own tasks and deciding on production methods and priorities? How things are produced is vitally important. Indeed, the present control over the form and content of work by a small elite of managers and planners is a feature of the inequitable political and economic structures which underlie modern war.

**Jobs.** Jobs are a key to peace conversion: the need to maintain employment can be either an obstacle or an incentive to development of conversion plans. But the very idea of a job — paid work under someone else's direction — is part of the problem of unequal political and economic power. The idea of a job, as distinguished from the idea of work, assumes bosses or some other form of control from the top. To develop plans for

conversion which maintain jobs does not challenge the roots of war sufficiently. What is needed is formulation of a different way of distributing the output of the economic system to those who need it, and a different way by which people can contribute their labour. The basic model favoured by peace conversion advocates usually involves greater state participation in economic processes, but this holds little potential for overcoming war, since states are a central part of the war system. What is required is grassroots economics: coordination of economic production and distribution by the workers and communities. Relatively little work has been done on what this means in practice.

**Human needs.** Peace conversion is commonly said to be conversion of military production to production for human needs. But what are human needs, and who decides what they are? This is not a trivial question. Food, housing, transport and communications are among commonly accepted human needs. But there are many ways to provide food, ranging from locally grown vegetables to factory farming of animals involving high inputs of grains, energy and antibiotics. One criticism of the Lucas Aerospace workers' plan is that the alternative products, although more socially useful than aerospace components, still fall in the mould of high technology: kidney machines rather than changes in diet to prevent kidney disease, more efficient and versatile motors and vehicles rather than new modes of town planning.

It would be rather unfair to expect the Lucas workers to come up with a plan that leaps abruptly into an alternative future involving local self-reliance in health, education, food and energy. The Lucas workers, after all, necessarily began with their own skills and resources, and for political reasons chose to present a plan that, while moving towards an alternative future, has credibility within the present economic system. The implication for peace conversion is that conversion is not a one-step process. By necessity it will have to be a continual conversion, not stopping at removal of only that production which is overtly military.

The peace movement slogan 'Fund human needs' is nice rhetoric which covers over a host of difficulties. Do advertising, professional sports, banking and air travel count as human needs? Whose needs should be funded: poor people in the Third World, poor people in rich countries, or also the well-to-do? Who provides the funds: corporations, governments or local communities? All these questions need to be answered in the course of developing peace conversion campaigns.

**Infrastructure.** Guns, nuclear weapon designs and missile components are products useful for military purposes. But products are only the symptoms. The roots of war are the structures which give rise to military

products, including political and economic inequality and injustice which is closely associated with modern industry, bureaucracy, science and technology. Peace conversion tends to focus more on obviously military production and less on the root structures which lead to military production. The danger is that peace conversion — if promoted or carried out while ignoring worker-community control and other critical aspects — could leave intact the infrastructure of industrial production and bureaucratic administration.



---

## Self-management

---

To develop a strategy to overcome a social problem, it is useful to have a clear analysis of the present situation and a picture of alternative social arrangements which do not give rise to the problem. A strategy is then formulated to move from the present towards the desirable future.

The formulation of alternative institutional structures is not a trivial matter, nor can their development be left to an afterthought. Many social struggles depend extensively on opposition: opposition to nuclear weapons, to hazardous chemicals, to sexism, to exploitation of workers. This opposition can achieve a lot. But such opposition can leave the driving forces behind the problems unaltered, and the same problem may persist or a different problem emerge. If an alternative to the underlying cause of the problem is provided, then campaigns against it have more credibility and direction and also an increased chance of eventual success.

In the case of the problem of modern war, I would argue that the most important driving forces are political and economic inequality, especially as these are embodied in institutions such as bureaucracy, the military, the state and the administrative class. The question then arises, what is an alternative to these institutions that does not give rise to war? In this chapter I describe one important alternative, characterised by the term self-management.

First I will list some characteristics of self-management, then discuss the possibility and experience of self-management and how self-management fits into campaigns for social change, and finally mention some problems confronting the self-management alternative.

### Characteristics of self-management

Self-management refers to forms of social organisations in which people collectively and individually have a great deal of control over the things which affect their lives. Most people are familiar with self-management in some aspect of their lives. For example, I play in an amateur woodwind quintet — flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn — which we call 'Windpower'. As five individuals with individual lives and interests, we get together because we enjoy playing as a group and occasionally performing. No one forces us to play in Windpower, though by participating we make

an implicit commitment to the others to practise our parts, to come to rehearsals which we arrange, and generally not to let the others down.

The group is self-managing to the extent that everyone has an opportunity to contribute towards decisions about what music we play, when and how often we rehearse, who we perform for, who fills a vacancy in the group and so forth. This means that no single individual or other subset of the group is allowed to determine decisions unilaterally or otherwise dominate the others in the group.

This does not mean that everyone in the group must be identical in personality or musical ability. Far from it! For example, Mary may have suggestions or strong opinions about interpretation of a piece of music. The rest of us may accept her judgement or disagree with it. Even if we think Mary's views are based on more experience or sensitivity in many cases, and accept her views for that reason, we do not therefore give her any automatic or permanent control over decisions. The implicit principle for decision-making is consensus based on respect for each other's skills, views, experience and individuality.

By comparison with small amateur chamber music groups, the degree of self-management in many other musical groups is much less. In most professional orchestras, participation in decisions about selection of players, style of rehearsals, choice of music and many other things is more restricted than in Windpower. In orchestras it is common for a small group of leading players, or a management committee, or the conductor alone, to make the most important decisions without much input from others. The same pattern prevails in most government bureaucracies, corporations, political parties and professional bodies. Participation by most members is infrequent, formal, non-interactive and limited in scope. This is just the opposite of a self-managing group.

Self-management should not be considered in isolation from wider structures in society, which may limit or expand the self-determination of small groups. In Windpower, we can choose what to play from chamber music published around the world. But in many countries with authoritarian governments, particular types of music are banned for political reasons, not to mention restrictions on theatre, painting and literature. In Windpower, we can choose which opportunities for performance we wish to request and accept, such as the fund-raising 'Anti-uranium Ball' where we first played publicly. In many countries such association with political activities would lead to harassment.

Our own tastes and abilities restrict the interest that others have in hearing us, but opportunities also are affected by the availability of venues, competition from professional musicians and the support for or hostility to us by influential figures. For us as an amateur group happy to play for

small audiences, these obstacles are not too great. But for individual performers hoping to play in the orchestra or opera, getting offside with influential figures in the amateur or professional music scene can lead to the withholding of opportunities to play.

Life in the non-musical world also affects groups such as Windpower. We lead individual lives which provide the time and incentive for amateur music. If our jobs or other activities were all-encompassing, we would not have time for practising individually or as a group. If we had terribly boring or physically debilitating jobs, we might not feel like playing music. If there were no places to practise without disturbing others, we could not play. If transport were inadequate, we could not get together regularly. If we were too poor we could not afford our instruments or music. Being a self-managing group — or indeed a group at all — depends on many such factors.

Finally there is the role of training, education and professionalism. Learning to play a musical instrument well takes a considerable amount of time and commitment not only from the player but usually also from the teacher. In Australian society both children and adults can take up a musical instrument, and many parents or individuals can afford to pay for instruction. This is not true in many parts of the world. Furthermore, at more advanced levels of playing music, there is a strong bias towards students intending to become professional musicians. Many excellent players must choose between a career as a professional musician and a non-musical career in which — by virtue of the required time and commitment — playing music becomes a minor activity or is dropped altogether. In short, amateur music survives in the interstices of professional music. But compared to many other amateur activities, amateur music is very healthy indeed. In areas such as medicine, science, law and many trades the opportunities for amateur involvement are either very limited or even restricted or prohibited by law, custom or other barriers.

The example of Windpower and performance of music is not as unrelated to the wider issues of self-management as it might seem. Self-management thrives in situations where bureaucratic or professional controls are weak and also where the people involved each have something to contribute and are reasonably small in number. Amateur music is one area where principles of voluntary association still hold sway. Of course, musicians seldom launch wars. But self-management is possible not only in music but also in agriculture, manufacturing, sport, families and many other areas of social life.

There are several characteristics which are associated with self-management, and it is worth mentioning these.

**Lack of hierarchy.** In a self-managing group, social interactions are not

based on positions in a formal hierarchy of power and privilege. Instead, people are treated according to who they are as individuals.

Formal hierarchies are easy to recognise. They include a large fraction of social relations in government bureaucracies, schools, corporations and military forces. Also important are informal hierarchies, usually based on traditional social relations such as the dominance of men in many families or of gurus within certain religions. Hierarchies are at the root of a great amount of suffering and injustice in the world. They allow the exploitation of workers, the oppression of women and the mobilisation of armies.

One of the primary aims of self-management is to overcome these consequences of hierarchy by giving everyone a chance to participate in designing and maintaining social arrangements. Participatory social systems serve to prevent ruthless people from climbing ladders of ambition. Another aim of self-management is to offer individual and social satisfaction through involvement in social planning and decision-making. This helps reduce the drive towards power by providing less socially destructive satisfactions.

**Equality.** Self-management thrives on and promotes a relatively equal distribution of goods, services and skills. Rough equality allows wider participation. Wide divergences in material wealth, for example, often can be used by the wealthy to influence decisions and increase their political power.

Equality does not imply identity. What is important in self-management is a rough equality in those areas which affect ongoing decision-making. People can be quite different in personality, tastes, skills, friendship groups, personal possessions and activities, so long as these differences do not permit any individuals or groups to build positions of dominance over others. The differences most threatening to self-management involve small group control over wealth (including land, money and factories), over instruments of violence and over special skills and knowledge.

Self-management, once established, tends to undermine inequality in dominance-creating areas: wealth is more equitably distributed, monopolies over violence are removed and skills and knowledge spread.

**Cooperation.** Self-management requires an orientation towards cooperation rather than competition. Chamber musicians, like groups building a house or planning an education programme, achieve a lot more when they cooperate. This involves mutual support, mutual learning and mutual constructive criticism.

If self-managing groups are to cooperate successfully, participants need to have good interpersonal skills: they need to be able to listen, share, be sensitive to the feelings of others, and be committed to the group's endeavours over personal trifles and selfishness. Of course, not everyone

can do this readily. Learning and experience in cooperative group dynamics is needed. And one of the best places to do this is in a supportive, self-managing group!

By contrast, competition thrives in hierarchical situations where people strive separately for a small number of privileged positions in society. Competitive systems are characterised by many losers and consequent apathy, disillusionment, resentment and wastage of talent.

**Community.** Self-management has a much better chance when there is a shared set of experiences, circumstances or interests: in short, in a community. Communities can be built around occupations such as rail work or scientific research, around interests such as playing music, around shared surroundings as in geographical neighbourhoods, or around shared lives as in extended families or communes. People in communities share experiences and often share goals. This is a useful basis for developing self-management.

Communities provide a basis for opposing centralised control. For example, Nigel Young has found that individual resistance to conscription is greatest where local communities are strong and support the individual acting in opposition to the state.

Self-management does not come automatically to communities! Patriarchal families or office workers in a state bureaucracy are not self-managing. But in these cases, it is often those subject to the arbitrary power of others that share the greatest sense of community: the weaker members of an extended patriarchal family, or the low-level office workers.

Social conditions strongly influence whether members of a community can effectively organise. For example, workers can organise against employers more easily in industries that provide easy communication, freedom from supervision, or multiple employers.

Where community is lacking, the opportunities for self-management are slim, as in the case of workers who work individually rather than collectively, in highly competitive situations, in neighbourhoods with a high turnover of residents, or among the home-bound.

**Small size.** Self-management works better with small groups. Five people can play most chamber music without a conductor; for a 100-piece orchestra a conductor is often a necessity. Similarly, it is easier to cooperate efficiently in small groups in making food or diagnosing illness.

**Decentralisation.** To be self-managing, a group needs a reasonable control over its local situation, such as over land, resources and skills. The essence of self-managing decentralisation is that key facilities are controlled by those who use them. Chamber music playing is decentralised to the extent that players control their own instruments, music skills and access to



rehearsal facilities. In a centralised system, musical authorities would strictly control use of instruments, music, recording rooms, and opportunities to rehearse and perform. Amateur music is quite decentralised. By contrast, energy supply in most industrialised societies is centrally controlled by governments and corporations, via large-scale production of oil, coal and electricity. The 'alternative energy movement' has promoted energy systems which can be controlled locally, such as energy-efficient buildings and small-scale solar, wind and biogas systems. Decentralisation does not guarantee self-management, but it helps.

To establish self-managing interactions between dispersed individuals and groups, some form of coordination is needed. One example of how this can be done is provided by the Amateur Chamber Music Players (ACMP), a body based in the United States which prepares a list of people around the world interested in playing amateur music. People simply send in their name, address, instrument, and self-rating of playing standard to the ACMP, which regularly sends out a full list to everyone on the list. Players make their own arrangements by contacting others on the list, for example when travelling. The ACMP has no power to force or prevent people from playing. The ACMP thus is a network which fosters self-management in music.

**Flexibility.** Self-managing systems tend to be more flexible than large, hierarchical, centralised systems. We in Windpower can change our rehearsal schedules to suit our individual and group needs. This is not always easy, but there is a lot more flexibility than with a large orchestra. Similarly, self-managing groups of students can try out special methods for individual learners, and self-managing groups of workers can alter their schedules and work arrangements for a member who has a special engagement, illness or handicap. By contrast, bureaucracy — the epitome of a non-self-managing system — is notorious for being inflexible to the individual requirements of workers and clients.

**Purposefully designed.** The possibility of self-management does not depend on the innate goodness of people or natural compatibility within groups. Anthropological studies of numerous non-industrial societies show that there is scope for a wide range of cultural arrangements, from non-hierarchical cooperative societies to violent competitive systems. There seem to be no genetic or other intrinsic barriers to self-management.

Furthermore, why be bound by the models from past or existing societies? Humans have the capacity to become aware of their own social arrangements and to design social systems with desired properties, just as technology can be designed with certain mechanical and social goals in mind.

For example, the methods used in nonviolent action training, including techniques for consensus decision-making, clarification of individual and group goals, and analysis and modification of group dynamics, can be used to mould individual and group behaviour in ways desired by the participating individuals. To be viable alternatives, self-managing political and economic systems do not have to be immediate, spontaneous or fully elaborated in advance. Instead, they can be developed as part of a process of self-conscious individual and social transformation.

With this point in mind, it is worth considering some experiences with self-management with an eye toward their relevance to eradicating the causes of war.

### **Lessons from history**

The most dramatic examples of large-scale self-management have occurred in revolutionary situations:

- \* communes in Paris during the French Revolution in 1792-1793;
- \* the Paris Commune in 1871;
- \* Soviets in the early stages of the Russian Revolution in 1917-1918;
- \* workers' and soldiers' councils in Germany in 1918-1919;
- \* factory councils in Italy in 1918-1920;
- \* collectives throughout Spain during the revolution and civil war of 1936-1939;
- \* factory committees in Hungary in the 1956 uprising;
- \* action committees in France during the revolt of May-June 1968;
- \* self-managing organisations in Chile in the early 1970s under Allende.

In these and other cases, major social, political and economic activities have been organised by the workers or population concerned, without the need of bureaucracies, managers or political elites to tell people what to do. Workers have taken over factories and other economic resources to run themselves. Self-organised groups have handled distribution of food, goods and health care. Distribution of land has been made to those who farm it, by agreement of all involved. Education, media and welfare have been organised by workers and community.

There is much to learn from such revolutionary episodes, and indeed there is a thriving literature on the Spanish events, for example. One vital lesson is that widespread self-management is not only quite possible, but that its potential normally lies hidden under the weight of oppressive and debilitating institutions, only to be revealed in conditions of enormous social upheaval.

The Paris Commune was destroyed by the French military. The Russian soviets were used by the Bolsheviks to gain power, but later destroyed by them. The Spanish collectives were opposed not only militarily by Franco's

fascist forces but also by elements within the Republican coalition, especially by the communists. In each of these three cases, the self-managing initiatives originated and were destroyed in the context of a major military struggle: the Prussian defeat of France in 1870, World War One and the war by the Bolsheviks against numerous opponents and invaders in 1918-1920, and the Spanish Civil War.

Self-management provides an alternative to the hierarchy and inequality which characterises war-based institutions. But when self-management develops spontaneously in the midst of major military and social upheaval, the chances of its survival seem not too high. On the one hand, military forces mobilised on the occasion may be used to destroy the social revolution, as when the French army, defeated by the Prussian army, was used to smash the Paris Commune. On the other hand, the self-managing bodies may initiate or join a military resistance, as in the case of the Spanish Civil War, with a corrosive effect on self-management even if the military resistance is organised democratically and is successful. In the case of the Russian Revolution, both mobilisation for the civil war and the developing centralisation of Bolshevik power served to destroy the soviets.

Social revolutions often seem larger than life. It couldn't happen here, could it? Possibly not at the moment, since such upheavals depend on a particular set of social conditions, which seldom can be consciously planned. Nevertheless, even seemingly stable societies may suddenly pulse with the demand for more participatory social institutions, as in the case of France in the events of May and June 1968. The opportunities opened by such events are often wasted. Spontaneity is seldom enough. Prior planning, preparations and working out of strategies may not be enough either, but they may provide politically fruitful channels for the spontaneous energy unleashed in revolutionary situations.

On a much less grandiose scale, but still highly important, are experiences with self-management in particular industries. In July 1971 the British government announced that two of the four yards of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (UCS) were to be closed. For about six weeks the workers had been discussing and planning what to do when the closure occurred. What they did was organise a 'work-in'. They took control of the yards and continued construction on the projects currently in the yards, organising jobs, pay, insurance and publicity themselves. The work-in continued until October 1972, when all the yards were made viable through government grants.

The UCS and other similar experiences show that workers can organise production by themselves quite adequately. The work-in as a form of social action is only suitable under certain conditions, in particular when as in the case of shipbuilding there are not constant problems of obtaining

supplies and selling products. Employers and governments invariably oppose work-ins and other strong self-management initiatives, and take various measures to induce these alternatives to fail. Because of this opposition and because of the risks generally, workers usually contemplate work-ins, sit-ins and other forms of direct action only when other avenues have failed. The UCS work-in was catalysed by the threat of massive layoffs.

Work-ins are a fundamental challenge to managerial control, and also give workers an experience in running their own affairs. In contrast, strikes seldom challenge hierarchical social relations themselves, but are used to achieve more benefits for the strikers *within* existing social relations. The work-in, in various forms, would seem to have a lot of potential in other contexts, especially in service areas. Instead of going on strike, bus drivers can work as usual but refuse to collect fares, and students can organise their own learning.

Self-management in social revolutions and work-ins are examples of what can be achieved in the course of an urgent social struggle. But in neither case has a long-term achievement of self-managing institutions been easy. What are the prospects for self-management as a more gradually introduced alternative?

There are quite a number of otherwise conventional enterprises around the world which incorporate features of self-management. One example is the Scott Bader Company in Britain, a substantial chemical company which is organised to allow workers to be involved in policy formulation and also to share in profits. Many large companies, as in West Germany and Sweden, have worker representatives on company boards, and also promote various types of job rotation and worker control over conditions at the shop floor level.

The best known example of worker self-management on a large-scale is Yugoslavian enterprises, about which much has been written. As a matter of state policy, formal structures for industrial democracy are found in all substantial enterprises. Policy by enterprises is decided upon by representatives from all parts of the workforce. The Yugoslav experience has been mixed. Certainly there has been much more worker participation in industry than in other countries, capitalist or state socialist. But the balance, degree and enthusiasm of participation has not reached expectations. One problem is that skilled and better educated workers tend to become representatives, while others remain apathetic. Another limitation is that overall economic policy is decided at the state level, and hence the scope for self-managing initiative is not as great as it might appear on paper.

Worker representation at management levels and job enrichment can

be steps in the direction of worker self-management, but they are severely limited. Worker representatives often become coopted into management perspectives, and job enrichment and limited autonomy at the shop floor level may be used to reduce discontent and head off demands for more fundamental changes.

It is important to distinguish between worker *participation* and worker *self-management*. Worker participation is sometimes promoted by management, who use it to consult with workers about decisions, thereby reducing discontent and gaining some useful ideas while still maintaining the final control over decisions. Worker participation can be a means of mobilising a degree of support or tolerance for management policy. Worker self-management, by contrast, implies a dissolving of the management-worker distinction.

What can be learned from the various official forms of self-management in industry in relation to the problem of war? First, measures of self-management do not automatically lead to anti-militaristic orientations. The Spanish anarchists organised themselves to fight in the Civil War in a self-managing way, but this approach has little potential for undermining the roots of war. Most of the companies with features of self-management manufacture the same range of goods as other companies, such as the chemicals produced by the Scott Bader Company. Indeed, arms production by workers' co-ops is not uncommon. Even the UCS workers began their work-in to continue making ships, not to challenge the orientation of industrial development. This is more or less inevitable given that these companies and workers must survive within the wider economic system, which itself is tightly linked with the state and war.

There is an interesting connection between Yugoslav self-management and Yugoslav national defence. Yugoslav defence planning is based on the principle of 'a nation in arms': rather than relying entirely on professional military forces, the Yugoslav government supplements its conventional forces with plans and preparation for arming the people and conducting partisan warfare. There are some geographical and political reasons for this, namely Yugoslavia's rugged terrain and its position outside the major military alliances in Europe. But defence by arming the people also goes hand in hand with self-management in industry. In both cases a much greater reliance on and trust in the people is apparent. Guerrilla warfare is not a solution to the problem of war, but it does not hold the same potential for mass destruction or of extreme violence controlled by a very small political or military elite.

The two other countries in Europe which have adopted the 'nation in arms' approach to the greatest extent are Sweden and Switzerland. Their governments have supplemented their conventional military forces with



militias, civil defence preparations and various other avenues for participation in national defence. It so happens that the Swedish and Swiss political systems also allow a somewhat higher degree of democratic participation than most other European countries. So, while recognising the many limitations of institutions in Yugoslavia, Sweden and Switzerland, the evidence suggests some degree of general correlation between greater self-management in political and economic institutions and in the mode of defence. This gives some hope that campaigns towards more extensive and deeper self-management in political and economic spheres will support and be supported by campaigns for wider self-management in defence, and social defence in particular.

### **Self-management within existing structures**

Self-management is sometimes associated with dramatic social confrontations, such as social revolutions or work-ins. But there are also elements of self-management in many aspects of daily life, so commonplace as to be unremarked, as in the case of Windpower. It is worth becoming aware of these elements of self-management, so that they can be protected, deepened and extended.

Public parks and public libraries contain elements of self-management. Although they are usually managed by professionals or bureaucrats, their use by the public depends on widespread acceptance of their value as a public resource of potential benefit to all. If even a tiny minority set out to cut down trees in parks and steal books from libraries, these public resources would quickly degenerate. It is not often realised today that parks and libraries were only established after significant social struggles in the mid 1800s. The ruling elites at that time did not believe that the common people were sufficiently responsible to care for parks and libraries. The struggle to protect these public resources has not ended, and indeed public parks have been the focus of many environmental battles between citizens and government or corporate developers.

Public facilities such as parks and libraries show that communal resources are both possible and beneficial. The extension of such resources to include films, printing equipment, videos, machine tools, bicycles and many other items would be a valuable focus for social action campaigns. At the moment public parks, telephones and swimming pools — not to mention schools and hospitals — are managed by professionals or government bureaucrats. Another important focus for social action is to increase local community control over such public resources.

An important element of self-management within the legal system is the jury. The jury system limits the control of professionals and bureaucrats. The selection of jurors by lot means that no individual can serve on and

dominate a succession of juries. Selection by lot also minimises inequalities in participation by class, age, sex and race. Of course juries are manipulated and circumvented in various ways by politicians, judges, police, lawyers and others, for example through the design of the law and through selective arrest and trial. But as an element of self-management, the jury system should be defended and the principles of its operation extended to other fields.

As a final example of self-management within conventional social structures, I will describe the honour system at Rice University where I was an undergraduate in the latter half of the 1960s. Rice is a very small private university in Houston, Texas, and is conventional in most ways — except the honour system. Each student pledges not to cheat on examinations or assignments, and not to knowingly allow others to cheat, and signs a statement to this effect on important exams and assignments. Although most students come from the typical sorts of high schools where cheating is common, and although Rice is highly competitive, the honour system is remarkably successful. For exams in classrooms, the teachers do not need to monitor the students, and often leave the room. Assignments and take-home exams are done under the honour system, in which students may be on their honour to stay within the time limit and not to consult textbooks, for example. Final exams are often arranged at times decided by the students for their own convenience. A student might take a final exam in a subject several days before her roommate; she is on her honour to reveal nothing about it.

Violations of the honour system are reported to the Honor Council, a committee of students who are elected to their positions. The Council is often quite harsh with violators. But the Council does not have a lot of business, since cheating is much less common at Rice than at comparable universities. It is not because the students are intrinsically more honest, but because the ethos of honesty in academic work is well and truly established and accepted. Because they are treated as responsible and honest people, most students would rather fail than cheat, even if no one caught them at it.

A number of people have told me they can hardly believe that the honour system works as well as I have described it, so ingrained is their expectation of dishonesty. Perhaps I too would be sceptical if I had not seen it in action for four years. Self-management often is seen as utopian. Society has become so dominated by administrators that many people cannot believe that groups can take responsibility and run things themselves.

The honour system is the exception rather than the rule at Rice. In most other parts of the university students are given little responsibility or control: formulating the curriculum, setting standards of assessment, hiring

staff, admitting students, or managing university finances. Furthermore, there is the irony that the honour system uses student honesty and self-management in controlling cheating to sustain the staff's power over students through the assessment process, and also to maintain competition between students rather than fostering cooperative learning. But then, cheating is hardly a step towards self-management: it accepts the authority of assessors and attempts only to obtain selective advantages within the assessment system. While the honour system is worth defending, its principles and its success should also be used as a lever for pushing for greater responsibility and participation in learning.

### **Self-management and social action**

Some of the most systematic attempts to develop and promote self-managing political and economic structures have been taken by social action groups and social movements, such as the feminist movement, the workers' control movement and the alternative technology movement. There are two major and interlinked focuses: self-management as a goal and self-management as a method.

As a goal, self-management can be seen as an implicit or explicit guiding principle in many campaigns against systems of unequal power. Feminists oppose the laws, regulations, habits, practices and attitudes which perpetuate the domination of men over women. Environmentalists oppose nuclear power partly because of its intimate connection with centralised political and economic power.

As a method, self-management is the preferred organisational principle for many social action groups. Self-managing social action groups try to promote participation by all members, share both routine tasks and exciting opportunities, use consensus or other democratic forms of decision-making, encourage members to develop a range of skills, and provide a social environment for emotional satisfaction and sharing as well as accomplishing tasks.

While some self-managing social action groups mainly focus on challenging oppressive structures — such as the nuclear power industry — others attempt to build alternative structures. A standard form for a self-managing structure is the cooperative, whether it is a food co-op, media co-op, women's refuge co-op, health co-op or manufacturing co-op. Cooperatives, as the name implies, are an alternative to the bureaucratised provision of goods and services. Co-ops are based on sharing work equitably, encouraging participation, reducing exploitation of workers, and sharing the benefits of the cooperative endeavour.

There are quite a number of action groups, co-ops and other groups around the world which aim at self-management as a method and a goal.

So far their impact on the dominant hierarchical structures in society — corporations, state bureaucracies, professions — has been limited. There are several problems facing self-managing social action groups.

First, it is not easy for a group of people to operate cooperatively and non-hierarchically when most of its members grew up in and live in a hierarchical society: in families, schools, bureaucracies and the like. As most participation in social action groups is a marginal and part-time activity, there is a continuing struggle to overcome the conditioning and experience that is so at variance with self-management.

Second, for most people there is a shortage of *time* which can be committed to self-managing groups. This is a straightforward practical problem in the face of job, family and other commitments.

Third, there is a continual conflict between achieving internal participation and agreement, and running campaigns or doing a job. The poles of danger are either becoming an introverted support group with no external impact, or running an externally successful campaign or service at the expense of internal self-management.

Fourth, there is little sense of overall coordination or strategy guiding the action of self-managing groups. Many groups focus on their own little area without a picture of where these efforts fit into a programme for social change. Although many activist groups keep in informal contact with each other, there is surprisingly little effort to jointly assess goals and methods and coordinate campaigns.

Fifth, self-managing groups are relatively few and weak compared with the dominant bureaucratic organisations and infrastructures, and the risk of being destroyed, being coopted or just giving up are quite high. Being small and weak is self-perpetuating, since few people will join a movement which seems ineffectual and lacking a convincing programme.

## Strategy

How can the present large, hierarchical and centralised political structures be transformed into or replaced by self-managing structures? This is a key question for all individuals and groups which adopt self-management as a goal or method. It is also a key question for those who see present structures as a root cause of war. Sadly, there is relatively little discussion of this question even in self-managing social action groups, much less any widely accepted answers. The reason for this is that since most self-managing groups are small and weak, it takes most of their energy just to survive and to run a few campaigns. In addition, the general problem of major social transformation seems so enormous and remote as to be not worth considering yet.

Actually, it is unfair to say that most self-managing social action groups



have not thought about how social change towards self-management will occur, since they are in the process of promoting such change themselves. Once general principles and goals are decided upon, such as self-management, nonviolence, sexual equality, respect for nature and organising at the grassroots, then it is not hard to orientate campaigns *in these directions*. For example, if maximising participation is a goal, then an unemployment action group will favour signature drives and door-to-door canvassing over running advertisements, and a food co-op will avoid dependence on paid staff and large corporate suppliers. In my experience, the implicit strategy underlying the actions of most social action groups is that the important thing is how to move in the correct direction. This requires both deciding on basic principles and promoting changes either internal or external to the group.

There is a lot to be said for this implicit strategy. It allows useful action to be carried out without waiting for a comprehensive programme. It is flexible and does not prejudice the possibilities for change. And it is not exclusive, but rather encourages individuals and groups to contribute in their own ways.

There are also some severe disadvantages to the implicit strategy of moving in the correct general direction without a more fully developed programme. It is easy to become sidetracked into superficial issues or actions, for example focussing solely on opposing particular weapons rather than also on the systems which promote the creation and use of weapons. It is also easy to only use methods which make people *feel* they are doing something, such as rallies and letter writing, rather than ones which are actually effective in helping change structures. Another big problem is that whole areas of vital importance to social change towards self-management are overlooked since groups stick only with their particular issue. Direct effort towards transformation of military establishments, for example, is not even on the agenda of most peace movements. Finally, the implicit strategy of moving in the correct direction avoids the difficult problems confronting social movements as they become larger and more powerful. How are they to be coordinated? How are they to be institutionalised? Many a social movement which has suddenly grown large — as the peace movement in the early 1980s — finds itself without ideas or methods for utilising and channelling this upsurge of support in an effective way.

Another strategy for replacing hierarchical structures by self-managing ones is the strategy of dual power. The basic idea is to start creating self-managing structures, even if only on a small scale, in all areas and at all levels: co-ops, alternative justice systems, alternative media and communications, etc. The hope is that more and more people will transfer their allegiance to the self-managing structures, and that the hierarchical



structures will collapse or wither away, leaving self-managing structures as the dominant organisational form.

The strategy of dual power has been promoted especially by sections of the anarchist movement. Certainly it is a clear application of the anarchist principle that the ends should be incorporated in the means. Dual power consists of making the desired end, self-management throughout society, as the basis for present campaigns.

In spite of its attractiveness as a principled method for social change, the strategy of dual power has several shortcomings. The main one in my view is that the organs of dual power — that is, the co-ops, alternative health services and so forth — by themselves are unlikely to cause the established institutions to decay or collapse. Indeed, so long as hierarchical institutions remain strong, they can suppress, tolerate or coopt small self-managing alternatives. The continuing difficulties confronting co-ops, initiatives for local democracy and the like testify not only to overt obstacles but also to the pervasive role of socialisation in bureaucratic organisations. The building of self-management at the grassroots in my opinion needs to be supplemented by campaigns to challenge and undermine hierarchical institutions.

### **Problems and limitations**

There are numerous obstacles, traps and unknown areas to be encountered in working towards self-managing political and economic structures. Here I outline a few of the key problems and limitations.

**Personal skills for self-management.** People need to develop skills and attitudes conducive to self-management. For most people who have grown up and lived in hierarchical structures — families, schools, corporations or state bureaucracies, professions — working in a non-hierarchical group takes a fair bit of adjustment and learning. This requires tolerance and support from all concerned. It also benefits from practical tools and exercises such as those used in nonviolent action training for encouraging and equalising participation, handling disagreement and conflict, sharing interpersonal skills, and evaluating activities and feelings. Self-management is not an instant utopia, and unrealistic expectations for it should not be fostered. But it can be satisfying and challenging given sufficient commitment and favourable external conditions.

**Limits of consensus.** Since the late 1960s, there has been a great expansion in the use of methods for consensus decision-making in social action groups. This has been a fundamental part of the promotion of self-management in these groups. Rather than use a decision-making procedure such as voting which assumes conflict and creates losers, the aim has been to look for solutions acceptable to everyone. If a strong objection to a proposal is

made by a single member, no action is taken until an agreeable solution is reached. Associated with use of consensus is the principle of equal respect for each person and the practice of meeting face-to-face. Opportunity and usually encouragement is given to each person to participate fully.

There are many advantages to use of the consensus approach. It helps to orient thinking to common interests, to avoid prematurely settling on a less than adequate solution, to incorporate insights from all people, and especially to unify the group behind the decision taken. Most important in terms of self-management, consensus techniques are effective in preventing the rise of traditional power elites.

While consensus has many advantages for social action groups, it is not the solution to all problems. Yet use of consensus methods has become a virtual dogma in many activist circles. At the same time, consensus has largely been ignored or rejected in other areas such as trade unions and political parties. What are the limits of consensus? A major contribution towards answering this question has been made by Jane J. Mansbridge in *Beyond Adversary Democracy*. Mansbridge distinguishes between unitary and adversary democracy. Unitary democracies are like friendships: they are based on a high degree of common interest, and tend to be based on consensus. Adversary democracies assume the existence of strong conflicts of interest, and typically use majority rule, the secret ballot and other means for equal protection of interests (rather than equal respect).

Mansbridge notes that liberal democratic theory has focussed almost entirely on adversary situations. In practice, many unitary elements enter in, as in the Vermont town meeting government which she studied. The promotion of consensus methods in an explicit way by social action groups has redressed this imbalance and drawn attention to the importance of seeking out common interests.

Mansbridge's observations about the limits of consensus — based in part on her detailed study of a successful participatory workplace — are quite important. The most difficult problem for the consensus approach is dealing with fundamental conflicts of interest. In face-to-face meetings, genuine conflict tends to be suppressed. Those who are less confident or experienced tend to feel intimidated. Those with more experience in the organisation tend to have more contacts, inside knowledge and social networks, all of which give them more power. By contrast, adversary methods are well suited for dealing with conflicts.

In situations of conflict, settlements based on taking turns, majority rule or arranging a set of outcomes proportional to those people desiring them are often best. But with consensus methods it is hard to reach these outcomes, because the adversary methods of bargaining and compromise are discouraged. For example, consider the problem of a peace group

deciding whether to support a proposal to criticise Soviet militarism. With majority rule — an adversary procedure — a vote would simply be taken. But if consensus is the procedure, then one or two pro-soviet members can prevent action. When there is a strong disagreement over Soviet militarism, or other issues such as United States militarism, the effect of relying solely on consensus is to suppress debate and end up with a pro-peace stance with little substance or scope for organising action. Using consensus, it would be difficult to reach a solution based on separate efforts, namely forming different groups or allowing independent actions by subgroups. The wider problem, only touched upon by Mansbridge, is how to organise systems incorporating the strengths of both unitary and adversary democracy. How can groups switch from consensus to voting and back again depending on the issue and level of agreement? And how can large-scale coordination of self-managing groups be organised without losing the benefits of small-scale consensus? This latter question leads to the next topic, coordination.

**Coordination.** How can and how should different self-managing organisations coordinate their activities? Consider a group of co-ops for food production and distribution, mining, manufacture and distribution of goods and so forth. How should they coordinate their activities? One method that avoids hierarchy is to demand a high degree of local self-sufficiency, so that little overt coordination is required. But such a high degree of self-sufficiency may not be possible or even desirable even in the long term, and certainly in a transition to greater self-management the existing interdependencies must be dealt with. The concepts of the market and of centralised planning are the standard coordinating principles, but they each generate strong pressures for the creation of elites.

The most common idea for coordination of self-managing groups is through some sort of federation, in which member bodies would be represented in some way. How would representation be made? The problem with elected representatives — a familiar problem due to the well-known shortcomings of representative government — is that those elected soon develop special interests of their own, and use their position to entrench their power and that of others like themselves. One way to tackle this is to have delegates rather than elected representatives. The delegate from a group would be expected by the group to represent the group's views, within a pre-decided range of personal initiative. Delegates could be changed at any time: they would be revocable.

The idea of a revocable delegate implies that the bodies to be represented are relatively small: from perhaps ten up to several hundred people. For larger scale coordination, several layers of representative bodies based on delegates could be envisaged.

The delegate method has worked reasonably well in consensus decision-making involving hundreds and even thousands of people, especially within the coalitions against nuclear power. Affinity groups of perhaps a dozen people send delegates (often called 'spokes') to a central meeting. If consensus cannot be reached immediately, delegates report back to their affinity groups and reconsideration of views or new proposals is sought.

In spite of the successes of this consensus procedure, and in spite of the scope for learning and improvement in consensus methods, there are likely to be serious obstacles to coordination of self-managing groups for which the delegate method will have difficulty. There is the danger of strong personalities building positions of considerable informal power. There is the problem of reaching agreement when quite contrary interests and viewpoints are involved. And there is the problem of the experts — those who know more about a specialised subject, such as health, farming or consensus methods themselves — who may find themselves thrust into positions of power without the incentive to spread knowledge and decision-making in these areas.

One possible method for overcoming some of these problems of coordination is to use the lot or jury system. The lot system was used in ancient Athens to select public officials, though the exclusion of women, slaves, children and resident aliens from consideration in the lottery indicated its incomplete application. This system, as mentioned earlier in regard to the jury system, contains many features supportive of self-management: participation is equalised and the consolidation of elite power is minimised. The lot system could readily be used to select gradually rotating committees, for example to coordinate co-op production and distribution or to make suggestions on major projects such as selecting transport routes.

The lot system would not disenfranchise people who were not selected, since after all they could still communicate their views in various ways and if necessary use nonviolent action to press their claims. What the lot system so nicely achieves is the prevention of people obtaining formal positions of influence simply because of their connections, personality or skills. It is revealing to hear objections to this system, which often come from people who would normally expect to gain positions of formal or informal influence.

The lot system has hardly been tried by self-managing groups. One reason is that such groups are seldom large enough to require the coordinating role facilitated by the lot system. Another reason is that influential people in social movements have not been on the lookout for ways to counteract their own power. More often than not, large meetings of social activists are dominated by experienced 'heavies' from local areas and especially by



full-time activists, often in paid positions. The lot system provides a threat to those who seek power and influence in the 'alternative' movements.

The lot system has considerable potential, especially since it can be used in small ways immediately, and thus is an alternative that is readily turned into a campaign. But the lot system, like federations and delegates, is not the final solution to coordination in a self-managing society. That is a problem which requires much more thought and experimentation.

**Bureaucratisation.** Another big problem in promoting self-managing political and economic structures is maintaining the self-managing features in the face of pressures from bureaucratisation: cooption in the bureaucratic system. Consider for example a consumer movement — though the process applies also to political parties, trade unions, peace groups and sundry others. In the early stages there are many small independent grassroots initiatives. To coordinate these a national body is set up. As more people join the movement, several full-time staff are hired to handle the national administration. The government, media and other influential groups take notice of the movement, and consult the movement leaders and staff. Perhaps government funds are provided, or employers agree to administer a salary deduction scheme to fund the movement. Pressures mount to increase the paid staff and to formalise the administration. The national office, because of its dependence on funding or its contacts with national elites, supports a more moderate line on consumer issues than most of its constituents. The process of bureaucratisation has begun.

Is this process inevitable, as social theorist Robert Michels and his 'iron law of oligarchy' claims? No: some groups largely avoid the process such as Friends of the Earth in Australia. But the pressures in this direction are strong, especially the pressures arising from the bureaucratic organisation of the state, including political parties. To work *through* the state bureaucracies or the major political parties, it is often more effective in the short term to adopt a similar bureaucratic form. To *challenge* the fundamental interests of the state bureaucracies is another matter. Without a firm commitment to a grassroots strategy for challenging structures, it is all too easy to fall into the process of bureaucratisation.

**Marginalisation.** While a prime danger of working within established institutions is bureaucratisation, a danger in staying too far away is marginalisation, or in other words being permanently on the fringe. Many of those who set up rural communes in the 'back to the land' movement which burgeoned in the 1960s wanted to avoid being compromised by the 'system', including schools, corporations, and the consumer society. So they left the scene physically. One problem with this is that a gradual re-creation of many conventional structures is likely unless collective



efforts are made to prevent this. After all, it is one thing to move physically and another to change mentally, emotionally and organisationally.

Another problem with many rural communes and other attempts to break significantly with established institutions is that a connection with ongoing struggles to challenge those institutions may be lost. The temptation is to become engrossed in surviving independently and enjoying apparent freedom and so to opt out of a social struggle. Unfortunately it is not enough simply to live the alternative. Some governments use repressive measures against those adopting 'alternative life styles', while others more perceptively allow them to pursue their own way as long as they don't create a fuss. Living the alternative by itself will not lead to the downfall of the systems of hierarchy and centralised power.

The challenge for those in rural communes and others in 'alternative' structures is to maintain a connection with struggles to change mainstream institutions. This is not easy, since while some governments may tolerate a minority of 'alternative lifestylers' on the fringe, they are less likely to turn a blind eye to political action from such groups.

**Self-management for elites.** Consider a team of doctors, all highly qualified and experienced specialists. They might organise their practices in a non-hierarchical, mutually supportive way, in most ways quite in tune with the principles of self-management. But what about the nurses, technicians, receptionists, accountants, cleaners and spouses? They might be left in the familiar hierarchies and division of labour. Indeed, in many oligarchies, the rulers practise self-management: they organise their own lives, and everyone else's too.

The possibility that privileged groups may practise self-management without including others points to a problem in promoting self-management in hierarchical organisations, or in occupations such as medicine based on professional dominance. Should self-management be promoted initially at different levels of the hierarchy, or should the full hierarchical division of labour be confronted from the outset? This is an important problem. It is not too difficult to find support for self-management if it is to be restricted to a particular stratum or occupational speciality: people often know and sometimes respect each other, and there is little loss of status involved in fostering participation. In many professional groups, a considerable degree of professional equality and autonomy is taken for granted. In academia, scholarly contributions are supposed to be treated according to merit, and autonomy is justified on the basis of the benefits of academic freedom. But such groups are strongly antagonistic to sharing their 'privileges' or involving others. Academics are usually very hostile to students sharing in academic decision-making such as deciding on curriculum, hiring of staff or even serving on committees. The implication is that

campaigns for self-management cannot uncritically accept occupational or organisational structures. Promoting self-management among particular groups can be a useful contribution, but not if it strengthens the position of those groups over others.

A related problem is the promotion of self-management among those doing useless or harmful things. The self-managing team of doctors might be cosmetic surgeons for the rich, or specialists in heart transplants. Given the pressing health needs of the poor and the diversion of resources and attention away from preventative health measures towards high technology curative medicine, these emphases are examples of useless or harmful medicine. Other examples can be found in the growing of tobacco, the building of planned obsolescent cars, the designing of tax loopholes and the manufacture of chemical weapons. Is it really worth promoting self-management 'among tobacco growers or tax avoidance lawyers? The answer is not simple. Self-management can help rescue or streamline failing enterprises, and thus prop up harmful activities. But as suggested by the case of the Lucas Aerospace workers, participation in decision-making about one's work can lead to questioning about the products as well as the work organisation. The challenge is to develop campaigns which encourage this sort of questioning.

The goal of workers' control in industry illustrates both these problems. Workers' control can be used to entrench the position of current workers, and so keep out women, racial minorities and even political dissidents. And workers' control can be introduced in undesirable or marginally beneficial industries.

**Preventing counter-revolution.** In social revolutions, the greatest immediate threat is counter-revolution: the smashing of people's self-managing organs, often by military attack. To oppose the counter-revolution, there is a strong temptation to turn to or rely on a revolutionary elite, as in the case of the Russian Revolution and the ensuing civil war. How can counter-revolution be prevented without creating a new permanent elite? There is also the problem of the conservatism of the elites in supposedly 'progressive' groups, as illustrated by the lack of support by the French Communist Party in May-June 1968 for the student and worker initiatives. How can the opposition of 'progressive' elites to self-managing initiatives be overcome?

A general answer can be given. The idea and practice of self-management must be spread at all levels, laying the groundwork for action in a crisis. The trust in elites of any variety must be countered by spreading leadership skills and creating networks for decision-making. Strategies must be analysed and discussed widely. And earlier experiences must be studied and digested. Preparations for resisting counter-revolution, such as social

defence for resisting aggression, need to be made. And plans for circumventing 'progressive' elites need to be formulated.

Is this approach sufficient to prevent counter-revolution? Can it work? Where should efforts begin? What does it mean in detail? These are hard questions, since so little has been done to build systematically towards self-managing social transformation.

---

## Grassroots mobilisation

---

It is all very well to have a superb strategy against war — or for any other social goal — but nothing will come of it unless people take action. How are people mobilised for social action? And how in particular are they mobilised for social action that confronts the roots rather than the symptoms of social problems?

In most situations where injustice has occurred or some sort of systematic oppression exists, there are a small number of people or groups who express opposition. These people and their actions provide potential sparks to ignite social movements.

In many cases these sparks of opposition are quickly extinguished. Other times only a small action is needed to ignite a social movement. A classic example is the refusal by Rosa Parks in 1955 to give up her seat on a bus for a white person, which sparked the beginning of the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, which in turn played a major role in the development of the modern black civil rights movement in the United States. The small act of questioning or resistance may be all that is required: calling a meeting, writing a letter, making a speech, or refusing to obey an order.

Whether or not an act of opposition leads to a social movement depends a lot on whether the social conditions are 'ripe'. If there are contradictions in the conditions of oppression, this often provides an avenue for intervention. In the US in the 1950s, the reality of racial oppression contrasted sharply with the rhetoric of freedom and democracy and with experiences during World War Two of reduced discrimination. The situation was made especially ripe for action by the US Supreme Court decisions in 1954 and 1955 which made segregation illegal for the first time in 50 years. In such a context, it is usually incidental which particular individual or individuals voice resistance. The key question is whether they act in a way which strikes at such a point of contradiction.

Sparkling a social movement does not automatically provide a strategy for the movement, nor even a clear set of goals. The problem of mobilising against the roots of war is more than the problem of stimulating people to become concerned about an issue. The more difficult problem is to create possible avenues for involvement which are both attractive and effective.

Consider the situation of isolated individuals or small groups who are

committed to trying to tackle the roots of war or of some other social problem. They have thought out their goals and methods, and have a tentative strategy, for example promoting social defence, peace conversion or self-management. The question of mobilisation then is, how should actions or campaigns be designed to stimulate greater commitment and participation towards the goals of the activists? In the usual situation, much more than a spark is needed to launch a social movement. A patient process of developing goals, strategies and participation is required.

I have assumed that the groups are small and weak. If they are large and strong, mobilisation is not such a problem, though other difficult problems are likely to exist. At the current time, it should be realised that counter-institutional movements are very weak. Some social movements — such as the peace movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and in the 1980s — can boast a high level of participation and public sympathy. But only a small fraction of activities even at these times systematically challenge the institutional underpinnings of war. Furthermore, even large and apparently strong social movements and cultures may be vulnerable to attack by opposition forces, as in the case of the European socialist and antiwar movement which was smashed after the outbreak of World War One, and the bulk of left political activism and culture in the United States which succumbed to cold war suppression in the late 1940s and the 1950s. Social activists should not mislead themselves that they are in a powerful position. Almost always they are not.

On the other hand, the position of social activists is potentially powerful, since the bulk of the population is often opposed in a general way to war, political repression, poverty, and injustice. The problem is that elite groups are often more successful in mobilising populations for their own ends, for example to support wars to defend 'freedom' or 'our way of life'. Elite groups have the powerful advantage of coercive measures and influence over dominant communication channels. Furthermore, elites benefit from a favourable set of institutions such as the day-to-day framework of job, transport, goods and services, and privatised home life. To be successful in mobilising people, social activists must overcome this formidable array of barriers, and overcome the mobilising power of elites.

So again, consider the problem of small groups of people working against the roots of war. There are several criteria which can be used in assessing actions or campaigns as to their capacity for mobilising people:

- \* participation: the extent to which large numbers of people are or can be actively involved;

- \* immediate relevance: the significance of the goals and actions to people's day-to-day lives and concerns;

- \* mutual support: the extent to which the actions are collective



actions providing mutual support and reinforcement, rather than isolated individual activities;

\* cutting edge: the role of the actions in a strategy that challenges the roots rather than just the symptoms of social problems, and which intervenes at vulnerable points in dominant structures.

Using these and other criteria it is possible to analyse different methods of social action, for example in the following manner.

*Lobbying politicians*

Participation: usually low, since lobbyists need to know the issues and the current political scene, and be fluent and persuasive.

Relevance: low, since lobbying is not taking action for oneself.

Mutual support: low unless lobbying in groups.

Cutting edge: low.

*Writing letters to newspapers*

Participation: potentially very high, since no qualifications are required.

Relevance: variable, depending on the subject matter.

Mutual support: usually low, although group letter-writing sessions can provide some support.

Cutting edge: fairly low in countries where civil liberties are accepted; potentially high in authoritarian countries.

*Tax withholding*

Participation: potentially very high, depending on tax laws.

Relevance: immediate and personal.

Mutual support: low since individuals must take a risk, though support groups can reduce this.

Cutting edge: medium.

*Rallies*

Participation: potentially high.

Relevance: medium.

Mutual support: medium to high, depending on the design of the rally.

Cutting edge: variable. High in the early stages of a campaign or under authoritarian conditions, low as routinised protest.

*Civil disobedience*

Participation: usually low due to personal risks and sacrifices required.

Relevance: often immediate.

Mutual support: very high in many collective actions.

Cutting edge: very high in many cases.

Many of the entries in this tabulation are rather vague, purposefully so. For while it is true that rallies usually provide more opportunity for participation and mutual support than lobbying, at the same time there is a great variability in the participation or mutual support provided by rallies, and similarly for other actions. Let me illustrate this with some experiences in Canberra.

The Australian opposition to nuclear power has mainly been against uranium mining, since no other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle have become established. The most active years for the anti-uranium movement in Australia were 1976 to 1979. One of the key organising focuses was marches and rallies. The aim was to attract as large a crowd as possible for publicity purposes, and also to encourage and enable people to make a public stand by joining the rally. One method used to attract a crowd was generating lots of publicity by distributing leaflets, putting up posters, contacting individuals and groups, and putting out media releases. Another method was to schedule 'name' speakers at the rally — well-known politicians, artists or other public figures — who by their reputation would attract a crowd.

Even in the early days of the anti-uranium movement in Canberra, speakers and methods for gaining publicity were chosen with participation in mind. Rather than using paid advertisements, publicity was organised at the grassroots level by circulating leaflets and putting up posters through a large contact list of sympathetic people in areas such as schools, neighbourhoods and government bureaucracies. The aim was not only to publicise the rally but also to encourage many people to become involved by helping publicise it. And although well-known speakers were sought, it was considered important to obtain good rally speakers — none of those dry academics — and to obtain representation of women, trade unionists, Aborigines and other relevant sections of the community.

In spite of this orientation towards participation in organising rallies, there were a lot of disadvantages with rallies as an organising focus. The key organisers would work very hard and worry greatly, and this contributed to activist 'burnout'. There was often a letdown after a rally. What next? As the movement grew there were fewer and larger rallies, but growth could not occur indefinitely and press coverage declined. And the rallies themselves were rather boring, especially after having attended a few. All those speeches! And the atmosphere at the rallies was not conducive to meeting and involving new people.

As a result of these considerations, there was gradually a switch to more

participative activities instead of the traditional rally with speeches. Instead of the usual Hiroshima Day rallies, in 1978 and 1979 'open days' were organised with films, discussion groups and displays. Not as many people attended, but there was more interaction than at a typical rally.

This development reached its peak at Hiroshima Day in 1981 with activities organised by Canberra Peacemakers. Our aim was to create a more satisfying experience for those who attended rather than to maximise numbers or publicity. So we did not run a massive publicity effort, but mainly circulated notices to the groups from whom most participants at rallies came anyway. The rally on Hiroshima Day contained no 'name' speakers, only local activists who provided songs, poetry, a testimonial and street theatre. The songs and street theatre allowed some audience participation. The general feeling at the rally was excellent. Two days later, we visited the embassies of seven major nuclear weapons states (China, Soviet Union, France, United States, Israel, South Africa and Britain). At each embassy a symbolic action was performed, including poetry reading, street theatre about masculinity and war, and a 'die-in' in which people lay down symbolising deaths from French nuclear activities in the Pacific. Afterwards a small peace concert was organised with local artists. The numbers were small: perhaps 250 at the rally and 50 on the embassies tour. If we had organised a traditional rally with massive publicity, perhaps 500 people would have attended, judging by previous experience. (This was before the 1980s resurgence of the worldwide peace movement filtered through to Canberra).

From this experience it should be clear that 'participation' is not a simple concept. There can be large numbers of people superficially participating in rallies — just attending and then going home — or smaller numbers participating in a way which has meaningful links with ongoing action. The choice between these and other approaches should be openly and carefully made in the light of an overall strategy. In my opinion there is often too little attention to quality of participation and to links with other action by the participants. This lack of attention is associated with lack of attention to strategies which address the roots of social problems: superficial participation is easier to mobilise to attack symptoms rather than causes of social problems.

In 1982 as the worldwide upsurge in concern about nuclear war spread into Canberra, a new peace group sprang up, the Canberra Programme for Peace Committee (CPPC). The initial stimulus for this group's formation was to organise a traditional march and rally, with mass publicity and numerous speakers, including several prominent ones. A large crowd of 3,000 turned out. But there was no strategy against war for these people to contribute to or to become involved in.



At first the CPPC adopted a fairly traditional orientation to peace issues, focussing mainly against nuclear weapons and against United States militarism and looking ahead only to the next major activity, whether a rally, public meeting, petition drive or barbecue. But the CPPC evolved also, and only 18 months later it decentralised its activities and orientated them more to mobilising local and independent participation.

A difficult problem in pursuing a long-term strategy for eliminating the roots of war is deciding how much to become involved in superficially appealing immediate issues which attract considerable participation but have relatively little relation to the long-term strategy. On the one hand, it is important to avoid becoming sidetracked into immediate issues such as neutron bombs and nuclear freezes if this divert too much attention from programmes for fundamental change of bureaucracies or states. But it is equally important to not insist on a 'purist' programme for institutional change that does not use opportunities for mobilisation provided by more topical issues. Indeed, topical issues sometimes symbolise deep contradictions in dominant institutions. The challenge is to develop campaigns which link people's concern on immediate issues to a programme which addresses the roots of the problems.

At the time in early 1982 when the CPPC was formed, we in Canberra Peacemakers had been focussing mainly on nonviolent action training and social defence. But we soon found ourselves swept along by the rapidly surging interest in peace issues and putting much of our limited energy into aspects of the rally preparations. There was no immediate spinoff from the rally for the goals we wanted to reach: we had not thought carefully about what we hoped to achieve. Our small contribution to the rally was not wasted, since the nonviolent action training for march stewards helped prevent an unpleasant confrontation. But the net effect was that our ongoing investigation and promotion of social defence was interrupted for quite a few months.

This small example illustrates the dilemma that may arise between focussing on long-term campaigns — for Canberra Peacemakers, social defence — and joining more popular protests which are less connected to a long-term strategy — the major rally in April 1982. One-off events and responses to immediate issues such as particular arms negotiations or arms trade fairs can sometimes divert and diffuse efforts towards structural change. But immediate issues also provide an opportunity for involving and mobilising people for antiwar action. Without a connection with current events, the efforts towards structural change may remain confined to a tiny minority who are cut off from mainstream antiwar thinking.

Later in 1982 in Canberra Peacemakers serious differences arose over future directions. Some members wanted to concentrate on nonviolent

action training in relation to 'immediate' issues such as destruction of native forests or the planned flooding of the Franklin River in south-west Tasmania. They were not particularly interested in being involved with social defence activities. Others – including myself – wanted to maintain social defence as a major focus. After much agonising, this and other differences led to the formation of a separate group called Groundswell for nonviolent action training. Canberra Peacemakers continued primarily with social defence and other peace-related issues and activities. Groundswell members quickly became heavily involved in nonviolent action training for the 'blockade' of preliminary construction work for the south-west Tasmanian dam.

The campaign against the flooding of the Franklin River was a classic case of focussing mainly on the symptoms of environmental problems and of aiming at influencing elites. Most attention was directed towards natural features of the area to be flooded, including trees, platypusses and scenic gorges. Little headway was made in addressing the problem of restructuring the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission, planner and constructor of the dam and the single most potent political force in Tasmania. The campaign for the Franklin was based primarily on obtaining mass publicity and applying pressure to parliamentarians. People were asked to contribute to the campaign by writing to politicians, sending money, writing 'no dams' on ballot papers at elections, or voting for the candidates specified by the campaign directors.

To this campaign, the south-west blockade was a somewhat incongruous addition, based as it was on nonviolent action, consensus decision-making and the strong personal sacrifice required for civil disobedience. The organisation of the blockade and of the national campaign did not always mesh easily.

The south-west campaign continued to aim at influencing elites. For the March 1983 national election the South-West Coalition put its full efforts towards electing a Labor government. After the Labor victory, popular involvement in the campaign plummeted as the issues was fought in the High Court between the national government and the Tasmanian state government which backed the dam. The flooding of the Franklin was prevented, while the issue of transforming the Hydro-Electric Commission never really entered the political agenda.

The Franklin River issue generated wider public concern than any other environmental issue in Australian history. In spite of the blockade's limitations as part of a campaign for the narrow goal of stopping a particular dam and using public pressure to influence elites, the blockade had an enormous effect in broadening experience with nonviolent action and with nonviolent action training in Australia, multiplying by several times within



a few months the number of people exposed to and committed to this approach.

This is quite relevant to social defence. The blockaders, because of their personal experience in nonviolent action and the training for it, became able to grasp the meaning and significance of social defence more readily than any other single group of people Canberra Peacemakers had encountered.

This case illustrates the difficulty of assessing the role of 'immediate' issues in pursuing long-term strategies. The south-west blockade, for all the limitations of the wider campaign of which it was a part, has provided knowledge, skills, experience and motivation to many people which will benefit many other social action campaigns. But without groups such as Canberra Peacemakers which promote social defence and other contributions towards structural change, participation in nonviolent action can remain harnessed to campaigns which address only the symptoms of environmental and other social problems.

The deeper challenge facing Canberra Peacemakers and others working towards transforming the roots of war is to make social defence, peace conversion, self-management and other such components of an antiwar strategy seem relevant and immediate. Personally I feel the threat of war and of political repression is just as immediate as the building of a dam, and that working with people on how to resist military aggression nonviolently is just as immediate as being arrested for entering land on which the Hydro-Electric Commission is carrying out preparatory work for dam construction. But many others do not feel the same way.

There are several potential reasons why different people have differing perceptions of what are 'immediate' issues for them. In the case of the Franklin River, many middle-class people responded to beautiful pictures of wilderness about to be destroyed and so opposed the dam, while many workers in Tasmania supported the dam because it symbolised the issue of jobs which was more immediate for them.

The general problem is that the issues which mobilise people are not necessarily the key ones for confronting the roots of social problems. Many activists, through their exposure to the issues and through their personal and political experiences, have developed an analysis of the roots of social problems. But this needs to be connected theoretically and practically with ideas and actions which capture people's enthusiasm. Should activists involve themselves in issues which already have immediacy for many people and attempt to promote strategies that address the institutional roots of social problems? An example would be entering the Franklin dam dispute and developing ways to devolve the power of the Hydro-Electric Commission. Or should activists attempt to popularise

what they consider to be the 'key' issues and aim to make them seem immediate for more people? An example would be trying to make peace conversion more appealing. The answer must depend on the particular activists and issues; there is a place for both these approaches.

The basic problem in grassroots mobilisation is how to develop a continuing political practice which remains democratic and participatory and which also works to overturn structures. The standard activist approach, which involves lurching from rally to rally or to some other action with periods of inertia between, is inadequate because it pursues no programme for structural challenge or reconstruction. The standard alternative, involvement in a political party organisation with a definite programme, usually involves a political practice orientated to lobbying and other insider channels which reinforce rather than challenge dominant structures. The gap between these two approaches needs filling, but many questions and action and organisation remain to be answered.

There are many more things which can be said about grassroots mobilisation, but the problem cannot easily be separated from wider issues of strategy which are treated in other chapters. Here I will just briefly raise a few other topics relevant to mobilisation.

**Countering sectarian disruption.** One problem facing many large social movements is disruption or manipulation by sectarian groups, such as left-wing 'vanguard' parties. Members of such groups are often extremely hard working for the cause in question, and their efforts should not be slighted. Like many other individuals and groups, sectarian groups aim to use the issue and people's involvement in the social movement to build up their own organisation and foster their own particular brand of social change.

There is nothing wrong with this, and indeed pluralism in social movements can be a very strong point. Problems arise when the activities of sectarian groups are severely counter-productive for the movement as a whole. For example, groups favouring violence and confrontation may alienate support, and similarly groups which believe that salvation can be achieved only from the efforts of one particular segment of the population, such as the workers, may act in a way which antagonises others.

What can happen is that sectarian activists gain positions of formal or de facto power within social movements, and use this power to influence the direction and rhetoric of campaigns. Again, there is nothing wrong with this as long as directions and rhetoric are decided democratically and participatively. But some sectarian groups are not enthusiastic about unenlightened people with a 'false consciousness' having an equal say in movement activities.

In some of the large Australian cities, sectarian involvement in the anti-uranium movement caused severe difficulties. Decisions were made in large

meetings in which dominant individuals used personality and experience to heavy-handedly push through their own preferences over the unexpressed views of many others. The meetings were unpleasant and restricted wider involvement. The solution was decentralisation: setting up many neighbourhood groups which are relatively autonomous, with central coordination but no central control.

In Canberra there has never been much of a problem with sectarian groups. The social movements have not been large enough to justify lots of effort to take them over, and in any case the sectarian groups have not been large enough to mount major efforts of this type anyway. The International Socialists have been the most prominent Marxist group in the anti-uranium and peace movements, but they have not had a traumatic impact as have some groups in other places.

Decentralisation does not entirely overcome the problem of undue influence by sectarian groups if coordinating bodies play a big role in laying the framework for campaigns. A familiar experience is the national consultative meetings in which experienced 'heavies' dominate the proceedings in an exercise of power politics. Introducing a lot system or some other method for increasing participation can help overcome this problem.

At issue here is both *what* strategy to choose and *how* to go about choosing it. A particular sectarian group might indeed be advocating the 'best' strategy in the abstract, that is assuming everyone agreed on it. But just as important is the way in which people are won over to one strategy or another. In terms of building a social movement, democratic and participatory decision-making procedures and organisational forms are at least as important as taking the abstractly 'correct' line at a particular time.

The problems posed by sectarian groups are similar to those posed by infiltration by agents of the state or other hostile groups. Decentralisation and measures to equalise participation help reduce the influence of outside agents to a minimum.

**The limits of civil disobedience.** Civil disobedience is a potent way of opposing oppressive institutions and also for building solidarity in opposition to these institutions. But, as I have argued in chapter 1, nonviolent action does not in itself constitute a strategy for social change, nor even necessarily a very participative one. While utilising the undoubted strengths of civil disobedience, it is also important to be aware of limitations.

\* If civil disobedience is used mainly to obtain publicity, one limitation is that publicity may be focussed on the disobedience and not the social problem of concern. Another is that publicity is likely to fall off in time even if participation, arrests and other activity increases.

\* The big problem with civil disobedience is that only some people can readily take the time or the risk to be involved. These tend to be people

not in full-time employment or less at risk of losing their jobs, such as students.

\* When civil disobedience is used to obtain publicity, pressures may arise to escalate actions to come closer to violence. This will further reduce the opportunity or attractiveness of participation for many people.

\* Building a campaign around civil disobedience requires a lot of energy and lots of backup, and those who cannot or do not wish to be involved this way may be left out.

\* Organisation for civil disobedience, for example using affinity groups, often is not designed for other types of social action. After the civil disobedience actions are over, the affinity groups may fall apart and action may lapse until the next similar action is organised.

\* A type of moral superiority may come to be associated with those who have participated in civil disobedience, and this may alienate people who might prefer to be involved in other ways.

These limitations would not matter so much if civil disobedience in itself led to restructuring of social institutions. But this is rarely the case. In practice, civil disobedience needs to be a part of a wider strategy of social transformation. It is wrong to assume that the only *real* action is civil disobedience, and that holding discussions, writing newsletters, canvassing door-to-door, and pushing for small changes inside existing institutions are all a waste of time or a lower form of activity.

**Grassroots mobilisation within bureaucracies.** Many social activists see grassroots mobilisation as something relevant mainly in arenas outside powerful hierarchical institutions such as corporations, state bureaucracies and the military. Public rallies are a symbol of oppositional mobilisation, and so sometimes are strikes. But for fundamental social change to occur, much support will be required from people well inside presently dominant institutions, such as office workers and soldiers. They may not be able to overtly show their support in typical ways, but their mobilisation is important nevertheless. This problem is treated in later chapters.

**Bureaucratisation.** At the end of chapter 5 I mentioned the problem of bureaucratisation: establishment within social movements of hierarchies, centralisation of power, and a division of labour between the key activists and the wider mass of supporters. Bureaucratisation within social movements is the opposite pole to mobilisation. Supporters channel their efforts through the social movement hierarchy, which then usually interacts with other established bureaucracies to push for policy changes. Bureaucratised social movements may be effective in working through existing power structures, but they have little prospect of transforming these structures. In addition, as Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward have shown in

their important study *Poor People's Movements*, bureaucratised movements are often ineffective even in obtaining immediate concessions, whereas direct and unregulated protest is often effective.

**Electoralism.** As mentioned in chapter 1, involvement in elections can be an effective way of demobilising a social movement. The basic problem with putting energy into electing sympathetic candidates is that reliance is vested in elites. People may participate in election campaigns, but the energy of participation is channelled to serve those running for office, not to strengthen the resolve and self-reliance of those participating. The same problem arises when working within or through any institution based on hierarchy or restricted expertise, such as the labour movement or academia. These areas should not be neglected, but neither should they be seen as areas where energy can be used uncritically. The essential question to consider in assessing involvement in elections is whether grassroots involvement will be strengthened after either 'victory' or 'defeat' in the election.



---

## The individual

---

What makes some individuals into social activists? What keeps other individuals non-active? How can individuals help themselves become more effective in acting against oppressive social institutions? What does it take to build and hold a commitment to helping achieve grassroots action against war and other social problems?

Rather than answering these questions just by myself, I have also asked a few friends to write about their own experiences. I asked people who have been involved in social action for five years or more and who are committed to changing the institutions underlying social problems. I asked them to tell a bit about their upbringing and personal background and how it related to social action, and to tell about things which help or which hinder their involvement in social action and their ongoing personal change. I also asked them to list some general points which they think are important for individuals participating in a wider process of social change from the grassroots.

Individuals have only limited control over their lives. They can make choices within constraints currently imposed by personal abilities, personal relationships and commitment, social class, sex, ethnic group, age, and other variables. An important question for social activists is this: what can be done to shape one's own social circumstances in order to provide a strong and lasting basis for both activism and personal needs?

### Robert Griew

I was born in 1960. I am a student and have lived in Canberra for six years. Before I came to Canberra, I lived in Perth with my mother and two sisters. Both my parents are well educated and politically progressive. My father is an academic; my mother is a librarian. Our family history was basically tied up with my father's career at various universities until, when I was sixteen, he left.

Likely to be politically conscious because of this early life, I think the disruption of our life caused by our parents' separation resulted in my sisters and myself adopting a more radical outlook. When Dad did leave, we moved to a smaller house and were, fairly suddenly, less 'comfortable' economically. My mother 'went back to work' and started a graduate training. Consequently, we were confronted with a need for a drastic

transformation of the division of labour among the four of us. I came in for quite a lot of just criticism during this time and, being a sixteen year old young man, resisted a fair amount in turn! This experience and my anger at the trauma that their separation inflicted on my mother added to the generally left-wing family orientation in predisposing me to political radicalism when I went to university.

In six years in Canberra I have been a student for four years. I was a student at the Australian National University for two years. Via student politics I became involved with a very active Unemployed Workers' Union and the lifestyle of 24-hours-a-day activism. I also became involved in the peace movement and nonviolent action training. In 1981 I took a job in a childcare centre. Working there with a wonderful group of children, while also being involved with a 'men's group', redirected my political energy into my second attempt at tertiary study. I have just finished a degree in health education and am hopeful of work in the health field which is both economically and politically rewarding.

When I came to university for the first time I found the student left very inaccessible, indeed forbidding. Visible left wing student politicians spoke with great confidence and speed, (some never say 'um' at all!). Mostly they didn't make friends with non-activist students, or at least they didn't seem to, and their own friendships seemed very bound up with the ever changing lexicons of theoretical jargon and with their confident, brusque world. When I finally became involved in student politics I found that the dominant mode of communication was indeed very reified and was fairly exclusively controlled by the competing theoretical interests of small groups of men.

Community-based activists were also forbidding when I wanted to join them. Their theoretical orthodoxy was different. It was based rather on an anti-theoretical individualistic idea of social change, 'coming down to individual change'. This is not true of all such groups, of course, but it is to an extent a predominant ideology in the environmental and nonviolent movements. Arriving in these groups as I did from involvement in student politics I found it desirable, though very difficult, to bring to the groups the language and insights of other theoretical viewpoints. I found these groups also quite exclusive in their adherence to a communication mode — characterised by emphasis on one's own feelings and on interpersonal relationships rather than on an exchange of ideas — and to this mode's underlying theoretical assumptions.

Thus, while those two kinds of group in which I have been involved were quite different in styles and in outlook, I found them to be quite similar in rigidity and in separatism from non-activists who do not conform to these expectations. Another similarity which occurs to me is the

prevalence of 'burnout' — of disillusionment, frustration, exhaustion and ill-humour — among members of both types of groups.

Repeatedly as an activist I have had terrible problems reconciling my own pressing activities, such as earning money, studying and friendship, with the high expectations of the activist role. In both groups which I have caricatured above, the theoretical outlook and mode of communication which dominated also produced a distinct set of expectations of group members which was not flexible to the multiplicity of pressures with which we all live. This was just as true of the supposedly individualistic nonviolent action groups as of the more anti-individualistic student left.

Sadly I have found my personal answer has consistently been to withdraw from activist groups in favour of the pressures of earning money to live on and, recently, to be more fully involved in studying and in having a child. Optimistically I have found that significant grassroots political opportunities present themselves in work and study situations, especially if I have the energy and time to follow them up. In 1983 I was part of a breakaway tutorial group which was involved in some interesting political conflict with our course's coordinators. I have also had the opportunity of pursuing industrial issues in casual workplaces. The issues which underlie such 'opportunities' are of course vital issues to the lives of the people with whom we interact. Given the frustrating isolation of radical groups to which I have referred, I have come to regard this kind of political work as very valuable in itself. My health has also improved by adopting a lifestyle more similar to and more accessible to the 'straight' people with whom I interact.

Community action groups are, of course, still vital and I want to finish here with a few guidelines which I will follow myself in my next involvement in such a group and which I will push the group to make room for when others want to join. Firstly, be clear with yourself as to why you are getting involved in a political group and how much time and energy you can contribute. It is better to concentrate on an issue or one group than be at every demonstration and meeting; better politically and better emotionally, in the long run. Secondly, be prepared to challenge group orthodoxies and to refuse pressure to make personal commitments and changes which aren't appropriate. Be ideologically unsound every day! Thirdly, constantly re-evaluate the state of your life and the variety of needs and pressures that constitute it. The revolution depends less on your total commitment than on your long term survival.

### **Janet Hunt**

I was born in England in 1948 and brought up in a family where politics were never discussed and where day-to-day living consumed most of our energies. My father had a milkround and worked long hours in the

belief that if you work hard you do well. He didn't. Instead he lost what little money we had. There were two things about my upbringing that probably influenced me without my realising it. Firstly, out of necessity my mother worked in the milk business too. Though roles in the family were very traditional it never seemed odd for me for wives to work, though I had to admit I saw no point in women receiving much education. Secondly, my father was strongly against bureaucrats. I remember him ripping up the Census form and complaining that *THEY* didn't have a right to know all about him.

I passed the notorious eleven plus exam and went to an all girls grammar school which I hated. I dealt with this by resisting passively. I never stayed there one second longer than I had to (even for sports which I enjoyed). I left as soon as I could — fortunately with some 'O' levels. I went out to work — with horses, which were my consuming passion and my antidote to school! My seven years' experience in the 'horse world' made me think a lot. Though I loved the work I hated some of the people with whom I found myself mixing (the 'hunting set', the 'upper crust') and it gradually dawned on me that, but for the circumstances of birth, they were no better than me. Also, I realised, despite my own negative school experiences, I was not entirely stupid. So when a friend left horses to go to teacher training I watched with interest. A couple of years later I decided that I would follow in her footsteps. I had had enough of working for people whom I felt did not need my labour. I decided I would try and make myself useful to people in greater need.

At teachers' college I met Ron Bond — a socialist, whom I was fortunate to have as my 'personal tutor'. The more sociology I read, and the more I listened to Ron, the more I realised that the things which had been going on in my mind over the past few years had some substance. Inspired by Ron and some fellow students I felt increasingly committed to working for 'disadvantaged' people, and to education as a means of social change. But my early experiences in schools were a rather shattering blow to my zeal! I started to see schools themselves as the source of many problems. I found myself forced by the culture of schools into an authoritarian role which I hated. This time, as a teacher, I felt rebellious about and resentful of the petty rules and regulations in schools and the apparent incapacity of people in these institutions to treat young people as human beings.

A year at Cambridge doing a bachelor of education degree opened my eyes still more. There I rubbed shoulders with the younger members of Britain's upper classes. I didn't like what I saw. For me, the chance to go to university was one which I valued greatly. I was the first member of my family to receive a university education and with it, I felt a responsibility to use the opportunity I'd had for the benefit of people like my own

family who had not been so fortunate. I found very few other students who felt a similar conviction. Among the friends I made in Cambridge were several Australians. I decided that I wanted to teach overseas, so when jobs in Victoria were advertised I applied, and was accepted.

I arrived in Australia in August 1975, in time to witness the 'constitutional coup' which was the downfall of the Labor government. I was shattered by Labor's defeat in the subsequent election, but found myself quite alone in a very small conservative country town in north-western Victoria. In 1977 I moved to Armidale, New South Wales, to start a master of education degree. I wanted to read more and work towards changing schools. That year I lived in college as a tutor. Again I ran into hierarchy and an attempt to create in an alien setting an Oxbridge 'tradition' more orthodox than that I had seen at Cambridge itself.

Once again I became angry and I took stock of where I'd got to in my life. Though I knew what my values were, I realised that beyond my work there was little I was doing about them. I resolved to become involved in at least one voluntary social work group, to contribute to the community radio and to join the Labor Party. All three gave me new insights. Telephone counselling training helped me as much as any help I ever gave through my work. I learned to listen to others better and, of course, became more closely aware of the tragedies of some people's lives. The community radio — which tried to operate as a very democratic cooperative — taught me a lot about the difficulties of working in ways many of us were not used to. The Labor Party made me more aware of a range of political issues. In education, I became involved in the movement to make schools more participatory and open.

On arrival in Queensland to teach at a college of advanced education I soon found myself forced to 'take a stand'. Politics in that state were very polarised and I felt bound to speak out against injustice. I was rapidly involved in a host of political activities — both at work in a very sexist institution, and outside where civil liberties, land rights and abortion were all 'hot' issues. I also became deeply embroiled in attempts to democratise the Queensland Labor Party, and later began to work in Toowoomba on peace issues.

In 1982 I moved to Canberra, where I soon became very active in the Canberra Programme for Peace Committee. A lot of 'threads' have come together now in my concern for disadvantaged groups, my desire to make educational institutions more participatory and 'inclusive', and my concern with peace and women's issues. A strong commitment to social justice and an understanding of the need for a radical restructuring of society to achieve it are at the core of my beliefs and work. Personal change has been gradual — apart from the time in 1977 when I 'took stock', I can't think of



any *one* event which changed me — but taken together I find my experiences and reflection on them keep pushing me in more radical directions.

What has helped me? My friends have been essential. Especially in Queensland, where I virtually 'burned out', I found the support of a few close friends of inestimable value. We all helped and encouraged each other — and vented our despair and anger at times. Alone I could never have withstood the political forces against me. I gained a great deal from the strong spirit of defiance and determination among those Queensland people struggling for change. In my educational work I have similarly gained strength from a wide network of people all over Australia whom I have met (often on the 'fringe' of conferences) and whose work I admired. *Knowing you are not alone is vital!* To know that you are part of a global movement is inspiring.

Secondly, I have remained single. This gives me more time for political work — but it has its disadvantages, not least of which is the sharing of feelings and frustrations with someone very close, and the sharing of responsibilities at home. Yet I feel better off than those whose closest 'mate' is unsupportive or unsympathetic. I don't have to expend energy dealing with that — many women do.

Thirdly, I am learning (slowly!) not to take on too much. This year, 1984, I am giving myself more time to reflect, read and write. I shall try not to go to so many meetings! I am really asking myself whether *my* participation is necessary, and in which groups I'll find my energies maintained, not drained. Groups which pay attention to the social needs of their members as well as the task are more energy giving. So are those that work through consensus — one isn't always struggling in a win/lose situation.

I am concerned that the processes used by peace groups reflect the kind of society that we want to see. That is, we must not have oppressive relationships within our movement. Similarly, becoming a group member must give each individual a chance to develop, rather than feel intimidated and overwhelmed by others. Small, grassroots groups, loosely linked, release much more energy than large bureaucratic-type organisations. They are more likely to make each person feel that he or she has something to offer. Thus, as I see it, social change movements must be creating change *now*. Through their ways of working they need to model in a small way the kinds of social arrangements we would want to see.

As far as organising myself is concerned, I make endless lists, and leave notes to myself all over the place. I've taken to having pen and paper by my bed, because I always remember something really important just before I go off to sleep. To scribble it down quickly means I sleep easily, without fear of forgetting it.

Time off is important too. It is very easy to get caught up in an endless round of activism. Personal relationships and friendships suffer unless time is given to them. Also, it is very easy to become obsessed with the state of the world that the day-to-day concerns of people are forgotten, leading one to become very depressed.

To keep mentally calm I exercise. I find regular swimming is a wonderful relaxation for me, and if I miss out for more than a week I feel the tension rise. I now have a fairly demanding job, and, had I chosen to, I believe that I could gain further promotion. But to do that I also feel I might have to play games which I'm not prepared to do. I also don't want to put myself back into a very stressful work environment. My current job, as a research officer for an education authority, is interesting and, most important, my close workmates are terrific people who are generally very supportive of my activism (even if they think I'm a bit mad at times!). I learned in Queensland that it is very unfair to oneself to struggle on all fronts at once. While sometimes I feel compelled to take on a number of issues because of the injustices involved, I try to keep mentally calm as I do so. I have decided that to give some energy to the peace movement, I have to have the kind of job which doesn't completely exhaust me.

There is no doubt that social change is hard and tiring — but through the peace movement I have met some wonderful and courageous people, and had a lot of fun. That, and hope, keep me going.

### **Brian Martin**

I was born in 1947 in the United States. My upbringing was not designed to produce social activists. The family atmosphere created by my parents was very supportive, middle class, and socially and politically conservative within the conservative environment of Tulsa, Oklahoma. I never heard of any relatives who were active on social issues. My four years at Rice University, 1965-1969, broadened my social horizons, and somewhat softened my right wing political views. Still, in 1968 I voted for Richard Nixon for President.

Rice University was a conservative campus, and not significantly affected by anti-Vietnam War protests until after I left. But the war was nevertheless a worrying factor when we as students occasionally thought about it in considering our career plans. In those years I thought that if the war was to be fought, the US government should get in and win it, with no holds barred. This was not an uncommon view.

The key turning point in my life came in 1969. I was due to graduate from Rice, and unlike most of my friends lacked any straightforward avenue for avoiding being conscripted into the army. After an injury induced while playing handball, I arranged for an early army physical in

the hope of obtaining medical deferment. The few hours experience at the physical itself, plus what I knew about the army already, was enough to precipitate my decision to avoid conscription. What repelled me was the regimentation and authoritarianism. I was afraid that some things I cared for about myself — such as my optimism and my emotional sensitivity, such as it was — would not survive the army experience, irrespective of going to Vietnam.

After assessing the options for avoiding conscription, I decided to emigrate to Australia. Canada was a more obvious place to go, but I disliked the idea of being so nearby to the US where I wouldn't be able to go, as I then assumed would always be the case. My parents were very supportive of me in my decision to leave the US. Refusing to be conscripted is not entirely out of line with certain types of right wing anti-government attitudes, which can sometimes swing into a wider anti-authoritarianism, as in my case.

Once in Australia, it took me several years of thinking and reading to come to grips with what I had done. I had always been a voracious reader. Now I read social analysis, politics, the history of the Vietnam War and much else. Gradually I began to understand some of the driving forces behind social and political arrangements. Being away from the US was also a true educational experience, allowing a more dispassionate inspection of the assumptions which I had grown up with.

My avoidance of conscription had been reactive rather than carefully thought out. Having taken that action then led me to think and rethink my views. Thus for me, in a fundamental way, action had led to thought, not vice versa. Ever since then I have been sceptical of approaches to social improvement based solely on convincing people. I would much rather encourage them to act and so convince themselves.

In my first years in Australia I was not involved in social action to any degree. While doing my Ph.D. in theoretical physics I read and studied a lot on a range of topics, without much interaction with others on the issues I was considering. Though undoubtedly inefficient and undirected at first, my isolated study of social issues was very productive in that I learned to think for myself, and to have faith in my own judgements. Getting away from formal coursework was an advantage too, since I had usually found that this inhibited rather than encouraged my learning.

After slow beginnings of involvement in education, environmental and radical science issues in Sydney, my full-fledged involvement in social action groups began on moving to Canberra in 1976. The issue was uranium mining and the group was Friends of the Earth. The activists in FOE then were committed to grassroots organising, to raising political as well as environmental objections to nuclear power, and to participatory group

dynamics and non-hierarchical organisation. It fitted nicely with the theoretical views I had come to by then. I learned an enormous amount from the young but experienced activists in the anti-uranium campaign. Since then I have continued in FOE and also, since 1979, in Canberra Peacemakers, which I helped to form.

There has been a high turnover of people in the social movement groups in which I've been involved. Many have dropped out, while quite a few leading activists have become 'burnt out' after working too hard. Several things about my life have helped me maintain involvement. First, I have had a full-time job — as a researcher in applied mathematics — that allows a lot of flexibility. So long as I have done satisfactory research work, my time has been free to arrange as I please. This allows attending meetings, working on leaflets and articles and so forth. But it is just as important that I am not a full-time activist. Having a generally congenial job to do provides an escape from too much activism and potential burnout.

Second, my home life is very steady and routine. My wife Kathy does not share my social and political interests and activities, but she tolerates some of them. She has never wanted to have children, and not having any means we have more time for other things.

Third, I have always been a well-organised person, and have tried to utilise this trait to become an efficient activist. I keep copies of all correspondence, notes on books and articles I read, and other material, all in alphabetical order. I keep a list of things I need to do, such as a list of articles I am writing or plan to write. When I make a commitment, I do my best to follow through.

Fourth, it is my involvement in social action groups which provides many of my most satisfying and motivating experiences. Academia is a very unsupportive environment for a social activist. In Friends of the Earth and Canberra Peacemakers we try to provide emotional support as well as performing tasks. The energy I gain from involvement in these groups helps keep me going in other areas.

Here are some points I think are important for individuals involved in social action.

- \* Ways need to be provided for people to be involved in social activism in their own way, sometimes as individuals and sometimes in groups, operating at different levels and open to interaction with others in suitable ways. There is no one best way to be an effective social activist, no one most important issue, and no single thing that everyone should be doing.

- \* People should avoid making others, and especially themselves, feel guilty for not doing enough. Guilt-tripping of oneself is one cause of burnout for activists.

- \* On the other hand, it is important to avoid escapes and consumer

gratifications — television, drugs, trendy lifestyles, etc. — that provide excuses for doing nothing.

\* Self-discipline is important. There are severe problems with many institutions, such as schooling, state bureaucracies and the military, but reacting against *everything* associated with such institutions can be a problem: learning, discipline and planning, for example, may be rejected because they are associated with corrupt institutions. Rather than rejecting learning, discipline and planning altogether, they should be reconstructed, redirected and rechannelled, to serve a self-managing and self-reliant society.

\* The notion that *other* people — leaders or experts — are addressing the important questions about social problems should be tossed out. Individuals need to address these questions themselves, and develop individual modes of commitment and social action.

\* People should be encouraged to make their own judgements. By all means let us compare our views with others, but not slavishly depend on gurus and orthodoxies.

### **Rosemary Walters**

I was born in 1950. I was often told I had great 'potential' and the feeling that I ought to do something significant with my life has remained with me.

A strong imagination and powerful emotions were intensified by my frequent bouts of illness which confined me to bed with books and fantasies.

Though there were lots of discussions among the adults in our extended family, I can remember thinking to myself that the opinions expressed never went outside the house. We were a very private family and, as I heard the trams go by outside, I felt like there was a thick wall between us and the other residents of Bendigo, Victoria.

I was deeply religious and by the age of twelve had resolved to be a missionary. This was not encouraged by either my family or my Melbourne Church of England School. I can remember the lack of enthusiasm which greeted an essay of mine about uniting the various churches. Neither teachers nor students were interested in my concern about religious matters or about world poverty.

Nevertheless I retained my desire to convert others to my viewpoint — a desire which has motivated much of my activism. There was more to my religious feelings, however, than just a desire to out-argue others. As I learned more about the extent of evil in the world, I resisted the temptation to be overwhelmed with despair by believing that there is something good working its way through the mess. That 'something good' is what I would call the Spirit of God. I see evidence of its power on a large scale in such



phenomena as the growth of the environmental movement in which the typical materialism of Australians is partly balanced by a concern for more lasting values. On a smaller scale, I see the power of the Spirit in the tenacity with which people in oppressive regimes insist on speaking the truth despite horrifying punishments, and in the way people with lives of misery — prostitution, drug-taking and self-hatred — can become healed and whole again.

However, before reaching this faith, I had a long period of agnosticism — a very valuable time of re-thinking. During this period, at the age of 22, I worked as a teacher on an Aboriginal settlement in the Northern Territory. I was shocked by the housing conditions of Aboriginal people and made my first clumsy attempt at changing 'society' by going on 'strike' in one area of my work. With no knowledge of how to organise community or fellow-teacher support for my efforts, I achieved no improvements in Aboriginal housing and received a few passing 'put-downs' from my superior officers.

While on the settlement I read Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*. Fired with rage due to these new perceptions, I verbally attacked the males I knew, most of whom had traditional assumptions about male-female relationships. (This was 1972). From this inept, individualistic experience I learned that anger merely entrenches people further into their positions. Other approaches are needed if ideas and behaviour are to change.

These failures did not discourage me. When I returned to Canberra, I soon joined Action for World Development, Freedom from Hunger Campaign, the Campaign against Racial Exploitation, Force Ten, and Amnesty International. I also worked with the Canberra Learning Exchange and School Without Walls and wrote a book with a Schools Commission grant.

What impelled me to be so active? Looking back on it, I feel tired just remembering it all.

I was lonely and desperately wanted friends. The people I met in these organisations were among the few I had ever found who shared the concerns I had had since I was a teenager. It was a great relief to talk to people who regarded world hunger as an outrage.

In addition to wanting like-minded friends, I also wanted a sense of identity. I was terrified of being the bland woman represented on the covers of *Women's Weekly*: a woman no-one would notice.

The usual means by which people obtained a sense of identity seemed closed to me. My job was dull at that time, I was unmarried (and fearful that marriage would submerge my identity further), and I couldn't study, having developed a loathing for it at school.

I wanted my identity to be fashioned around something substantial and

useful that I (and others) could respect. And of course, at the age of 24, I thought that it would be relatively easy to achieve world-change. It all seemed so obvious. You just had to change people's views.

I worked very hard, frequently becoming ill but feeling too driven to stop. I did training in human-relations work because I felt so lacking in peace within myself.

At this stage I was still an agnostic. Dismayed by the meaninglessness of existence, I was determined to carve out a meaning for myself by deciding that some things were worth working for.

When my mother died, I was quite diminished by grief. I lost my desire to argue vociferously and overpoweringly (a desire I don't want to regain). I felt crushed and weak.

At this time, I started to look for God again, a search which intensified with the difficulties I was to face.

For some months things seemed to become worse and worse. My personal life, my work and my home life were all going wrong. Eventually I caught glandular fever and came to a full stop.

Unable to work with groups or to visit friends much, my need to be recognised and noticed deepened. In my diaries there were entries such as: "I feel turbulent. I feel like I want to win a contest and slay an opponent and overcome huge odds and be admired." The absence of my activism threw up feelings which showed some of the purposes that the activism had served.

On a brief trip to Indonesia made immediately upon recovery, a chance remark from a friend prompted me to look into the Movement Against Uranium Mining. Upon meeting the MAUM group, I rushed into activity with all the enthusiasm of my pent-up need to be noticed after my secluded illness. My energy was met with a luke-warm reaction from the group.

By this time I had too much experience and confidence as an activist to be discouraged. I had earlier dropped my Third World activism, discouraged by the enormity of the problems. I now saw a chance to indirectly contribute to that situation by reducing the global degradation caused by the First World.

After a couple of months of meetings, I made a commitment to the group and have attended almost every weekly meeting for several years, persisting even when numbers were low and times were difficult.

Soon after this at the age of 30, I joined a group house in Lyneham, a Canberra suburb. It was a Student Christian Movement house with a 'companion' dwelling nearby. Suddenly I belonged. I was part of a group that accepted me and in which I could relax and be myself. I had an identity within that group and particularly within that household.

This newfound happiness released a burst of creativity. I wrote many

letters to the *Canberra Times* as well as articles and contributions to leaflets. I made countless phone calls for Friends of the Earth and helped in many other ways. As an activist I was less frantic but more productive than I'd been before.

However our group house was very demanding. I can remember being up half the night dealing with a drunken person and then driving to an anti-nuclear conference the next morning. Inevitably I became exhausted and burnt out.

At a time when I was considering taking 6 months off activism, I was urged to become president of the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra. I strongly resisted the idea.

I eventually chose to become president for several reasons. I was greatly encouraged by friends. I believed (correctly) that the job would be difficult and demanding and, though I wanted a rest, I also still wanted a challenge and a sense of achievement.

For two years, I had as much challenge as I could handle. I was a strong leader in the Conservation Council, in our group house and in the classroom where I taught and I was an old hand in Friends of the Earth. I found it very difficult, even overwhelming sometimes, but very satisfying.

In 1983, I stopped working for the Conservation Council in order to study and take in new ideas (though activism has always been a rich source of education for me).

I now feel, at the age of 34, that I have achievements behind me, a sense of identity, recognition from people and plenty of friends.

I have nevertheless continued to work with Friends of the Earth. Why have I continued when the apparent psychological urges have been met?

One reason is that the people in FOE are old friends who I look forward to seeing every week.

Another reason is that one aspect of my mind has remained unchanged over the years. I've always had a deep pessimism about the survival of the human species. Through this pessimism there is a rather thin but persistent optimism which says 'It's worth a try'. Perhaps that is the Spirit pushing me on.

I'm certainly not a three-star performer as an activist these days, but I hope that I will retain that main trait that can keep me useful — namely persistence.

### **Rosemary's points for activists**

1. Only join one or two activist organisations. They will generate more work than you can do.
2. Carrying out promises between meetings is at least as important as

being at the meeting. Don't rush from one meeting to another, leaving no time to do work or background reading.

3. Be organised.

4. Be on time.

5. Thank others for their contributions. You don't know what it may have cost them. Thank yourself, too.

6. Learn and practise valuable skills for meetings such as:

- \* Listening;
- \* not interrupting;
- \* summarising what has been said so far;
- \* putting in a good word for a maligned member;
- \* encouraging silent people to speak if they want to;
- \* pointing to encouraging signs in your campaign.

7. Build enjoyment into your activism.

8. Build up relationships between members in your group.

9. Leave time for fun and leisure. Encourage others to rest when they need to. Don't use guilt on others or yourself.

10. Friendships are precious: give time to them.

---

## The state

---

Most modern wars are fought between professional military forces fighting on behalf of states, such as wars between Germany and Britain, between North and South Korea, between Egypt and Israel, and between China and Vietnam. Sometimes there are several participants on one or both sides, as in World Wars One and Two. Again, the 'participants' are states, which mobilise organised violence to defend, attack or otherwise protect and advance their interests. Sometimes one of the sides in a war is not a formal state, as in the Algerian war against France. In such cases this side usually aspires to the status of a state.

It may seem obvious that wars are fought by and on behalf of states. But it is also important to realise that wars are *not* fought directly on behalf of other groups.

\* Violence between individuals by itself does not make a war. Separate incidents of interpersonal violence in modern societies are quite different from the phenomenon of modern war. For war, violence must be co-ordinated, mobilised and directed. There are few modern cases in which a human community has organised and decided for itself, independently of the state, to launch mass warfare on another community.

\* Violence between classes has not been the framework for war. Certainly ruling classes have used violence against subordinate classes, but this is better categorised as repression. And subordinate classes have sometimes used violence in challenging or overturning ruling establishments, as in the Chinese Revolution. But most large-scale revolutionary violence – and counterrevolutionary violence – has been concerned with the capture or maintenance of state power. Working class groups have not autonomously organised themselves for warfare independently of an administrative structure characteristic of the state.

\* Violence between different ethnic groups is common, but ethnic groups have seldom autonomously organised themselves for mass violence by professionals. Ethnic antagonisms commonly are channelled through the state, and indeed often mobilised on behalf of particular states. Organised genocidal violence, such as by the Turkish government against the Armenians in 1915 and by the German government against the Jews and other ethnic groups during World War Two, has been closely linked with control of the state by one ethnic group.



\* Violence of men against women is not the immediate basis of war. Wars are not directly organised or fought as a systematic procedure for mobilising men for violence against women, or for maintaining domination of men over women. Rather, men and masculine behaviour are *mobilised* on behalf of states to fight against similarly organised groups. While wars do draw upon and reinforce male domination, this occurs mainly through the channel of the state and the military.

Modern war is organised violence by military forces on behalf of states in a system of competing states. War is seldom a direct battle between individuals or communities, between classes, between ethnic groups or between sexes. Violence does occur directly in relation to these and other divisions in society, and the problems raised by this are important ones. But for focussing on the problem of war, consideration of the role of the state is vital. Institutions such as patriarchy do play vital roles in war — as I will describe in later chapters — but these also need to be analysed through their connection with the state and the state system.

It is true that war preceded the state. But 'war' is not a timeless category: its significance and dynamics depend on the social structures in which it occurs. Few of the conditions for tribal and feudal warfare exist in industrialised societies today. Understanding the nature of war in pre-historic times can be illuminating, but the insights are not readily transportable to the analysis of modern war, since the institutions through which organised violence is mobilised and the uses for which it is directed are so different. Modern war is tightly linked with the modern state system and associated institutions such as bureaucracy, patriarchy and capitalism. To address the problem of modern war, it is necessary to confront the state.

### What is the State?

The state can be defined as a set of social institutions based on a monopoly within a territory over what is claimed to be the legitimate use of force. The institutions of the state operate to control and extract resources from the population in the territory. Military forces and police are the agents of the state which exercise violence on its behalf against external or internal enemies.

The central role of the state in war is the focus of this definition. Indeed, it is by implicitly invoking this definition that I have distinguished war from independent violence between individuals or ethnic groups, for example. The definition also points to the importance of the *system* of competing states as a key factor in the dynamics of individual states, rather than looking entirely at the relationship of social classes within countries. While the state is not the only locus of power in society, it is of central

importance for the problem of war due to its monopoly on 'legitimate' violence.

More concretely, the state is typically composed of a set of organisations, most of them bureaucratic in form:

- \* bureaucracies to administer and regulate trade, tariffs, taxation, transportation and communications;
- \* the legal, police and prison systems;
- \* bureaucracies for running or regulating education, medical and welfare services;
- \* the 'government', namely the political executive of the state;
- \* the military.

Under state socialism, the state directly owns and administers the large majority of economic enterprises. In capitalist systems those enterprises not owned by the state are still quite constrained by state ownership or regulation of transport, communications, land use, labour, permitted products and so forth.

Within its realm created by a monopoly over legitimate force, the characteristic function of the state is administration: controlling from above the frameworks in which economic, political and social life takes place. The organisational medium through which this administration takes place is bureaucracy. The state is essentially an intermeshing system of bureaucracies which together make up a large-scale power system which sustains itself by means of exploitation of a population. The key bureaucracy which defends and promotes the state using violent means is the military.

The modern system is only a few hundred years old. Increased trade and the slow development of capitalism undermined the economic self-sufficiency of the feudal system in Europe. This also undermined the political and military autonomy of the feudal estates. More power passed to monarchs, who employed tax collectors and other administrators to control economic and political life. The rise of state bureaucracies and state military forces further undermined local autonomy, especially as the military role of the feudal aristocracy — its main justification for political control and economic exploitation — was superseded.

The process of state-building has been immensely stimulated by two types of catastrophic events: violent revolutions and wars. The French Revolution played a key role in the extension of the state in Western Europe. Theda Skocpol in *States and Social Revolutions* conceives a revolution as a rapid and fundamental transformation of state and class structures, in part carried out by a class-based revolt from below. Prior to the French Revolution, local loyalties had been breaking down but no replacement was being provided. The revolution provided a new focus for loyalty: the state itself. This faith in a state ideal, often of religious

depth and fervour, is usually called nationalism, though statism is a more appropriate term.

Revolutions are events of state-building and state transformation. The mechanism for changing class rule is by changing state structures. Historically, this has usually meant the creation of vast new bureaucracies for state control of society. Revolution in this sense is virtually always a state-orientated transformation. Major social revolutions since the French Revolution — including the Russian Revolution, the Chinese Revolution and other Third World Revolutions — have taken a similar state-building form. This is just as true of the Iranian Revolution, in which the clergy has consolidated state power under its leadership, as it is of revolutions led by communist parties. In each case mass action has been utilised to destroy one state and class structure and create another. Also in every case, the newly created state apparatuses have maintained and extended the powers gained through revolution, and increased centralised control over the populace which gave rise to it.

War is the second type of catastrophic event, besides violent revolution, which has greatly stimulated state-building. The French Revolution mobilised nationalist passions and channelled them into a policy of expansion and conquest. Ruling elites whose countries were overwhelmed or threatened by French military expansion saw the necessity for defending their own interests by centralising and expanding military strength, and extending state power to pay for and administer this. The French armies did not achieve victories by superior armaments or leadership. The key to their success was mass mobilisation and fighting spirit based on state chauvinism. To defend against this, a similar state mobilisation was promoted in other European countries.

Violent revolutions have often been linked with war. The Russian Revolution was precipitated by defeat of the Czarist armies in World War One, and followed in 1918-1920 by a major war for survival against internal and external opponents. Third World revolutions have often been the end products of lengthy anti-colonial wars. Wars are important in state-building in several ways. Besides defending the territorial monopoly on violence necessary for perpetuation of the state, wars also require the creation of bureaucracies for supporting, staffing and supplying armies. Central control of political and economic decision-making is required for the war effort. National unity is enhanced and dissident opinion repressed.

The state-building role of war applies not only in social revolutions but also to wars fought by existing states. As Randolph Bourne wrote during World War One, "War is the health of the state".

The state is not only linked historically with war; as the institutionalisation of war-making power, the state shares many qualities with the military.

These qualities include centralisation of command, emphasis on discipline and obedience, and hierarchical organisational structures. This is not surprising, since the state is composed of bureaucracies and the military is a model bureaucracy. But this connection is not a coincidence: it is forged and extended in the course of war, which promotes the militarisation of society and strengthens the state as the locus of centralised administration.

Since the rise of the modern state several centuries ago, it has gone from strength to strength. The activities of existing states have been steadily extended. Typical activities include public health measures, town planning, schooling, funding of scientific research, unemployment payments, job creation schemes, subsidies for major industries, and ownership or regulation of radio and television. In extending its activities, the state directly or indirectly has broken down many local institutions and traditions. The 'mentally ill' are no longer cared for by local communities, but are controlled by professionals funded by the state. Involvement by local people in town-level political decision-making has given way over many decades to an ever increasing focus on state-level party politics and particularly on the prime minister or president. The social support systems of the extended family and local community are collapsing in the face of geographical and social mobility — which is fostered by the economic system based on centralised control — and the provision of state services to individuals or nuclear families. Worker and community educational associations have given way to state-funded and regulated compulsory schooling.

The destruction of local organisations has meant that the state no longer has any major locally-rooted rivals in the provision of services. Only capitalist enterprises provide real competition to the state in providing some services. Provision of services by families, voluntary organisations and informal community structures — part of the 'twin economy' — is important, but takes place within a state-controlled framework.

As well as breaking down local institutions, the state has moved into many new areas as they become significant, such as environmental protection, legislating against racial and sexual discrimination, and promoting nuclear power. This expanding role of the state helps prevent the rise of any significant competing forms of social organisation.

Many of the roles and activities of the state now seem indispensable. Even those who complain bitterly about the inefficiencies and abuses of state bureaucracies usually want only to reform the state rather than provide an alternative structure. Relying on the state for solutions to the problems of labour exploitation, poverty, racism, sexism and environmental degradation can be attractive, since the state can and does meet some needs in these areas. But the difficulty is that the expansion of state power also reduces local direct democracy and increases vulnerability to manipulation

by elites, thereby reinforcing the structural basis for the original social problems whose alleviation was sought. The problem of war is a case in point.

In several instances, what were seen as solutions to the problem of war succumbed to the moulding force of the state system. Democracy was at one time seen as an antidote to war. But 'democracy' has been institutionalised in the mould of the state: representative democracy to elect state officials, in which candidates are chosen by bureaucratised political parties. Far from being an antidote to war, mass representative democracy has been linked historically with the development of modern war. Indeed, mass democracies, beginning with the French Revolution, have been quite successful in war-fighting due to the power of popular sentiment mobilised on behalf of the state. In the two world wars, the mass democracies have defeated empires.

Socialism was also seen as an antidote to war, but it too succumbed to the state mould. The revolutionary triumph of socialism has always been the triumph of state socialism, not transnational socialism. In Soviet, Chinese and other socialist systems, the statist aspects of state socialism have prevailed over the libertarian aspects. War — the great promoter of the state — has been the rule in state socialist revolutions, and has been a frequent occurrence in interstate socialist relations.

World War One demonstrated the victory of the state system over any competitors or moderating influences. The international socialist movement, which demonstrated great apparent strength before the war, quickly succumbed to nationalist passions on the outbreak of the war. There was no general strike by workers nor blocking of war credits by socialist parliamentarians. Likewise, personal and group commitments to pacifism and neutralism were overwhelmed by nationalism. The pleas of Christian leaders were ignored. The talents and emotions of intellectuals were mobilised to glorify their own states and to vilify opponents. A part of the anarchist movement, including some leading figures such as Peter Kropotkin, supported the war. Big business and international finance could not prevent the war, but rather adapted production to make war profits. War and the state system have emerged triumphant over allegedly pacifistic influences of representative democracy, capitalism, Christianity and socialism. These and other ideologies and social systems have succumbed to or accommodated war and the state.

### **Mobilisation for the state**

The state cannot survive solely by the use of violence to enforce acquiescence. A fair degree of popular support or at least passivity is required. State objectives can be more effectively promoted if members of the population are mobilised to support and work for the state. This



process of mobilisation to serve the state is a key one. It proceeds on many levels.

**Individual psychology.** The state is a symbol of strength and domination with which many individuals can identify. As the traditional sources of allegiance, such as the family, religion and local community, lose their force, the more abstract allegiance to country and state takes its place. Patriotism is the most obvious manifestation of the mobilisation of psychology to serve the state, but more pervasive is the tendency to perceive the world from the viewpoint of one's state and to identify one's own interests with those of the state.

The process of identifying with the state is most widespread in relation to international relations, where the influence of the individual is least. Individual powerlessness can promote identification with what is seen as the source of power, the state. Mobilisation of individual psychology helps mobilisation for war, and in turn is a potent method for generating patriotism.

**Participation.** In many cases agencies of the state can act without consulting or involving members of the public. But when community disenchantment or outright opposition begins to play a major role, then the state may sponsor limited participation which helps to mobilise consent for its policies and actions.

For example, city planners for many years simply proceeded without consulting the public. But in the late 1960s and 1970s community resistance developed: local pressure groups were established to oppose freeways, new airports, demolition programmes, uncontrolled commercialisation of neighbourhoods, and other aspects of urban 'renewal' and 'development'. One official response to this grassroots resistance was to sponsor limited forms of participation in urban planning, for example by setting up neighbourhood councils to advise planners. Participation as used and promoted by state bureaucrats served to mobilise support and legitimacy for the state. Low-level participation can serve as a form of social control. It ensures that 'participation' takes the form of consultation or placation rather than community control. It also serves to coopt and absorb many social activists, and to isolate radicals from their constituency.

State sponsored participation serves to mobilise consent both to support particular policies and to support the prevailing system of top-down administration. This is similar to the use of limited forms of worker participation in corporations.

**Racism.** Antagonism between ethnic groups can be used and reinforced by the state to sustain its own power. When one ethnic group controls all the key positions in the state, this is readily used to keep other groups in

subordinate positions, and as a basis for economic exploitation. This is clearly a key process in apartheid in South Africa, but is also at work in many other countries in which minority groups are oppressed. From this perspective, the dominant ethnic group uses state power to maintain its ascendance. But at the same time, the use of political and economic power for racial oppression helps to sustain and legitimate state power itself. This is because the maintenance of racial domination and exploitation comes to depend partly on the use of state power, which is therefore supported and expanded by the dominant group. From this perspective it can be said that the state mobilises racism to help maintain itself.

There are several other avenues used by the state to mobilise support. Several of these will be treated in the following chapters, including bureaucracy, professionalism and patriarchy. In each case, institutionalised patterns of dominance and submission are mobilised to support the state, and the state in turn helps to sustain the institution in question, such as bureaucracy or patriarchy. To counter the state, it is necessary both to promote grassroots mobilisation and to undermine the key institutions from which the state draws its power and from which it mobilises support.

### Problems with the state system

Is the state system really so bad? War is the most obvious indictment of the system, and this alone should be enough to justify questioning the state. As wars have become more destructive, there is no sign that any steps to re-examine or transform the state system are being taken by state elites. This should not be surprising. War is not simply a by-product of the state system, to be moderated and regulated when it becomes too dangerous to populations. Rather, war is part and parcel of the state system, so the destructiveness of war makes no difference. State elites — and many others — see the world as a state-structured world, and all action is premised on this perspective.

War is the external manifestation of state violence. Political repression is its internal form. Political freedoms are not only at a premium under military dictatorships and state socialism, but are also precarious in the representative democracies, especially in relation to 'national security'.

One of the most telling indictments of the state system is found in Leo Kuper's book *Genocide*. Kuper documents the most horrific exterminations in this century, including the killing of the Jews by the Nazis, the massacre of the Bangladeshis by the West Pakistan army in 1971 and the extermination in Cambodia in 1975. What is damning of the state system is the reluctance of governments — and of that assemblage of state actors, the United Nations — to intervene against even the most well documented genocidal killing. The reason for this reluctance is the concern for the autonomy of

the state. In short, maintaining the 'integrity' of the state system is more important for state elites than intervening against genocide.

There are many other social problems caused, sustained or aggravated by the state, including suppression of dissent, state support for corporate elites, and the activities of spy agencies and secret police. These problems stem essentially from the system of unequal power and privilege which the state both is part of and sustains. The state is not the only way to embody and sustain unequal power and privilege: it is a particular way involving bureaucracies for administration and military forces for defending against external and internal enemies.

### **Critique of the state**

It is possible to analyse the nature of the state at great length. Indeed, this has been an active area of inquiry for quite a few years, especially for Marxist academics. One can analyse the changing class composition of state elites, the relative autonomy of the state and the ideological state apparatuses, *ad infinitum*. But for all the analysis of the state as it is, there is relatively little fundamental critique of the state as an institution, and less still in the way of alternatives to the state. Abolishing the state is hypothetically on the Marxist agenda for the far-distant future, but is certainly not an immediate preoccupation of state socialists. Under state socialism, the state is strengthened. In capitalist societies, most socialists also seek to strengthen and expand the domain of the state. They aim to adapt state power for their own ends, not to abolish it. One reason for maintaining the state is to wage war against the enemies of the state.

Who are those who seriously want to reduce state power? Here I will discuss three groups: anarchists, certain conservatives, and globalists.

**Anarchists.** Anarchism provides the most longstanding and incisive critique of state power, and indeed the centrepiece of anarchist theory and practice is opposition to the state as an institution. There are many different anarchist perspectives, ranging from support for a capitalist market economy without state interference to more collectivist orientations which also can be termed 'libertarian socialism' or 'left-wing anarchism'. My focus will be on these latter orientations. Most anarchists see a possible and desirable human community as one directly managed by the people who live in it. A typical libertarian socialist vision is that local communities and workers would organise their activities by techniques of direct democracy, with higher-order decisions being made by bodies composed of delegates directly elected and immediately revocable by local groups. In such an anarchist society, privilege and power based on formal position would not

exist. Work would be reconstituted so that the distinctions between mental and manual work and between work and nonwork were dissolved.

The long-term goals of left-wing anarchists and of socialists often have much in common, and indeed Marx is sometimes claimed as a mentor by both groups. Anarchists accept the bulk of Marxist analysis of capitalism, and like socialists oppose class rule: the unequal distribution of political and economic power embodied in capitalist social relations. Lenin's theoretical position on the state, spelled out just before the Russian October Revolution, contains many democratic practices which would be supported by most anarchists, such as direct recall of delegates and merging of legislative and executive functions.

Where anarchists and state socialists differ is over what methods are acceptable and successful for attaining liberation from class rule. State socialists historically have supported the 'intermediate' stage of 'dictatorship of the proletariat', namely the vesting of ownership of the means of production in the hands of communist party elites who allegedly represent the proletariat. In other words, in order to destroy capitalist power, state socialists support the vast expansion of state power. In theory this state power is supposed to wither away sometime in the future, but in practice there has been no programme to achieve this goal.

Anarchists, since the early days of Marxism, have warned that the taking over of state power in the name of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' involves only another form of elite rule, and is not compatible with the goal of a stateless world. Anarchists strongly support the principle that the means should embody the ends. If the goal is abolition of the state, the means must involve weakening rather than strengthening state power. Anarchists in the late 1800s correctly foresaw that the outcome of revolutions led by vanguard elites to capture state power would be increased political repression.

The anarchists' critique of the state is not always matched by an equally incisive critique of other systems of power which also need to be addressed, such as patriarchy. And even with their heavy focus on the problems caused by the state, anarchists are far from having developed a persuasive and potent programme of political action against the state. They do support initiatives for self-management such as cooperatives and workers' control. These are seen as budding alternatives to state power and to other types of elite power. Furthermore, anarchist perspectives can be used to analyse social action campaigns to determine whether actions will really promote self-management or will just reinforce state power.

In practice, many anarchists tend to take a 'purist' attitude to social action, preferring to avoid involvement in the state system themselves and

so to work only on its fringes. This is one reason why anarchism remains very much a 'fringe' ideology.

Anarchists have devoted little attention to strategies for challenging and replacing the state system. Part of the reason for this is that many anarchists have looked for social change to come from sudden — often violent — revolutionary transformations of society. Unlike vanguard parties on the left, few anarchist activists and theorists want to become new elites. They bend over backwards to avoid formal leadership roles, and prefer to leave the course of revolutions to the spontaneous initiatives of the masses. The intuitive support for self-managing structures has been graphically illustrated by such occasions as the Spanish Collectives in 1936-1939. These occasions are among the central guiding images for many modern anarchists.

The lack of attention by many anarchists to long-term strategies for undermining and superseding the state is unfortunate. With a far-reaching critique of the state and other structures for social repression, and with a fair conception of an alternative mode of social organisation based on self-management, anarchism provides perhaps the most fruitful starting point for development of anti-state strategies. Anarchists have not taken up such strategy development because of their avoidance of 'contamination' by getting enmeshed in the state system and because of their belief in the spontaneity of self-managing social revolution. Contrary to many anarchists, I think a strategy against the state must involve coordinated action by people both inside and outside the state. 'Getting dirty' — being ideologically compromised — is an inevitable consequence of such an approach. Also, I think the emphasis by some anarchists on spontaneity is somewhat misplaced. Plans, strategies and scenarios are greatly needed to promote social change. The proper alternative to the rigid 'lines' of socialist vanguard parties is not pure spontaneity, but rather involvement by all interested people in developing the road — or rather many roads — to a self-managing future. For all their promise, the major social revolutions with self-managing traits have not had encouraging outcomes. More planning and attention to strategy could increase the odds of success in the future.

**Conservatives.** Another critique of state power is provided by certain conservatives. I say 'certain' conservatives since much right-wing opinion is not critical of the state in any fundamental sense. Defenders of capitalism — who are usually located towards the right in the conventional political spectrum — often complain loudly about government intervention, but few want to alter the nature of the state in any dramatic way. Rather, they want state intervention in the economy to be tilted more towards the interests of capitalists. Few of them would really be happy with the disappearance of state financing and regulation of roads, rail systems and air traffic, foreign trade, medical services, schools or the legal system.



The conservatives I have in mind are those who oppose the weakening of local organisations — including families, communities, churches and voluntary organisations — by the centralised state. This is a conservative anti-statism rooted in traditions of autonomy rather than in defence of corporate or other vested interests. Localist anti-statism is found in most parts of the world which have not succumbed to industrialisation and 'modernisation'. (Modernisation is a code word for incorporation in the exploitative national and international political and economic systems.) Even in industrialised countries, localist and anti-statism persists in many areas, especially in the United States. Often it is mixed with pro-capitalist ideology.

A writer who presents the view of conservative localist anti-statism very well is Robert Nisbet. In his book *Twilight of Authority* his basic theme is the destruction of local organisations by the centralised state, and the need for renewal of the local organisations. Nisbet provides a strong critique of the state, pointing to its failures, corruption, abuse of power, and destruction of valuable traditional institutions and values. Nisbet also spells out the connection between the rise of state power and the rise of bureaucracy, the important role of war and military influence as causes and consequences of increased state power, and the role of intellectual class in promoting and being benefitted by the state and war.

Nisbet's preferred alternative to state domination is a revival of localism, of kinship links, of decentralisation and of voluntary organisations. In this emphasis, localist conservatism and anti-statism has much in common with anarchism and with the goals of many community activists who push for more local autonomy and self-reliance in health, energy or production.

But there is a big difference in the nature of the local organisations supported by anarchists and by conservative localists. Anarchists favour self-managing local alternatives, and oppose hierarchy and other forms of oppression such as patriarchy and the factory division of labour. Nisbet by contrast is uncritical of the localist alternatives to state power. He does not question the inequality and oppression embodied in the traditional family, university and so forth. Nisbet supports local varieties of hierarchy as a counter to centralised enforcement of uniformity.

How long does Nisbet see localism recovering its lost position against statism? This is a problem: Nisbet has no strategy. He apparently puts his trust in the power of ideas to cause change. This lack of strategy is linked with Nisbet's lack of critical attention to the family, voluntary organisations and local community whose resurgences he advocates. The oppression found in these local organisational forms has a lot to answer for, including contributions to racism, sexism, religious intolerance and class oppression.

This is one important reason why state power so often has been seen as a solution to social problems.

Because anarchists and other community activists do criticise the localist organisational forms, this provides them with a basis for mobilising people's concerns and energy. For example, feminists are able to mobilise social action through their focus on oppression in the family and in larger-scale patriarchal social structures. The energy generated by organising to build egalitarian and self-managing systems of social organisation also can be used to undermine and challenge state power. By aiming to reconstruct local institutions and thereby mobilising people, anarchists, feminists and others have access to a broad constituency for an anti-war strategy. The constituency for a conservative anti-state strategy would lie in those who are privileged by local hierarchies, and this is a much more dubious base for challenging the larger hierarchies of the state.

**Globalists.** A third critique of the state comes from those who may be called globalists. These are people who recognise the tragic consequences of war, exploitation and repression caused by the state system, and see the solution as some sort of global world order.

One frequently advocated alternative to the state system is world government. But world government, or rather a world state, would not necessarily eliminate war, exploitation and repression. Rebellions, revolts and civil war would still be possible and indeed would be likely unless the inequality, exploitation and other causes of war were removed. A form of peace enforced by ruthless use of centralised power might be maintained, but this in many ways could be just as bad as war. Indeed, in a world state the opportunities for repression would be immense. If a world state came into existence, it would be as necessary to develop ways to challenge and go beyond it as it is to challenge the present state system. Those who advocate the world state of course do not want it to be repressive. But the reality of a world state is likely to be quite different, especially considering that the most probable way in which a world state could arise is as a result of a major global war.

Short of a world state, another favoured direction is a strengthening of present international organisations, especially the United Nations. For all its advantages, this approach is still limited by its reliance on the continued existence of states. The UN has failed time and time again to prevent war or repression, essentially because it is an organisation of state elites: an inter-national and not a global organisation. To be represented at an international level, local initiatives must be filtered through the state apparatuses. The UN and other international organisations often are able to act above and beyond the interests of particular state elites. But in any

action that threatens to challenge or undermine the state system itself, international organisations are quickly reined in by their constituent members, the state elites.

This problem is well recognised by sophisticated globalists such as Richard Falk and Johan Galtung. They favour a weakening and superseding of state power by simultaneously strengthening initiatives at local and global levels. Local organisations and campaigns can be linked in networks across state boundaries, and global organisations can be constituted independently of states, as in the case of global organisations of scholars, war resisters or amateur musicians. Global organisations, or individuals or groups constituted independently of states, provide valuable support for local initiatives, and vice versa.

Where this viewpoint runs into some trouble is in spelling out what sort of powers global organisations would have in setting frameworks or providing administration. Surely it is desirable to provide guidance at a global level for regulating the input of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere from burning fossil fuels, or for providing assistance to disaster stricken areas. But what procedures should be used for creating and operating groups on such vital topics? How are they to be made properly representative and accountable? Are their recommendations to be enforced in any way?

Nevertheless, the key insight of the globalist-localist advocates is an important one: that local groups and initiatives should be linked non-hierarchically with other groups and initiatives throughout the world. Action groups often operate strictly within the framework and perspective of a single state. The globalist orientation can help broaden the view of local activists. Likewise, the involvement of individuals and local organisations in global initiatives helps break down tendencies towards elitism in global organisations.

### **Implications for action groups**

What should be done to help transform the state system in the direction of self-reliance and self-management? The problem can seem overwhelming. What difference can the actions of an individual or small group make? Actually, quite a lot.

The state system is strong because the actions of many people and groups support it. Most social activists see state intervention as a solution — often *the* solution — to social problems.

- \* What can be done about poverty? More state welfare.
- \* What about racial discrimination? Laws and enforcement to stop it.
- \* What about environmental degradation? State regulation.
- \* What about sexual discrimination? Anti-discrimination legislation.
- \* What about corporate irresponsibility or excess profits? Nationalisation.

- \* What about unemployment? State regulation of the economy: investment incentives, job creation schemes, tariffs.
- \* What about crime? More police, more prisons, more counsellors.
- \* What about enemy attack? More military spending.
- \* What about too much military spending? Convince or pressure the government to cut back.

The obvious point is that most social activists look constantly to the state for solutions to social problems. This point bears labouring, because the orientations of and action by most social action groups tends to reinforce state power. This applies to most antiwar action too. Many of the goals and methods of peace movements have been oriented around action by the state, such as appealing to state elites and advocating neutralism and unilateralism. Indeed, peace movements spend a lot of effort debating *which* demand to make on the state: nuclear freeze, unilateral or multilateral disarmament, nuclear-free zones, or removal of military bases. By appealing to the state, activists indirectly strengthen the roots of many social problems, the problem of war in particular.

To help transform the state system, action groups need to develop strategies which, at a minimum, do not reinforce state power. This means ending the incessant appeals for state intervention, and promoting solutions to social problems which strengthen local self-reliance and initiative.

- \* What can be done about poverty? Promote worker and community control over economic resources, and local self-reliance in skills and resources.
- \* What about racial discrimination? Promote discussion, interaction and nonviolent action at a grassroots level.
- \* What about environmental degradation? Encourage local communities to re-examine their own activities and to confront damaging practices.
- \* What about sexual discrimination? Build grassroots campaigns against rape and the gender division of labour, and mount challenges to hierarchical institutions which help sustain patriarchy.
- \* What about corporate irresponsibility or excess profits? Promote worker and community control over production.
- \* What about unemployment? Promote community control of community resources for equitable distribution of work and the economic product, and develop worker cooperatives as an alternative to jobs as gifts of employers.
- \* What about crime? Work against unequal power and privilege, and for meaningful ways of living, to undercut the motivation for crime, and promote local community solidarity as a defence against crime.
- \* What about enemy attack? Social defence.
- \* What about too much military spending? Build local alternatives to



the state, use these alternatives to withdraw support from the state and undermine the economic foundation of military spending.

These grassroots, self-managing solutions to social problems are in many cases no more than suggestive directions. Detailed grassroots strategies in most cases have not been developed, partly because so little attention has been devoted to them compared to strategies relying on state intervention. But the direction should be clear: in developing strategies to address social problems, aim at building local self-reliance and withdrawing support from the state rather than appealing for state intervention and thereby reinforcing state power.

Many people's thinking is permeated by state perspectives. One manifestation of this is the unstated identification of states or governments with the people in a country which is embodied in the words 'we' or 'us'. "We must negotiate sound disarmament treaties". "We must renounce first use of nuclear weapons". Those who make such statements implicitly identify with the state or government in question. It is important to avoid this identification, and to carefully distinguish states from people. The Australian state is different from the people living in Australia. Instead of saying "China invaded Vietnam", it is more accurate and revealing to say something like "Chinese military forces invaded Vietnamese territory" or perhaps "Chinese military forces, mostly conscripts, were ordered by the rulers of the Chinese state to invade territory which was claimed by rulers of the Vietnamese state as exclusively theirs to control". Also to be avoided is the attribution of gender to states, as in 'motherland' or 'fatherland'.

Many social action campaigns have a national focus, a national organisational basis and depend on national activist leaders. This is especially true when the campaign is based on influencing state elites to implement or change policies. This national focus and national organisational basis both reflects and reinforces a state perspective and state power. The alternative is to think and act both locally and transnationally, and to develop skills and leadership ability at local levels. This approach has been adopted by some social movements, but seldom on a sustained and systematic basis.

In developing strategies which withdraw support from rather than reinforce the state, activists must come to grips with the issue of electoral politics. In most countries with systems of representative democracy, the dominant political parties are well and truly interlinked with the state. Far from providing a means for externally controlling state power, the party system is really an adjunct of the state. The party in government can achieve little without the cooperation of the state bureaucracies, especially the bureaucratic elites. Likewise, the ability of the government to implement policies depends on fitting those policies into the mould of state bureaucratic



activity. This government-bureaucratic feedback provides enormous pressure to turn the party in government into co-administrators: helping to administer the state, along with bureaucratic elites. This relationship is strengthened by the bureaucratic structure of most political parties, which are organised similarly to state bureaucracies, and by the system of patronage, which promotes interchange of key personnel.

If the electoral system is so closely intertwined with the state, this may suggest that activists wishing to strengthen local and transnational rather than state power should withdraw from electoral politics. This is indeed the conclusion drawn by many anarchists. But this conclusion is a bit too hasty.

In transforming the state, there are two interlinked approaches: building self-managing alternatives from scratch, and moving existing state structures towards self-management. For example, as well as starting up new worker cooperatives, initiatives in the direction of self-management can be undertaken within state bureaucracies. Likewise, as well as building new processes for decision-making, efforts for democratisation of the existing political system can be undertaken. The electoral system, like all other parts of society, is a potential area for social struggle with the aim of increased self-management. Indeed, the electoral system is a fairly fruitful avenue for such struggle, since it is less perfectly bureaucratised and is relatively open to grassroots input.

The big problem in trying to transform the electoral system is getting caught up in the system: entirely working within it rather than also helping change it. The inevitable pressure on party leaders is to compromise principles of democracy, participation and responsiveness to the grassroots for the goal of attaining or maintaining power. Activists often go along with these compromises, and their participation in electoral politics then serves to reinforce rather than weaken state power.

The conclusion for activists is to be very careful about engaging in electoral politics. It is not good enough to assume that any social movement, once it reaches a certain critical size and strength, *must* engage in electoral politics. Grassroots strategies that do not depend on 'success' in elections need to be developed and pursued.

Finally, people in action groups should try to come to grips with their own statist and nationalist feelings, and attempt to transcend them. A good test is to address issues which strike at the roots of statist feelings. One such issue is immigration. In a world in which state power has been dissolved, there should be no barrier to movement between large-scale communities: no requirement for passports, immigration quotas and screening procedures. It is compatible with this goal to campaign for open state borders. On the other hand, it might — or might not — be a feature of

a self-managing society to have closed or semi-closed *local* borders, at the level of households, communes or neighbourhoods, at least so far as settlement is concerned. For example, many ethnic groups need local autonomy to maintain their culture. Immigration and other issues relating to statist feeling — such as citizenship, uniforms and medals, flags, state representation as in sporting events, and state holidays — often contain a deep reservoir of emotion. Confronting these issues and formulating policies and actions concerning them is a good way to come to grips with statist assumptions and feelings.

### **Strategy against the state**

As mentioned before, there has been little effort devoted towards developing grassroots strategies for dissolving the state and replacing it by self-managing political and economic systems. Here all I will do is outline some of the elements which might contribute towards such a strategy.

The essential basis for a state-transforming strategy is building self-managing alternative structures at the local level:

- \* cooperatives, self-help systems in housing, health and education;
- \* technologies and social arrangements for self-reliance in energy, transport and communications;
- \* social defence to supersede military defence, community security arrangements to supersede police;
- \* arrangements for grassroots participation in decision-making, including affinity groups, workers' and community control, the lot system and others.

As well as building self-managing structures, it is necessary to challenge, confront, undermine, transform or abolish many existing state structures. There are several avenues through which such challenges may proceed.

\* One of the key functions of the state is administering the economy. By managing the economy, for example in coordinating labour and working conditions, the state aims to produce a surplus which sustains the activities of the state itself, including warfare. Thus through economic administration the state creates its own conditions of existence. Economic administration proceeds through the activities of state bureaucracies, and so challenging state bureaucracies and challenging bureaucracy as an organisational form provides a key challenge to the state. This issue is discussed in the next chapter.

\* Economic growth is a key stabilising factor for the state, since it helps buy off discontent and displaces struggles for self-management into disputes over who receives the economic surplus. Questioning the ideology of economic growth, if the questioning is linked with struggles for economic

self-management, can be a potent challenge to the state and the centralised economy.

\* The state depends heavily on the modern division of labour, both as a basis for administering social life and as a way for preventing development of the grassroots solidarity on which opposition can be sustained. Yet the modern division of labour also creates new vulnerabilities for the state: organised nonviolent action by key workers, such as power system engineers or computer programmers, cannot be repressed by force alone. Organising in a host of such key areas thus provides a serious threat to state power.

\* The state both promotes and is reinforced by forms of high technology which require state control, such as nuclear power, space programmes, supersonic transport aircraft and, not least, military technology such as nuclear weapons. Challenging these forms of high technology also directly challenges the expansion or maintenance of centralised political and economic power which is closely linked with the state. The movement against nuclear power has repeatedly been met with state opposition and repression precisely for this reason. State support for technology which is capital-intensive, dependent on experts, and which requires state ownership or control can be seen as one way in which the state creates conditions of existence favourable to itself. Challenges to nuclear power, supersonic transports and other similar technologies thereby become potent avenues for confronting state power.

\* The technology and social organisation of communications, such as state-controlled or regulated television broadcasting, play a big role in sustaining mass opinion favourable to the state. As well as developing decentralised and self-managing communication alternatives, challenges to the dominant communications media can constitute a challenge to state power.

\* As mentioned earlier, the state mobilises support in various ways, such as through individual psychology, participation and racism. The other side of this process is grassroots mobilisation. For example, creating and strengthening community groups, such as affinity groups in social movements, provides a solid basis for emotional satisfaction and solidarity which thereby reduces the potential for the state to mobilise individual psychology. Likewise, with a grassroots programme for working both on the inside and outside of government bureaucracies, state-sponsored participation has less potential for coopting local initiative. And while the state can mobilise racism and patriarchy, the entry of ethnic minorities and women into state employment can also provide an avenue for undermining state structures, as will be discussed in chapter 12 in relation to patriarchy.

In pursuing campaigns which challenge the state, it is important that planning and coordination be done on both local and global levels, rather



than just within separate states. The overall challenge must be to the state system, not just to individual states within it.

Challenges to the state need to take into account the different parts of the state and their different roles in restraining or supporting grassroots efforts. Those parts of the state in which social activism is most tolerated or structurally possible are mostly the areas where social activists are currently found and where campaigns are focussed, such as the education system, welfare systems and the electoral system. These efforts are important, since these sorts of areas are where most headway seems possible. But it is also important to develop campaigns focussing on parts of the state which are most resistant to democratisation and which play the largest role in opposing and smashing social movements. The following are some of the powerful and potentially most repressive parts of the state in relation to the problem of war.

- \* The executive. The executive of state, and in particular the top person or group, holds an immense power. The President of the United States, for example, has control over a much greater potential for violence than any individual dictator in past eras. Any social strategies which increase or reinforce the power of the state executive need to be reconsidered. Anti-state strategies are required which withdraw power from the state executive, or which actively challenge this power.

- \* The military. This is treated in chapter 11.

- \* Spy agencies. Secret agencies for spying, 'covert action' and 'disinformation' have grown immensely in power along with state power. They play a potent role in restraining grassroots movements and in sustaining elite power. Because their effectiveness depends on secrecy, the greatest single threat to spy agencies is exposure. Individuals and community groups which have campaigned against spy agencies have played and will continue to play a vital role in opposing further repression and centralisation of power. Much more effort is needed to develop effective campaigns against spy agencies.

- \* The police. The police play a complementary role to the military in defending the state against challengers, mainly internal challengers. Campaigns to challenge the repressive role of the police and to establish alternative methods for community security are needed. Such campaigns will have much in common with campaigns to abolish the military.

- \* The prison system. The prison system, with help from the legal system, serves as a potent coercive system to contain challenges to state power. The role of the prisons is most vital to state power when they are used to repress or intimidate political dissidents. It is not coincidental to the role of prisons as a support for the state that violence within many prison systems is so entrenched. Campaigns for prison reform, for

redefinition of crime and for justice not biased towards state interests can and do quite a lot to restrain the extension of state power. Thus prisoners' action groups and other challenges to the prison system can play an important role in strategies to undercut the coercive power of the state.

Since the state system is so strong now, it would be somewhat speculative to present a detailed strategy for state transformation. For the moment, moving in the appropriate direction may have to be sufficient, for example in organising campaigns by action groups. If and when local forces become much stronger and pose a real threat to state power, other more difficult problems for strategy will arise. To what extent should global considerations dictate actions within a single country? Is self-management possible in one country? What should be the role of figureheads and leaders of the nonviolent revolutionary movement? Which parts of the state system should be abolished, which reconstituted and which protected for the time being? What about the electoral system?

These and other such questions may seem far in the future. But although significant change towards self-management may not occur for many decades, it is best to be prepared. Social revolutions usually proceed far ahead of planning and strategy, often with disastrous consequences. It is never too early for grassroots involvement in thinking and planning for long-term social change.

### **Problems and limitations**

There are a number of traps into which anti-state campaigns can fall.

**Weakening the periphery.** In chipping away at peripheral portions of the state system, one possible result is increased power for local communities, but another is increased power for the central parts of the state system. For example, challenging a regional government within a state may lead to increased local power or to increased power for the national government, depending on circumstances. Likewise, weakening state power in peripheral states, as in Australia or Czechoslovakia, may increase community-level power or increase the sway of the United States or Soviet Union, or both. The existence of this problem should not provide an excuse for bolstering regional or peripheral state power. Rather, the implication is that campaigns should be designed so that grassroots organisations are able to take advantage of any space opened by weakening bureaucracies or other aspects of the state.

**New States.** One of the important challenges to existing states lies in separatist movements, as in Quebec, Scotland, Tibet or Bangladesh. But in weakening the control of existing states, separatist movements can play



into the hands of regional elites. A successful separatist movement often simply leads to a new state in the old mould.

States should be distinguished from nations. A *nation* is a group of people typically with a common language and culture, and a set of traditions based in common religion, territory, and political, military and economic institutions. A state may include more than one nation, as in the case of the Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians and other nations of the Soviet Union. Also, a national grouping may be spread over many states, as in the case of the Jews. But states exert a strong pressure towards internal unity, by promoting a common language, education and culture, so the tendency is for people within a state to be moulded into a single and unique nation as well. The standard concept of the nation-state is testimony to this process.

The related phenomenon of *nationalism* is often thought to be based primarily on common cultural characteristics. But John Breuilly argues that nationalism is better understood as a form of politics, in which cultural characteristics are used to legitimate and mobilise a political opposition to the state. Instead of appealing to universal principles or particular political rights in organising a political movement, a nationalist movement appeals to a distinctive cultural identity. But nationalist politics, according to Breuilly, have little connection with the existence or non-existence of a nation, but rather are shaped by existing interstate politics. From this perspective, the aim of nationalist movements is gaining or exercising state power, not providing any fundamental challenge to the nature of the state system.

**Strengthening transnational corporations.** Like the problem of weakening peripheral portions of the state system, weakening the state in some cases may simply allow increased exploitation by non-state organisations such as transnational corporations. It is important to keep in mind that while the state may be a key driving force behind war, it is not the only source of poverty, exploitation and repression. Campaigns against capitalism and other repressive power systems — including church hierarchies, patriarchy, and feudal-style social systems — need to be pursued hand in hand with campaigns against the state system.

**Dismantling social services.** The state has gradually garnered a monopoly over provision of certain social services, such as unemployment payments, pensions, schooling and medical care. It is one thing to promote locally controlled and self-reliant alternatives to these state services, and another to uncritically call for cutbacks in state services. Without the alternatives, opposition to state provision of services plays into the hands of those who wish to maintain their own privilege at the expense of others. But blindly defending the state services helps to maintain the state system with all its

problems. The resolution to this problem is to develop and build up ways of satisfying social needs for livelihood, learning and health in a more locally controlled manner than state services, and also to push for conversion of state services to these alternatives.

---

## Bureaucracy

---

For many people the word 'bureaucracy' conjures up an image of a mass of office workers buried in mounds of paper and tied to a set of petty rules, the notorious 'red tape'. Bureaucracies are often the focus of popular dislike, especially because they are perceived to be inefficient and lack flexibility to meet individual requirements. The infamous 'they' who are continually meddling in people's lives are often thought of as remote bureaucrats.

While the popular perceptions about bureaucracy reflect some insights, they are not a good basis to begin analysing a social institution. To do this bureaucracy needs to be looked at as a set of relationships between people.

Bureaucracy is a way of organising work in which people are treated as interchangeable and replaceable cogs to fill specialised roles. Two key features of bureaucracy are hierarchy and a specialised division of labour. Other characteristics of an 'ideal' bureaucracy are rules which describe the duties of members, a set of standard operating procedures, and impersonal relations between members. In a model bureaucracy, initiatives and policy directions come only from the top echelons. Work in carrying out policies is done at the lower levels within the guidelines set from above.

Most large modern organisations are bureaucratic in form: government departments, corporations, political parties, churches and trade unions. None of these real organisations are *pure* bureaucracies. For example, initiatives and policy directions in political parties and trade unions sometimes come from the rank and file.

### Bureaucracy and the war system

How is bureaucracy as an organisational form connected with the war system? To begin, most modern professional military forces are run as model bureaucracies. This is an important connection. But although most wars are fought by armies, they are fought on behalf of states, and bureaucracy is the key organisational building block of the state.

The state is composed of numerous bureaucracies at national and local levels, to administer government policy concerning government finances and taxation, the military, economic production, law, transport, communications, etc. If industries are run or regulated by the state, this operation is usually organised bureaucratically. Most services run or

### **Bureaucracy and the psychology of bureaucrats**

Bureaucracies foster particular psychological characteristics in bureaucrats. Among these are conformism, inflexibility, conservatism and emotional aloofness.

How does the psychology of bureaucrats develop? There are several mechanisms.

- \* Self-selection: people choosing to become bureaucrats because bureaucracies nurture or reward their inclinations. For example, conformers are more likely to seek a haven in a state bureaucracy than in the arts.

- \* Peer pressure: the influence of other bureaucrats. Those who don't work through the proper channels often experience noncooperation, ostracism or worse.

- \* Social pressure: expectations and interactions with people outside bureaucracies, such as clients. Welfare recipients demand prompt and predictable service without special favours.

- \* Bureaucratic structure: the constraints on and cues for behaviour by the way bureaucracy is organised. The bureaucratic division of labour encourages people to be inward-looking and task-oriented.

- \* Social structure: the constraints on and cues for behaviour created by the way society is organised. The hierarchical social relations found in families or embodied in centralised energy technologies promote many of the same psychological characteristics fostered by bureaucracies.

Knowing the nature of the interaction between bureaucracy and bureaucratic psychology is important in deciding how to reform or replace bureaucracies.

One approach is to aim at changing the bureaucrats. If bureaucrats can be humanised, so it is hoped, then bureaucracies will be more responsive to human interests. This approach is based on individualism, the dominant ideology in capitalist societies. If something is wrong, individualism blames individuals, not institutions. To fix the problem, individuals are counselled, educated, penalised, rearranged or replaced. The structures stay the same.

Another problem is to change the structure of bureaucracies and other institutions so that they do not encourage or induce the undesirable behaviour. This approach assumes that pathological behaviour primarily results from pathological structures, not pathological individuals.

Social action often depends on initiative by individuals such as labour organisers whose psychology may differ from the norm. But while social action depends on individuals, its strategies must encompass methods to change structures. Aiming to change structures purely by changing individuals is futile, as any examination of history's crusades will show.

administered by the state, including schooling, medical and welfare services, are handled according to bureaucratic principles. Indeed, with few exceptions it may be said that the modern state is made up of bureaucracies.

Does this mean that bureaucracy is necessarily a lynchpin of the war system? To obtain a better view of this it is useful to examine the history of bureaucracy and the state.

There are a number of examples of major bureaucracies in ancient times, such as the pyramid-building 'armies' of slaves in Egypt under the pharaohs, the mandarin system in ancient Chinese empires, and similar forms of rule in various forms of so-called Asiatic despotism. Some of these systems were extensive and rigid bureaucracies. It should also be noted that ancient bureaucracies were usually associated with dictatorial political systems. That bureaucracies were found so useful in these arenas is suggestive of the future of this organisational form.

The expansion of modern bureaucracies occurred in conjunction with the rise of modern states and of professional military forces in service of the state. The key events occurred in Europe in the past several hundred years. According to Henry Jacoby in *The Bureaucratization of the World*, the rise of bureaucracy occurred as the ties to local groups weakened. The feudal system, which was to be superseded by the state and capitalism and later by state socialism, was based on considerable local economic and political self-reliance. There were many local centres of power, including the church, estates, local aristocrats and provincial centres. People had close ties and psychologically identified with family, land, manor and church. All these aspects of the feudal system were resistant to the extensive division of labour and centralised control required for the operation of bureaucracy.

The feudal system was based on severe inequality and exploitation, and on a narrow physical and mental world which permitted little scope for oppressed groups such as peasants and slaves to organise for change. The feudal estates were also quite warlike. Because there was no higher lord to which appeal could be made in the case of disputes, bitter and prolonged private wars between fiefholders were not unusual. Such wars were possible because the coercive power used to control serfs and peasants within estates could also be turned against external opponents.

The local self-sufficiency and autonomy of the feudal system began to break down under the impact of increased trade and commerce, both in goods and in ideas. Towns became centres of independent enterprise, and also provided niches for independent thinking and challenging of religious dogma. The towns, to obtain independence of the feudal lords, looked to the king — hitherto only a leader among equals — for support.

Once the economic self-sufficiency of the feudal domains was eroded,



the stage was set for the rise of state power, often under a monarch. A key to the power of the monarchy was taxation. To impose taxes not only on towns but also on feudal estates, hoards of tax collectors — bureaucrats — were employed. Bookkeeping and administration were also required, and the state bureaucracy grew apace. One of the important avenues for expansion of early state bureaucracies, for example in France and Prussia, was to provide training, supervision and supply for large military forces. The state, once it gained significant power over the feudal landowners, used its economic and military power to further destroy sources of resistance: trade monopolies and regulations were established and central police and prison systems were expanded.

To enforce its powers, the state relied ultimately on military force. With its evergrowing power of taxation, larger armies could be maintained. And the army consumed a large fraction of state finances. Armies remained mainly mercenary until the French Revolution, in which popular support and involvement in military forces was mobilised for state goals. By this time the role of bureaucracy as the organisational form for administering state power was well established.

As the feudal system declined, so did feudal warfare, including its 'polite' forms such as dueling. With the decline of feudal warfare came the rise of modern war, organised around the modern state, bureaucracy and military. Both feudal and modern warfare have grown out of institutional frameworks in which organised violence is used to protect the interests of dominant social groups.

This thumbnail history omits most of the detail and complications of the development of the connection between bureaucracy, the state and the military. But it does suggest the strong connection between bureaucracy and the modern war system, beyond the organisation of the military itself as a bureaucracy. In particular, bureaucratic organisation allows the central administration of large areas of life necessary to maintain and expand state power and its monopoly over mass violence. In addition, the organisation of society along bureaucratic lines serves to destroy independent sources of economic and political power.

To what extent is bureaucracy as an organisational form a root of modern war, and to what extent is the problem simply the directions to which bureaucracies are turned? In other words, can bureaucracy be reformed or must it be abolished or transformed out of recognition? It is important to sort out thoughts about this issue before launching into campaigns to change bureaucracy. What precisely should be the goal of such campaigns?

From one perspective, the problem is the uses to which bureaucracy is turned. Bureaucracies after all can be used to enforce environmental protection and provide welfare payments to the poor as well as to run wars and

spy operations. However, this perspective of the intrinsically neutral bureaucracy is flawed because it does not address the issue of which groups in society are in a position to 'use' bureaucracy. Bureaucracy thrives much more readily in systems of centralised power, not surprisingly considering that bureaucracy is based on the principle of hierarchy. Direct democratic control of bureaucracies is almost a contradiction in terms. In liberal democratic political systems, the most that can be claimed is that state bureaucracies are controlled at the top by elected representatives of the people. Even this so-called popular control is implemented seldom enough. In practice, state bureaucracies in capitalist societies are strongly influenced by corporate elites via provision of jobs, perks and most basically by providing a reason for the state bureaucracies to exist.

In authoritarian political systems, there is less pretence that state bureaucracies are controlled by the people. It is not for nothing that bureaucracies have been prominent not only in Asiatic despotism in earlier times but also under Nazism and Stalinism in this century.

But as well as being a tool for certain class interests — such as capitalists — bureaucracies serve their own interests, especially those of the bureaucratic elites themselves. The familiar behaviour of bureaucrats in sticking by procedures even when this wastes enormous amounts of resources, in tightly controlling information, and in not tolerating internal dissent are all parts of a general defence of bureaucratic interests.

If one insists on seeing bureaucracy as a tool, then it should be seen as a tool easy to use by elites and very difficult to use by any group practising self-management and direct democracy. Bureaucracies are no more neutral tools than nuclear weapons are neutral forms of technology. Bureaucracy is both designed for and selectively useful for a society based on inequality and centralised control. Being prepared for modern mass warfare is one of the ways in which such a society maintains itself. Bureaucracy is therefore not only implicated in serving the war system, it is a mainstay of the system itself. To remove bureaucracy as a root of war, it would need to be restructured along the lines of self-management. With such a thoroughgoing transformation, the result could scarcely be called bureaucratic.

I turn now to a closer look at bureaucratic organisation itself and then to some grassroots strategies for transforming bureaucracy.

### **The nature of bureaucracy**

As mentioned before, bureaucracies are characterised by hierarchical authority, a detailed division of labour, a set of rules and standard routines, and impersonal relations between staff. Not all bureaucracies will manifest these characteristics to the same degree. Here I will approach bureaucracy as a political system which facilitates elite control.

It is useful to compare bureaucracy with the factory system of production. Stephen Marglin has analysed the origins of the industrial revolution. The earlier system of production was the 'putting-out' system: workers produced goods for the market in their own time and under their own control, commonly doing the work at home. Capitalists might handle raw materials and also retail distribution, but control over the speed and method of production remained in the hands of the workers. According to Marglin, the factory system — grouping these workers in supervised workplaces — did not initially increase the output of goods for a given input of materials and labour. The same production methods were used. (Labour-saving technological innovations came *after* the establishment of the factory mode of production.) In fact overheads in equipment and supervision were higher, so overall production efficiency was lower than with the putting-out system. But the factory system allowed capitalists greater control: they could force workers to work longer hours, and were able to control the output more tightly. The capitalists increased their profits and used this to extend their control.

Adam Smith used the example of pin manufacture to argue that the factory division of labour increased efficiency greatly. Marglin has exploded the logic behind this example by showing that the increased efficiencies of the division of tasks — drawing the metal, straightening it, cutting it, pointing it, grinding it, etc. — do not require a corresponding specialisation of labourers. The tasks can just as well be done by the same person, one after the other. The manufacturing division of labour is only one way to organise production. It is a way that reduces the control workers have over their work. Marglin thus has shown that the driving force behind the introduction of the factory system was not increased efficiency at all, but the greater control it offered to capitalists.

The continuing development of technology and work organisation has been guided by the aim of increased efficiency or output only within the parameters of equal or increased owner or managerial control over production. This applies to innovations in areas such as metalwork, furniture production, meatpacking, manufacture of wearing apparel, typesetting and computer programming. The classic work on this subject is Harry Braverman's *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, which has stimulated much further work. The automobile assembly line is the epitome of this tendency.

Bureaucracy, like the factory system, is a way of organising workers. The factory system organises manual workers. Office bureaucracy organises mental workers. Both the factory and bureaucracy are commonly justified by their alleged efficiency. Some factories and bureaucracies are efficient in certain senses, others are not. But the driving force behind bureaucratisation is not efficiency. The key to both the factory system and bureau-

cracy is that they are organisational forms which facilitate centralised control by elites. In both cases this control is enabled by hierarchy and a fine division of labour.

Fred Emery argues that the key to bureaucracy is the location of authority and responsibility for coordination at least one level above those who are doing the work. The division of labour is not an evil if it is arranged by the workers themselves. It is the combination of hierarchy and the division of labour that allows control by elites.

Rather than seeing bureaucracy as a form of organisation designed for efficient administration, bureaucracy is better understood as a political or power system. Top bureaucrats have the greatest formal power. But the hierarchy and division of labour also permit powerful outside groups — corporate or other bureaucratic elites in capitalist countries, or communist party elites in communist countries — to have a great deal of influence.

Deena Weinstein in *Bureaucratic Opposition* has developed most effectively the idea of bureaucracy as a political system. She argues that bureaucracies are analogous to authoritarian states: in both cases people are expected to stay in their places, to do as they are told, to offer opinions only when asked, and to identify solely with the rulers and the official ideology. Within authoritarian states, and within bureaucracies, individual and collective oppositions exist. The opposition may be to particular policies, to corruption, to exploitation or to organisational structures. Rather than being misfits who are disturbing efficient functioning, bureaucratic oppositions should be analysed as political oppositions, that is as challenges to the use or distribution of power in the bureaucracy.

Weinstein's analogy between bureaucracies and states is particularly revealing with regard to their links with the war system. Bureaucracies and states each prop up systems of privilege and power. It is appropriate that bureaucracy, as the building block of the state, is similar in the nature of its power structure to a state, an authoritarian state no-less!

One important difference between bureaucracies and states is that most bureaucracies rely only on nonviolent sanctions against dissidents, whereas states can call on police and military forces if necessary. Most bureaucracies rely not on the use of force but more on a system of rewards — favourable feedback, promotions — and on a system of rules that legitimises the structure. Willing service to 'higher causes' within a bureaucracy or in a state provides much more stability than reliance on coercion. Antagonism is further subdued by permitting nonconformity within limits, and using various methods to buy off discontent and coopt dissident leaders. Non-coercive control is all the more effective because it is difficult to recognise and to oppose.

Under state socialism the dominance of bureaucracy is quite overt. State



bureaucracies administer all possible aspects of life. In parallel with these state bureaucracies, penetrating them, controlling them and constrained by them is another powerful bureaucracy, the communist party. In each case bureaucratic elites are in positions of state power. Hence state socialism is sometimes called 'bureaucratic socialism'.

In capitalist societies the dominance of bureaucracy is less immediately evident, but the practice is not vastly different. In many capitalist societies, national economic and political directions are set through a system which is called corporatism. Elites from key influential sectors – government, corporations, state bureaucracies, trade unions and others – get together formally or informally to negotiate the framework for political and economic decision-making. This may occur through national planning agreements between corporations and trade unions, by creation of government departments or advisory bodies or positions for women's affairs, the environment or science, or bipartisan agreement on military expenditures. As I interpret it, corporatism is essentially coordination by elites, most of whom are bureaucratic elites. To have an effect on policy, one must work through a bureaucratic structure in one sector or another, whether it is a political party, a corporation, a trade union or an environmental advisory body. The appearance is that all interests are represented. The bureaucratic underpinning of corporatism ensures that power remains at the top.

Any bureaucracy is linked in many ways to other key institutions in society. Consider for example a state bureaucracy. The bureaucratic elites will have a particular relationship with dominant social classes via recruitment, career interests, opportunities for expansion, relationships to international conditions (such as military successes or defeats), and the existence of a mass revolutionary movement or conservative forces. A state agency overseeing chemicals in a capitalist society will often be closely tied to chemical industry interests through career opportunities and the liaison developed for regulation and promotion of chemical use. Also affecting the agency will be factors such as military use of chemicals, penetration of the national economy by foreign chemical companies, and the existence and nature of a consumer movement. All these factors can affect the potential for change in the bureaucracy from the top or bottom internally, or from the outside.

Bureaucracies both incorporate and mobilise other power structures. Men in bureaucracies can use their power to exclude women and hence maintain or extend patriarchal power. At the same time, bureaucracies mobilise the power of men over women to maintain the bureaucracy itself: men support bureaucratic power since it is a means for maintaining power over women. In a similar way, bureaucracies dynamically interact with



other institutions of unequal power, including capitalism, racism and the state.

How can bureaucracy be transformed into – or abolished to make way for – a different organisational form which is more participatory, less hierarchical, more responsive to community interests, and generally less easy to be directed towards maintaining or promoting inequality, domination and war? A big question! More immediately, what has been done towards learning how to transform bureaucracies in the direction of self-management? Here I will describe three different approaches towards this goal: academic promotion of and facilitation of industrial democracy, the workers' control movement, and experiences of social action groups.

### **Academics and industrial democracy**

The academic community is quite undemocratic, hierarchical and riven by competition, jealousy and power plays. The status and privileges of academics depend heavily on their position as professionals and their links with other professional groups and managers, all of whom help establish the framework for managing employees lower in the pecking order. Substantial moves towards industrial democracy would undercut the status and privileges of academics. The nature of academia helps explain why hardly any of the numerous scholarly outpourings on bureaucracy are useful to social activists. There are many studies of how to control and use bureaucracy, but always from the point of view of those at the top. There is very little material on alternatives to bureaucracy and on how to go about changing bureaucracy from the bottom.

The area of academic study most directly relevant to bureaucratic change is industrial democracy. Academics by and large have ignored or been hostile to this area. When interest has been shown, it has mainly involved study and critique at a distance, and not active involvement in learning how industrial democracy might be fostered. When academics study industrial democracy, it is as something 'out there': industrial rather than academic democracy.

In spite of all this, there have been a small number of academics who have bucked the tide and not only studied but also promoted industrial democracy in the course of studying it. (Actually, to call these researchers 'academics' may be a bit unfair, since many of them are closer to being social activists in background experience and orientation.) One of the main such groups was associated with the Tavistock Institute in the 1950s and 1960s and involved people such as Eric Trist, Einar Thorsrud and Fred Emery. These researchers studied existing and spontaneous examples of autonomous work groups, and drew conclusions about the difference between this mode of work organisation and the usual bureaucratic mode.

But they realised that to learn more about the dynamics of autonomous work groups, the conditions for their survival and the sources of resistance to them, they needed to help design or stimulate the design of autonomous work groups. In practice this meant they were promoting industrial democracy. For an academic to create an experimental innovation — whether a weapons design, a surgical technique, a mode of social analysis, or a form of social organisation — is quite often in effect if not in intention to promote it as well.

The Tavistock researchers entered a number of work situations seeking to introduce trials with different forms of work organisation. They sought permission of all parties concerned: management, trade unions and workers. Given permission, the investigators studied the entire work situation: not only the hierarchy and division of labour, but also the technical equipment, the skills required, and the objectives sought by workers and management. Alternatives were investigated and eventually a reorganisation of work relationships and technical organisation proposed. Because social and technical factors were intermeshed, this approach is called socio-technical design (or redesign).

To take only one of many possible examples, at a pulp mill in Norway a reorganisation of work involved an upgrading of skills and a limited form of job rotation. The results included improvement in quality and costs of production, better communication and teamwork between operators, and many suggestions from the workers for technical improvement.

From a social science perspective, the results of several decades of experience with socio-technical design are remarkably clearcut. The evidence shows overwhelmingly that reorganisation of work to increase participation, promote sharing or rotation of tasks, and reduce hierarchy is not only possible, but also results in equal or greater productivity, increases job satisfaction, reduces absenteeism and increases quality of output.

The alternative is at hand, and it works! The industrial democracy researchers had hoped that socio-technical design innovations, which they introduced in small working groups, would by their example be taken up throughout the enterprises and copied elsewhere. By and large this expectation has not been met. The innovations, however successful, have mostly remained isolated changes or have even been reversed. There are several reasons for this, including the conservatism of management, trade unions and staff and the lack of further injections of the special attention which had been lavished on the experimental groups.

One of the key problems inhibiting further expansion of industrial democracy was that the academics were responsible for too much of the redesign process and for promoting the alternative. In some cases the re-

design was largely worked out by the academics. But even when they mainly served as facilitators for redesign efforts by workers, there was no incentive or participation created at the middle management level for expanding the scope of the redesign.

The next step towards fostering a self-sustaining process of work redesign in the direction of industrial democracy has been described by Trevor Williams in *Learning to Manage our Futures*. He concluded that middle management needed to become active promoters of industrial democracy. Williams helped organise a programme in which middle managers of Telecom Western Australia (the government telecommunications bureaucracy) attended workshops run by him and his colleagues. The managers clarified long-term goals of Telecom in the light of changing global circumstances, were introduced to concepts of work redesign, and were encouraged to develop projects to encourage workers at lower levels in their own sections to undertake work redesign. The idea behind this approach was that the managers themselves would become committed to a process of organisational self-evaluation and change in the direction of industrial democracy. The approach has shown positive results, though it is too soon to see how self-sustaining and far-reaching the effects will be.

In another experiment, an attempt to introduce increased self-management in his own commerce courses at the University of Western Australia, Williams made an important finding. Those students who were most resistant to collectively organising their learning in a cooperative fashion were those with the longest and least interrupted experience in orthodox educational institutions. As well as the length of learning, also important was what the students had learned about learning. Some had learned to prefer a stable bureaucratic environment, while others preferred a ruthless competitive struggle. Only a few learned to actively control their learning environment to maximise learning for a changing environment. This suggests that traditional schooling as a form of social organisation is quite contrary to the willingness to engage in self-management. This will be dealt with further in the next chapter which deals with the administrative class.

There are many things to be gained by active experimentation in industrial democracy such as undertaken by the Tavistock researchers. Unlike spontaneous efforts towards workers' control, researchers can choose their situation carefully and systematically examine the factors favouring and hindering industrial democracy. Academics are not automatically identified with a particular interest group, and thus sometimes can gain the support of management, unions and workers to promote socio-technical redesign.

There are also some serious limitations to the academic work so far

which seeks to determine how industrial democracy can be promoted. One limitation is the basic justification for increased industrial democracy, which is premised on the need for bureaucracies to survive in a 'turbulent' organisational environment in which traditional methods of top-down control are inefficient or counterproductive because external conditions change too rapidly. Although this perspective is quite useful, it does not provide a basis for fostering industrial democracy when the requirement for 'active adaptive organisational learning' is not so pressing as to demand changes in bureaucratic structures.

Another limitation of academic work is that the issue of recalcitrant or uncooperative bureaucracies has not been tackled. What should be done when management or workers don't want to change? In particular, the academic work has depended on gaining management support or tolerance for implementing socio-technical redesign. This means that the changes made in work organisation have mostly been at the shopfloor level. This is valuable, but how is overall decision-making in bureaucracies to be democratised?

In addition, the problem of harmful or unnecessary bureaucracies has not been confronted. Even complete workers' control is not much of a goal if what is being controlled is a tobacco company or a nuclear power plant. Experiments need to go beyond industrial democracy to worker-community control.

### **Workers' control**

The workers' control movement probably has more experience in directly challenging bureaucratic organisational forms than any other social movement. The more far-reaching aims of the workers' control movement include workers collectively and democratically designing social and technical work arrangements, workers being direct and equal participants in deciding overall goals, methods and policies for productive enterprises, and workers deciding what goods or services the enterprises should be producing. It is clear that these goals are incompatible with the hierarchy and division of labour characteristic of bureaucracy.

The workers' control movement has grown largely out of the immediate experiences and initiatives of workers, and in many cases action has preceded and stimulated theory. It is interesting that there has been relatively little cross-fertilisation between the workers' control movement and the academics promoting industrial democracy. One reason for this is that the academics have sought to obtain management support or tolerance for their initiatives, whereas the workers' control movement in many cases has directly challenged the role of management.

Some of the features, strengths and limitations of workers' control



initiatives were described in chapter 5 on self-management. Here some of the aspects of workers' control directly relevant to transforming bureaucracy will be spelled out.

Workers' control means many things to many people. It does not always imply doing away with bureaucratic structures. Indeed, the goal of transforming bureaucracy is seldom explicit in workers' control theory and action, and almost never in relation to the war system.

In many cases workers' control is interpreted in ways which coopt rather than mobilise forces for change. In these cases the terms 'worker participation' or 'industrial democracy' tend to be used. 'Worker participation' can be taken to mean greater autonomy or measures for increased job satisfaction at the shop floor level, without any fundamental change in the hierarchical decision-making structures. There is considerable debate among certain socialists about whether such piecemeal tokens of 'participation' and 'democracy' should be supported or even accepted by workers. On the one hand, such small changes in the direction of workers' control can increase workers' autonomy and may provide leeway for building campaigns for more fundamental changes. On the other hand, concessions from management — or indeed initiatives from management — to marginally improve participation or working conditions often serve to dampen or head off discontent. Limited forms of participation — consultation, representation, self-determination of work within limited parameters — may legitimise the prerogatives of management on fundamental matters.

A major problem facing the workers' control movement is the extreme hostility by corporate and state administrators to any major workers' initiatives which challenge the prerogatives of management. Survival in a hostile capitalist-bureaucratic environment is not easy: supplies are cut off, sales channels closed, insurance is not applicable, legal and police powers are antagonistic. The obstacles are even greater for the many workers' control initiatives launched in collapsing industries.

A powerful source of support for workers' control initiatives is the labour movement, and also some social action groups. Another source of support often sought by workers' control promoters is the government, especially when a social democratic party is in office, and especially via nationalisation. Nationalised industry, in which the state is the owner and manager, needs to be distinguished from socialised industry or self-managing industry, in which control is directly vested in workers and community. Nationalisation by itself does nothing for, or is contrary to, the goal of transforming bureaucracy, since bureaucratic modes of organisation are more entrenched within the state than within capitalist enterprises.

In spite of these and other problems and limitations of the workers'



control movement, it remains one of the most important movements for challenging bureaucracy: its most radical goals undercut the essential principles of bureaucracy and its grassroots organisational base challenges the elite control which sustains and is sustained by bureaucracy.

### **Social action groups**

For most social action groups — gay activists, feminists, antiracists, education activists, environmentalists and antiwar activists — bureaucracy as a form of social organisation in the state, corporations and other dominant institutions has not been a focus of attention. Bureaucracy is often not seen at all: it is accepted as part of the social and political landscape. As a result, there have been few campaigns aimed at transforming large-scale bureaucracies.

Action groups that focus on challenging social problems often work *through* bureaucracy, sometimes eagerly and sometimes grudgingly. Their aim is to change bureaucratic policies, not bureaucratic structures. Groups struggling for the rights of women, gays and oppressed minorities aim to overturn discriminatory policies and to obtain fair hiring and promotion practices and representation within bureaucracies. Environmentalists seek to stop particular freeways or chemical factories, not to reconstitute the basic nature of social decision-making. Experienced activists pass on their knowledge of how to use the state bureaucracies: who are the sympathetic bureaucrats, how to lobby effectively, how to apply mass pressure to influence policy at key moments. All of this can be quite useful and often effective, and should not be rejected. But working through bureaucracy on the inside, or demanding policy changes from the outside, does little to transform bureaucracy itself. In fact, working through bureaucracy can reinforce the legitimacy and sway of bureaucracy itself. In addition, campaigns oriented towards working through bureaucracy or applying pressure for change at the top tend to become bureaucratised themselves.

Another important orientation adopted by many social activists is towards building self-managing organisational forms for their own activities, such as cooperative enterprises or egalitarian action groups. Self-managing organisational forms are an alternative to bureaucracy. Direct experience in self-managing groups not only strengthens the sense of community and commitment to social action, but also provides understanding and individual strength to resist pressures for bureaucratisation in the wider society. In as much as social movements organise themselves as decentralised self-managing groups, linked by federations and networks, and self-consciously set out to develop and extend such structures, they provide a strong challenge to the domination of bureaucratic forms of social organisation.

Setting out to 'live the alternative' of self-management is vitally

important, but it is not enough. So long as self-managing social action groups remain small and isolated, they provide little threat to dominant institutions. The military can tolerate, or squash if necessary, a few conscientious objectors or nonviolent groups on the fringes of society. Likewise, so long as self-managing social action groups remain separate from the day-to-day experience of most people working in large-scale bureaucracies, there is little chance that these bureaucracies will suddenly collapse or transform themselves.

In short, most social activists have either worked through bureaucracies or organised alternatives isolated from the dominant bureaucracies. They have not mounted campaigns focussing on bureaucracy as a key social form. I believe doing this should be a top priority for those seeking to remove the roots of war. The field is wide open and there is much to learn.

Some efforts by social activists have resulted in challenges to bureaucratic control. For example, in some education systems there have been struggles for more participatory decision-making and greater community control. Because schooling is only partly bureaucratised, there is more political potential for teacher and community activists to push for local self-management. There is a great need for such struggles to be studied and for political insights from them to be drawn out. Here I will only describe one small example of a social action campaign focussing on bureaucracy.

At the beginning of 1982, Friends of the Earth (Canberra) decided to organise a campaign around bureaucracy. Since its formation in the early 1970s, FOE-Canberra has mainly campaigned against uranium mining and nuclear power, and to a lesser extent at different times on other issues such as forestry and packaging, whaling, and jobs and energy. Attendance at weekly meetings has ranged from 2 to 12, averaging perhaps 6. Members have attempted to decide on goals and methods in a participatory way, and gradually procedures for attaining consensus have become better understood and used. A continual attempt has been made to design campaigns and activities to allow participation by all, to share both boring tasks and exciting opportunities, and to provide emotional support and pay attention to group dynamics while pursuing tasks. Thus it is fair to say that FOE-Canberra has aimed at organising itself in a self-managing way.

At the end of 1981 we spent several meetings deciding on priorities for 1982. Uranium mining and nuclear power came out at the head of the list, as usual, but bureaucracy also rated highly. Several of us felt that bureaucracy was in some way at the root of many environmental problems. Environmentalists could write letters, organise protests and use nonviolent occupations, for example to oppose the logging of the rainforest at Terania Creek. But these campaigns, however successful in their immediate

objectives, did nothing to transform the government forestry commissions, which kept on with their environmentally destructive policies which served the forest industries as well as the government forestry bureaucracies themselves.

At the beginning, even those of us who were enthusiastic about a bureaucracy campaign didn't really know what this meant in practice. It took us nearly six months just to work out what we were trying to do. We had discussions and brainstorming sessions, circulated articles about bureaucracy and talked to people outside our group. Several of our members were sceptical. What were we trying to do? Why worry about bureaucracy? What could we possibly do anyway? One thing was clear: in Canberra, the national capital, there were plenty of state bureaucracies on which to try out any ideas we came up with.

One early idea was to interfere somehow with a particular bureaucracy in Canberra, so as to learn how it operated. The idea was to launch a little probe into the organisation and see what happened. Bureaucracies might seem very stable, but no one was sticking pins in them to see if they had sensitive points. One proposed probe was to write numerous letters that would require replies drafted on behalf of the government minister in charge of a department — so-called 'ministerial' letters — and so clog up the system. By learning first about the internal dynamics of the department, and then soliciting support from many other social action groups, we could aim at such a goal of jamming up the bureaucracy.

But on reflection this approach seemed to have at least two flaws. First, it would antagonise those bureaucrats who were burdened with the ministerial correspondence. Second, there was no reason to expect that clogging up the system this way would in any way help to transform bureaucracy, or even provide lessons on how to transform bureaucracy.

For several years I occasionally had read material about bureaucracy. With the FOE project in mind, I began a somewhat more systematic search for ideas about transforming bureaucracy. There turned out to be very little to guide us. The academic work on industrial democracy was useful and stimulating, but not directly relevant since we were not academic researchers. The literature on workers' control was valuable, but we were not the workers. In fact, there was nothing at all that I could find about how social action groups — inside or outside a bureaucracy — should go about learning and campaigning to transform bureaucratic structures. Indeed, most of the theoretical perspectives on bureaucracy were pretty useless for a social action group with this goal. The most valuable perspective was that presented by Deena Weinstein of bureaucracy as a political system.

Eventually I came upon a useful idea. In one of André Gorz's articles,

on workers' control, he describes the following: In the early 1960s, a British sociologist named Goldthorpe made a detailed study of Vauxhall workers at Luton. Interviewing them separately, he enquired about their feelings concerning work, wages and their life situation, and concluded that the workers were integrated into the system. A few militant workers obtained a summary of Goldthorpe's report and circulated copies to workers. Shortly after, a newspaper reported on Vauxhall's large profits which were being sent to General Motors in the United States. After this news was also made known to the workers, rioting broke out at the Luton Vauxhall factories, lasting two days.

So although Goldthorpe found that the individual workers seemed to be satisfied, underneath there was a great dissatisfaction and potential for collective action. And Goldthorpe's study contributed to the workers' outburst by focussing attention on issues of job satisfaction.

Gorz's account suggested that we might undertake a survey. We could hardly expect or desire to induce a riot in an Australian government bureaucracy, but in other ways a survey seemed a useful tool. It would help us learn more about bureaucracy, would involve us in direct interaction with bureaucrats, and encourage bureaucrats to think more critically about their own situation.

Even after deciding on a survey, it took several months for us to decide on an interview technique (we chose open-ended but directed discussion as described by Ferdynand Zweig) and cull out the key areas which we hoped to probe and develop suitable questions. We then practised our interview approach on each other and on sympathetic bureaucrats. We also had to decide on procedures for maintaining confidentiality and pick a suitable section of the government bureaucracy. We chose a division of the Department of National Development and Energy, which we thought would be neither overly sympathetic (such as Environment or Industrial Relations) nor excessively hostile (such as Defence or Treasury). It also took us quite a few months to complete the interviews. During this time we had other things to do as well, such as preparing street theatre for Hiroshima Day.

Our results were illuminating to us, though not very surprising. We obtained responses about job satisfaction and the nature of bureaucratic decision-making which tally with the standard knowledge about bureaucracy. We found as expected that very few respondents knew anything about alternatives to bureaucracy, and fewer still had any ideas about how to go about changing bureaucracy to be a more satisfying place to work in and to be more responsive to community interests.

Perhaps more revealing was the reluctance of many bureaucrats to be interviewed at all. After the initial stages we were told by the top

bureaucrats that we could not enter the premises for our survey. But we obtained written permission from the head of the department concerned to interview staff about their personal views, so long as it was done outside the building and outside working hours. Even with this written permission, a large fraction of bureaucrats were clearly afraid of being associated with us at all. FOE in Australia has the reputation of being a radical organisation, and apparently it would be potentially harmful to their careers for bureaucrats to even be known to have talked with us. This response made the similarity of bureaucracy to an authoritarian state quite clear.

Eventually we completed an article describing the nature of bureaucracy, insights from our interviews, and alternatives to bureaucracy. At the end of 1983 we distributed copies of this article to members of the division where we had made our interviews.

It is clear that our interview project is at most the first step in a bureaucracy campaign. There are several possible future directions which could be taken. Even the interview project was mostly put to one side for many months in 1983 due to the resurgence in efforts against uranium mining after the election of a Labor government, and ironically much of our effort on this was aimed at applying pressure to the Labor Party hierarchy.

Perhaps not too much headway is possible with our particular project, even with further development. But in any case many such projects are needed. Some should spark creative initiatives or fall on fertile bureaucratic soil, and provide the example and inspiration for further efforts to change bureaucracy.

### **Strategy to transform bureaucracy**

It would be nice to be able to present a coherent and persuasive strategy for confronting and transforming bureaucracy into self-managing alternatives of autonomous working groups, self-reliant communities, federations and networks, drawing on experiences and insights from a variety of successful and unsuccessful grassroots campaigns to change bureaucracy in this way. Unfortunately the information and experience to draw up such a strategy is not yet available, at least not in organised form. No more than a few isolated social action groups have developed campaigns focussing on transforming large-scale bureaucracy as an organisational form. The more important next step in developing a strategy to change bureaucracy is for more groups to put bureaucracy 'on the agenda'.

What I will do here is outline some principles which I think are important in developing campaigns for transforming bureaucracy.

**Link insiders and outsiders.** Campaigns concerning bureaucracy are much more likely to be effective if they involve coordinated efforts by



people both inside and outside the bureaucracy. Insiders know what is going on first-hand: work conditions, power structures, attitudes, avenues for intervention. They can provide valuable information to outsiders, can advise on what tactics might be misdirected or counterproductive, and can sound out ideas informally. Outsiders have much greater freedom to act without putting their careers in jeopardy. They can take overt stands not safe for insiders to take. Outsiders also can have a wider picture of the role of particular bureaucracies, and are closer in tune with community perceptions.

Insider-outsider links help ensure that campaigns are broad-based, and prevent polarisation of attitudes. In many social movements, there is a strong tendency to label all those who are involved with oppressive institutions — government bureaucrats, soldiers, police, corporation managers, or political party workers — as automatically supporters of the 'enemy' and therefore beyond salvation. Once accepting this attitude and by adopting polarising methods, the result is that the bureaucrats, soldiers and other insiders close ranks against attack by the outsiders. Any hope of changing the structure — government bureaucracy, army, police forces, corporations or political party structure — is squandered. Treating insiders as potential and indeed essential supporters, and building links with insiders, helps overcome this counterproductive polarisation.

Similar comments apply to insiders. Many workers in government bureaucracies, police forces, political parties and so forth are sympathetic to the goals of the outside social action groups, but may see these groups as amateurish and meddling. The tendency is then to avoid contact with them, which allows the outsiders to become more out of touch and frustrated and adopt stronger tactics, thus polarising the situation. It is far more fruitful to build links with the outsiders and help them become more effective. This does not mean channelling the outside actions into bureaucratic avenues, but rather enabling outsiders to be more effective in their own terms, providing a persuasive challenge to bureaucracies while not antagonising bureaucrats needlessly.

The last word here, 'needlessly', is important. Polarisation is often inevitable in social struggles. The point is not to create a polarisation which turns too many people into supporters of the oppressive institution.

Building links between insiders and outsiders does not necessarily require close collaboration in 'mixed' groups. Linking between groups and individuals is compatible with 'separatism' so long as no group imagines its own efforts to be the only ones required.

People who are both insiders and outsiders at the same time — such as feminist bureaucrats who maintain contact with outside feminist groups — can play a crucial role. They can be a thorn in the side of the bureaucracy

by raising challenges internally, and can also provide insights to outside groups to make their campaigns more effective.

If bureaucracies are political structures, then internal bureaucratic oppositions either exist or are possible. Furthermore, bureaucracies exist as political structures in the wider political environment of society, and external bureaucratic oppositions also either exist or are possible. The idea behind forging insider-outsider links is to combine the strengths of both the internal and external bureaucratic oppositions.

Building insider-outsider links is not always easy. The biggest obstacle is the preconceptions of others on the same side of the fence. Hard-line outsider groups will label those who work with bureaucrats as 'reformists', a term of abuse in this context. It is even harder for bureaucrats to break ranks and be seen to be working with 'ratbags' on the outside.

James Robertson recognises several roles played by different people in social transformation. Some people spend their time developing and carrying out alternative ways of living and working. Others commit themselves to confronting and eroding existing power structures; they may not have the time or energy to develop non-standard ways of living. A third role is that which Robertson calls 'decolonisers': people who work in a bureaucracy and identify with it, but who are prepared to take part in decolonisation, namely helping people over whom they formerly had power to become independent. Robertson argues that people in these and other roles should try and communicate with and build links between themselves, but that they should also expect conflicts between the different roles.

People do not just fall into a particular role, such as 'decoloniser', by chance. Social class, sex, personal history and organisational location can each contribute to this. Since Robertson's decolonisers – or what Trevor Williams would call 'active adaptive learners' – are so important in helping to challenge and change bureaucracies from the inside, the conditions which produce these people seem a crucial area for investigation.

An example of the unfortunate consequences of lack of contact between insiders and outsiders is the familiar antagonism between social activists and police. Calling the police 'pigs' and even fighting with them are only among the more extreme manifestations of activist hostility to police, which is mutually reinforcing. While many members of police forces are corrupt, brutal and conservative, not all are. Many are politically aware and often sympathetic to the causes espoused by the protesters who they must guard or arrest. Police are the agents of social control for dominant social institutions, not the embodiment of evil. If there is to be any hope of eliminating oppressive social institutions, this will involve transforming police forces as structures. There is a need for self-managing methods for neighbourhood security, for alternatives to conventional prisons, for

campaigns to undercut the roots of crime as well as redefinitions of crime, and for conversion plans for police forces. To achieve much of this, building links with sympathetic members of the police is an important task. Already this has been done with many civil disobedience actions. Arrangements with police are made so that arrests do not involve violence. This way, more attention can be focussed on the policy or institution being challenged.

In the Australian anti-uranium movement, described earlier in chapter 6, there was close liaison between anti-uranium activists inside and outside the labour movement, and this was highly valuable in building strength for the anti-uranium movement as a whole. The community-based anti-uranium movement provided many activists who presented the arguments to members of the labour movement, at the shopfloor and party branch level, as well as lobbying key figures in the labour hierarchy. This grassroots approach resulted in policies against uranium mining by the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in 1977. Anti-uranium activists within the labour movement also provided valuable support for the wider movement. Sympathetic unions provided finance and support for some of the early anti-uranium efforts, and unions held strikes and black bans in opposition to uranium mining, thus providing inspiration to other anti-uranium activists.

While this interaction between anti-uranium activists inside and outside the labour movement was most valuable, it was not always maintained as well as it could have been. From about 1978, several key activists from the community-based anti-uranium movement began full-time work for ALP politicians. Undoubtedly their role on the inside of the ALP has been most important, but they have tended to lose contact with the community groups. Working for a parliamentarian can require extraordinary working hours and commitment, with little time for contact outside the parliamentary scene. As one friend comments, "Parliament House is one big energy sink". The challenge for activists who decide to work inside the system is to maintain links with the outside.

Once the ALP and ACTU adopted anti-uranium policies, there was a tendency by community-based anti-uranium activists to reduce involvement with the labour movement, and leave it to the sympathetic insiders to maintain the policies. Although this may have seemed like a good idea at the time, the 1982 watering down of the ALP platform, and the 1983 backtracking on even the watered-down platform by the Labor government, have shown the dangers of this stance. These reversals would have been less likely had strong grassroots pressure been maintained, coordinated both inside and outside the party. The lesson for outsiders is similar to that for insiders: maintain the links.

**Use political methods.** There is little prospect of transforming bureaucracy by exclusively using its own methods, in other words by working 'through the system'. Use of standard channels needs to be linked with methods that challenge the bureaucratic way of doing things, and which incorporate the alternatives being argued for.

This principle has the greatest relevance to those inside bureaucracy. One approach to social change is the 'long march through institutions': climbing the existing hierarchical ladders to obtain formal positions of power, where supposedly one can then have some impact on social directions. The trouble with this approach is that the institutions change most of the individuals long before the individuals rise to positions to change the institutions.

If people in bureaucracies want to change its structure, they can begin at once by raising issues with colleagues, studying and preparing critiques, speaking out on relevant issues, providing support for insider dissidents, and being involved in action groups inside and outside the organisation. Although bureaucrats are often afraid of the consequences of being socially active, there is usually quite a lot that can be said and done without jeopardising one's position. In many cases, establishing a history of principled stands and outspoken behaviour allows a person more scope for further such activity. Others learn to expect dissent.

Climbing to or obtaining high positions in hierarchies is not *necessarily* undesirable for social activists, so long as this is done without sacrificing one's principles. At higher levels, the dangers of compromise and cooption are much greater. But sometimes the opportunities are greater too. Antiwar generals, corporation executives fostering workers' control and top politicians promoting local self-reliance play a useful role in efforts for social change, especially to the extent that they work with social movements and refuse to play all the 'rules of the game' at the top. Activists promoting self-management from high-level positions are in an inherently unstable position: to the extent that their efforts are successful, their own formal power will be undermined. Indeed, a useful criterion for efforts against bureaucracy is whether top-level power is cemented or eroded.

Action groups outside bureaucracies also need to be wary of working 'through the system'. There is a great temptation to use the normal channels, and use them well: writing letters to politicians and bureaucratic elites, lobbying, being involved in official enquiries, presenting appropriate technical arguments, knowing the right people to contact to have things done. Using bureaucratic mechanisms is often valuable, but it holds little prospect of transforming bureaucracy.

In a liberal democratic state where power relations are massively unequal,

lobbying is most useful to powerful groups interacting with each other, such as corporations lobbying state bureaucracies. This is because bureaucracies operate on the basis of centralised power, not logic. For groups without top-down control over physical and human resources, lobbying is largely fruitless and hence interactions with bureaucrats are extremely frustrating, rather like going into shops without any money.

In the FOE survey of bureaucrats in the Department of National Development and Energy, several interviewees told us we were approaching bureaucracy in the wrong way. They said we should be couching our arguments against uranium mining, for example, in narrow technical rather than moral terms, that we should make an attempt to appear much more 'respectable' and competent, and that we should have tried to introduce our survey through official channels. Though this was not stated, the image spelled out for us was of a slick public relations and lobbying group, rather like that of the corporate lobbying groups that routinely interact with the government bureaucracies. This advice came both from bureaucrats sympathetic to our environmental goals and from those unsympathetic. Indeed, almost all respondents implicitly assumed that our aim was the same as theirs, namely to work through established channels more effectively. They could not easily grasp that we were questioning the nature of bureaucracy.

The great advantage of non-bureaucratic, 'political' methods is that they throw people — bureaucrats in particular — out of their usual routines and generate awareness of the political nature of social issues and decision-making. Letters and articles in newspapers, distribution of leaflets, public statements, demonstrations and occupations are hard for bureaucrats to cope with. Often they are at a loss in the face of such tactics when used by or on behalf of internal dissidents. When students occupy an administration building, or squatters occupy dwellings, the familiar bureaucratic responses are useless and bureaucratic elites may panic or be paralysed. The familiar dynamic of nonviolent action, in which repression generates greater opposition, can come into play.

Because the experience with campaigns specifically designed to change bureaucracy is so small, it is hard to be more specific than the principle 'use political methods' at this time. There are lots of ways of acting which challenge bureaucratic methods. It would be valuable to study historical instances in which social action caused bureaucracies to be stopped, ameliorated, reversed or prevented, and other cases where bureaucratisation was unrestrained or accelerated, and to draw out lessons for campaigns. Further insight can be gained from campaigns specifically designed for this purpose.

**Links with fundamental goals.** For a small number of individuals and



groups, an analysis of the problems of bureaucracy will be enough to justify and motivate efforts to transform bureaucracy. But in general it is important to link such efforts to other interests and principles, often ones which are of immediate or fundamental concern.

\* In defending dissidents and dissidence within bureaucracies, the principle of free speech can be invoked.

\* In promoting autonomous work groups and other more democratic work arrangements, both job satisfaction and the principle of democracy can be raised.

\* In advocating plans for production of different goods, as at Lucas Aerospace, the relevance of the goods to social welfare can play a key role.

\* In opposing bureaucratised trade union structures, campaigns against employers can be used to mobilise the rank and file.

While raising issues such as free speech or job satisfaction, it is important not to lose sight of the goal of transforming bureaucracy. The objectives should be to link together the immediate concern and the issue of the nature of bureaucracy. For example, suppose a government bureaucrat speaks out about cost overruns in military contracting, as US Department of Defense employee A. Ernest Fitzgerald did in 1970 over the C-5A transport aircraft. If a defence against bureaucratic reprisals were organised, it would be important to emphasise issues of free speech, rights of due process and the importance of exposing misuse of public monies. These points could be linked to criticisms of secrecy and the role of vested interests in bureaucratic decision-making, criticisms of the bureaucratic power structures which victimise people who expose such corruption, and proposals for nonbureaucratic alternatives to the current structures.

In linking fundamental goals with bureaucracy transformation campaigns, a careful choice of 'fundamental goals' is vital. For example, it might be argued that self-managing work groups are more efficient than hierarchically organised groups. But efficiency is mainly something desired by elites controlling or benefiting from bureaucracies, and 'efficiency' is usually interpreted only under the presupposition that the process is controlled from the top: that is, efficiency within the existing power relations or efficiency in preserving them. In any case efficiency, however measured, should be a secondary consideration to goals such as democracy or overcoming poverty and alienation.

Rather than 'efficiency', it is better to use principles such as free speech, job satisfaction and production for social use in conjunction with bureaucracy transformation campaigns. These principles are each antagonistic in fundamental ways to the political power structure of bureaucracy.

**Promote alternatives.** Essential to any strategy to change bureaucracy is an alternative structure. What is the alternative? As described in chapter 5,

there are many experiences and ideas for self-managing organisational forms, including self-managing work groups, cooperatives, federations and the lot system, all as part of a society with much greater local autonomy and self-reliance. But in spite of the wealth of experience in nonbureaucratic structures, much more investigation and action is needed to develop stable, effective and attractive alternatives.

It is highly productive to formulate critiques of existing bureaucracies in conjunction with spelling out alternatives. Attention to self-managing systems increases awareness of the key systems of control in bureaucracies, while analysing bureaucracy stimulates awareness of what features of bureaucracy the alternatives need to challenge and transcend. For example, a critique of bureaucracy might focus on the key role of interchangeability of members of the bureaucracy in allowing hierarchical control, and suggest the importance of allowing and encouraging people to develop and use a variety of skills in a self-managing alternative. Conversely, preference for a strong sense of community and personal support in a self-managing organisation can raise awareness of the way bureaucracy isolates people and fragments social relations through specialisation, hierarchy and working on problems formulated by others.

Formulating alternatives is essential in any bureaucracy campaign. If no alternative is offered, dissatisfaction will remain at the level of gripes or be siphoned off through cosmetic reforms. Alternatives help people see bureaucracy as a social product rather than as part of an inherent nature of society. But more than this, alternatives provide a concrete basis for challenges to bureaucracy. An alternative plan — for example including self-managing work groups or a limited introduction of the lot system — can be a rallying point for both outside critics and internal opponents. The aim here is to turn the alternative into a campaign. In this way the goal of moving from bureaucracy towards self-managing structures is much less likely to become sidetracked.

One way to turn the alternative into a campaign is to actually begin behaving according to the new model. A group of workers could decide to share their tasks and decide priorities cooperatively. The whole panoply of nonviolent action can be called upon, and nonviolent action training used to prepare for opposition as well as to practise the alternative. 'Living the alternative' is something that happens spontaneously and more or less openly throughout almost all bureaucracies, especially at the margins: workers sort out their own work-sharing arrangements, formal meeting procedure remains nominal while *de facto* consensus procedures are used, individual nonconformists are allowed to go their own way. The introduction of technology for social control and of more refined work arrangements are part of a continuing process in which even these margins of freedom

from bureaucratic control are controlled or eliminated. In order for the niches of self-management in bureaucracies to grow, or even to survive increasing bureaucratisation, they need to be cultivated, understood and consciously promoted.

One key part of promoting alternatives to bureaucracy is spreading skills and knowledge. Bureaucratic elites obtain a great deal of power by controlling information and breaking up activities into narrow tasks. Any action which makes it possible for others — insiders or outsiders — to understand what goes on inside particular bureaucracies, and to actually carry out the full range of tasks, is subversive of bureaucratic control. Spreading skills and knowledge might take the form of sharing job skills with workmates, describing patterns of decision-making to outsiders, writing exposés of bureaucratic functioning, and preparing manuals and training sessions for others who wish to be able to run or dismantle the bureaucratic machinery.

One of the seemingly hardest problems facing a bureaucracy campaign arises when in a particular case transformation means abolition. In a transition to a self-managing nonviolent world, many present bureaucracies have little that is retrievable, including most aspects of armies, advertising agencies and automobile assembly lines. In these cases internal reform is at best an interim measure. An alternative plan needs to provide both an alternative organisation and an alternative goal. Instead of hierarchy, division of labour and advertisements, the alternative might be self-managing groups to foster intergroup communications. Instead of hierarchy, division of labour and combat training, the alternative might be self-managing groups to fight fires or to build roads. Or should the alternative function be less related to the old one: instead of pushing paper, a combination of growing vegetables, building bicycles and being with children? The answer is not obvious. It may be more 'logical' to propose an alternative goal that uses at least some existing skills. But if the alternative is too similar to the original bureaucratic mission, a reversion to the bureaucratic model may be too easy.

The solution to this dilemma lies in the hands of all those who take steps to transform bureaucracy. The transformation of the organisational form of bureaucracy and of the goals of the particular bureaucracies can be carried out hand in hand. As members of bureaucracies and outsiders gain greater collective control and participation, they will be able to question the goals of the organisation. Faith in the social responsibility of self-managing groups of people must underlie any programme for changing bureaucracy from the grassroots. After all, the premise of bureaucracy is that such faith is unwarranted.

---

## The administrative class

---

In the rise of modern bureaucracy, of the state and of professional military forces, has there been a particular class or group of people which has achieved ascendance? In feudal Europe, the dominant class was the aristocracy, augmented by the elites of the Catholic Church. With the decline of feudalism, as trade and burgeoning capitalist enterprise undermined the self-reliance of the estates, the power of the aristocracy was challenged by that of the bourgeoisie: traders, shopkeepers, factory owners and professionals of the rising middle class. But with the concomitant rise of the state and of state bureaucracies, another important social category blossoms: bureaucratic administrators.

While the most wealthy capitalists maintained strong links and influence in the state, they did not run the state directly. Furthermore, as firms became much larger and the state intervened more heavily in the economy, large-scale capitalist enterprise itself became bureaucratised. Throughout the past century, capitalist ownership has gradually become less important and the managing of capitalist firms has become their key source of internal control and wider influence. The so-called 'managerial revolution' has led to a basic structural similarity between large-scale state and private enterprise. Bureaucracy is the standard organisational form, and top managers or bureaucrats — administrators, essentially — comprise the most influential social group.

In the Soviet Union and other countries in which state socialism has been instituted through revolution or outside military takeover, capitalists have been eliminated but administrators have proliferated. State socialist revolution can be seen as an exercise in destroying the old state apparatus and creating a new, more powerful one. Numerous jobs are provided in the state bureaucracies to provide the massive central administration of the economy and of social life.

Administrators also prospered under fascism. Under fascism — especially so-called 'national socialism' in Germany under Nazism — the state took a dominant role, while working closely with the major capitalist enterprises. State intervention in the bureaucracy allowed those people with relevant knowledge and appropriate loyalty — technocrats and bureaucrats — to occupy the dominant positions within the state and corporate hierarchies.

Thus under capitalism, state socialism and fascism, a single category of



people hold the key positions of power. This group I call the administrative class. What characterises this class? Essentially a particular set of social relations: formal inequalities in power which permit the administrators to manage the lives of others directly or indirectly. Often these inequalities are based on reasonably high formal positions in bureaucratic structures.

The administrative class cuts across several categories of activity. First are the bureaucrats and managers in the state corporations. They manage other people's lives not so much by control over their immediate subordinates as by the role they play in managing the economy. Corporate managers play this role by pursuing corporate survival, profit and growth, while state managers help determine the regulative framework for the economy.

A second category in the administrative class is political elites: elected officials in liberal democratic societies, communist party elites in communist regimes, and ruling juntas in military regimes. Elected officials usually owe their office to successful negotiation up through a political party bureaucracy, and once in office they must work through the framework of state bureaucracies for much of their activities. Similarly, communist parties are bureaucracies parallel to state socialist bureaucracies, and communist party elites can be seen as administrators with special executive powers. Members of military oligarchies can also be seen as executive administrators, who in this case derive their power from the military, itself a model bureaucracy.

Political elites differ from bureaucrats and managers in the state and corporations in having a power base separate from the mainstream bureaucracies. Elected officials owe their position to the party bureaucracy and in limited form to popular mandate; communist party elites depend on the dominant role of the communist party; military oligarchs rely on the military hierarchy and military dominance.

A third category of the administrative class includes certain members of the professions. The activities of many professionals serve to manage the lives of others.

- \* Doctors and hospital administrators manage the illnesses of patients.
- \* Lawyers and judges administer the legal system.
- \* Police and prison administrators control persons convicted of crime.
- \* Top scientists and engineers influence the direction of technological innovation, which shapes people's lives.
- \* Educationists administer the schooling of nearly everyone.
- \* Editors and directors of the media shape public perceptions of reality.

Professionals differ in the degree to which their activities serve to manage, directly or indirectly, the lives of others. A top hospital



administrator is just that — an administrator — whereas most general practitioners have a much more limited influence on patients. Scientific directors of major research facilities have a much larger influence on technological innovation than do most scientific researchers. Most professions are not as hierarchical or bureaucratised as state or corporate bureaucracies, but nevertheless there are important differences in formal position and power within professions. Those who are at the top are the key members of the administrative class.

There has been considerable attention, especially in recent years, to the rise and role of the group of people which I have called the administrative class. A common way of characterising this class is in terms of special knowledge they hold as mental workers. This is then related, as is usual in Marxist analysis, to the means of production. Mental workers clearly are not traditional capitalists: they do not own the physical means of production such as factories or farms. Barbara and John Ehrenreich put workers into a separate class, which they call the 'professional-managerial class', essentially on the basis of whether their work is mental in nature. Alvin Gouldner fits mental workers into a neo-Marxist framework by referring to the 'New Class', the owners of 'intellectual capital'. The mental workers use this intellectual capital to attain positions of power and control.

Val Plumwood convinced me that it is not very useful to categorise people simply according to whether their work is mental or manual. Many mental workers, such as low level clerks or teachers' assistants, have little in common with top bureaucrats. Rather than use the mental-manual distinction, I prefer to use as the criterion for the administrative class whether a person's activities serve to manage, directly or indirectly, the lives of others, when carried out as part of an institutionalised system of managing political and economic inequality. The administrative class by this definition includes top and middle-level bureaucrats and managers, political elites and many professionals, but leaves out those with routine work at the bottom of bureaucracies and professions. The boundary of the administrative class by this definition is arbitrary, but the criterion is reasonably easy to apply.

The Ehrenreichs, Gouldner and others try to define class in the traditional Marxist way by relation to the means of production. This exclusive focus on economics I think causes difficulties. Defining the administrative class according to role in managing or administering life is essentially a political criterion, although it incorporates economic and social administration too. It is for this reason that I use the term administrative class rather than intellectual class, professional-managerial class or New Class.

It is not the individuals in the administrative class who are of particular concern, but rather the social relationships involved which are characterised

by administration. These relationships of unequal power form a social institution of which administrative elites are the most visible manifestations. So while for convenience I will sometimes refer to the administrative class as a group of people, it is this institution which is of fundamental concern.

### **The nature of the administrative class**

The power of the administrative class comes from two interlinked sources: knowledge and formal position in a hierarchical system. Specialised knowledge can be useful to a bureaucrat, manager or professional. Sometimes this is knowledge of the subject matter being dealt with, such as automobile manufacture, insurance or medicine. But for top administrators, such knowledge is often deemed secondary to knowledge of administration itself: knowledge of standard procedures within a factory, a filing system or a hospital. The second key source of power of administrators is formal position, as a manager in a factory, as a senior bureaucrat, or a member of the board of a hospital.

Often the power of those with special knowledge is traced to the knowledge itself. But to a large extent formal position allows the monopolisation of knowledge. Many details of corporate accounts, personnel policy and planning are not available except to top managers. Non-corporate bureaucrats also tend to restrict important information to those at the top, and many activities of doctors and other professionals are learned only by being in the profession. So while some facility in acquiring and using knowledge can be useful in moving ahead within the administrative class, it is just as true that position allows access to important insider knowledge.

The connection between knowledge and position is important. The existence of hierarchy is often justified by referring to differences in skills and abilities. But to a significant extent the differences that do exist are not due to differences in personal aptitude but stem from the greater access to relevant formal and informal knowledge available to those in higher positions. Thus hierarchical organisation justifies itself by inequalities which the hierarchy itself creates and sustains.

Because so many activities in modern industrialised society — maintaining factory production, coordinating trade, maintaining communications facilities — depend on special knowledge and skills, routine violence alone cannot serve to maintain social control. Key workers simply cannot be replaced. To keep the system going, loyalty or personal commitment is much more effective than coercion.

A key institution in developing this commitment is the schooling system. Schooling does provide opportunities for acquiring knowledge and skills

which are useful in mental occupations. But just as important is the role of the school in socialisation. Students are given experience in acceding to authority figures and in negotiating life in a hierarchical organisation. They are expected to conform to a culture imposed from the top. Schools also encourage the use of knowledge to compete and serve personal advancement rather than collective goals.

While schooling in many ways supports the continuation of bureaucracy and hierarchy, it does not automatically or invariably produce conformity. Mass schooling has ensured that many people can understand alternative points of view. Schooling also has helped to undermine the power of tradition alone to establish the legitimacy of social institutions. In addition, students may rebel against the schooling experience and thereby begin to learn about the dynamics of resistance to authority.

Specialisation is a key factor in maintaining the commitment of skilled personnel to the existing social arrangements. Occupational differentiation allows people satisfaction in doing their own tasks in a competent manner without much awareness of the wider social context. Specialists in commercial law, electrical appliance design or enforcement of local ordinances may find it quite difficult to obtain a perspective on their activities. In bureaucratised society, specialists are not expected to take moral responsibility for their actions, but simply to use their technical skills competently.

Divisions of the population along lines of sex, ethnic origin, religion and other variables also are mobilised to reinforce administrative dominance. Vested interests by men in domination over women and by whites in domination over other ethnic groups are used to build support for administrative hierarchy, which in turn bolsters patriarchy and white racial dominance. This dynamic is further described in chapter 12.

Another factor which helps maintain loyalty of specialised mental workers is an explanatory ideology. This includes a belief in the efficiency or inherent necessity of hierarchy, of the moral virtue of doing a technical job well, and of the appropriateness of leaving decisions about goals and ends to those at the top. Most scientists are quite happy to be able to do competent research on a topic whether it is funded by science councils, drug companies or electricity authorities. They do not see their role as one of questioning why particular areas are funded.

The ideology of the administrative class also includes a belief that expertise and control are necessary to keep society going, that therefore administrators are entitled to their privileged role and that any challenge to this role is a challenge to the foundations of society.

Yet another factor which maintains the loyalty of administrators is privilege itself. Monetary rewards are usually ample, and very large for elite

administrators. Status is high and there are usually opportunities for exercise of power over low-level workers or clients.

The greatest threat to the role of the administrative class is community participation in decision-making. This threatens the power and privilege of the administrators and undermines the ideology of professionalism. Bureaucrats and professionals use their position to oppose participation, in particular by restricting information. For them, knowledge is power, and that is how knowledge is used.

### **War and the administrative class**

A major connection between the war system and the administrative class lies in the direct involvement of state administrators, military elites and elite professionals in preparations for war and controlling society during war. State bureaucracies devoted to military affairs and corporations heavily dependent on military expenditure have a direct vested interest in the war system.

More importantly, preparations for war and especially war itself greatly increase the role of state power. The expansion in the size and power of state bureaucracies provides opportunities for upward mobility and use of skills by administrative elites.

Many top professionals see their roles expanded by an increase in war-making potential by the state. For example, in a war economy of an industrialised country, science becomes a precious state asset, and elite scientists and technologists are inducted into the corridors of power. Even many lower-level researchers gain increased funding for jobs and increased prestige from war preparations and war. This helps explain why top war researchers are such strong opponents of any restraint on their 'freedom of scientific inquiry' and why scientists who worked to make the first nuclear weapons during World War Two have such a nostalgia for those exciting years.

An even more important linkage between the war system and the administrative class is the role played by the administrative class in sustaining systems of unequal power and privilege. The members of the administrative class, the greatest beneficiaries of contemporary social inequality, are also its strongest defenders. This defence of inequality is couched in terms of efficiency and expertise, but the net result is a profound antagonism to democratisation. Most professionals as well as bureaucrats jealously guard their monopoly on knowledge. They righteously pursue the expansion of state administration and professional control to defence, education, welfare and mental health and many other areas of life.

The administrative class institutionalises the idea that people cannot

properly organise their lives for themselves, but that this must be done by appropriate officials or licenced experts. Conventional military defence is defence by professionals, and this fits centrally in the pattern of social administration.

Expanded administration and professionalism perpetuate the inequality, alienation and breakdown of community which contribute to the problems of poverty, crime, powerlessness and loss of direction which the administrative and professional treatments were supposed to overcome. This cycle allows little room for grassroots initiatives to address social problems.

The rise of the administrative class is linked with the ideology of rational ideas: the belief that the social order should be organised logically and efficiently. The ideology of rationality includes the implicit assumption that the expert administrators and professionals are the arbiters of what is 'rational'. This ideology arises from and contributes to the 'will to do everything' (from the top) which lies behind the expansion of bureaucratic power. In such a society, dissent is 'irrational'. The ultimate form of social rationalism embodying these assumptions is dictatorship.

Even for relatively independent intellectuals, such as writers, academics and artists, there are strong connections with the war system. Key intellectual themes, including progress, development of ideals and revolutionary change, have much in common with the appeals of war. In this century intellectuals have played an even larger role in war, not only through the media or by joining governments, but also by providing moral justifications, glorifying the state, developing slogans and fostering a crisis mentality.

The activities of most radical intellectuals are limited by their affinity with the administrative class. They still think in terms of acting at the top, of changing the administrators but not the nature of administration. At the top is where intellectuals often feel most comfortable using their skills in persuasion and their class affinity with elite administrators. Grassroots strategy for transforming institutions is a greatly neglected topic by intellectuals. Not only is it beneath their dignity to descend to the 'ordinary' people, but the grassroots perspective is alien to the prevailing ideology of social 'rationality'.

In the Third World, the vast expansion in schooling has not yet been matched by expanding job opportunities for professionals. Many are unemployed, and many leave for rich countries as part of the 'brain drain'. This situation provides a strong pressure for expansion of state bureaucracies in the Third World and for an adoption of Western-style economic development. This is accompanied by breakdown of traditional communities and culture and an expansion of bureaucratic modes of social organisation. This process is tied up with the development of aggressive nationalism and militarism, and frequently overt military rule. The role of the administrative



class in the Third World illustrates, in exaggerated form, its role generally in the war system.

What is the future of the administrative class? This is an important question that deserves attention. The rise of the administrative class would seem to be part of a large-scale political transformation in which the nature of social organisation and control is at stake. To eliminate the causes of war may require elimination of the administrative class. This is by no means inconceivable: administrative elites may well become as redundant as most religious elites have become. But to promote the transformation, and avoid even worse alternatives, there is a great need for understanding and strategy.

### **Science and the war system**

To give a better idea of the relation of the administrative class to the war system, I will describe in a bit more detail the relation of professionalised science to the war system. Science is both partly professionalised and partly bureaucratised, and thus different from the more orthodox bureaucracies treated in the previous chapter. I also choose science as an example because, as a research scientist myself, science has been of special interest to me for some time.

There are several fairly straightforward links between science and war, operating through military funding of scientific research, the direction of technological development and the criteria for important scientific problems. After briefly describing these, I will then outline the most critical connection between science and war, the similarity between the structure and ethos of the scientific community and the other bureaucracies of the war system.

**Funding.** A large fraction of funding for science is directly or indirectly for the purposes of war. It is often noted that somewhere between a quarter and a half of scientists and engineers worldwide are engaged on military-related projects. Because of the high fraction of war-orientated science funding, it is not surprising that many research areas and applications of science are oriented to war. In weather research, for example, military interests play a strong role because of the importance of weather conditions and predictions to military operations. There is also a strong interest in studying weather modification for military purposes.

Social sciences are also brought into play. The most infamous example is Project Camelot, in which studies of the potential for internal war in Latin America were undertaken for United States military and political interests. Funding is a primary reason why there is much more scientific study of the factors contributing to solidarity of soldiers and of civilians in war than on the solidarity of movements for self-management.

Whole fields of scientific research can arise due to military influences.

Operations research, the mathematical analysis of situations to determine optimal courses of action, grew out of the study of military problems by scientists during World War Two.

**Directions.** War influences not only specific scientific projects but also the whole direction of technological innovation. This in turn influences the ongoing focus of scientific research, which is at all times influenced by current technologies.

Actual or potential technological development has provided a spur for the development of scientific theory throughout the history of science. In the first several centuries of modern science, technology usually preceded scientific explanation: for example, the invention of combustion engines preceded, and stimulated, the development of thermodynamics. Since the mid 1800s science and technology – and, more generally, theory and application – have become more and more symbiotic.

Nuclear power is a prime example of this interaction. The massive expansion of interest in nuclear science during World War Two was due to the interest in making a devastating weapon. Nuclear power was in many ways a spinoff from nuclear weapons programmes. Nuclear power depended on physical facilities such as uranium enrichment built for making weapons grade uranium and on the scientific and engineering skills gained through weapons research and development. There was also a political advantage in the early 1950s in associating nuclear technology with peaceful purposes. Once nuclear power projects were launched by several governments, they provided a strong force for expanding training and research in nuclear science and engineering. As nuclear power facilities and training in nuclear science and engineering became more widespread, so did the capability of more and more states to make nuclear weapons.

Another area of technological innovation strongly influenced by military imperatives is computing. In the 1940s and 1950s military interest in computers was primarily in number-crunching to solve problems such as designing more efficient nuclear weapons and calculating ballistic missile trajectories. The emphasis then was on large mainframe computers. In the 1970s and 1980s military interest in number-crunching has remained, but added to this is interest in microprocessors for 'smart weapons' and the like. The development of computing facilities has strongly influenced the nature of scientific research, for example by changing the criteria for elegance and solvability.

**Important scientific problems.** Due to the high degree of military funding for science and the military influence on the direction of technological innovation, what are seen as important scientific problems – even in the area of so-called 'pure' science – can become oriented to military interests.

Nuclear physics, genetic engineering and plasma physics owe part of their prestige to their potential role in war. More generally, the criterion for important science has become success in manipulating and controlling nature, rather than understanding nature and human interactions with it. Seeing the world as an object for manipulation is quite suited for the technical-rational mode of governance by administrative elites which is at the core of the modern war system.

For example, in the case of weather research, it is highly prestigious to study complex multi-level global circulation models requiring sophisticated numerical analysis, data acquisition and computing facilities. Indeed, this type of research is virtually synonymous with doing 'scientific' research on weather. By comparison, to engage in local weather prediction by obtaining information from amateurs and relying on experience and understanding of local weather patterns is to engage in a low status activity. It is no coincidence that research on global circulation models and similar topics, for which generous funding is available, is of at least potential military use. By contrast, local weather prediction which relies on data input from amateurs and which helps local farmers, businesses and individuals is both poorly funded and less attractive to professional military planners because it is not fully under control of military and technical personnel. Indeed, local weather prediction with input from amateurs has much more relevance to a social defence programme.

The direction of social science research is also influenced by military funding and the prominence of military priorities in society. For example, game theory – a mathematical framework for studying conflict situations – has been widely used and adapted for modelling international conflict. This is partly because the conceptual framework of game theory, which assumes discrete 'players', arbitrary fixed choices and a conflict of interests, is congruent with a military model of the world. In psychology, the dominant behaviourist paradigm which focusses on observable and measurable behaviour is admirably suited to the manipulation and control of humans which is essential for perpetuating the war system.

**Structure of the scientific community.** The modern scientific community is a body of full-time professionals, most of whom work in a bureaucratic or semi-bureaucratic setting of university, corporation or government. A large fraction of research is carried out by teams of scientists. Much research is accompanied by secrecy, especially military research. A key feature of modern science is intense specialisation.

These features of modern science are not timeless. Indeed, they have only become routine in the past century. Before this, scientific research was carried out by amateur, independent thinkers usually working individually. Generalists were much more common.

The professionalised, bureaucratised, government-funded, highly specialised nature of modern science is essentially an outcome of the restructuring of science to serve the modern state. The scientific community has prospered financially by state funding, but has had to pay the price of adopting an organisational form similar to the state, namely bureaucracy and administration, and the price of orienting its work to the interests of the state. Government funding and hierarchical organisation means that the results of scientific research are available mainly to those at the top of the pyramid. A high degree of specialisation ensures that most scientists boring away at their corner of knowledge have little awareness of the wider implications of their work, and little capacity for combining with each other or with the general community to press for a redirection of research.

**The ethos of the scientific community.** The bureaucratic and professional organisation of science is supported by an explanatory ideology, which basically boils down to the idea that scientific knowledge is neutral, that a scientist's duty is to produce good research and that the use of science and technology is the responsibility of others, namely scientific or political elites. This ideology provides a justification for uncritically accepting the framework in which scientific research is done. One aspect of this framework is the war system. Thus the ideology of value-free science enables scientists to serve the war system with a clear conscience.

Scientific research is an intensely masculine occupation, being dominated by men and by masculine values of emotional aloofness, competition and the aim of domination and manipulation of nature, including humans. Masculine values also notoriously prevail in armies and national security bureaucracies, where the traits of empathy, sharing, cooperation and nurturing are systematically suppressed or excluded. Given this similarity of values associated with patriarchy in science and the military, it is not surprising that science as a professional activity is so easily integrated into the bureaucratic organisational mode and so easily turned towards military purposes.

The structure and ethos of the modern scientific community is the key to its connection with the war system. It is true that since its earliest days, science has been associated with war. The inventors Archimedes and Leonardo turned their talents to the problems of fighting, and since the rise of modern science many individual scientists have steered their investigations towards military purposes. But the orientation of science to war was relatively sporadic until the rise of professionalised science under the auspices of the state beginning in the late 1800s. The process of incorporation of science into the war system was greatly accelerated by the two world wars this century. According to this analysis, science is part of the war system rather than just a servant of it. In historical terms this

should not be surprising, since the rise of modern science was part of the process of the breakdown of European feudalism and the rise of capitalism, of the state and modern bureaucracy and of modern professional armies. The orientation of modern scientists to the requirements of the state is evident, especially during the two world wars. In World War One scientists clamoured to be able to devote their talents to war-making on behalf of the states with which they identified. In World War Two scientific communities were thoroughly mobilised to serve states for military ends, and this led to the continuing close connection between science and the state in the following decades. The organisation of modern science into a professionalised, bureaucratic form can be seen as a shaping of science into the image of other state bureaucracies. Scientists are no longer independent of the state: they depend on it for funding, professional status, and scientific priorities. The administration of science puts scientists and the results of scientific research at the beck and call of state elites, including the power elites of science, who are well known to inhabit the corridors of state power as well. The power elites of science thus are another part of the administrative class which has so often benefited from and promoted the war system.

### **Alternatives**

The grassroots alternative to rule by the administrative class is self-management. Rather than a particular category of people having the dominant influence on shaping the institutions in which people live, decisions about institutions would be made by the people in a participatory fashion.

The usual response to the idea of self-management is to say that present society couldn't survive without all the experts. This is correct. Getting rid of present experts but leaving bureaucracies, factories and cities the way they are now is a recipe for disaster. Eliminating the administrative class means simultaneously removing the political inequalities inherent in hierarchical administration and transforming the systems of organisation and technology which depend on and sustain hierarchical administration.

Take the medical profession. The system of professional intervention to overcome illness is one which puts much power in the hands of doctors and especially in the hands of elite medical administrators within the profession and in the government. How can this system be transformed? Simply changing or removing the elites of medicine would change little fundamentally: the power inequalities of doctors vis-a-vis patients, and the dependence of the medical profession on government regulation to maintain a monopoly on treatment are bound to give rise to new medical elites.



Stronger state regulation of doctors is similarly limited, since this strengthens another wing of the administrative class.

The alternative path is to pursue self-reliance in health. At a personal and community level this means people taking a much greater responsibility for their own health problems. It is not unusual for sufferers from a disease to learn more about it, through study and personal observation, than all but the most highly specialised doctors. Networks of sufferers, which already exist in the case of many diseases, allow mutual support and exchange of information which can undercut the power of the experts.

More fundamentally, self-reliance in health means that communities would gradually redesign themselves to remove the sources of most ill health:

- \* Provision of basic needs of food and shelter to all would remove much poverty-induced disease.

- \* Production processes would be designed or reorganised by workers and local community members to reduce health hazards to workers and community.

- \* Community planning would make walking, cycling and some mass transit more attractive travel options, eliminating the structural need for the killer automobile. The emphasis on walking and cycling would also increase general fitness.

- \* Elimination of formal hierarchies and the encouragement of participation in social life would reduce much disease and distress created by the career and consumer competition and by drug-taking to avoid reality.

- \* Health support groups could investigate prevention of ill health by nutritional means, by physical and mental exercise and stimulation, and by collective creation of satisfying lifestyles.

- \* Spreading skills in social defence would help remove war-induced death and injury.

These and many other similar measures would greatly reduce the requirement for sophisticated medical intervention. This would do more to undercut the power of the medical wing of the administrative class than any form of direct confrontation or regulation.

The key component then of a strategy to transform the administrative class is to promote self-reliance. The aim is to increase the skills of non-elites and to restructure institutions to remove the need for administrators and professionals. It is possible to outline a reorganisation of society in the direction of self-reliance which would remove the need for most categories of the administrative class, in areas such as medicine, corporations, schooling, welfare, banking and politics. This might include worker and community self-management of production, student and advisor-organised

learning programmes, and worker-community design of communications and transport systems. In some areas, such as education, there would be opportunities for many more people to participate as both learners and teachers, while elite administrators would be made unnecessary. In other areas, such as military production and nuclear power, there would be no need for activity by anyone.

The degree to which the power of experts could be reduced is a debatable issue, quite validly so. Even after removing most diseases arising from social structures, and exploring nutritional and other avenues for prevention and cure, there would still be a role for some medical intervention. Would there be any traditional doctors in a self-managed society? How would they be trained, and how would their skills be ensured? These are important questions, worthy of close attention. But whatever the answer, the implications are much the same: promote individual and group self-reliance, and thereby undercut the power of the medical profession and other groups which administer society in their own interests.

Also, it is important to remember what is being challenged is not expertise per se, but expertise that is connected with power and control exercised through institutions which perpetuate inequality, exploitation, war and institutionally-based power itself. It is not so much the particular experts and administrators who are the obstacles as the system which gives them power.

Who is going to lead the way to eliminating the administrative class? As argued before, I think that the answer must be both insiders and outsiders: people from within the administrative class linked with those outside it.

The promotion of self-reliance is a positive programme to remove the power base for the administrative class. But in addition to this, direct challenges to the administrative class are needed, otherwise the budding alternatives are likely to be squashed by the united opposition of administrators. For example, the medical profession has for the most part been apathetic or hostile to an emphasis on community-oriented preventative measures to remove all sources of ill health. Promotion of alternatives to the automobile or conventional factory production is seen as outside the bounds of professional responsibility, while nutritional prevention is usually ignored or castigated. Those promoting these alternatives would be more permanently relegated to the fringe of respectability if it were not for the exposure of the limitations of conventional medicine.

Two important direct challenges to the administrative class are exposure of values and spreading of skills. Exposure of values is essentially unmasking the realities of activities by the administrative class, especially the political values embodied in these activities, the low level of benefits to the general public and the harmful consequences. Bureaucrats and professionals bolster

their positions by controlling knowledge and erecting barriers to understanding what they do. The obvious challenge to the knowledge monopolies is exposure, or demystification as it is often called. It is threatening to the power of the medical profession for people to realise that the introduction of vaccines against smallpox or x-rays for tuberculosis were mostly irrelevant in the decline of these diseases, to realise the extent of illness caused by medical intervention, or to realise the gross distortion of priorities embodied in high technology medicine such as heart transplants while many people suffer and die for lack of basic physical necessities.

A second important direct challenge to the administrative class is the spreading of skills. This means sharing out the special understandings and capabilities that are normally monopolised by the administrative class. An example is making known the standard procedures used by doctors in diagnosing illness.

In many cases these skills are not directly useful to outsiders. Managers in bureaucracies use various techniques to perpetuate and legitimise their roles, such as building alliances with other key bureaucrats and providing rewards to those who toe the line. Spreading the knowledge of how this process operates is done not so that others can do it as well, but so it may be confronted more effectively, and so self-management can be more effectively developed in the face of opposition.

Even though many skills of administrators would be irrelevant in a self-managing world, spreading them to non-elites and non-professionals is vital in making the transition. Roads and automobiles will be around for quite a while. Challenges to conventional methods of town planning and automobile manufacture would be greatly aided by enabling more people to effectively intervene and promote alternatives.

Who can best promote exposure of values and spreading of skills? Again, a combination of insiders and outsiders is an effective one. Members of the administrative class are aware of the inside knowledge, the standard operating procedures, the uses and abuses of power and the weaknesses of the administrators. But even insiders who are sympathetic to alternative directions are often caught in the value systems of the administration and often are unable to communicate effectively to outsiders. Outsiders can more readily grasp the value assumptions of the administrative class, and can adapt insider knowledge to be more useful in developing self-managed alternatives.

In the case of medicine, a small fraction of doctors are critical of prevailing practices and take action to expose abuses. Outsiders, such as many of those who promote nutritional prevention, use some knowledge produced by medical researchers and practitioners, but make it available in a form accessible to the public.

**Antiwar science**

Let me return to science and the war system. To begin, what would a science look like that was oriented towards helping achieve a society without war? First, science would be used in a positive way to help create a nonviolent society. The topics for research would grow out of the needs of self-managing, self-reliant communities. One example of a worthwhile scientific research project would be to develop radio and other communications systems which are easy and effective for local communities to use as part of social defence but hard to disrupt by military forces, spy agencies or potentially repressive governments.

Second, an antiwar science would be used to help dismantle existing physical and social structures which support the war system. Antiwar scientists can spread knowledge about how the war system can be dismantled by popular action. To undertake such direct action, people need to know how to disable nuclear weapons, how to run communication systems and electrical power systems. Scientists and engineers, who now tend to monopolise such knowledge when they have it, can aid this process by exposing the workings, weaknesses, and alternatives to the infrastructure of the war system.

Finally, scientific organisation and activity, instead of being bureaucratised, specialised, state-funded — in essence, militarised — would be a harmonious part of a self-managing society. Instead of science being funded by the state, it would be one of the many activities carried out by local communities. Instead of science being almost always a full-time professional activity, it would be something that most interested people could participate in. Instead of being professionalised and bureaucratised, science would be done participatively. As a result of the different research interests for science and of the different organisational base, it would inevitably follow that the knowledge frameworks of antiwar science would be different to a greater or lesser degree. The criteria for valid and important science would depend less on manipulation and control and more on fostering community understanding of nature and society and on providing tools for sustaining a democratic, just and nonviolent society.

These grand visions and goals are all very well, but what is to be done to move towards such a future? One basic approach taken by antiwar scientists is to appeal to governments and other elites to end their war-promoting activities. One need only read the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* or most other journals of antiwar scientists to find many careful arguments against military policies of governments, many suggestions for what governments should do, and many appeals to state elites to restrain their war activities. But as I argued in chapter 1, if the war system is essentially a state-based system of privilege and centralised power defended by military power, it



is futile to expect logic and argument to convince elites that they should undermine the system in which they rose to status and power.

More promisingly, on many occasions antiwar scientists have taken their arguments to the general public. But this effort has been limited in two ways. First, mobilisation of the general public has been done via appeals to fear, the fear of nuclear war in particular. Second, the aim of mobilising the public has been largely to apply greater pressure on governments.

Most antiwar scientists have not thought to reconstruct society to remove the sources of war, but rather just to somehow eliminate war within the existing structures. Such a superficial approach is not surprising. The beliefs and actions of scientists as well as others are conditioned by their training, social situation and career pressures. Scientists are trained to be paradigm-bound problem-solvers, specialists within a narrowly defined area. The social system of science does not encourage critical attention to pervasive and subtle political and social assumptions underlying science and society. Furthermore, the career structure of scientists is bound up with the bureaucracies of the war system. It is not easy to accept that opposing war requires reexamination of the foundations of one's profession and career.

A more fundamental challenge to professionalised science has been made by the radical science movement. Especially since about 1970, small groups of activists have formulated a critique of science and taken action to oppose dominant institutions and their form of science. In the UK the radical science movement has mainly been associated with the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, and in the US with Science for the People. The radical science movement has been strongest in making a critique of the use of science within capitalist society: the orientation of scientific research for the purposes of profit and social control. For example, attention has been focussed on agricultural research which selectively helps large farmers and on the ideas of sociobiology which help justify sexual and social inequality.

In spite of all this activity, the radical science movement has given relatively little attention to science as a professionalised activity. The critique has mainly been of science as a tool of capitalism. The implicit assumption often seems to be that professionalised science would continue pretty much as at present in a socialist society, except that science would be oriented to socialist rather than capitalist ends. Clearly such a conception takes little account of the power structures within science as a professionalised activity.

There have been a few suggestive signs of how to move towards a deprofessionalised science. One avenue is the 'science shop' which has been



pioneered in the Netherlands. Growing out of university-based radical science groups, science shops were set up to link together community groups and scientific experts. Community groups without easy access to scientific expertise, such as trade unions or environmental groups, can approach the science shop with particular problems. The shop workers then try to find scientists who are willing to work on the problems. The science shop thus helps to break down the barriers between scientific research and community needs.

Another promising model is given by citizen groups in Japan organised to study environmental problems. The groups are composed of teachers, citizens and some sympathetic scientists, and they undertake research on environmental problems in simple but penetrating ways, such as by studying radiation-sensitive plants and doing surveys of ailments in local communities. The citizen research groups have actually been more successful in finding the origins of some environmental problems, such as Minamata disease caused by mercury poisoning, than highly trained, heavily funded professional teams of scientists. This is because the citizen research groups did not get side-tracked into specialised research abstracted from the real issues, and also because they were willing to interact directly with the pollution-affected communities.

By and large, there has been little thought and action towards deprofessionalising science. The Dutch science shops and the Japanese citizen research teams are partial exceptions, and even in those cases it is hard to determine their strength and significance since they are foreign examples. One of the reasons for the lack of progress towards self-managing science lies in the difficulties which arise in radical science groups. To illustrate these I will discuss some experiences in a radical science group in Canberra in 1980-1982, Community Action on Science and Environment (CASE).

CASE was set up to focus on social issues involving science and technology, not to concentrate on the technical issues themselves. For example, in looking at the role of herbicides in agriculture and other uses, we did investigate the health and environmental consequences of herbicides, but with the aim of highlighting the way herbicides were developed and promoted to benefit particular groups (government departments and chemical companies) and the aim of suggesting some alternative approaches which had fewer harmful environmental effects and which also gave less power to outside elites and experts. This was the aim; the practice was more difficult.

We worked on quite a few issues during the years of CASE's existence, mainly in the areas of environmental chemicals and diet. We treated, for example, issues associated with head lice treatments, sugar in diets, caffeine,

fluoridation, dietary salt and herbicides. After deciding upon an issue to look into — either as a result of interest by group members or by outside request — our usual procedure was to investigate technical literature on the subject, and then prepare written material about the issue raising both health and environmental points and also political points and alternatives. Typically, the result would be a leaflet about the topic, which would be distributed at stalls and via contacts. On some issues we wrote letters to the newspaper or made press releases. There were several problems faced by CASE which limited its effectiveness.

\* There was a tendency towards academic carefulness in analysing and writing about the issues tackled. Although this was necessary to avoid being discredited, it tended to alienate the non-scientist members of the group.

\* In addressing issues with a scientific content, an attempt was made to be scientifically accurate and thus to rely on the credibility of scientists in the community. But the group lacked the prestige associated with institutional affiliation and officially sanctioned expertise.

\* After writing a leaflet or making some other compilation of information on an issue, there was a lack of follow-up. Issues were not pursued by such means as demonstrations, distributing leaflets at supermarkets, or organising community networks. The group thus not only lacked the credibility of an official expert group, but also failed to use its freedom from institutions to engage in more overt forms of activism.

\* The group had little effect on professionalised science. Since the group was organised without a formal hierarchy and addressed the interlinkings between science and politics, those attracted to the group were mainly those on the fringes of the scientific community: Ph.D. students, dissidents and other scientists low in the scientific hierarchy, former students, and members of government bureaucracies. Because of the tensions between scientific accuracy and credibility on the one hand and activism on the other, even this group couldn't hang together. Like many other such groups, these tensions tended to lead either towards respectability as 'counter-experts' and reduction of activism, or towards greater activism and cutting of most ties with mainstream scientists. CASE tried to straddle these two tendencies and perhaps as a result did not last long.

My conclusion from this experience is not that CASE-type groups are a waste of time. Quite the contrary, there is a need for many more such groups. But another and perhaps more fruitful direction for scientist-activists is to become involved in other social action groups, such as labour, feminist, environmental or antiwar groups. To such groups scientific insiders can bring and share knowledge and skills in analysing information to cut through scientific smokescreens on social issues involving science and technology.

Scientific insiders can gain from such groups an understanding of political analysis and action, and perhaps some of these insights can then be used to push towards self-management in science from both the inside and the outside.

### **Problems and limitations**

Especially for those antiwar activists with jobs or perspectives rooted in the administrative class, there are several traps in taking action to transform the administrative class.

**Professionalised social activists.** Social action can easily become a full-time occupation and preoccupation. There is a danger that professionalised social activists by their energy and position will distort the agenda of social movements in directions that suit their own interests. There is a tendency, in some cases, for full-time activists to favour lobbying and inside channels over grassroots organising, to demand social action to be up to their own high standards of political sophistication (often with the consequence of discouraging others without such understanding), and to become impatient with amateur, voluntary efforts. The pressure on full-time activists is to become 'social activism elites', unconsciously protecting their own status by not challenging the state hierarchies with which they interact, and reproducing in their own role the relation of administrators to those administered. In other words, the social relations of the administrative system are reproduced in social movements.

Internal self-management is the basis for a solution to this problem: sharing skills and responsibilities and political understanding. The use of money to hire full-time activists must be done with great care, if at all.

**Social change as an academic pursuit.** Many peace activists make calls for more peace education and peace research. The problem arises when education and research are carried out in the typical fashion: education as schooling, the rote learning of information provided by authorities; research as the pursuit of intellectual understanding by professionals, divorced from social movements. Conventional education and research are mostly carried out in hierarchical organisations in ways in line with the continued dominance of the administrative class. Peace education and research may only reinforce the administrative class and drain energy from peace movements.

Much peace education and research is fine. But it should not be seen as much of a solution unless it is strongly linked with practical action against war. This requires the routine interaction of activists, teachers, learners and researchers. Without constant input from activists and without facing the problem posed by making education and research relevant to systematic

ongoing efforts in grassroots social activism, teachers and researchers can be easily diverted into priorities of professional advancement and control of professional prerogatives.

Action groups should not be lulled into complacency by the existence of programmes of peace education and research. In many cases these programmes are used by teachers and researchers to keep doing something that previously went under another name, such as international relations, anthropology or psychology. Activists cannot afford to avoid responsibility for intellectual inquiry by leaving it to the professionals. Activists need to develop independent, broad-based abilities and incentives to think and act deeply on social issues, providing both an alternative and a prod to professional teachers and researchers. The aim should be to unify theory and practice — as always — and avoid letting the administrative class monopolise theoretical investigation.

**Experience and equality.** Even within social action groups in which no one is a full-time activist, there are inevitable differences in experience and understanding of social action and group dynamics. How are these differences reconciled with a commitment to egalitarian group operation? What should be the role of experienced or knowledgeable persons: to help maintain apparent equality in the group by not offering their experience and knowledge, or to heavily promote the actions or campaigns they favour? If they wish, people skilled in 'group dynamics' can often obtain their way even in apparently egalitarian groups by skillfully steering the group towards a particular consensus. Is such manipulation justified if the outcome is a plan of action that more effectively advances the social movement and its goals?

In some cases the answers are clear. For experienced people to acquiesce in what they expect to be a disastrous plan, in order to avoid blocking consensus or stifling initiative, seems unwise. On the other end of the spectrum, obvious manipulation of a group, however desirable is the decision resulting from the manipulation, is harmful if the group itself is split or its members alienated or disempowered. But there are many intermediate cases in which the answer is not so obvious.

For example, in Canberra Peacemakers I was for some time a lone proponent of taking up social defence as a major focus. I had more knowledge about social defence by having read and thought about it. I was convinced that social defence should be a high priority, more important for example than organising another protest at Parliament House. At that stage most of the others in the group preferred activities other than about social defence. They did not understand how social defence could become a focus for social action — and neither did I to any extent, since I was hoping the group would work on this problem. What should I have done? Left social defence

to another day and gone along with what the others preferred? Or persisted in pushing social defence in the face of obvious reluctance?

So far as I am aware, there are no easy answers to such dilemmas. In the event, I regularly pushed for social defence but tried not to ram it down people's throats. In some cases, I am sure I pushed too hard, and alienated some members who were just not interested. On the other hand, by being goal-directed to the extent of running some workshops and writing a broadsheet on social defence, the ideas were spread more widely and many people outside Canberra Peacemakers became exposed to and interested in social defence. Within Canberra Peacemakers there is now a lot of support for social defence, and a strong understanding of it. And the collective experience of trying to understand and develop campaigns around social defence has been immensely valuable. Certainly if I had 'pushed ahead' with study and analysis on my own, without the challenge of applying the ideas to social action, the results would have been less fruitful.

Lest this sound like an unadulterated success story, I should mention that in late 1982 a serious conflict arose in Canberra Peacemakers, partly because I continued to push social defence and was not sufficiently sensitive to the degree this was opposed by others.

I have told this story from the point of view of the more knowledgeable person, but the problem is just as severe or more so from the other side of the relationship. How should a newcomer to a group react to experienced or knowledgeable members who are sophisticated in getting their own way? Acquiesce for the time being? Block consensus until convinced? My feeling is that groups need to openly address this problem to a much greater extent. Self-management does not mean that people are equal in experience or knowledge, and a pretence that they are only prevents problems from being dealt with.

This problem is a central one in developing an alternative to the administrative class. Administration is based on differences in knowledge and experience that are structurally perpetuated, by formal hierarchies, by professional training and by restricted flows of information. A dynamic alternative to the administrative class must be able to tap the skills of insiders and at the same time help dismantle the structures and practices which sustain the privileges associated with those skills. That means being able to utilise rather than ignore or deny the experience and knowledge of those who have it, while simultaneously preventing domination by those with the experience and knowledge. It does not seem an easy task. But this may be because the question has not been formulated in the right way.

**The self-managerial class?** The power of capitalists is rooted in control over the means of production. The power of elite politicians is based on control over the means of political decision-making. What is the social



basis for the politics of self-management? To what do social activists owe their power? Moral superiority? Prestige? Commitment to individual rights or to collective control?

I ask these questions because in the past many social groups, before they came to power, were thought to provide the basis for a world without war, while in practice they ended up becoming part of the war system. Capitalism did not end war, and neither did state socialism. What about self-management? Will the struggle for self-management serve to create a new oppressive system overseen by a new oppressive class? If this danger exists, what should be done to avoid it?

---

## The military

---

Superficially, military forces are a prime root of war. They are responsible for fighting, the organised human and technological use of force and violence against human and technological opposition. Without military forces, there would be no war as currently conceived.

At a deeper level, military forces may not seem so much a direct cause of war as a consequence of the war system, as agents of ruling groups. Modern military forces are mobilised by the state, as a defence of the interests of state elites against external and internal enemies. Without addressing the dominant social interests in the state, whose ultimate defence against internal challenge is the military, a focus on eliminating the military alone is quite inadequate.

But while military forces do indeed serve the interests of the state, the military is not purely a tool. Military personnel, and especially military elites — the officer corps — have their own special interests. Military elites will not sit by idly while state power is dissolved or transferred to interests seen as hostile to military interests. The many military regimes around the world would testify to the potential semi-independent political role of military forces. While military forces may serve state interests, this is often contingent on state interests serving military interests. The state and the military are symbiotically joined, and they need to be addressed both separately and jointly.

Even in societies where military forces are overtly subordinate to civilian elites, military perspectives and interests can penetrate deeply into a society's fabric. This process of militarisation has been especially noticeable in industrialised countries since World War Two: since then, 'peacetime' military spending has provided a rationale for continuing state intervention into economies and for the turning of industrial and professional efforts towards military priorities.

Bureaucracy and the administrative class can be seen as roots of war because they facilitate the maintenance of elite power and privilege, especially at the level of the state, and smash or pre-empt non-hierarchical and self-reliant forms of human interaction. The military is bureaucratic in form, and indeed in many ways is a pioneer and model bureaucracy. In many cases the military takes a leading role in administering society, and military elites are part of the administrative class. Thus the military is

closely intertwined with several other roots of war, namely the state, bureaucracy and the administrative class. In addition, as described in the next chapter, the military and patriarchy are strongly interconnected.

The close connection between the military, bureaucracy and state is shown by the revolutionary role sometimes played by military elites. Ellen Kay Trimberger in *Revolution from Above* has analysed several instances in which a revolution — a forcible alteration of class forces — has been implemented by military elites acting as state administrators. She uses the examples of Japan beginning in 1868, Turkey in the 1920s, Egypt under Nasser since 1952 and Peru under the generals since 1968. In each case military bureaucrats, having captured state power without mobilisation of the populace, proceeded to destroy the power of the dominant economic class, such as the aristocracy. There are several conditions necessary to generate revolutions within the top ranks of military administration. The military must be independent of the class controlling the means of production, and key members of the military must be politicised and cohesive. The revolution from above is a response to nationalist movements from below demanding an end to national humiliation at the hands of foreign powers. And there must be opportunities in the international system for moves to increase national autonomy.

'Revolution from above' by military bureaucrats can only occur when both the military and the civilian state administration are highly bureaucratised. The military elites undertake their revolutionary course in order to create the conditions for successful economic national development which had been held back by conservative ruling forces. The revolutionary state bureaucrats are forced to take the economic initiative and overcome the initial problems of capital accumulation and creation of an economic infrastructure before private capital enters the scene. The limitation of this approach is that mass mobilisation of the populace is not undertaken, and so the revolutionary administrators undertake some form of capitalist development, and also end up integrating themselves with the capitalist class.

The phenomenon of revolution from above does not in itself provide many insights for grassroots struggle. But it does point out the close connections between the military, bureaucracy and the state, and suggests that the role of the military is not always as subordinate as normally conceived.

### Characteristics

Internally, military forces are bureaucratic in form, with a strict hierarchy and division of labour, rigid rules and duties. The function of military forces is to be able to use organised violence against opponents, usually

seen as similarly organised. Because killing of other humans is not readily undertaken by many people in modern societies, military recruits undergo extensive training, indoctrination and isolation in a military environment. The key to military performance has long been unquestioning obedience to orders, which again has much in common with non-military bureaucracies.

Military forces use violence as the ultimate defence of state interests, and not surprisingly the ultimate sanction against internal resistance in armed forces is also violent: imprisonment or even execution. Military forces even more than other bureaucracies are similar to authoritarian states in their denial of the right or opportunity to dissent, in their demand for obedience and in their use of reprisals against recalcitrant subjects.

The composition of armed forces embodies particular social values. In many countries, the officer corps has been drawn disproportionately from privileged classes. Within the military the officer corps is a politically aware stratum. Both by origin and by hierarchical position, the officer corps tends to be a strong supporter of state political systems based on authoritarian principles, similar in nature to the military itself. By contrast, the military rank and file are more often working class in origin, and are structurally removed from political activity.

Military elites also strongly oppose participation of women and gays, especially in key roles such as officers or combat soldiers. This opposition stems from the links between masculinity and violence and, more deeply, between patriarchy and the military.

Because of the military's rigid bureaucratic structure and because of its relative isolation from other social institutions, the military is an intensely conservative institution. This is well illustrated by its reluctance to adopt technological innovations of demonstrated effectiveness. For example, European armies were very slow to adopt the machine gun in spite of its years of proven effectiveness in colonial wars. The reason for this conservatism is that introducing weapons systems also requires internal social change in areas such as corps organisation, training, battlefield tactics and command structures. Changes that adversely affect particular bureaucratic empires in the military are resisted most of all. Fundamental changes in military organisation or doctrine often require outside intervention, for example by civilian political elites.

Another reason for the conservatism of military forces is that most of them are at war only a small fraction of time, and in between wars there is no 'marketplace' test of the current doctrines. Internal conservatism is one reason why militaries are notorious for being prepared to fight the previous war.

Although military forces remain strongly hierarchical, repressive,

conservative, sexist and heterosexist, there are two forces in particular which are modifying the internal dynamics of the military. One is the increasing technological content of modern war. Instead of being mainly composed of fighting troops, military forces are structured around systems of advanced technology. For every fighter pilot there are 10 or 20 other workers providing maintenance, planning logistics, organising provisions and so forth. Along with sophisticated technology have come many workers in specialised occupations, including engineers, technicians, mechanics, computer programmers, accountants and filing clerks. To utilise this personnel effectively, the traditional military hierarchy with its demand for unquestioning obedience to commands and use of repression is much less appropriate. The trend is away from coercion and towards organisational and manipulative techniques of control more characteristic of civilian bureaucracies.

The other force which is promoting a change in military forces towards civilian bureaucracy comes from soldiers who refuse to be submissive. This refusal stems from the breakdown of traditional institutions which inculcated authoritarian and submissive attitudes, including the church, authoritarian employment situations, rigid schooling and the patriarchal family. These traditional structures are collapsing between the extension of state power and bureaucratic modes of organisation on the one hand and the rise of movements for liberation from oppression on the other, including the labour movement, feminism and the gay movement. Life is less and less organised on the basis of physical coercion and a requirement for blind obedience to authority, and more on bureaucratic lines of hierarchy, division of labour, rules and proper procedures, all legitimised on the basis of alleged efficiency and technical merit. These changes affecting personal interactions, families, schools and workplaces can hardly leave military forces untouched.

Lawrence Radine in his book *The Taming of the Troops: Social Control in the United States Army* describes the shift from coercive to manipulative controls. The new brand of manipulative controls demand the skills of psychologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, lawyers and correctional therapists. Techniques involve questionnaires and surveys to detect and screen out dissidents, cooperation and talking about problems with soldiers, making token concessions, particularising opposition to reformable peripheral issues, and transfers of dissidents. Behavioural science is used to study what makes people fight — which has been found to be concrete necessity and commitment to a small reference group, not ideological commitment — and this knowledge is used to organise training and deployment of troops. While the military is adopting many methods from civilian bureaucracies, it is also true that the military is pioneering methods of sophisticated,



non-coercive control. Radine suggests that because of this the army can be seen as a 'vanguard bureaucracy'.

The internal characteristics of the military have implications beyond the life of soldiers. The very way the military is organised has a major impact on the nature of the society in which it exists. A thought-provoking treatment of this is Stanislaw Andreski's book *Military Organization and Society*.

One of Andreski's important findings, backed by evidence from numerous societies, is that a higher level of participation by a society's population in military forces tends to reduce structured inequality — called stratification — in the society. Thus stratification is likely to be lower with high participation guerrilla warfare than with low participation conventional forces. This finding reinforces the idea that modern military forces, with low participation due to professionalism and specialised training for modern weapons systems, are intimately associated with the existence and power of political and economic elite groups. Another implication is that the introduction of social defence, which by its nature requires high levels of participation, will tend to reduce stratification. This would be doubly beneficial. Stratification is associated with inequality, exploitation and injustice, and also at the level of state power with the requirement for military forces to defend elite interests.

Andreski says many empires have been created by exclusive possession of superior armaments or tactics. Collapse of the empire through loss of the monopoly is less common, since conquered peoples are usually disarmed and made helpless. States founded on conquest usually disintegrate through loss of cohesion of the ruling stratum, or as a result of outside attack. These insights have two immediate implications. First, social defence is a good preventative to the formation of empires, since exclusive possession of techniques of nonviolent resistance is not feasible. Second, breaking monopolies on current weapons is important to oppose centralised political power backed by military forces. But for the antiwar movement, breaking weapons monopolies does not mean spreading the weapons but spreading knowledge of how people can dismantle them: preparing for people's disarmament.

Andreski treats many other topics of significance, such as subordination and hierarchy in society and the military, and the relation of war and the extent of government regulation. Andreski's analysis contains many insights of potential use in antiwar action, and is certainly more useful in this regard than the vast bulk of military sociology.

Why then has Andreski's material had no impact on antiwar strategy? One reason is that Andreski's writing is academic. He offers no hints on how to apply his insights in order to change society from the grassroots.

Most antiwar activists do not delve into military sociology at all, partly because most antiwar activists have no intention or method for transforming military organisation. Furthermore, Andreski is a social theorist who is seen as relatively conservative, and hence is not likely to appeal to the antiwar movement theorists who usually favour politically left-wing analyses. This is regrettable, in my opinion. In developing an antiwar strategy, insights are needed from whatever source available. It is for antiwar theorists and activists to decide how to interpret, adapt and use these insights.

Military forces have two main roles in society: defence of the state against foreign military threat and defence of the state against internal challenge. Almost all treatments of military issues, including those by the antiwar movement, concern defence against external enemies. Yet the role of the military in defending the state internally — the military's role in class and social struggle — warrants equal attention by antiwar activists. For by supporting state power internally, the military protects the position and power of elite groups which not only help perpetuate poverty, injustice and alienation, but also sustain the state system which is the backbone of the modern war system.

In earlier eras it was possible for armed uprisings to overcome the numbers and force of the army and other defenders of ruling elites. But for many decades it has been the case that such an uprising has no chance against the sophisticated weaponry used by military and police forces. With machine guns, tanks, chemical weapons, and efficient transport and communications capabilities at the disposal of the military willing to use them, armed insurrection in an industrialised society is futile, as argued by Martin Oppenheimer in *The Urban Guerilla*.

The only qualification to this conclusion lies in the nature of modern technology. Whereas earlier military technology — bayonets, rifles, trenches and barriers, jeeps and machine guns — could be used equally against external foes or against internal uprisings, much modern technology is suitable only for specialised purposes. Jet aircraft, submarines and long-range missiles are of little value in quelling internal disorder: their use would be unselective and hence politically counterproductive. On the other hand, there is an increasing interest by military and police forces in the 'technology of social control': disabling chemical and physical agents for crowd control, sophisticated surveillance techniques, and methods to break the resistance of prisoners. For example, the British army has developed and tested much social control technology in Northern Ireland.

What does all this reveal? It is clear that even on purely pragmatic grounds, the road to social revolution in industrialised countries cannot be by armed struggle. Beyond this, there is not a lot to be gained by studying the technology of war, except in the important area of learning about the

relation of technological systems to the social organisation of the military and the state. A technological system brings with it a social organisation, as in the case of weapons platforms such as the aircraft carrier.

### **The military and revolution**

Military forces are a key element in the war system, and are a prime obstacle to abolishing war. But as I have noted, the role of the military in defending the state against internal challenges is just as important. By restraining social change towards a more just, equal and participatory society, military forces help perpetuate the social, political and economic institutions which underlie not only war but also many other social problems.

Considering the key role of the military in potentially blocking fundamental social transformation, it is disappointing that there have been few organised efforts to confront military structures, or even theoretical perspectives on how to abolish the military. Most social movements simply accept the military as part of the nature of things, or assume that the military is kept under control by political elites. State socialists, for example, do not aim to abolish military forces, but rather prefer to keep them – perhaps reconstituted as a militia or guerrilla force – under the control of a state apparatus run by the communist party. The military has not often been a focus for social action aimed at transformation or abolition partly because of the assumption that military forces are essential for defence against external threats, and partly because most social action assumes the persistence of the state system.

Although there is a lack of specifically focussed social action aimed at the eventual elimination of military forces, many valuable insights are to be had by studying revolutions, especially those which have involved the collapse of armies. To my mind the most valuable study for this purpose is Katherine Chorley's book *Armies and the Art of Revolution*. Using a careful and systematic historical analysis, but without excess detail, Chorley has itemised, documented and highlighted the best strategies both for the forces of revolution and for those of reaction.

Chorley is primarily concerned with revolutions which are fairly quick takeovers of state power, and for which violence is a potential tool for the revolutionaries. Nevertheless, her analysis gives a good feel for revolutionary strategy, and many of her insights can be applied to nonviolent strategies for challenging the roots of war.

Chorley's studies of revolution – including the French and Russian revolutions, for example – show the vital necessity of winning over at least part of the military to attain revolutionary success. Social transformation requires transformation of the military. This cannot be achieved by confronting the army on its own terms. Technology has weighted the scale in

favour of the professional army against volunteers. Insurrections cannot succeed against a unified military force. To succeed, the revolutionaries must break down the unity of the army by political means, by weakening the commitment and morale of the soldiers.

Military forces are not socially indivisible or ideologically coherent. There is diversity, especially between ranks. The officer corps is usually aligned with more conservative social groups. For a government to maintain its control, it must maintain the good will of the officer corps. For a revolution from the right — serving the interests of established elites — support from the officer corps is all that is required. For a revolution from the left — attacking existing elite interests — a disintegration of the military rank and file is required, since the officer corps will never support a left revolution. (Left-wing military coups are usually carried out by junior officers.)

There is diversity within as well as between ranks. Individual soldiers can become dissatisfied. Usually discontent in the army arises from practical grievances: unpleasant duties, petty harassment, arbitrary orders. These grievances need to be reinforced by a political analysis of the nature of the military system and the ends for which it is used. Opposition within the military can be stimulated both by inside organisers and also by contact with outsiders.

Contact with outsiders is vital in promoting the disintegration of military forces in a revolutionary situation. The aim of contact is to break down the military isolation and win over wavering soldiers to the revolutionary cause. This in short is fraternisation. The alternative strategy of opposing military forces by 'revolutionary' forces — guerrilla warfare or violent urban insurrection — tends by comparison to unify the established army rather than dissolve it.

During the French Revolution, soldiers were normally billeted in homes of local people. Thus the soldiers were exposed to the currents of social and political unrest that swept through the community. It is now common practice to house soldiers in barracks or otherwise separate them from the general community. In the case of the 1871 Paris Commune, the commander of the army withdrew the troops from Paris. In the countryside away from the revolutionary infection, the troops were disciplined and stiffened, and then were led to Paris to bloodily smash the Commune. These examples show the importance of fraternisation.

Although grievances always exist in military forces, usually they are an insufficient basis for bringing about any degree of disintegration. A good chance for revolution often is provided by war, especially unsuccessful war, which puts armies under enormous strain. The Russian Revolution in 1917 was made possible by the virtual collapse of the Russian army in World



of the French army by the Prussians.

The impossibility of revolution without politically undermining the military, the importance of fraternisation, the disintegrating effect of analysis provides. Many of these ideas can be readily used or adopted in developing a strategy for elimination of the military as a root of war.

Other findings by Chorley are less easy to translate to a violent revolution.

For example, she says that organisers of revolutionary wars are aware that discipline and efficiency are not compatible with

attack an army must be organised, trained and commanded by normal military methods. These points suggest to me that whatever efforts are enlightened revolutionary government will be unable to use organised violence in a way in keeping with democratic precepts.

Since Chorley's *War and the Art of Revolution* was first published in 1942, but has been revised in 1966 and 1970.

ever greater use of modern technology in military forces leading to a greater use of technical specialists and bureaucratic modes of organisation.

which fraternisation proceeds. But the move to technical specialisation and bureaucratic organisation has also decreased the role of direct coercion in maintaining social control in the military. This suggests that there will be a further move to civilianise the military.

bureaucracy and the military.

Another study adding force to Chorley's conclusions is D. E. H. Russell's

the military in 14 mass rebellions: violent non-violent, threatening and throw of the regime. Some of the rebellions selected were successful, such as in Mexico in 1911, and others were unsuccessful such as in Burma in 1948. Russell's study is a critical analysis of the military's role in these rebellions.

of the armed forces (though disloyalty by itself did not guarantee a successful rebellion). The important implication is that revolutionary success does

and economic 'preconditions' but also critically on the unity of the military. Russell points out that much more study is needed to determine what factors explain and encourage military disloyalty. To do this, revolutionaries

for example by fraternisation, infiltration, minimising differences in dress, public behaviour and language, and conceiving military personnel as victims



rather than exploiters. These suggestions seem just as relevant to nonviolent revolution as to violent revolution.

### **Grassroots strategy**

A grassroots strategy to transform or abolish military forces must be part of a wider strategy for confronting the institutions of bureaucracy and the state and building self-managing alternative structures. But because of the key importance of military forces in opposing fundamental social change as well as in fighting wars, it is vital to develop campaigns focussing on the military. There is so little systematised experience in doing this that here I will only outline a few areas for consideration.

**Social defence.** Social defence can be seen as a mode of social organisation — participatory, non-hierarchical, using only nonviolent methods — that is fundamentally antagonistic to the military. Social defence not only provides an alternative to military defence but also mobilises people to be able to resist the military. But this in itself does not automatically weaken the cohesion of military forces. It is important to take the ideas and methods of social defence to the military, and especially to the rank and file. Partly this will be accomplished as the families and friends of soldiers pass the word on. But soldiers also need to be approached as soldiers, exposed to the ideas and to the proponents of social defence. A spinoff is that soldiers are likely to have valuable suggestions or criticisms for the advocates of social defence.

**Conversion.** Social defence will be inevitably seen as a threat to the livelihood of soldiers, namely to their role as monopolisers of 'defence'. There need to be plans for moving from military defence to social defence. Conversion of the military will not be attractive to soldiers unless their livelihoods and dignities are protected. An attractive conversion plan will go a long way towards weakening military antagonism to social defence. A conversion plan can also be the basis for campaigns to transform and eliminate the military. Involvement by the military rank and file in developing such a plan would be extremely valuable, although this could be a difficult enterprise to organise.

**Fraternisation.** People outside the military can talk with people in the military, find out about how it operates, its strengths and weaknesses, sources of commitment and of disillusionment, recruitment, funding, political control, and ideology. People in the military can foster contact with both inside and outside critics, and also learn more about the military as a political system and its relations with society. In both cases, informal contacts, self-managing groups and networks can be used to foster interaction, critique and action.

**Weaknesses of military governments.** Repressive military regimes in both Greece and Argentina relinquished power to civilian governments in the past decade. How did these nonviolent transfers of power come about? What was the role of torture and terror by the military rulers in strengthening or weakening the regime? What was the role of loss of legitimacy due to international setbacks such as the defeat of the Argentine government in the Falklands/Malvinas war with the British government? What was the role of violent and nonviolent opposition? Many further studies and struggles are needed to learn about the role of the military in revolution and in social control, and of the potential for grassroots social action in the face of military repression.

**Debureaucratisation.** The weakness of the modern systems of military bureaucracy lies in their organisation: hierarchy, specialisation, and lack of mobilisation of the political support of the populace. Essentially all the goals and campaigns which are useful in transforming bureaucracies can be used in relation to militaries: building networks at the rank-and-file level, promoting self-management such as democratised command structures, and fostering individual and group self-reliance. In all these efforts to debureaucratise the military, the long-term goal of abolishing military forces needs to be built in, which means linking the debureaucratisation efforts to implementation of conversion plans and development of social defence.

Programmes for challenging the military and the administrative class can be compared as follows.

	<b>Administrative class</b>	<b>Military</b>
Critique	Exposure of values and dangers	Exposure of values and dangers
Conversion	Spreading of skills	Peace conversion
Alternative	Self-reliance	Social defence

---

## Patriarchy

---

In virtually every known society past and present, women have not been treated as the full equals of men. In a few societies, such as the Eskimo, women have had a great deal of liberty and influence, though still less than men, while in many other societies women have been and are severely oppressed.

In some non-industrialised societies there is no organised violence, and also relatively little 'structural violence' such as oppression, exploitation and inequality. But many non-industrialised societies do engage in organised violence, which can be called 'war' though the similarity to modern war is limited. In most of these warlike societies, fighting is directly organised around the gender division of labour. For example, in some hunter-gatherer societies, men have sole responsibility for hunting and fighting, while women are involved in child-rearing, cooking and gathering. In these situations, men control the means of violence against outside enemies and can use this control to dominate the women.

The link between the gender division of labour and organised violence in non-industrialised societies strongly suggests that there may be a close connection between modern forms of male domination over women and modern war.

Modern military forces are overwhelmingly composed of men. Furthermore, sexism is a common part of military training and military life. Soldiers are trained to be violent, competitive, tough, and 'masculine'. Feminine characteristics of supportiveness, cooperativeness, tenderness and physical softness are seen as what needs to be eliminated from the behaviour and personalities of soldiers. Often military training is accompanied with explicit verbal abuse of women and the portrayal of women only as sex objects.

The masculine ethos of military life has much in common with violence against and exploitation of women in both military and civilian life: rape, batterings, prostitution, oppressive working conditions. In direct person-to-person violence, it is primarily men who are the perpetrators.

Another connection between modern patriarchy and war is the service provided by women to men in both military and civilian life. Cynthia Enloe in *Does Khaki Become You?* has analysed a range of areas in which women serve the military: as prostitutes, as military wives, as nurses, as



soldiers, and as workers in arms industries. In each of these cases women are placed in a subordinate position where they are easily exploited. The service of women to men is carried out in civilian life in a similar fashion, and in very similar categories: as prostitutes, as wives, as workers in the 'helping professions', and as workers in occupations which are poorly paid, low-skilled and lacking security and career prospects.

Also quite revealing is the gender division of labour in the military. This is clearest in the category of 'combat soldiers', from which women are often excluded in theory. In fact, the actual role of women in combat has varied considerably in different countries and at different times, as Enloe has ably documented. When the need is urgent, women are used at the front lines in positions that at other times would be called combat positions. But when this happens, the definition of 'combat' is changed so that women are not seen to be involved. So while what women do in the military varies considerably, one thing remains constant: the gender-based distinction between 'combat' and 'non-combat'. This suggests that military interests have a strong ideological concern to maintain 'combat' — the place where direct violence is seen to take place — as an exclusively male preserve.

In some guerilla warfare struggles, women have played a role as combat soldiers. But as soon as the urgency of fighting is reduced, women are pushed back to other, less prestigious positions. This applies equally to the Israeli army and the Vietnamese army. A similar process applies to women who work in armaments factories during wars. After the war they are pushed out by men and forced into the private sphere. It would seem that maintaining a central role for men in the preparation for and implementation of organised violence is a key feature of the war system.

While these connections between war and male domination are suggestive, they do not amount to a clearly defined link between the two. It is too simplistic to say that male violence against women leads directly to organised mass warfare. Many soldiers kill in combat but are tender with their families, while many male doctors who are dedicated professionally to relieving suffering are known to batter their wives. The problem of war cannot be reduced to the problem of individual violence. Rather, social relations are structured to promote particular kinds of violence in particular circumstances. While there are some important connections between individual male violence and collective violence in war — rape in war is a notable one — these connections are more symptoms than causes of the relationship between patriarchy and other war-linked institutions.

Even the link between overt sexism and the military is being attenuated as war becomes more bureaucratised and face-to-face combat is reduced in importance. Typical military tasks in a highly technological military force

include flying a plane, servicing a computer, operating communications equipment, administering supplies and supervising launching of missiles. Such tasks are similar to duties in the civilian workforce, and the need for highly developed sexism of traditional military training is not present. Military training and activity, though still containing much emphasis on brutality and obedience, is becoming more oriented to professional competence and bureaucratic responsiveness. To the extent that women can perform as competent professionals or bureaucrats, they too can serve the war system effectively.

The functional value of women to the military also does not demonstrate an automatic connection between war and domination over women: while women's services may be useful to the military, they are not necessarily essential to its survival. To get at the connection between patriarchy and war, it is necessary to look at the links between patriarchy and the state, bureaucracy and administration, as well as between patriarchy and the military.

First, what is patriarchy? For the purposes here it can be seen as a set of social relationships and institutions which provide for the collective domination of men over women. Patriarchy is manifest in unequal salaries for similar work, in discrimination, in legal inequality, in unequal expectations, in patterns of interpersonal dominance and submission, and in patterns of rape and other direct violence. Especially vital to patriarchy is the control by men of most key positions in dominant institutions: government, state bureaucracies, corporations, the military and professional bodies.

Associated with patriarchal power relations is a gender-linked allocation of social roles. ('Gender' here refers to socially shaped differences, while 'sex' refers to biological differences.) Behaviour and values of dominance, confidence, strength, competition and rationality are seen as masculine, while behaviour and values of submission, nurturance, caring, sensitivity and emotionality are seen as feminine. Men are expected to exhibit masculine behaviour and women to exhibit feminine behaviour, though in practice few people fit their gender stereotypes in all ways and circumstances. The masculine values are the ones valued most highly for positions of power, and people in such positions — men or women — are expected to behave appropriately. And at the same time, actual masculine or feminine behaviour patterns are used to justify men holding most powerful positions and most women remaining in situations of oppression.

There are several ways in which the oppression of women can be analysed. One approach is in terms of gender roles which are inculcated from birth. Another approach uses value differences between men and women, which serve to constitute a men's culture and a women's culture.



These perspectives are useful in analysing certain types of problems. But to analyse the connection between patriarchy and war, I find it more convenient to use a type of power analysis which looks at institutionalised ways in which men collectively dominate over women. Such an analysis can be used to look at patriarchy and such institutions as bureaucracy.

### **Bureaucracy and patriarchy**

The connection between patriarchy and bureaucracy can be seen as one of mutual mobilisation. In short, men use bureaucracy to sustain their power over women, while at the same time elite bureaucrats use patriarchy to sustain the bureaucratic hierarchy.

The first part of this dynamic is men using bureaucracy to sustain their power over women. In a typical bureaucracy — a state agency, a corporation, or a trade union — most of the top positions are occupied by men, while women are concentrated in lower positions such as typists, process workers or cleaners. In addition, top male bureaucrats usually have wives who do most of the work of child-rearing and housework and who provide emotional and career support. The power, prestige and privileges of the top bureaucrats thus depend on the subordinate position of women both on the job and at home. To maintain this power, the top bureaucrats can use their power in the bureaucracy to keep women in their subordinate place. This can take place in several ways:

- \* formal exclusion of women from top positions;
- \* discrimination against women in hiring and promotion;
- \* promoting conformity to the bureaucratic values of emotional aloofness and technical rationality as a means of deterring or restraining women who operate best in an environment providing emotional support and opportunities for cooperative work;
- \* creation and maintenance of gender-linked job categories, which tie women into lower-level positions;
- \* maintenance of male career patterns which require mobility, full-time work and no interruptions (for child-bearing);
- \* maintenance of on-the-job work organisation which excludes integration of child-rearing and work, and opposition to alternatives such as independent work at home, or neighbourhood-based decentralised office arrangements;
- \* supporting other elite groups with similar practices, such as when trade union elites do not protest against corporate sexism;
- \* lobbying and applying political pressure to maintain policies that keep women in subordinate positions.

In these and other ways, the power that men as top bureaucrats have — due to the unequal distribution of power inherent in the hierarchy and

division of labour in bureaucratic organisation — is used to keep men collectively in a dominant position over women. In this way, bureaucracy is mobilised by men to support patriarchy. The domination of men over women does not occur in the abstract. In this case it operates via the unequal power distribution within bureaucracies.

Equally important is the way patriarchy is mobilised to serve bureaucracy. Top bureaucrats can maintain and strengthen their power by using, within the bureaucracy, the wider cultural dominance of men over women. The existence of a bureaucratic hierarchy is partly sustained by fostering the competitive and dominance attributes of many men. The existence of a promotion path which favours men ensures loyalty of many men in lower positions, and the discrimination against women in lower levels — for example, the low salary, lack of autonomy and low prestige of typing positions — provides an opportunity for low-level men to feel superior to someone. In this way the psychology of masculine domination is mobilised to support bureaucratic hierarchy. A patriarchally organised bureaucracy is structured to maximise the linkages between male-female inequality and bureaucratic inequality. This ensures that any fundamental challenge to bureaucratic hierarchy would also require a fundamental challenge to prevailing male-female power relations.

The mobilisation of patriarchy to serve bureaucracy takes place by many of the same methods as listed above by which bureaucracy is mobilised to serve patriarchy. Particularly important is the gender-typing of particular tasks, work styles and occupations, and the association of top positions with masculine values of competition, individualism, emotional aloofness and instrumental rationality.

The same processes of mutual mobilisation apply between patriarchy and other institutions, in particular the state, the military, capitalism, and the professions. For example, the gender-based definition of 'combat' in the military is used to mobilise men and masculine behaviour for the military, and also to mobilise military hierarchy and command-obedience relations to maintain male dominance over women.

The same processes of mutual mobilisation also provide a dynamic between the state, bureaucracy, the military, capitalism and the professions and the institutionalised oppression of ethnic minorities and gays. For example, capitalists have on many occasions exploited and fostered ethnic divisions between workers to hinder and disrupt organisation of workers against employers.

While patriarchy and other war-related institutions support each other in many ways, there are also points of friction and direct conflict. For example, it is important to the state and capitalism that subordinates respond to female bosses in the same way as to male bosses. But this is

incompatible with patriarchy to the extent that subordinate men see power differences as inherently linked to biological sex rather than just to masculine and feminine behaviour. In other words, treating individuals according to their performance, which can be useful for bureaucratic efficiency and legitimation or for capitalist profit, can conflict with treating individuals differently because they are women.

Another point of friction arises in the military's mobilisation of masculine values. One key masculine value is dominance, which is useful to the military in developing a hostile attitude to the enemy. But for internal control the military insists on obedience within the chain of command, and obedience or submission is a feminine rather than a masculine value.

It would appear that the war system is mainly strengthened by the close interconnections between patriarchy and other war-related institutions. But these interconnections also provide a basis for grassroots mobilisation by feminists and others to effectively intervene in the institutional complex. An attack on patriarchy — depending on how it is carried out — can also help to undermine institutions such as bureaucracy and to promote self-managing alternatives. To see how this can be done, strategies against patriarchy need to be examined.

### **Strategies against patriarchy**

The feminist movement contains a wide range of perspectives. Some of the dominant directions go under the names of liberal feminism, radical feminism and socialist feminism. Each of these rubrics contains several types of analysis and strategy, and there are also other directions such as anarchist and lesbian feminism. The different perspectives within the movement have grown out of different social circumstances, including the historical era, the social class of the women, and the ethnic and cultural environment.

This diversity of perspectives has led to a variety of actions and directions. Here only some strategies against patriarchy will be examined. The focus will be on their strengths and weaknesses as part of efforts to also remove the structures underlying war.

**Equality within institutions.** One basic strand to the women's movement has been to push for equality and representation for women within institutions as they are presently organised. The immediate goal is removal of formal inequalities such as unequal pay, lack of support facilities such as childcare, and gender-linked occupational differentiation. Discrimination against women is strongly opposed, and legal or quasi-legal avenues for redress are favoured. The goal is fair representation of women within

bureaucracies, professions, corporations, political parties, trade unions and churches.

By helping to undercut dominance of men over women within institutions, liberal feminist action of this sort can to some degree weaken the existing power distribution. In a social environment in which explicit discrimination against women is illegitimate, the use of patriarchal inequality to bolster bureaucratic and other power structures is made more difficult.

Furthermore, collective actions to empower women to push for their rights and due rewards within hierarchical institutions can serve a radicalising function. In confronting discrimination, women may come to question and organise against the institutional structure and functions themselves. For example, struggles for maternity leave and time off to care for children may become linked with struggles for more flexible work hours and career patterns and for more worker autonomy on the job.

But there are serious limits to the programme of promoting equality within otherwise unchanged institutions. Many women who obtain top jobs will be conditioned by perspectives, powers and interactions at the top, and become essentially like other elites. Only the sex composition of the personnel may be changed, and not the relations of power, wealth, status and knowledge. In some ways this would actually strengthen institutions such as bureaucracy, which in their pure form are supposed to operate on the basis of prescribed rules and performance abilities rather than characteristics such as sex and ethnic origin.

This problem has been raised by many feminists. One common idea is that there are two stages to a feminist programme: first, getting women into positions of power, and second, implementing changes in institutions to undercut hierarchy and inequality. The problem with this is that postponing institutional change to a later time is likely to mean indefinite postponement. The most serious threat to the institutions from feminists arises from the potential for mobilising women to act against their oppression and, as part of this, against their exclusion from and exploitation by dominant institutions. If women are successful in gaining some representation in these institutions, this will partly remove the rationale for challenge, namely exclusion and discrimination. In addition, many women who do rise to positions of power thereby gain a vested interest in the institution. This includes many women who might otherwise be leaders of feminist action to challenge institutions in a more fundamental way.

The programme of promoting women into elite positions is sometimes held to be a fruitful avenue for transforming institutions because women, through their biology or very early and deep socialisation, will be less

aggressive, competitive or dominating than men. But even if the deep-seated psychological characteristics of women are different from those of men, this by itself does not necessarily pose a severe threat to dominant institutions. Women vary in their characteristics, and they do have a potential for violence, for domination and for ruthlessness. Corporations and military forces will select those women – and indeed women will select themselves – who are most suited to operate in them, and the women will be further socialised once they join. Furthermore, even if some caring and cooperative women obtain high positions in corporations and armies and proceed to act within the institutions according to these values, this might only lead to the failure of some businesses and the defeat of some military forces rather than a collapse of the wider capitalist and military systems.

Another problem with the promotion of equality within institutions is that the institution may be undesirable even if it were balanced by gender or entirely female. The military is a case in point.

The experiences of earlier social movements should not be forgotten. The early feminist movement was often closely connected with socialist ideals. But the socialist goals were set aside to concentrate on obtaining the vote for women. After enormous efforts this was achieved, but with surprisingly little effect on the electoral system. This success was followed by the virtual collapse of the feminist movement and hence also the almost complete loss of a feminist push for socialism. Similarly, the organisation of workers for better working conditions was achieved after enormous effort, but at the expense of jettisoning most of the radical efforts for workers' control.

Struggles for equality within institutions cannot be a substitute for institutional change, but they can be an important part of struggles for such change as I will describe later.

**Individual change.** Another strategy against patriarchy is based on changing the attitudes and experiences of individuals, especially women. The aim is to increase assertiveness, overcome submissiveness, learn new skills such as job skills, and generally to build confidence and ability. A special focus is on education and experiences in early life which need to be changed from inculcating standardised gender roles to promoting the skills and self-esteem of girls.

This approach has several advantages. It addresses the problem that women will not attain equality simply by removal of barriers and that they must be able and willing to work for their own interests. Assertiveness training and learning of skills can act to mobilise individual women against their oppression.

But as a means for challenging institutions responsible for social



problems, change restricted to the individual is severely limited. While patriarchy and other institutions such as bureaucracy are closely intertwined, individual confidence and skills will have limited effect. Instead, organised patterns of discrimination and oppression will continue to create and foster feelings of inferiority and inhibit development or use of skills.

To confront this, attention is needed on collective rather than just individual assertiveness and skills.

**Direct challenges to patriarchy.** Another set of feminist concerns is to address patriarchal domination and its effects at the immediate level of individuals and the local community. This has led to the development of rape crisis centres, marches to 'take back the night', women's refuges, campaigns to end legal and professional restrictions on abortion, opposition to sexist language and behaviour, resistance to sexual harassment, and attacks on anti-women pornography. These initiatives are vital in overcoming gender-based inequality and dominance-submission patterns, in helping individual women who are physical and mental victims of violence and sexist attitudes, and in empowering women to take control over their own lives.

Direct challenges to patriarchy also can have an indirect impact on the support provided by patriarchy to the war system. This occurs through the weakening of patriarchal domination at key points — such as the role of rape, violence and restrictions on abortion in keeping women dependent on men as the protectors or providers — and thus reducing the value of patriarchy as a prop for other institutions such as bureaucracy and the military. For example, challenging the turning of women into sex objects reduces the potential for mobilisation of masculinity in military training.

Another important challenge to patriarchy is overcoming the division of labour and the economy between home and workplace: the separation between 'productive' labour for corporations or state bureaucracies and 'reproductive' labour in the home and family. Challenging this separation is also a challenge to dominant institutions within the sphere of 'production', which is based on subordination and exploitation of women's labour within the family.

But many direct challenges to patriarchy only peripherally challenge the key large-scale institutions of the war system. For example, many campaigns against pornography strengthen state power by promoting the use of law and administrative intervention to stop pornography. Similarly, some campaigns against rape and sexual harassment rely heavily on legal and administrative sanctions. While such campaigns can have a beneficial short-term impact in restraining sexist practices, they do little to address institutions such as the state with which patriarchy is intertwined. And

as long as such institutions remain, they will provide a strong support for patriarchy and thus help perpetuate problems such as rape.

The question is, what should be done? While many feminists do not want to strengthen the state, they are also concerned about women being raped *now*. Laws and state intervention seem to provide a quick and powerful avenue to oppose such problems.

In many cases this dilemma is more apparent than real, because effective administrative intervention to serve the interests of women against patriarchy only occurs as a consequence of grassroots action. Consider for example two possible directions for a campaign against sexual harassment in a state bureaucracy. One path is to apply pressure to top administrators to introduce guidelines and penalties to oppose sexual harassment. This might involve higher-level bureaucrats being responsible for intervening against sexual harassment and the introduction of new disciplinary procedures to deal with harassers. There are several difficulties with this direction. Most top administrators are likely to be males, and relatively unresponsive on the issue of sexual harassment. The implementation of the guidelines will be in the hands of higher-level bureaucrats, mostly males, who will be reluctant to take action against harassers in the top ranks. And the new disciplinary procedures will strengthen the power of the top bureaucrats.

An alternative approach is to act mainly at the grassroots: to raise the issue of sexual harassment with low-level workers, to organise nonviolent action training sessions to develop skills in opposing sexual harassment, and to take up individual cases of harassment. The basic aim would be to mobilise women and sympathetic men against sexual harassment and, more generally, to challenge male domination in other areas. This might be linked with other initiatives, for example to reorganise work in a less hierarchical and more cooperative manner, which would reduce the bureaucratic power of men over women which is often linked with sexual harassment. One likely consequence of such a grassroots approach is that the introduction of guidelines and formal penalties would become easier, if this were thought desirable. Indeed, bureaucratic elites might well take the initiative themselves to forestall a more serious challenge to the bureaucratic power structure.

In short, instead of focussing on obtaining changes at the top to challenge patriarchy — a path which may only aggravate problems in the long term — consideration should be given to challenges to patriarchy at the grassroots. Such grassroots initiatives would also challenge other institutions such as bureaucracy which also provide support for patriarchy.

**Women and social action groups.** Feminism has made a great impact on the organisation and style of many social action groups. For many decades,

most social action groups, such as those of the peace movement, have been organised hierarchically. A few men, who were usually white and middle-class as well, have held the important positions in the main movement organisations, and indeed they still do in many cases. These men have acted as executives, public spokesmen, theorists, campaign decision-makers and sometimes as gurus. Other people have not been given the same opportunities. Women in particular have been relegated to being tea-makers, typists, cleaners and providers of sex. The situation has not been better in the black movement, which also has been organised patriarchally.

The 1960s revival of the feminist movement had its origins in the experience of women in being oppressed within 'progressive' movements of the left. In sharing and comparing their experiences they developed a critique of domination within political movements and helped develop alternative modes of interaction incorporating sharing of feelings as well as ideas, encouragement of participation by all, consensus decision-making, and sharing or rotation of tasks. These practices had been in use earlier by some groups. The feminist input greatly expanded the range and depth of their use. These approaches are now used in the nonviolence movement, some anarchist groups and portions of the environmental movement, as well as the feminist movement itself. Only portions of the peace movement have taken up these approaches, and they are as yet hardly ever used in Marxist groups, trade unions or political parties. The extension of egalitarian methods will depend on development of democratic decision-making procedures for groups which contain strong conflicts of interests, as discussed in chapter 5.

There are now a number of women-only groups in some areas of social action. These are important in providing a place for women to organise and develop their thoughts and feelings away from constant confrontation with sexist men.

While acknowledging the vital role of women-only groups, it is also important to recognise difficulties. One is that there is only limited energy left for working in groups with men, for example in mainstream peace groups. It will remain necessary to challenge hierarchy, power-knowledge connections and other problems in mixed groups. Many women have the choice of working only in women-only groups, or of doing 'double duty' by working both in mixed and women-only groups. This problem is not unique to women's issues. Many people in radical caucuses, for example in professional areas, must work both within the caucus and also in the normal professional organisation.

Another and perhaps more serious problem for women-only groups is the possibility of developing new dominance relations between women.

personality. This problem can be fostered by the feeling that 'we are all women' which encourages a reluctance to tackle other sorts of inequalities. In particular, women play a dominating role which no one is willing to question for fear of being branded sexist. At a different level, the same problem occurs when a person in an elite position is not criticised because critiques of and challenges to patriarchy with similar efforts against other oppressive institutions.

**Women's protest.** One of the major forces within the antiwar actions of the 1980s has been women-only protests. The most well known is the women's protest camp at Greenham Common, and there are many others. There are many strengths to the women's actions:

- \* They mobilise women as a constituency, and attract many who would otherwise not be involved in antiwar action.

organising and in challenging the war system

- \* They challenge patriarchal power relations within the antiwar movement by male statements and charismatic figures.

- \* They provide a powerful and direct symbolic challenge to the patriarchal institutions of the state and the military by being an organised

- \* They tend to foster a political practice based on nonviolence, cooperative decision-making, integration of personal and political action,

- \* They provide the basis for moving from symbolic action to direct physical challenge, as has been happening at Greenham Common.

They demonstrate how an institution — the peace camp itself — can

The women-only or women-led antiwar protests are the most dynamic part of the contemporary antiwar movement. My guess is that the positive impact of these protests is far greater than the limitations to them. But there are also some limitations to these protests.

First, a primary orientation of many of the women's protests — like most antiwar protests — is to appeal to the governments to take action. I

Second, women-only protests tend to orient women to struggling only *outside* the patriarchal institutions in the war system, such as the



mobilise opposition from inside institutions to link with outside challenges. Transforming or abolishing war-linked and patriarchal institutions will require working from the inside as well as the outside, and this means taking the struggle to men as well as women.

In many women's antiwar actions, participation is fostered by equating women's role in childbirth and child-rearing and women's affinity with nature with an innate antipathy to war. This connection does serve to mobilise many women who do not see themselves as feminists but who do identify as mothers. But it also serves to accentuate the two limitations of women's protests mentioned above. The appeal-to-women's-conscience aspect is easily linked with the approach of appealing to the consciences of elites, and emphasis on women's alleged innate antipathy to war turns attention away from forging links with men inside the institutions of the war system.

**Feminist reconstruction of institutions.** The most serious challenge posed by feminists to the war system grows out of the feminist critique of all institutions based on domination, inequality and exploitation. Rather than try to get women into positions of power within the present hierarchical institutions, the aim is to restructure the institutions to remove the structural basis for domination. This approach does not reject other strategies such as those described above, but rather build on aspects of them to link challenges to patriarchy with challenges to other institutions.

\* Challenges to exclusion of women from bureaucracies, or their relegation to particular occupations, can be linked with challenges to the organisational structures. For example, as women gain access to positions in bureaucracies, they can use them to reorganise work relations to be more cooperative and responsive to community concerns. At the same time, the organised demand is not so much for access by women to elite positions, but rather restructuring of work relations to allow greater grassroots control within organisations. For example, rather than pushing for opportunities for a few typists to become executives — who still rely on low-level typists — the goal would be reorganisation of work so that office workers share typing as well as executive tasks. This might mean that people would type their own work, or that work groups would rotate typing and other routine jobs among individuals in a mutually agreed-upon way.

\* Development of the confidence and skills of individual women, rather than being done in relative isolation from the social context, would be linked with organised campaigns for political and economic change. Assertiveness training could be oriented to community organising and canvassing, for example within the medical profession to develop challenges



and alternatives to domination by medical administrators, as well as to develop confidence in questioning one's own doctor.

The Boston Women's Health Collective, among other groups, has produced information about women's health problems and how to address them politically. Such information, when used individually and collectively, helps to increase women's control over their bodies and to challenge the medical establishment's professional control and domination over women.

\* Protests, rather than relying on appeals to elites, can directly confront patriarchal institutions. Many women's protests have done this to a considerable extent. For example, in Canberra in 1980 on ANZAC Day — a public holiday on which Australian soldiers who died in wars are mourned, and on which the military obtains considerable adulation — a number of women were arrested for following the march in order to mourn all women raped in all wars. Outraged by the arrests, the next year a large number of women — many of whom had done nonviolent action training for the event — tried to join the ANZAC Day march, and many were arrested under specially drafted legislation. In the following years different legislation was introduced, and women were able to march with certain restrictions on time and place. These women's marches provided a powerful challenge to the military mobilisation of patriarchy, by exposing not only the extreme hostility of returned servicemen elites to independent women's protest but also a deep-seated refusal to acknowledge the problem of rape, and rape in war in particular. In addition, the actions of the government in bringing special legislation against the women helped to mobilise many more women from all walks of life. The women's marches also generated a valuable link between parts of the Canberra feminist and peace movements.

The ANZAC Day women's actions illustrate the potential of joint challenges to patriarchy and other dominant institutions. The demand by the women was not to be able to join the men *within* the organisations participating on ANZAC Day, but to introduce an entirely new and previously excluded group and issue, namely women mourning women raped in war. The development of confidence in public protest and skills in political organising were not simply for individual use within prevailing institutions, but rather for collective action. The protest was entirely organised and run by women. It was not designed as an appeal to elites for changes in laws or representation in the march. Instead, the women acted directly — by going ahead and marching — to obtain their goal. Finally, the challenge to patriarchy, especially in raising the issue of rape, was strongly linked to a challenge to an institution closely tied to patriarchy, namely the military.

---

## State socialism

---

The problem of transforming the state takes on a special dimension when applied to state socialism. By the expression 'state socialism' I refer to societies such as the Soviet Union, China, Eastern European societies, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. These are commonly called communist, although these societies have little relation to the original concept of communism. They have also been called bureaucratic socialist, state capitalist and totalitarian.

Socialism can be defined as a form of social organisation in which ownership and control of the means of production — farms, factories, etc. — is in the hands of the community as a whole. Under state socialism this ownership and control is vested in the state.

Under state socialism the state has much more far-reaching powers than under capitalism. Factories, communications, farms, transport and publishing are owned and controlled by the state, as well as labour, police, education, military forces, trade and foreign relations. The state bureaucracies are large, powerful and pervasive, and this is why this form of social organisation is often called bureaucratic socialism.

State socialism could be considered rule by bureaucracy except for the important role of the communist party. The communist party in a given state is officially the political representative of the people, the means by which the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' is implemented. In practice the communist party is also organised bureaucratically, but in a way which penetrates the other state bureaucracies. In its role as political executive of the state, the communist party organisation serves to control — and if necessary shake up or purge — other bureaucracies in order to maintain the system of centralised political control and to advance the goals of the state and the party.

What is the connection between state socialism and the war system? It would seem to be a close one. State socialist regimes have been called permanent war economies, since even in the absence of external war they are politically organised like capitalist societies during wartime. The wartime suppression of dissent under capitalism is the usual policy in state socialist regimes. Likewise, the pervasive control of the economy by state bureaucracies under wartime capitalism, the use of police and the military

to maintain internal control, and generally the dominance of state power are all normal characteristics of state socialism.

War has played a key role in the creation of state socialism. The establishment of the Soviet Union was made possible by the collapse of the Czarist army in World War One. After the Bolsheviks took power, a military attack on the fledgling Soviet regime was made by a number of governments, though this was short of all-out war on their part. To defend the new regime, the Russian army was reconstituted and expanded along traditional hierarchical lines. Many Czarist military officers were restored to commands, and soon the Soviet military forces were organisationally indistinguishable from their opponents. This process helped to militarise the Soviet system.

Centralisation of power in the early years of the Soviet Union also occurred as the Bolsheviks reconstructed the secret police and used it to help crush internal opposition groups. The libertarian and democratic aspects of the revolution, such as the factory committees, were destroyed as political, economic and military power were concentrated at the apex of the state, especially in the communist party elites.

Many other state socialist regimes have been established following military struggles, either struggles against colonial powers as in the case of China and Vietnam, or direct conquest by other state socialist military forces as in the case of most states in Eastern Europe.

There are several possible explanations of why socialism in the Soviet Union, China and elsewhere has taken a bureaucratic, militarised, statist form. One explanation, which often serves as an apology, is that socialist militarisation has been a response, even a necessary response, to attacks, threats and encirclement by capitalist military powers. Undoubtedly this factor has played a role.

There have also been internal driving forces behind 'militarisation of the revolution'. During and shortly after the Russian Revolution, Lenin and other Marxists consciously addressed the theoretical problem of bureaucracy and attempted to think up means to prevent its expansion. But their political practice was different: state power was greatly increased. The dynamic for bureaucratic expansion came in part from reliance on a vanguard elite as the embodiment of the interests of the proletariat, both to smash the previous state and to administer the new society. Since that time, capturing and maximally exploiting state power has become an explicit part of Leninist practice. (This approach is sometimes traced to Marx's ideas as well.) The leaders of state socialist revolutions since the Russian Revolution have consciously oriented their actions towards capturing state power, and consolidating their hold on it by expanding state bureaucracies and military and police forces.

Another factor is the reliance on violence by some state socialist

revolutionaries. Violence is often resorted to when a vanguard party acts to capture state power and reconstruct economic relations. The use of violence tends to restrict participation, promote secrecy, reinforce the dominance of men, encourage ruthlessness and subordinate means to ends. In established state socialist regimes, a priority on military spending provides a continuing justification for centralisation of economic power.

After the success of the Russian Revolution, the then strong tradition of socialist anti-militarism virtually dropped from view. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union for decades controlled or strongly influenced most foreign communist parties, and used this influence to serve the interests of the Soviet state. This led to the spread of a commitment to the use of armed force to build and protect state socialism. Support for the military struggle to serve state socialism took precedence over opposition to war. Only war by capitalist states was condemned; socialist militarism was unquestioned.

Third and perhaps most important in the militarising of state socialism has been the squeezing of socialism into a state mould. Essentially, when socialism encountered statism, statism prevailed. To survive in a state system — including hostile capitalist states — socialism adopted a state form, which meant bureaucratisation and militarisation. For this reason, I consider the problem of challenging state socialism and promoting democratic socialism to be closely linked with the problem of challenging the state and promoting self-management.

Supporters of socialism used to think that the worldwide triumph of socialism, even in a statist form, would automatically lead to the abolition of war. The wars and military confrontations between the governments and military forces of China and the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam, Vietnam and Kampuchea, and others, should have laid this illusion to rest. Since 1945 — before which there were no other socialist states — almost all combat action by Soviet military forces has been against other socialist states, or against the Soviet people.

Another illusion was challenged in Poland in December 1981: the ultimate authority of the communist party. With the rise of Solidarity in 1980, the Polish Communist Party was strongly affected by the energies released for democratisation and participation. It required a military coup — as an alternative to Soviet military intervention — to contain this challenge to authoritarian rule. But this was not the first time the military was used in a state socialist regime to maintain state power against challenges from the grassroots. In China during the Cultural Revolution the army was called out to squash the more excessive initiatives of the Red Guards. Mao, to promote his interests in the power struggle among the Chinese state elites, had originally stimulated the Red Guards into action. But the Guards

had taken Mao's rhetoric seriously and had begun to get out of control... out of control of the state elites, that is.

As well as the structural similarities between different state socialist regimes, it is also important to be aware of differences. In China, for example, there is considerable local autonomy at the commune level, while at the state level, foreign policy and ideological hegemony are as centrally controlled as in any other variety of state socialism. In Yugoslavia, worker self-management is official policy, and the relative local autonomy in enterprises is related to the partial reliance on partisan military forces, as discussed in chapter 5.

I turn now to two approaches to the problem of transforming state socialist regimes, and to illustrate these approaches I use the stark stereotypes of the right and the statist left. The stereotypes are of course simplistic, but I believe they are accurate in at least one respect, namely in the conclusion that little has been done to develop a strategy for promoting self-managing socialism within state socialist regimes.

### **The failure of the right**

By the right I refer to the supporters of capitalism in the West, specifically the supporters of currently dominant corporate elites. Those on the right tend to support state intervention to benefit capitalists, oppose more than moderate state intervention to support workers and communities, and favour maintenance of social inequality within traditional structures of class, family, sex roles and corporate hierarchy.

What has the right done to help transform state socialism? This is a pertinent question, since almost all anticommunist rhetoric and action has come from the right, and not surprisingly, since socialism by abolishing corporate property is a direct threat to capitalists. Capitalist anticommunism is based to a substantial extent on self-interest. This explains the right's unwillingness to acknowledge the undoubted advances under state socialism, such as increased material standards of living, relatively full employment, and comprehensive social welfare systems. By the same token, most of the right is blithely uncritical of capitalism. Much of right-wing anticommunism takes the form of stereotyping capitalism as good and socialism as bad. This is not conducive to formulation of realistic strategies concerning state socialism.

The typical approach of the right is to support the maintenance and use of military forces on behalf of capitalist states to hold state socialist regimes in check. Since the end of the Second World War the alleged need to contain state socialism has been the primary excuse for Western armaments and for intervention in Third World conflicts. Of course military forces do serve various functions: for example, they serve to contain internal dissent



and to maintain capitalist penetration of Third World economies. But setting aside these other aspects of militarisation to serve capitalist interests, what has been the success of Western military confrontations and intervention in undermining state socialism? After all, ever since 1918, and especially since 1945, military force and intervention has been the primary means of action to oppose state socialism. How has this approach fared?

Even from an anticommunist perspective, military opposition to state socialism has been, in short, an abysmal failure. There is not a single example of a well established state socialist regime which has even been seriously weakened by Western military force or the threat of it. Quite the contrary. Western wars, military presences and interventions have in several ways helped promote the militarisation and centralisation of political and economic power under state socialism. The Western intervention against the Bolsheviks in 1918-1920 helped to militarise the revolution. Western colonialism and military intervention against nationalist movements in Third World countries, by smashing noncommunist opposition to local elites, have aided the dominance of state socialist orientations within national liberation movements. The Western military forces in Europe help the Soviet government to justify repression in Eastern Europe. From the viewpoint of state socialist elites, the Western military threat provides a way of justifying to the population their own war economy.

From the point of view of promoting self-managing socialism, the right has no strategy at all — not even a counterproductive one! Nor does the right have a strategy to abolish war: the right, almost without exception, is committed to maintaining the military.

A cynic might argue that by relying on military strength and confrontation, any middle ground between the supporters of capitalism and state socialism is destroyed, and that such middle positions, such as the nonviolent Buddhist opposition during the Vietnam war, are greater threats to both capitalist and state socialist systems of unequal power and privilege than either system is to the other. Whether intended or not, this certainly is one practical result of the military confrontation between elite supporters of capitalism and state socialism. Indeed, it could even be argued that it is in the interests of capitalists to encourage repressive rule in state socialist regimes, in order to discredit all socialist alternatives, including libertarian socialism which would pose a much more serious ideological threat to capitalism.

Not all elite supporters of capitalism favour military confrontation. Many, especially those who identify with large corporate and banking interests, prefer to supplement military preparedness with trade and capitalist activity in state socialist economies. One possible result could be the undermining of state socialist economies as they are gradually penetrated

by capitalist investment and dependency-inducing trade. Is this the basis for a strategy to democratise state socialist regimes?

Certainly trade between East and West has grown, and has continued even in the periods of most intense confrontation. In addition, an increasing amount of Western technology is being imported into state socialist regimes in the form of entire factories to produce soft drinks or cars. But far from weakening these regimes, this trade interaction is strengthening the elites on both sides. As Charles Levinson documents in his book *Vodka Cola*, the result of the interaction is to provide modern Western technology to the bureaucratically slow-to-innovate state socialist economies, while the Western corporations benefit from the labour of Eastern workers who are paid less and not allowed to strike.

Western corporations have shown little interest in moves towards self-management under state socialism. The rise of the free trade unions in Poland in 1980 posed a threat especially to Western bankers, who cared more about the security of their loans to the Polish government than about the democratic rights of the workers. Besides, the activities of the Polish free trade unions were a bit embarrassing to capitalists, considering the persistence of right-wing attacks on trade unions in the West.

A collapse of state socialism and a triumph of worker and community-based, nonviolent libertarian socialism would be a disaster for the right in the West. The state socialist military threat could no longer be invoked and a truly non-authoritarian alternative would be offered as an example to Third World peoples, and to those in the capitalist world as well.

### **Failure of the statist left**

By the statist left I refer to those favouring increased state control over the economy and other social areas. Those on the statist left in the West support state regulation or takeover of capitalist enterprises and state intervention to support the welfare of workers and communities. The preferred means for promoting these aims is through a social democratic political party — usually a labour or communist party — which when in government would move steadily towards reducing capitalist exploitation by increasing state regulation and intervention.

What has the statist left done to help democratise state socialism? For the most part, nothing. The statist left tends to take an uncritical attitude to state socialist regimes. Even among those on the statist left who recognise the severe shortcomings of these regimes, including denial of freedoms, bureaucratisation and militarisation, there is a tendency to be tolerant. The real evil is seen to be capitalism: state socialist regimes have, after all, expropriated the capitalists and established state control over the economy.

The statist left is uncritical of state socialism in part as a reaction to the anticommunism of the right, and the right's use of the state socialist bogey as a means for attacking the more moderate aims of the statist left for state intervention. While not many on the statist left warmly espouse existing state socialist regimes, openly opposing them seems to run the risk of aiding the uncritical pro-capitalism of the right. The result is a general disinclination to speak out about state socialism.

Given the inadequacy and counterproductiveness of military-based, right-supported policies of confrontation and containment of state socialism, there is a real need for left strategy to promote forces within state socialist regimes which favour self-managing socialism.

Another problem is the ambivalence of the statist left towards violence in social change. Within the industrialised West, most on the statist left see change coming through existing channels, especially parliamentary channels, without significant violence. But in Third World countries, violent liberation struggles against imperialist or neocolonialist rule are often supported by the statist left in First World countries. Furthermore, since the statist left wishes to expand state power in the West, there is no plan to remove the military. Lip service may be given to making reductions in the level of armaments, though usually only when a social democratic party is *not* in government.

It should not be surprising that the statist left has no strategy for promoting the shift from state socialism to self-managing socialism. The statist left favours expansion in the West of state power, state bureaucracies and the military, the same institutions which are linked to centralised control under state socialism. And the statist left does not want to buy into the anticommunism of the right, and so is stifled in developing a critical view or activist strategy concerning state socialism.

Aside from the views characteristic of what I have called the right and the statist left, there is very little else that is useful in developing a grassroots strategy for promoting self-managing socialism. Indeed, the polarisation between right and statist left views, plus the common assumptions of reliance on the military and the state, seem to have stifled creative thinking on this problem.

## Strategy

A strategy to undermine the repressive features of state socialism must inevitably be a grassroots strategy. Even more than in the West, it is futile to expect movement towards self-management in state socialist societies to come about through actions by elites. Here I will only make a few general arguments about grassroots strategy.

The prime force behind change in state socialist societies must come

from the people living in these societies. 'Liberation' from the outside is more likely to lead to a new form of oppression, such as the imposition of capitalism.

In confronting and replacing state socialism, the goal must be to go in the direction of self-managing socialism. A viable opposition to state socialism needs to build on the strengths of socialist reality and visions in order to mobilise grassroots support. Such support is not likely to be forthcoming if the alternative is a restoration of capitalist exploitation or some variant of bureaucratic domination.

In particular, the goals need to encompass and go beyond changes in the formal economic structure of society. For example, state socialist societies have not eliminated the oppression of women, since the measures taken to do this have revolved around integration of women into the workforce without addressing the ways patriarchy is mobilised within the family and within state institutions, for example through the gender division of labour.

What groups have the potential and incentive to organise for self-managing socialism? The elements of opposition which are most publicised in the West are the intellectual dissidents. Their opposition is important, but it has many limitations. Much of it is concerned with ensuring constitutional rights rather than more fundamental changes in power relations. This reflects the social location of the intellectuals as a stratum or class with interests separate from the workers.

Equally or more important has been the internal opposition by working class individuals and groups. The major uprisings in Eastern Europe — East Germany in 1953, Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968-1969, and Poland in 1956, 1970 and 1980-1981 — have depended on working class participation or leadership or both. The establishment of self-managing organs such as factory councils has been characteristic of these revolts. Also symptomatic of working class discontent, there have been quite a number of strikes and riots in the Soviet Union, though knowledge of these seldom reaches or is publicised in the West. Soviet military forces had to be used to repress a number of these revolts, resulting in tens or hundreds of killings. These acts of resistance demonstrate an enormous latent resentment toward the figures of formal authority.

There is also an individualised resistance by workers which is manifested in absenteeism, alcoholism, labour turnover and workplace sabotage. Much of this localised and sporadic opposition by the working class arises from dissatisfaction with wages and consumer prices, or from visible abuses of bureaucratic power. As such, it is not at the stage of contributing to an overall programme to challenge state socialist power relations.

Iván Szelenyi and others have argued that developing linkages between

the opposition of the workers and of the intellectuals is vitally important for the socialist opposition. For example, intellectuals could examine the way in which state socialist rulers are able to maintain and legitimate their power, and collaborate with workers to develop effective channels for grassroots opposition.

What can Western groups do? This is a difficult and delicate problem. The most obvious thing is to support Eastern opposition groups. This can be done by making personal contact, through publicity, and by applying pressure to state socialist governments. Portions of the Western peace movement in the 1980s, led by European Nuclear Disarmament, have had some success in building up links with Eastern peace groups. The question is, what can be done beyond this? This is indeed a difficult question. In the past, too little was done in providing support for Eastern opposition groups in promoting self-managing socialism. But there is also a danger in too much intervention by Western groups. The Eastern opposition groups may become targets of state repression, and their independence and autonomy in developing a form of opposition appropriate to their own country may be jeopardised.

To raise some ideas for consideration, next I will present the ideas of two people who have developed comprehensive and original ideas on this subject. First is Stephen King-Hall, an ardent anticommunist and fairly uncritical supporter of Western institutions, who favours conversion to nonviolent methods for confronting state socialism. Second is John Zube, a libertarian and opponent of state intervention in the West and East, who favours fomenting of people's uprisings within state socialist regimes.

### The King-Hall approach

Stephen King-Hall's book *Defence in the Nuclear Age*, published in 1958, can reasonably be called the first major presentation of a programme for social defence. King-Hall argues that the aim of defence is not to protect territory but to protect a way of life. The way of life he wishes to protect is, quite uncritically, that of Britain especially and parliamentary democracies generally, in particular the parliamentary system and the free press. He sees state socialist regimes and in particular the Soviet Union as the major threat to this way of life. King-Hall argues that reliance on nuclear weapons is self-defeating, and that the key struggle is for people's minds, a struggle to which he says the West has devoted too little attention. He argues that the British government should renounce not only its nuclear weapons but also most conventional weapons, and that the populace should prepare itself in knowledge and training for nonviolent resistance to any Soviet invasion.



King-Hall was in the British Navy in the First World War and retired from it in 1929. He was a prominent commentator on a variety of issues since the 1930s, edited the King-Hall newsletter until 1959 and wrote a number of books. He died in 1966.

King-Hall has received relatively little credit for his pioneering work on social defence. I imagine this is because he was a former military officer and an ardent anticommunist, and had rather simplistic notions of the goodness of Western capitalist societies. None of these features would be endearing to most left-oriented or academically minded proponents of social defence.

King-Hall assumes that nonviolent resistance must be defence of the state against external aggression, that it would be implemented by government, and that governments would be convinced to do this by the power of knowledge and logic. He has no analysis of the underlying roots of war or of structural underpinnings of the state which rely on violence. But these and other limitations need not detract from the important insights to be gained from King-Hall's proposed programme. For unlike most other anticommunists, King-Hall favours nonviolent methods, and unlike most proponents of social defence he sees the importance of taking the struggle into the enemy camp.

King-Hall argues that the key weak point of a repressive regime lies with the attitudes of the subject population. If the minds of the people in the enemy country can be reached and changed, this is equivalent to success in a war without fighting. This idea that the power of rulers depends on popular acquiescence or support has become widespread in the nonviolent action movement, especially since the publication in 1973 of Gene Sharp's book *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. This idea also has an earlier history, dating at least from Étienne de la Boétie's *Discourse on Involuntary Servitude* in 1548.

King-Hall advocates use of 'democratic propaganda', aimed at the people in state socialist countries, to oppose state socialist governments. There are 5 features of King-Hall's approach on which I will comment here, adding some notes on their application to grassroots strategies.

(1) Truth. King-Hall insists that "TRUTH must be the dominating feature of democratic propaganda". In particular, he criticises the political warfare efforts by the Allies during World War Two which, being made subservient to immediate military ends, were ineffective or counter-productive.

What King-Hall does not say is that most Western government and private anticommunist propaganda — such as the broadcasts of the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe — present only one version of the truth: an uncritical pro-capitalism. This propaganda is not likely to do

much to stimulate a move from state socialism to self-managing socialism. What is needed is 'democratic propaganda' providing information, visions, history and analysis about the advantages and disadvantages of all types of societies, and about methods and experiences of nonviolent social struggle.

(2) Scale. King-Hall bemoans the small size of Western government propaganda efforts. To have any chance of winning the battle for the minds of people, he argues, the scale of the political warfare effort must be comparable with the military effort.

King-Hall does not recognise the powerful propaganda content of Western lifestyles, including consumer goods, higher wages and popular music. This cultural influence is, like the Voice of America, largely pro-capitalist. This influence is enormous in impact. By comparison, propaganda for self-managing socialism is insignificant.

(3) Methods of communication. King-Hall advocates use of radio, television, letters, leaflets, and talking with individuals to communicate democratic propaganda to people under state socialism. He assumes Western government support for such an effort, and so for him none of these methods poses a great difficulty. For non-government efforts to communicate information about self-managing socialism, many of the same methods could be used, though access to radio and television would be difficult. But there is nothing to stop efforts to share information with visitors from state socialist regimes or while visiting state socialist countries or to send letters to people in these countries.

(4) Propaganda stunts. King-Hall suggests as an example that the British Prime Minister in 1956 could have invited Khrushchev to appear on television with him, and then propose to Khrushchev that 100,000 Soviet citizens come to live in British homes for a fortnight at British government expense. King-Hall says Khrushchev would have rejected the proposal, and this refusal could have been given maximum publicity especially in the Soviet Union: "why has your government refused to let you visit us and let us learn from each other?"

Western groups supporting self-managing socialism could not realistically make such grandiose proposals, but there is a lot of scope for imaginative initiatives which would increase contact between individuals if accepted or be embarrassing to state socialist elites if rejected. Use could also be made of Western governments' reluctance to foster genuine grassroots interaction such as would have resulted from King-Hall's proposal.

(5) Social defence. Aside from the role of social defence in actually resisting occupying Soviet military forces, King-Hall recognises the vital influence of nonviolent resistance on the morale of invading forces and

on popular opinion in the Soviet Union. He sees occupation as a potential opportunity to spread the idea of the British way of life and so undermine the Soviet people's loyalty to their rulers.

Even more revealing than King-Hall's arguments are his experiences in trying to undermine the German people's support for the Nazi regime. For several years before the outbreak of World War Two, King-Hall tried to convince British state elites to undertake propaganda actions against Hitler's regime. He got nowhere. So in mid 1939 with private funds he produced a series of newsletters addressed to the German people, and arranged for their distribution by posting to individuals and making delivery by hand. The content of the letters was pretty innocuous: he wrote as a concerned individual, pointing out what the German government was doing from the point of view of the British people. According to King-Hall, this modest effort led to numerous useful responses, and greatly upset Hitler and Goebbels.

The key to the effectiveness of such actions lies in recognising as King-Hall does that repressive regimes are not monolithic. Their weakest point lies with their own people. Military opposition may only serve to unite the people behind their oppressors. King-Hall's alternative in practice is grassroots subversion: people-to-people communication and interaction.

### **A libertarian approach**

John Zube is a libertarian favouring unrestricted individual rights such as free trade, free migration and extraterritorial autonomy for all voluntary groups. He sees these and other liberties and the dissolution of states as guarantees against mass warfare. Zube also has many ideas on opposing and overthrowing state socialist regimes. It is some of these ideas which I examine here.

Zube was born in Germany and came to Australia in the 1950s. For many years he has done an enormous amount of work in publishing microfiches of libertarian writings, including books of his own. His work is little known outside libertarian circles, partly because the anti-state libertarian position is so completely counter to the current political power structures and also to the thinking of most social activists. In addition, Zube holds his views quite uncompromisingly and does not tailor them for a larger audience.

Being a consistent libertarian, Zube strongly opposes state socialist rule as well as other forms of state rule and tyranny. To oppose state socialist regimes, he favours encouraging internal opposition. He suggests, for example:

- \* mass fraternisation with people in state socialist countries;

- \* encouragement of mass desertion from armed forces and mass exodus from state socialist countries;
- \* encouragement of armed revolutions and military insurrections in state socialist countries;
- \* tyrannicide;
- \* separate peace treaties with people and units of armed forces in state socialist countries;
- \* guarantee of full autonomy for remaining communist idealists, including asylum, protection or false identities for those who fear acts of revenge.

The basic idea in these suggestions is to encourage the withdrawal of power from state socialist regimes by the uprising of the people in them or by the secession of people from them, especially uprising or secession by members of the military forces. Zube wishes to encourage the various potentially anti-state forces in state socialist countries, for example nationalist and religious opposition movements in the Soviet Union – but only when these movements go beyond conventional territorial goals to seek full autonomy on a voluntary basis. He sees that the destruction of Soviet nuclear weapons can best be done by the Soviet people, especially by its military forces. (Likewise, Western nuclear weapons would best be destroyed by disobedient Western military forces acting unilaterally.)

To encourage such uprisings in state socialist countries, Zube argues that changes are necessary in the West. Guarantees against punishment or reprisals – or even provision of large incentives – would have to be made to Soviet military personnel to encourage them to desert or remain neutral towards popular anti-Soviet uprisings, or to resist, capture or execute tyrants. Asylum for refugees and deserters from state socialist rule would need to be provided, with guarantees of accommodation, jobs and autonomy (rather than incorporation into a capitalist state system).

More generally, Zube sees it necessary and morally imperative for the West to become more libertarian – to eliminate constraints on trade and to eliminate territorial organisation, for example – and thus provide better alternatives to state socialist domination and also to be in a better position to offer guarantees to internal opponents and also to adherents of state socialist regimes. He suggests that if a Western programme supporting popular revolution were developed and made well known in both state socialist and capitalist countries, then Western governments could begin unilateral nuclear disarmament to support disobedience and uprisings in state socialist countries. Indeed if such a programme were sufficiently prepared in the West, then even outward surrender might become an option: an occupation of the West by Soviet conscripts could be dangerous to the Soviet rulers.



Zube's programme relies mainly on nonviolent action, though he does not rule out forceful internal resistance to state socialist regimes, such as by Soviet military forces which could forcibly disarm Soviet nuclear weapons. Furthermore, he supports voluntary militias for the protection and realisation of human rights in West and East as the libertarian alternative to weapons of mass destruction associated with centralised power.

One problem I see with many of Zube's suggestions is that they seem to require policy changes by present Western governments, for example guarantees of asylum for refugees and deserters. Alternatively, people would need to withdraw power from Western states and society be transformed into a libertarian system in order to implement Zube's programme. As a libertarian, Zube of course does not expect governments to take the initiative, but rather hopes that the policies he suggests might be promoted by direct action groups of soldiers, workers and peasants. But what will mobilise them to do so? Zube relies on the power of libertarian ideas in the marketplace of ideas. Unfortunately ideas alone, however good, are insufficient to generate the required action.

Since a libertarian-inspired transformation does not seem in the offing, the practical implications of Zube's approach are not fully obvious. Nevertheless I draw from Zube's programme several important points.

(1) From the viewpoint of moving towards a self-managing society, the most vulnerable aspect of state socialist regimes is the loyalty of the people in them. Efforts to promote self-management should aim at stimulating the capacity and motivation of people under state socialist rule to undertake resistance themselves. The standard right-wing approach, namely military and other threats at the state level, are likely to entrench rather than weaken socialist state power.

(2) The self-managing alternative to state socialism needs to be recognised as a full-blooded revolutionary alternative, one which will see the collapse of centralised rule, secret police and military forces resulting from the withdrawal of support. The statist left view on state socialism, by contrast, usually sees the need only for reforms to ease repression or free up bureaucratic rigidity. But if state socialist regimes are built on bureaucratic, state and military power, reforms in these structures will not remove the driving forces behind war, repression and exploitation. It is an open question whether revolutionary change in state socialist regimes will come by military uprising or nonviolent noncooperation, whether the process will be quick or drawn out, and how traumatic it will be.

(3) Transformation of state socialist societies to self-managing alternatives must be accompanied or even preceded by parallel changes in capitalist societies. At the moment, military forces and political structures in West and East support each other. Moves towards self-management in



capitalist countries would undercut the justification for state socialist repression and would provide inspiration for people under state socialism. But for any such changes to have an effect on developments in state socialist regimes, communication links must be established, and attention given by Western activists towards how to help promote the grassroots transition to self-management within state socialist countries.

### **More on strategy**

To my commentary on the approaches of King-Hall and of Zube, there are only a few points I would add. To aid the transformation to self-management in state socialist countries, it is futile to look to Western governments for much support. Western government approaches are almost always self-serving. After the invasions of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, and after the military takeover in Poland, there was much posturing by Western elites but little action. Furthermore, what action there is by Western elites is usually state action against socialist states, such as economic or Olympic boycotts. The orientation is state confrontation and competition, thoroughly in the state mould, which leaves unchallenged the premises of the state system. Entirely lacking is any support for grassroots socialist opposition.

This means that Western support for initiatives towards self-management under state socialism must come primarily from nongovernment groups. There are two basic approaches for these groups: to act at home in promoting social defence, local self-reliance and other changes to undermine the roots of war; and to provide direct support for democratic opposition groups in state socialist countries, by providing information, ideas, solidarity and by various initiatives.

While it is important to support democratic opposition groups in state socialist countries, it is also important to critically evaluate their initiatives. For example, the free trade union movement in Poland deserves not only support and encouragement, but also disagreement, criticism, and ideas for new directions. Western leftists for decades have uncritically glorified social initiatives in foreign lands, whether they be Soviet communism, Cuban socialism or the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Social initiatives deserve more than this: they need to be engaged in dialogue, not worship.

The hardest problem for Western activists in supporting democratic initiatives within state socialist countries is doing something at a local level which actually has an impact on people in these countries. Some on the right will suggest public criticisms of state socialist regimes in Western media or demonstrations at Soviet embassies. These are all very well in themselves, but do relatively little to foster the initiative of people under state socialist rule. What can Western local action groups actually do that goes beyond this? Here are a few possibilities:

- \* systematically contact and exchange ideas with visitors from state socialist countries;

- \* encourage visitors to state socialist countries to make contact with dissidents and to distribute information;

- \* send letters or leaflets to people in state socialist countries. These might be known dissidents or friends of a contact. (In all cases, special efforts would be needed to avoid causing unnecessary victimisation of people contacted.)

- \* send letters to censors and KGB agents who will open mail en route to its formal destination.

A friend of mine, Chris Harwood, suggests that Western tourists could do a lot to encourage anti-elite initiatives in the Soviet Union. The Soviet government is usually desperate for foreign currency, and would be reluctant to turn away tourists. Two million 'peace tourists' could hardly be monitored even by the KGB. If the tourists were searched on entry, they might consider using some existing or specially developed microtechnology to bring in information and miniature reproducing equipment. Surely Western technology could rise to this challenge! Another possibility would be for a financially prosperous peace movement to rent part of a satellite overflying the Soviet Union, and to broadcast information. Jamming, though extensive, cannot be fully effective.

All these suggestions may sound quite inadequate to contribute much towards a move from state socialism to self-managing socialism. Exchange ideas, write letters — is that all that can be done? Certainly there is a need for developing other ways to encourage and support internal opposition to repressive regimes. But even the simple avenues of communication remain little used. One likely consequence of increased contact with state socialist opposition groups is learning what *they* think should be done. After all, they are in a good position to know their own political environment.

What information could be communicated through personal contacts, letters and broadcasts? It might be methods for social defence, strategies for self-reliance or news of activities of Western antiwar groups. State socialist regimes are based on a rigid control over information. They are like bureaucracies generally: free discussion is subversive. Therefore actions which puncture the elite monopoly on knowledge and communication can be potent. What may be innocuous in the West can be a powerful act of dissent or subversion in the East. Therefore even apparently minor actions by Western antiwar groups, aimed at state socialist regimes, are well worth considering.

Apart from protests at the Chinese and Soviet embassies, Canberra Peacemakers tried one small action of relevance here. We wrote the following letter:

# AN OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET AND AMERICAN EMBASSIES IN AUSTRALIA

*Canberra Peacemakers*

GPO Box 1875 Canberra ACT 2601

15 February 1983

*Dear member of the Soviet or American Embassy,*

*Canberra Peacemakers is a small voluntary and nonprofit activist group working for peace and social change through grassroots non-violent action. We are writing this letter to address those who are members of the KGB, CIA or other 'intelligence' organisations.*

*The governments of the Soviet Union and of the United States have on many occasions acted to repress the freedom and independence of people of other countries – for example, the Soviet Union's interventions in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, and the United States' interventions in Vietnam, Chile and Iran. In these and many other cases the intelligence agencies of the Soviet Union and the United States have played a role in the repression. Some of these agencies also have acted against the Soviet and United States people themselves.*

*All of this has been justified in the name of national security. But in most cases, we believe, spying and covert operations do not gain anything important from the opposite government. The secrecy serves mainly to keep ordinary citizens ignorant of what is going on – including the Australian people. The intelligence agencies by many of their activities only seem to serve to justify each others' existence. Their methods of operation are in an important way opposed to democracy and freedom: dissent is discouraged, public accountability is minimal, fear and paranoia are promoted.*

*We encourage you as an individual to carefully consider these aspects of the role of the intelligence agencies. If you agree that some activities of these agencies are undesirable, we encourage you to do what you can in your own way to oppose them nonviolently, whether this is by arguing for changes from the inside, by withdrawing your personal involvement, or by undermining or disclosing undesirable activities.*

*The Nuremburg Trials laid down the principle that higher human values in at least some cases must take precedence over following orders. In today's world, there is no government or bureaucratic structure whose instructions are beyond question. We hope you agree.*

*Yours on behalf of Canberra Peacemakers,*

*(signed) Brian Martin, Meredith Petronella, Barbara Meyer*

We sent individual copies of this letter to all members of the two embassies. (The Australian government publishes a list of names and personal addresses of all embassy staff in Canberra. The only two countries for which addresses are *not* listed are the Soviet Union and the United States. But we obtained quite a few home addresses from the telephone directory.) We later sent a copy to the *Canberra Times*; it was not published.

This action was a very minor one, but still illustrates some of the strengths and weaknesses of similar actions. On the negative side, the letter was unlikely to influence any spies, except perhaps to cause them some amusement. We were addressing the Soviet and US people least receptive to our message. This is likely to be a common feature of many such actions, since few visitors from state socialist countries will be dissidents and censors will intercept much mail into these countries. Another problem was lack of feedback. It is exceedingly difficult to develop effective campaigns without knowledge of what succeeds and what fails. Even a major international effort like that of Amnesty International receives only limited and occasional feedback about the effectiveness of its letter-writing campaigns to free political prisoners. When some word is received, it is an enormous incentive to keep going.

On the positive side, we did *do* something, and also overcame the fear felt by some of our members about possible repercussions. (Actually, any repercussions almost certainly would have been to our advantage in publicising the issues.) Also, our action provided a bit of evidence that we oppose state socialist as well as capitalist institutions which underlie repression, exploitation and war. Red-baiting of peace groups has been a problem in Australia, though less so since the massive influx of people since 1981. For many people the peace movement is perceived to support state socialist militarism, and taking action against both sides can help overcome this.

A current (1983-1984) Canberra Peacemakers project is preparing a Russian version and translation of our social defence broadsheet, and arranging for delivery of copies into the Soviet Union.

Most important in developing actions to challenge war-linked institutions in state socialist as well as capitalist countries is moving beyond uncritical anticommunism and uncritical anticapitalism. It is all very well to say, "we are opposed to militarism in all societies" — and it is hard enough for many old-line peace groups to say this — but actions often speak louder than words. The challenging of bureaucracies, militaries, states and other roots of war needs to proceed in all types and parts of societies, and state socialism must be included. The development of practical activities to aid people in state socialist countries in confronting the war system is an urgent task in this project.

---

## Other factors

---

In the previous chapters I have examined six interconnected institutions — the state, bureaucracy, the administrative class, the military, patriarchy and state socialism — which are key parts of the war system, and which can be focusses for social action campaigns. My reasons for choosing these particular institutions have been presented. But these are not the only institutions tied into the war system, though by my analysis they are among the most important ones. In this chapter I offer brief comments on a range of other factors which at least some people think are roots of war. Therefore this chapter is somewhat of a mixed bag. Challenges to some of the institutions mentioned here — especially capitalism, racism and domination of nature — provide valuable avenues for antiwar action. For some of the other factors I think the opportunities are much less fruitful.

### Capitalism

Many leftists see capitalism as the key driving force behind war. Certainly capitalism is closely bound up in the war system. The drive for corporate survival, expansion and profits has stimulated many arms races and wars quite directly. More deeply, the oppression of working classes by capitalist owners and managers is one of the important systems of exploitation in the world, and states and armies are supported by key elements in the capitalist class in order to maintain their economic domination. Similar comments apply to imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

In capitalist societies, the economic system provides a set of power relations formally independent of the state. Capitalist ownership and managerial control, linked to the drive for capital accumulation, are the dominant influences in many areas of social life, notably work and consumption. Capitalist control often is reinforced by ties with other forms of social control, such as patriarchy, racism and bureaucracy. For example, capitalists foster the gender division of labour both to reduce overall labour costs and to weaken worker solidarity by mobilising sexism.

Military production under capitalism is organised by the state under the strong influence of the corporations which stand to gain. The most important process is the mobilisation of capitalist profit-seeking by the state for



war production. In the capitalist market for arms production, the state plays the key role in creating conditions for growth and profitability, by making purchases, providing subsidies and organising export markets. The world system of arms manufacture and sales is essentially a state-organised market, with the eager participation of armaments firms. In the 1800s and early 1900s, this complex was geared up mainly in wartime. Military demobilisation after wars was accompanied by capitalist conversion for civilian production. But especially since World War Two, the so-called 'permanent war economy' has become entrenched. The capitalist war economy is based on mutual mobilisation of the state war bureaucracies and the capitalist war manufacturers. Even under this system, only a small fraction of capital — such as aerospace — is strongly committed to war production. Many major sectors involved in military production, such as steel and electronics, are not heavily dependent on profits in these areas, and could readily find civilian markets if state incentives changed. This is not to mention capitalist sectors such as food and housing which have little to gain from military production. In short, only a portion of the capitalist class has a strong stake in the war system, and this stake is mainly dictated by the state.

The discussion so far concerns capitalist firms within a particular state. The wider question is, what role does the world capitalist system play in the war system? When examining particular wars, the immediate role of profit and accumulation is often minimal. Examples are World War Two, the Indochinese War and the many Middle East wars. Even in many cases of colonial empire, immediate economic advantages for the capitalist class have played a minor role compared to issues of expansion and maintenance of state power. The role of capitalism mainly entered through its structuring of economic relations which are supervised separately and jointly by capitalist states.

The main military service of the state to capitalists in the international system is to oppose movements which threaten the viability of capitalist economic relations. This includes state socialism and all movements for self-management. At the same time, the way this state intervention operates — namely, through separate and potentially competing state apparatuses — can conflict with the security of capitalism. For example, wars and military expenditures can jeopardise the stability of national economies, as in the case of the Indochinese War.

Only some struggles against capitalism have potential for challenging the war system. Efforts to oppose capital by mobilising the power of the state do little in this direction. In particular, promotion of state socialism — the destruction of capitalism within a state mode, with the maintenance of bureaucratic and administrative control — does little to address the problem

of war. The trouble here is that most of the socialist left sees capitalism as the sole source of evil in the world. This approach is blind to the roots of social problems, including racism, sexism, environmental degradation and war, which do not grow primarily out of class domination. Because of this blindness, even the struggle against capitalism is weakened, since attention is not paid to systems of power such as patriarchy and bureaucracy which are mobilised to support capitalism as well as other interests.

On the other hand, if capitalist control is undermined by extension of self-management then the struggle is also one against the war system. In addition, struggles against other war-linked institutions, such as the state, bureaucracy and military, would also undercut major institutional supports for capitalism. For example, initiatives for workers' control in state bureaucracies would have obvious implications for employees in capitalist firms, while challenges to the police and the military would undercut the ultimate guarantee against challenges by workers against capitalists, namely state repression.

It is because there has been so much attention to anti-capitalist struggles, and because the idea for grassroots strategy presented in previous chapters are mainly oriented to movements in capitalist societies, that I have not discussed capitalism in more detail, and instead given more attention to state socialism.

## **Racism**

Racism has been a major factor in many wars, and also has motivated a great deal of exploitation and genocide. Racism is tied up with unequal social and power relations: genetic, cultural or other real or attributed differences are used to mobilise one group of people against another. One driving force behind racism is the advantage to the dominant group of exploiting the subordinate group. Racism also strengthens the positions of certain elites within each ethnic group, even when no ethnic group dominates: hierarchy and elitism are allegedly justified by the need to confront the ethnic enemy (rather than inequalities within one's own ethnic group).

Racial violence of course occurs in 'peacetime' as well as war. The key link between racism and war is the link between the power hierarchies which derive strength from racial dominance and the power hierarchies of the war system.

Racism also serves to dehumanise people. In a large fraction of wars the enemy has been characterised as racially inferior or sub-human. This process of turning the enemy into a different type of person, an 'other', is used to mobilise people around one state against another. Racial antagonism can

become extremely deep-rooted in societies, and the passions aroused have been rivalled perhaps only by religious intolerance.

As in the case of patriarchy, the elite mobilisation of ethnic hatred for state purposes may play a reduced role as war becomes increasingly bureaucratic and technological. Also as in the case of feminism, anti-racism can play a significant role in a struggle to remove the sources of war, to the extent that the aim is not simply to obtain racial integration within existing hierarchies or to set up alternative hierarchies, but rather to reorganise social institutions in an egalitarian way.

The same general comments apply to the role of war of religious intolerance and other forms of social intolerance and discrimination.

### **Domination of nature**

Modern war, carried out by professional armies on behalf of states, is largely a product of European social, political and economic development over the past 500 or so years. Associated with the rise of the modern state, modern bureaucracy, industrialisation and capitalism has been a particular orientation to nature: nature is treated as an object to be dominated by humans. This occurs in mining and manufacture, in which resources are ripped from the earth with little thought for the environmental and cultural consequences. The aim of modern science is essentially manipulation and control of nature rather than understanding or mutually interacting with it, and reflects the same attitude to nature. Animals and plants are seen as raw materials to be produced and exploited.

It is hard to say how much of the orientation of Western societies towards nature is connected with the war system. Certainly there seems to be a common thread of domination and exploitation in destruction of natural environments, factory farming, and the development and use of weapons of mass destruction. From the point of view of the physical environment, much of modern industry is essentially a giant war-machine. From the point of view of animals, factory farms are concentration and death camps. Strip mines and battery hens differ from mass warfare only in that the destruction is carried out against non-human objects. The word 'objects' is appropriate. In war, and also in racism, sexism and heterosexism, for example, the enemy or person oppressed is seen as non-human, as an object.

Domination of nature is more than an attitude. It is embodied in the physical infrastructure and the social relations of mass manufacture, consumerism, eating habits and many other social institutions. The common features in the war system and the domination of nature are hierarchy, exploitation and domination. The institutions in the war system are characterised by domination of humans by other humans. The institutions

which sustain the domination of nature use human domination of humans to exploit non-human nature, and use the exploitation of nature to sustain human domination of humans. Military weapons for environmental destruction, and war research using experimental animals, epitomise these connections.

It seems to me that the domination of nature is tied up with the war system in a deep and pervasive way. But what the implications of this are for antiwar strategy are not so clear. Two avenues for opposition to the domination of nature are the environmental movement and the animal liberation movement. To the extent that these movements question theoretically and practically the right of humans to exploit nature in an unrestrained way, they also help undercut the basis of human exploitation of humans which the war system serves and is sustained by.

As in the case of liberal feminism, the mainstream environmental and animal welfare groups usually seek merely to achieve changes in the treatment of the environment and animals within existing social institutions. Better pollution control is sought, not overturning of the corporate and bureaucratic structures which create pollution. More controls on animal experimentation are sought, not a reconsideration of the need for the experiments and the elite control of the experiments. Tied in with this orientation, mainstream environmental and animal welfare groups use traditional methods for convincing elites such as lobbying, and depend on the goodwill of the government and state agencies in a number of ways including provision of funding and enforcement of administrative regulations.

Also as in the case of feminism, radical portions of the environmental and animal liberation movements look more fundamentally at the social institutions which create assaults against the environment and animals. Within social movement groups, opposition to speciesism must be added to opposition to sexism, racism, ageism and classoppression. The implications of a self-managing perspective incorporating the environment and non-human animals are far-reaching: not only must human society be reorganised to eliminate exploitation of humans by humans, but also to eliminate exploitation of the environment and animals. Without such a reorganisation of society, the perpetuation of the human domination of nature may well sustain the social institutions for domination of humans by humans.

The implications of this view for the strategy of social movements generally, and the antiwar movement in particular, have scarcely been raised. It seems time to do so.

### **Industrialisation**

Modern war could not be sustained without modern industrialisation.

Modern industry, especially the capital-intensive, energy-intensive and expert-intensive kind, is a mainstay for the war system as it exists. The maintenance and expansion of state and corporate bureaucracies requires economic expansion to provide the necessary surplus, and also to provide the object for bureaucratic control. The maintenance of state power is greatly facilitated by economic growth, so that a portion of the material benefits can be apportioned to the working class to buy off discontent. Economic growth helps head off opposition movements within states.

Industrialisation has also been a major factor in the breakup of traditional communities which has enabled the expansion of state power and the administrative class, lynchpins of the war system. Modern industry subjects employees to hierarchical control and encourages consumerism as a substitute gratification in place of self-management.

Is industrialisation a key to the war system? Some people think so. There is even a strategy of sorts: promote alternatives to industrial production, typically community enterprises, with less centralisation, greater self-reliance, less job specialisation, smaller impacts on nature, and a shift to rural or urban communal lifestyles. Essentially this approach is one of withdrawal from industrial society, and building a simpler, more self-reliant, personally satisfying set of lifestyles.

I see activity in this direction as a contribution to an antiwar strategy, but certainly not the entire answer. Such withdrawal is all right for some, but is not realistically an option for mass participation. Furthermore, the replacement of present institutions will require more than withdrawal, but as well direct action by people inside the present oppressive institutions, such as factory workers.

In addition, I don't see industrialisation per se as the culprit so much as the domination by owners, managers and experts which characterises modern industrialisation. The solution is not to 'turn back the clock' — though options from the past should not be rejected out of hand — but to develop self-managing forms of social organisation taking advantage of compatible aspects of modern technology and industry.

## Technology

Arms races are sometimes blamed on technological developments which are thought to be 'out of control'. The development of neutron bombs, precision-guided missiles and chemical weapons supposedly shows that not even state and military elites have control over arms races, but that an autonomous process of scientific discovery and technological development is to blame.

In my view, this perspective is not a fruitful one. To begin with, science and technology are not independent of society in any useful sense. Military



science and technology mostly result from massive injections of state funds into areas with potential military applications or spinoffs, such as nuclear technology, computing and genetic engineering. If the financial and career incentives were withdrawn, the orientation of new science and technology would quickly shift from military interests.

Second, technologies do not develop spontaneously, 'uncontrolled', into new weapons systems. They must be carefully monitored, assessed, channelled and specified over many long years. Engineering specifications must be established, manufacturing facilities constructed or adapted, and military planning and technological infrastructure appropriately modified. All of this is a cold, careful process for clearly specified military ends, not spontaneous technological creation. In short, military technologies are the rational product of scientific and technological development for military purposes. Military innovations are seldom sprung unawares on military planners.

This is not to say that military technological innovation is entirely under the control of state and military elites. Research and development scientists and engineers do have some influence, especially elite scientists and engineers. Those in research and development naturally want to maintain and increase their own power and prerogatives, and so favour new weapons systems that will keep them in business. The heads of the two major nuclear bomb design laboratories in the United States, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Los Alamos National Laboratory, strongly opposed the partial test ban treaty and have been instrumental in preventing agreement on a comprehensive test ban treaty, because this would inhibit their laboratories' continued funding, status and role. But such scientific elites are only one set of actors in the entire military and state apparatus: they are not uniquely powerful, nor are they autonomous.

Military technologies should be seen mainly as products or symptoms of the war system rather than as key driving forces. Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to conclude that once the social organisational roots of war — bureaucracy, the state and so forth — are eliminated, the technological symptoms of these structures will automatically alter too.

Technologies, once constructed, have an influence on ongoing social development. Technologies embody in themselves specific types of social relationships. Nuclear weapons, for example, are not only the product of centralised state planning for military purposes, but are also *selectively useful* for these same purposes. Nuclear weapons are not readily useable by community groups for any useful purpose! Technologies differ in how narrowly focussed their selective usefulness is. Rifles can be used by game hunters and guerrillas as well as by professional military forces. Nuclear weapons are mainly useful to the militaries of powerful states, and perhaps

other terrorists, while biological weapons have not yet proved highly useful even for military purposes.

Social activists often can and do focus on technologies which embody undesired social relationships, as a means for changing those relationships as well as removing or altering the technology itself. The movement against nuclear power is the best known example. Nuclear power is expensive, potentially dangerous, requires the attention of experts and is intimately linked with nuclear weapons both technologically and by training of nuclear scientists and engineers. Nuclear power is thus selectively useful for the purposes of state elites and a certain portion of the administrative class. Not surprisingly, nuclear power grew out of nuclear weapons programmes and has been promoted primarily by states rather than corporations. By opposing nuclear power, social activists help to challenge the elite power system which supports it and is supported by nuclear power.

In summary, a focus only on technology is not a useful basis for a strategy to uproot the war system. But campaigns against particular technologies can be a useful part of antiwar struggle, by providing an avenue for leverage against the wider social structures of which the technologies are a part.

## Size

A number of thinkers such as Leopold Kohr and Kirkpatrick Sale identify size as the key factor in most social problems. They see largeness in human communities as the basis for evils such as regimentation, alienation and war. By contrast, they see 'human-scale' communities, in the order of tens, hundreds or thousands rather than millions of people, as the basis for a much better society in all ways.

Tracing all problems to size is an inadequate perspective. For example, there have been many small warlike societies in history. Racism, sexism, genocide and other evils often have been practised in tiny domains. Small is not always beautiful.

Nevertheless, the implications of size should not be overlooked. Larger-sized social units do often permit greater centralised control and more entrenched forms of exploitation. The United States and Soviet states for example are potent forces for militarisation due to their ability to extract resources from large populations, and use of these resources to maintain and extend their political and economic influence. Bureaucracy and the administrative class thrive on administering large numbers of people.

The consequences of size are even more important for the organisation of social movements. A large, centrally organised movement is more vulnerable to destruction or cooption. An interlacing network of small independent groups and individuals provides more opportunities for direct

democracy, scope for initiative, resilience in the face of changed directions, and survivability against repression.

Kohr, Sale and most other advocates of 'human scale' have no strategy for change in the direction they favour. Nevertheless, social activists should keep size in mind in designing their campaigns. Small may not necessarily be beautiful, but it should also be noted that big is not necessarily best. Size is only one variable, and its effects are usually filtered through social institutions. In transforming social institutions, the size factor can be taken into account too.

### **Individuals**

Particular powerful people such as Genghis Khan or Hitler are often blamed for war. Often these people are thought to be evil, consciously scheming, or at the very least ignorant of the consequences of their actions.

This perspective is severely limited because it ignores the social structures which allow individuals to promote war, and indeed which shape behaviour in this direction.

If particular individuals are thought to be a cause of war, there are several ways to confront the problem. One is to try to convince them of the incorrectness of their practices, on the assumption that they are not aware of the implications of what they are doing. This approach has failed too many times to count. But although most individuals in positions of power are in the grip of the social conditions in which they operate and of the standard ideas used to justify their power and privilege, the immediate social environment does not exert total control. Some individual elites can and do question the assumptions on which their power rests. Hence social activists should look for support and supporters at elite levels as well as elsewhere.

'Evil' people are hard to find. Almost everyone is well intentioned. The problem is that people are well intentioned within frameworks of ideas and practices which sustain or do nothing to stop poverty, oppression and war.

### **Innate violence**

One of the most common objections raised against those who oppose war is that humans are innately aggressive and hence war is inevitable. Contrary to this, anthropological evidence from numerous non-industrial societies suggests that human societies can be organised in a variety of ways, some of which foster aggressiveness and others which foster harmonious human interactions. One implication is that it should be possible, if not easy, to organise human society to avoid war.

For many years the debate over innate aggressiveness has raged,

nonviolently it might be added. At stake is whether or not, down deep in genetically conditioned human behaviour patterns, there is a predisposition to use violence in interpersonal relations. The debate is fascinating and clearly exhibits the presuppositions of the protagonists, but it is largely irrelevant to the question of *modern* war which is increasingly technological and bureaucratic. Instinctual aggression has little to do with designing missile tracking systems, working in armaments factories or pressing switches for bomb delivery. Much more important in these cases are professional specialisation, the manufacturing division of labour, training in technical skills, conditioned acceptance of hierarchy and identification with one's own state.

My personal view is that the evidence for innate human aggressiveness is quite tenuous and has little significance for human behaviour. But there is no need to be dogmatic. For even if humans can meaningfully be said to have some predisposition towards using violence, the implications of this are not very far-reaching. A large fraction of modern soldiers are reluctant warriors. Conscription is required to fill armies, intense propaganda is required to instill hatred of the current enemy, and harsh discipline, training and isolation to break down soldiers' reluctance to kill. Studies have shown that only a fraction of soldiers thrust into the front lines actually fire their rifles. Innate violence, if it can meaningfully be said to exist, needs a lot of pampering for wars to be fought.

Furthermore, just because certain sorts of aggressive behaviour are common among some of the anthropoid apes does not mean such aggression is inevitable in human societies. After all, no one suggests that we should eat dinner or travel the way chimpanzees do. Hormones and prehistoric experiences hardly provide a prescription for the limits of human behaviour.

Genetics does provide some limits to human activity: humans do not have wings. The key point here is that whatever genetic inclinations there are towards aggressiveness and violence, they do not automatically result in war. This is because societies can be arranged in many ways, and the way people choose to arrange the society they live in is not genetically determined.

It is instructive that those who argue that war is due to the innate aggressiveness of humans are seldom seen swinging punches or machine-gunning their neighbours. The idea of innate aggressiveness has a long history, and is connected with the origin and use of Darwinist ideas to justify competitive capitalism and hierarchy in general. Most antiwar activists are familiar with the way the idea of innate aggressiveness is invoked by individuals to justify their doing nothing to oppose war.

Konrad Lorenz and some others who argue the scientific case for innate aggressiveness have suggested that international sport might serve as a

surrogate for war. This is wishful thinking, considering how often major sporting events are the immediate cause of violent clashes between supporters of competing sides. More fundamentally, modern international sport — at least the professional variety organised by state bureaucrats and aiming at victory as a means for national glorification — reflects rather than challenges the bureaucratic and state structures which underlie war. Indeed, struggles against these war structures and towards self-managing political and economic structures can go hand in hand with a move towards self-managing sport, in which the goals would be participation, cooperation and fitness rather than elite performance, competition and prestige.

### **War does not have a single root**

In this chapter and in the six preceding chapters I have examined a number of institutions and factors which have some connection with the war system. There is much more that could be said about any one of these institutions, and other factors which could be examined. Here I wish to note one important point: attention should not be focussed on one single factor to the exclusion of others. This is often done, for example, by Marxists who look only at capitalism as a root of war and other social problems, and by some feminists who attribute most problems to patriarchy. The danger of monocausal explanations is that they may lead to an inadequate political practice. The 'revolution' may be followed by the persistence or even expansion of many problems which were not addressed by the single-factor perspective.

The one connecting feature which I perceive in the institutions underlying war is an unequal distribution of power. This unequal distribution is socially organised in many different ways, such as in the large-scale structures for state administration, in capitalist ownership, in male domination within families and elsewhere, in control over knowledge by experts, and in the use of force by the military. Furthermore, these different systems of power are interconnected. They often support each other, and sometimes conflict. This means that the struggle against war must be undertaken at many different levels, from struggles to undermine state power to struggles to undermine racism, sexism and other forms of domination at the level of the individual and the local community. And it means that the different struggles need to be linked together. That is the motivation for analysing the institutional roots of war and developing strategies for grassroots movements to uproot these institutions.



---

## Nuclear extinction?

---

A grassroots programme for replacing the institutions underlying war is not a short-term proposition. It will require decades or, more likely, many centuries. Furthermore, the ultimate success of this road to a world without war is by no means guaranteed.

Any sensible strategy for addressing a social problem must take into account the possibility of setbacks as well as successes. In the final two chapters, I focus on the implications of one particular setback: nuclear war. I refer to nuclear war because it is the most well-known example of warfare causing mass death. But my comments could apply equally to large-scale biological or chemical war, or indeed conventional war.

The possible crises that may arise for the world and for the peace movement can be illustrated by a few scenarios.

**(a) Limited nuclear war in the periphery.** A war breaks out in the Middle East, and resort is made to nuclear weapons, killing several hundred thousand people. The United States and Soviet governments place their nuclear forces on the highest alert. As the tension continues to build, the US government declares a state of emergency. Normal democratic procedures are suspended, and 'dissidents' are rounded up. A similar process occurs in many countries allied militarily to the US. Within the Soviet bloc also, repression increases. A return to the pre-crisis state of affairs does not occur for years or decades. As well as precipitating bitter political repression, the crisis contributes to increased military races, especially among non-nuclear and small nuclear powers, as no effective sanctions are applied to those who used nuclear weapons. Another similar limited nuclear war and superpower crisis becomes likely . . . or perhaps the scene shifts to scenario c or d.

**(b) Limited nuclear war between the superpowers.** A limited exchange between the US and Soviet nuclear forces occurs, either due to accident or as part of a threat-counterthreat situation. A sizeable number of military or civilian targets are destroyed, either in the US or the Soviet Union or in allied states, and perhaps 5 or 10 million people are killed. As in scenario a, states of emergency are declared, political dissent repressed and public outrage channelled into massive military and political mobilisation to prepare for future confrontations and wars. Scenarios c and d become more likely.

(c) **A successful first strike.** In the midst of an international crisis, the US government launches a 'successful' first strike against Soviet nuclear forces by first crippling the Soviet communications, command and control systems and then destroying almost all Soviet ICBMs and most Soviet strategic submarines. About 20 million people are killed. The Soviet military response destroys a few US or allied population centres, or perhaps none at all. In the lead-up or aftermath of the first strike, a right-wing political-military alliance takes control of the US government, initiating severely repressive policies. In the wake of the nuclear attack, intense political unrest occurs in many areas of the globe caused by outrage at the attack. The US rulers respond by supporting like-minded repressive forces abroad. A new military race commences as the Soviet government strives for revenge and the US government protects against the possibility.

(d) **Global nuclear war.** A massive nuclear exchange occurs. Blast, heat and fallout kill 300 million people in the US, Soviet Union and Europe. Another 100 million people in these areas die from the freezing inland temperatures caused by blocking out of sunlight by dust and smoke from the explosions and resulting fires. Though their populations are decimated, states survive and apply brutal policies to obtain economic and military recovery, brooking no dissent. In the wake of the disaster, authoritarian civilian or military regimes take control in countries relatively unscathed by the war, such as Australia, Japan and Spain. The road is laid to an even more devastating World War Four.

Many other scenarios can be presented. One feature of these scenarios is familiar: the enormous scale of physical destruction and human suffering, which is only dimly indicated by the numbers of dead and injured, whether this is hundreds, or hundreds of millions. This destruction and suffering is familiar largely because many people have repeatedly warned of the human consequences of nuclear war. What has been almost entirely absent from peace movement analysis and planning is any consideration of the political consequences of nuclear war.

In this chapter I critically analyse the idea that nuclear war will kill most people on earth, and present some possible reasons for the prevalence of this and related beliefs. I argue that exaggerated ideas about nuclear war are both a cause and an effect of the limited political analysis which underlies much activity directed towards eliminating nuclear war. As a result of both the exaggerated ideas and the limited political analysis, the peace movement and its allies are almost completely unprepared for the political consequences and aftermath of nuclear war and nuclear crisis.

Some people feel that in criticising beliefs about nuclear extinction I thereby become an apologist for the military. To this I respond as follows. First, if peace activists hold or promote exaggerated views about

nuclear war, these need to be justified on some grounds, such as political necessity. This has not been done. Indeed, I argue that beliefs in extinction through nuclear war are counterproductive for the peace movement, especially by encouraging the approach of making moral appeals to elites and by focussing exclusively on nuclear war and discouraging attention to long-term strategies dealing with the institutions underlying war and other social problems. Second, the test of a peace activist should be political and social effectiveness in helping people move together towards a world without war, not the extremity of one's views about the consequences of nuclear war.

### **The evidence**

In this section I present a brief overview of the effects of nuclear war, to provide a basis for discussing beliefs about nuclear extinction which are my primary concern here.

**Direct effects.** Most of the immediate deaths and injuries from a nuclear war would be due to blast and heat in the neighbourhood of each explosion, and also to exposure to fallout deposited during the first few days downwind of explosions at or near the surface of the earth. The direct effects from a major global nuclear war, one involving the attempted use of most nuclear bombs that exist, could kill perhaps 400 to 500 million people, mostly in the United States, Europe and Soviet Union, and to a lesser extent China and Japan. The number of people killed would be higher if population centres around the world were systematically bombed or if the cores of many nuclear power plants were dispersed. The number would be lower if substantial numbers of nuclear weapons were used on military targets or if more than minimal civil defence measures were used.

**Global fallout.** The main effect of long-term fallout would be to increase the rate of cancer and genetic defects by a small percentage. Tens of millions might be affected worldwide over a period of many decades, but this would provide no threat to the survival of the human species.

**Ozone.** Nuclear war would cause an increase in ultraviolet light from the sun which reaches the earth's surface, due to reductions in stratospheric ozone caused by its catalytic destruction by nitrogen oxides produced in nuclear explosions. This would increase the incidence of skin cancer (which is mostly non-lethal) and possibly alter agricultural productivity, but would be most unlikely to cause widespread death.

**Fires.** Extensive fires caused directly or indirectly by nuclear explosions would fill the lower atmosphere in the northern hemisphere with so much particulate matter that the amount of sunlight reaching the earth's surface

could be greatly reduced for a few months. If this occurred during the northern spring or summer, one consequence would be greatly reduced agricultural production and possible widespread starvation. It is also possible that the temperature at the earth's surface would be greatly reduced for a period of months — especially in areas away from oceans — causing many people to die of the cold.

**Climatic changes.** Such changes might be caused, for example, by injection of nitrogen oxides or particulate matter into the upper atmosphere. The more calamitous possibilities include a heating trend leading to melting of the polar ice caps, the converse possibility of a new ice age, and the changing of climatic patterns leading to drought or unstable weather in areas of current high agricultural productivity. The rate of impact of such climatic change is likely to be sufficiently slow — decades, or years in some cases — for the avoidance of death of a substantial proportion of the world's population through climatic change.

**Agricultural and economic breakdown.** A major possible source of widespread death could be the failure of agricultural or economic recovery in heavily bombed areas, followed by starvation or social breakdown. Agricultural failure could occur due to reduced sunlight due to fires or to induced changes in weather. An agricultural or economic collapse would also increase the likelihood of epidemics. If agricultural or economic breakdown followed by widespread starvation or epidemics occurred in heavily bombed areas, and no effective rescue operations were mounted by less damaged neighbouring areas, then it is conceivable that many tens or even several hundred million more people might die, mainly in the US, Soviet Union and Europe.

**Synergistic and unpredicted effects.** The interaction of different effects, such as weakened resistance to disease due to cold temperatures, high radiation exposure or shortages of food, could well increase the death toll significantly. These consequences would mostly be confined to heavily bombed areas. Finally, there is the possibility that effects currently dismissed or not predicted could lead to many more deaths from nuclear war.

To summarise the above points, a major global nuclear war in which population centres in the US, Soviet Union, Europe and China were targeted, with no effective civil defence measures taken, could kill directly perhaps 400 to 500 million people. Induced effects, in particular freezing in northern continental areas and starvation or epidemics following agricultural failure or economic breakdown, might add several hundred million to the total.



### The popularity of extinction views

A major global nuclear war undoubtedly would be a catastrophe of enormous proportions. But, almost certainly, it would *not* lead to human extinction. The evidence suggests that even in the most extreme case there would remain alive some 4000 million people, some 80% or 90% of the world's population. The majority of them would be physically unharmed by the nuclear war. The following areas probably would escape devastation unless nuclear attacks were made in these regions: South and Central America, Africa, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, Australasia, Oceania and large parts of China. Even in the mid-latitudes of the northern hemisphere where most of the nuclear weapons would be exploded, areas upwind of nuclear attacks would remain free of heavy radioactive contamination, such as Portugal, Ireland and British Columbia.

The belief that nuclear war necessarily will lead to the end of much or all of human life on earth is very widespread, perhaps especially among people who are actively concerned about peace issues. In 1981 Canberra Peacemakers surveyed about 150 people in Canberra from a variety of occupations concerning their beliefs about nuclear war and other issues. Most of the respondents thought that a large fraction of the world's population would die in a global nuclear war, and many thought no one would survive. Other surveys confirm this finding. In my own reading, I have found statements in many books and articles since the 1950s, for example by social scientists, indicating a belief in nuclear extermination.

The point which I wish to make here is that in most cases this belief in nuclear annihilation — at least in the way it is usually held or expressed — has been maintained without the backing of scientific evidence. The available scientific evidence has provided little basis for the common belief that global nuclear war will lead to the death of most or all of the world's population. For example, I have been unable to find any convincing scientific arguments for the popular belief that current stocks of nuclear weapons have a capacity for 'overkill', if this is taken to imply the capacity to kill everyone on earth.

Another major point to be made in relation to statements about nuclear war is that almost exclusive attention has been focussed on the 'worst case' of a major global nuclear war, as indeed I have done here. A major global nuclear war is a possibility, but not the only one. In the case of 'limited' nuclear war, anywhere from hundreds of people to many tens of millions of people might die. This is a real possibility, but peace movement theory and practice have developed almost as if this possibility does not, or should not, exist.

In the 1950s and 1960s it was widely believed that nuclear war would blanket the world with sufficient fallout to kill most or all the world's



population. This was the idea behind Nevil Shute's well-known novel *On the Beach*. Yet during this time there were no scientifically accepted studies which showed any possibility of such global death from fallout or indeed from any other effect of nuclear war. Essentially the belief in global nuclear doom was sufficiently appealing to be sustained in the absence of supporting evidence.

Antiwar scientists, who are in a position to study the available studies on the effects of nuclear war, have seldom spoken out to criticise exaggerated views about nuclear extermination. For example, the commonly expressed idea that the United States and the Soviet Union have enough nuclear weapons to kill everyone on earth many times over has been left unchallenged.

The attraction of the idea of nuclear extinction was illustrated by the incredible adulation which greeted Jonathan Schell's articles and book *The Fate of the Earth*, which was the first carefully argued presentation that concluded that extinction is a significant possibility from nuclear war. Due to the impact of Schell's writing, I devote some space here to illustrating its severe limitations.

At the end of the first of the three essays which comprise *The Fate of the Earth*, entitled 'A Republic of Insects and Grass', Schell summarises some of the possible consequences of the explosion of thousands of megatonnes of nuclear weapons. These include

"the blinding of insects, birds and beasts all over the world; the extinction of many ocean species, among them some at the base of the food chain; the temporary or permanent alteration of the climate of the globe, with the outside chance of 'dramatic' and 'major' alterations in the structure of the atmosphere; the pollution of the whole eco-sphere with oxides of nitrogen; the incapacitation in ten minutes of unprotected people who go out into the sunlight; a significant decrease in photosynthesis in plants around the world; the scalding and killing of many crops; the increase in rates of cancer and mutation around the world, but especially in the targeted zones, and the attendant risk of global epidemics; the possible poisoning of all vertebrates by sharply increased levels of Vitamin D in their skin as a result of increased ultra-violet light".

When nuclear weapons are exploded, the high temperatures cause nitrogen in the air to react with oxygen, producing oxides of nitrogen. In explosions larger than about one megatonne, the fireball of the explosion rises the 10 or 15 kilometres necessary to deposit much of these oxides of nitrogen in the stratosphere, where the oxides of nitrogen destroy ozone.

Since stratospheric ozone absorbs ultraviolet light from the sun, the net consequence of large nuclear explosions is an increase in ultraviolet light at the earth's surface. All the effects listed by Schell in the above quotation, except for cancers and mutations, are possible consequences of large increases in ultraviolet light.

Scientific studies in the mid 1970s showed that stratospheric ozone in the northern hemisphere could be reduced by 50% or more for a few years by the explosion of 10,000Mt (megatonnes) of nuclear weapons. These are the studies on which Schell relies. But trends in nuclear weaponry beginning in the 1970s have reduced the likely effect on ozone. Instead of relying so much on multimegatonne warheads, the US and Soviet militaries have been and are continuing to convert the payloads of their strategic ballistic missiles to larger numbers of smaller warheads, usually each less than one megatonne. Numerous smaller warheads can cause more destruction at ground level, but they don't deposit oxides of nitrogen in the stratosphere in any quantity. So at least at the moment, the threats to human life from increases in ultraviolet light following nuclear war appear to be negligible.

But even if stratospheric ozone were reduced by 50% or more, few of the consequences portrayed by Schell would result. For example, permanent blinding of humans or other animals seems very unlikely. Stratospheric ozone levels vary considerably from place to place and time to time. Ultraviolet light passes through only about half as much ozone at the equator as at mid-latitudes, yet blindness in humans and other animals is not known to be more common at the equator than elsewhere. In addition, if ozone reductions did occur as a result of nuclear war, they would mainly occur in the northern mid-latitudes where ozone levels are higher to start with. So widespread blindness from ultraviolet light seems an unlikely possibility on two counts. Similar comments apply to the other dangers from ultraviolet light listed by Schell.

The only other possible basis for extinction listed by Schell is

"the outright slaughter on all targeted continents of most human beings and other living things by the initial nuclear radiation, the fireballs, the thermal pulses, the blast waves, the mass fires, and the fallout from the explosions".

How does Schell arrive at the conclusion that the immediate effects of nuclear weapons would kill "most human beings"? To start with, he treats fairly realistically the effect of 10,000Mt of nuclear weapons dropped on the United States. Such an attack would indeed be catastrophic, potentially killing  $\frac{3}{4}$  or more of the US population. Schell suggests that 10,000Mt could kill virtually *all* the US population due to fallout, since he says if

the 10,000Mt were evenly distributed and all weapons exploded at ground level, all parts of the US would be exposed to 10,000 rads — and 1000 rads will kill all the people exposed to it. Yet this argument is quite dubious. First, not all weapons would be exploded at ground level. Second, as Schell notes, the fallout would not be uniformly distributed, so many areas would escape heavy contamination. Third, Schell takes no account of protection, for example by ordinary buildings. Most US houses have basements which could reduce radiation levels by a factor of 10 or more. These qualifications change Schell's picture to one showing the survival of at least several tens of millions of people in the US, in agreement with the usual run of studies which give no grounds for anything approaching extinction.

In any case, it seems unlikely that 10,000Mt could ever be delivered to the US by the Soviet military. Total megatonnage in the Soviet arsenal is probably around 7500Mt (with 3500Mt in the US arsenal). In any war scenario except a completely successful Soviet first strike, it is likely that many Soviet weapons would be destroyed before use by anti-submarine warfare, anti-aircraft against bombers, or strikes against ICBMs. This plus missile unavailability and unreliability suggests that it is unlikely that even half the Soviet arsenal could reach the US. So Schell's 10,000Mt attack on the US is very much an extreme case, virtually impossible in practice.

But if all Soviet weapons were targeted on US targets, there would be none left for other places, such as China, Europe and Japan. Simultaneous extermination of people in all these areas seems out of the question. To kill most people on earth would require 10,000Mt or more on the US, 10,000Mt or more on Europe, 10,000Mt or more on China and so forth. Neither the Soviet nor the US militaries have anything like the arsenal or the delivery capacity to achieve this level of destruction.

At this stage in his argument, Schell makes a big jump with no justification. He asserts "most European countries would be annihilated by tens of megatons". The deaths of many millions of people might well result from attacks of this magnitude, but Schell does not show how "annihilation" could possibly result. The danger of extinction from blast, heat and local fallout from nuclear attacks seems as remote as extinction from ozone depletion.

A final possibility is added by Schell to the list of effects quoted above:

"that these consequences will all interact with one another in unguessable ways and, furthermore, are in all likelihood an incomplete list, which will be added to as our knowledge of the earth increases".

Schell is right on the point about possible effects not previously con-

sidered. For instance, the possibility that fires started by a nuclear war could lead to blocking out of sunlight by a large factor was only first raised in 1982.

I was perplexed after hearing about Schell's conclusions and about the sources he had used to reach them, since I had already read the same sources and had come across nothing that indicated that extinction was more than a remote possibility. The perplexity is explained by Schell's process of continually taking worst interpretations and bending the evidence to give the worst impression. For example, Schell implies that a nuclear attack is inevitably followed by a firestorm or conflagration, he always quotes the maximum time for people having to remain in shelters from fallout, and he takes a pessimistic view throughout of the potential for ecological resilience to radiation exposure and for human resourcefulness in a crisis. And usually when he spells out a worst case as a possibility — for example, the average 10,000 rad radiation dose from a 10,000Mt attack on the US — this becomes implicitly a certainty for later discussion, with qualifications dropped.

The key point about Schell's argument for my purposes here is not that he is wrong. After all, it cannot be ruled out that later studies may show that his conclusions, if not the details of his arguments, are substantially correct. The key point is rather that Schell's argument about nuclear extinction has been uncritically received, and indeed usually with the greatest of enthusiasm. Furthermore, I am not aware of any scientists aside from myself who have made attempts to expose the obvious weaknesses in Schell's arguments about the effects of nuclear war. It seems that nuclear extinction is such a popular view that no one wants to puncture any illusions.

Whenever public concern about nuclear war increases, scientists become more interested in studying and publicising the effects of nuclear war. This happened in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and again in the early 1980s. The most recent effect to be studied intensely is 'nuclear winter': the blotting out of sunlight and lowering of surface temperatures due to dust from nuclear explosions and smoke from fires caused by the explosions. As I write this in February 1984, there are extensive scientific investigations being undertaken around the world into this effect.

Several of the scientific studies on 'nuclear winter' which I have read tend to emphasise worst cases, and to ignore possible mitigating factors. For example, possible extinctions of plant and animal species are emphasised rather than possible ecological resilience. The possibility of changes in diet or migrations to coastal regions to escape starvation and freezing are not addressed. The existence of further unstudied factors is usually raised to suggest that the effects could be worse rather than less severe. Quite simply,

the scientists have seen it as their task to emphasise the *possibility* of massive disaster from nuclear war. And when these ideas are presented for public consumption, the doomsday aspects are even more greatly emphasised.

### **Why pessimistic views on the effects of nuclear war are preferred**

Why do so many people take a pessimistic view of the effects of nuclear war, or focus on the worst possible outcome? Many people tend to believe what they hear, but in the case of nuclear war there are both doomsday accounts and other accounts which minimise the dangers. Why has Schell's argument about human extinction been so amazingly popular? Many people, though not all by any means, seem to assume the worst and not look into the technical details, as indeed I myself did some years ago. Why?

Here I outline a number of possible reasons for pessimistic views on the effects of nuclear war and emphasise the worst cases. While the importance of most of these reasons may be disputed, I feel it is necessary to raise them for discussion. The points raised are not meant to lay blame on anyone, but rather to help ensure that peace movement strategy is founded on sound beliefs. By understanding our motivations and emotional responses, some insight may be gained into how better to struggle against war.

It has not been my primary aim here to argue the scientific case for or against nuclear extinction, and I would be foolish to deny any possibility of human extinction from nuclear war. Rather, my concern is with the strong tendency many people have to assume the worst possible outcome from nuclear war, and with the harmful effects this may have on antiwar strategy. Even if some of the worst predictions about the effects of nuclear war turn out to be correct, I think it is important to examine the points raised here.

**Pessimism to justify inaction.** For many people, nuclear war is seen as such a terrible event, and as something that people can do so little about, that they can see no point in taking action against war and do not even think about the danger. For those who have never been concerned or taken action on the issue, accepting an extreme account of the effects of nuclear war can provide conscious or unconscious justification of this inaction. In short, one removes from one's awareness the upsetting topic of nuclear war, and justifies this psychological denial by believing the worst.

This suggests two things. First, it may be more effective in mobilising people against war to describe the dangers in milder terms. Some experiments have shown that strong accounts of danger — for example, of smoking — can be less effective than weaker accounts in changing behaviour. Second, the peace movement should devote less attention to the dangers of nuclear war and more attention to what people can do to oppose it in their day-to-day lives.



**Fear of death.** Although death receives a large amount of attention in the media, the consideration of one's own death has been one of the most taboo topics in Western culture, at least until recently. Nuclear war as an issue raises the topic insistently, and unconsciously many people may prefer to avoid the issue for this reason. The fear of and repression of conscious thoughts about personal death may also lead to an unconscious tendency to exaggerate the effects of nuclear war. One's own personal death — the end of consciousness — can be especially threatening in the context of others remaining alive and conscious. Somehow the death of everyone may be less threatening. Robert Lifton argues that children who learn at roughly the same age about both personal death and nuclear holocaust may be unable to separate the two concepts, and as a result equate death with annihilation. This would have undesirable consequences for coping individually with life and working collectively against nuclear war.

Another factor here may be a feeling of potential guilt at the thought of surviving and having done nothing, or not enough or not the right thing, to prevent the death of others. Again, the idea that nearly everyone will die in nuclear war does not raise such disturbing possibilities.

**Fear-mongering.** When people concerned about nuclear war describe the threat to others, in many cases this does not trigger any action. An understandable response by the concerned people is to expand the threat until action is triggered. This is a valid procedure in many physiological and other domains. If a person does not heed a call of 'Fire!', shouting louder may do the trick.

The implicit premise behind much nuclear fear-mongering is that if the thought of 500 million people dying in a nuclear war is not enough to stimulate action, then the thought of extinction will. Schell for example explicitly advocates use of fear of extinction as the basis for inspiring the "complete rearrangement of world politics". The popularity of the politics of fear may partly explain the popularity of Schell's treatment.

The fear-mongering approach is deeply flawed. It leaves out consideration of how people can take action, how social change comes about, and of what motivates people to act. It can cause paralysis rather than action. Furthermore, fear is a poor basis on which to build long-term commitment to grassroots action against social problems.

In the case of nuclear war the assumptions underlying fear-mongering are completely inappropriate. The threat, even when stated very conservatively, is already past the point of sufficient stimulation. This means that what is needed is not an expansion of the threat but rather some avenue which allows and encourages people to take action to challenge the threat. One avenue is a carefully thought out and planned grassroots strategy for

challenging the war system, a strategy which makes sense to uncommitted people and which can easily accommodate their involvement.

**Planning and defeatism.** People may identify thinking about and planning for an undesirable future — namely the occurrence and aftermath of nuclear war — with accepting its inevitability (defeatism) or even actually wanting it. By taking a pessimistic view of the effects of nuclear war and emphasising the worst possible case, there becomes no post-war future at all to prepare for, and so this difficulty does not arise.

The limitations of this response are apparent in cases other than nuclear war. Surely it is not defeatism to think about what will happen when:

- \* a labour strike is broken;
- \* political events develop in an expected though unpleasant way, as Nazism in the 1920s and 1930s;
- \* a social revolution turns bad, as in the Soviet Union after 1917;
- \* a social revolution is destroyed, as in Chile in 1973.

Since, I would argue, some sort of nuclear war is virtually inevitable unless radical changes occur in industrialised societies, it is realism rather than defeatism to think about and take account of the likely aftermath of nuclear war. An effective way to deal with the feeling or charge of defeatism is to prepare for the political aftermath of nuclear war in ways which reduce the likelihood of nuclear war occurring in the first place, as I will argue in the next chapter.

**Exaggeration to justify concern (1).** People involved in any issue or activity tend to exaggerate its importance so as to justify and sustain their concern and involvement. Nuclear war is only one problem among many pressing problems in the world, which include starvation, poverty, exploitation, racial and sexual inequality and repressive states. By concentrating on peace issues, one must by necessity give less attention to other pressing issues. An unconscious tendency to exaggerate the effects of nuclear war has the effect of reducing conscious or unconscious guilt at not doing more on other issues.

Guilt of this sort is undoubtedly common, especially among those who are active on social issues and who become familiar with the wide range of social problems needing attention. The irony is that those who feel guilt for this reason tend to be those who have least cause to feel so. One politically effective way to overcome this guilt may be to strengthen and expand links between antiwar struggles and struggles for justice, equality and the like.

Magnifying the effects of nuclear war also can be a means for claiming that nuclear war is *the* most pressing social issue. Since, it is sometimes said, no cause or creed can survive nuclear war, then by implication those

who are involved with problems of poverty, injustice, sexism or racism should set aside their concerns until the nuclear threat is overcome. This idea that preventing nuclear war is the greatest social cause is politically dangerous as well as factually dubious. It is based on the incorrect assumption that social problems can be treated in isolation from one another, and that nuclear war can be better prevented if social activists on other issues joined current antiwar activities. I would argue to the contrary that it is quite likely that those social activists who address what are ostensibly 'other' problems, such as patriarchy and centralised political power, have as much or more to contribute to overcoming the problem of war as those dealing more overtly with 'peace' issues. Rather than asserting the primacy of one social struggle over others, more fruitful is the attempt to forge links between social movements through common analysis, action and strategy.

**Exaggeration to justify concern (2).** Spokespeople and apologists for nuclear states tend to emphasise conservative estimates of the effects of nuclear war. They also are primarily concerned with military and economic 'survival' of society so as to confront further threats to the state. To this orientation, one response by people favouring nonmilitary approaches to world order is to assume that the military-based estimates are too low, and hence to exaggerate the effects and emphasise the worst cases. The emotional underpinning for this response seems to be something like this: "if a militarist thinks nuclear war will kill 100 million people and still wants more nuclear weapons, and because I am totally opposed to nuclear war or plans for waging it, therefore nuclear war surely would kill 500 million people or everyone on earth".

This sort of unconscious reasoning confuses one's estimate of the size of a threat with one's attitude towards it. A more tenable conclusion is that the value structures of the military planner and the peace activist are sufficiently different to favour very different courses of action when considering the same evidence. The assumption that a given item of information will lead to a uniform emotional response or intellectual conclusion about its implications is false. The primary factor underlying differences in response to the threat of nuclear war is not differences in assessments of devastation, but political differences.

The identification of the degree of opposition to nuclear war with the degree of devastation envisaged may also lead to the labelling of those who make moderate estimates of the danger as lukewarm opponents of nuclear war. In many cases such an identification has some degree of validity: those with higher estimates of the extent of racism, sexism, exploitation and misery in the world are often the ones who take the strongest action. But the connection is not invariable. Extremism of belief and action does not automatically ensure accurate beliefs or effective action.

A recurrent problem is how to talk about nuclear war and wide scale devastation without appearing — or being — hard-hearted. Peace activists are quite right to reject sterilised language and doublethink ('war is peace') in discussions on nuclear death and destruction, especially when the facade of objectivity masks dangerous policies. But an exclusive reliance on highly emotional arguments, or an unofficial contest to see who can paint the worst picture of nuclear doom, is undesirable too, especially to the degree it subverts or paralyses critical thinking and creative development of strategy.

Another unconscious identification, related to the identification of the level of opposition to nuclear war with the level of destruction thought to be caused by it, arises out of people's abhorrence at 'thinking about the unthinkable', namely post-nuclear war planning by military and strategic planners. This abhorrence easily becomes abhorrence at 'thinking about the unthinkable' in another sense, namely thinking about nuclear war and its aftermath from a peace activist point of view.

The abhorrence, though, should be directed at the institutions which make possible the military and strategic planners, not at thinking about the 'unthinkable' event itself. While post-nuclear war planning is seriously carried out by some military and other state bodies, the strategies of the peace movement are seriously hampered by the gap created by self-imposed 'unthinkability'.

**White, Western orientation.** Most of the continuing large-scale suffering in the world — caused by poverty, starvation, disease and torture — is borne by the poor, non-white peoples of the Third World. A global nuclear war might well kill fewer people than have died of starvation and hunger-related disease in the past 50 or 100 years. Smaller nuclear wars would make this sort of contrast greater. Nuclear war is the one source of possible deaths of millions of people that would affect mainly white, rich, Western societies. (China and Japan are prime possible exceptions.) By comparison, the direct effect of global nuclear war on non-white, poor, Third World populations could well be relatively small.

White Westerners may tend to identify their own plight with that of the rest of the world, and hence exaggerate the threat of destruction wreaked on their own societies into a threat to all of humanity. White Westerners may also tend to see the rest of the world as vitally dependent on themselves for survival, and hence see catastrophe for all as a result of a nuclear war which destroys 'civilisation'. In practice, poor non-white populations arguably would be better off without the attentions of white, Western 'civilisation' — although nuclear war is hardly the way to achieve this.

These considerations suggest the importance of strengthening links

between antiwar struggles and struggles for justice, equality and freedom from exploitation in poor countries.

**Failure of the peace movement.** A nuclear war would be for many people in the peace movement a failure of the peace movement itself. It would mean psychologically that all their pleas, proposals, efforts to promote disarmament, protests and intense commitments had been in vain. There may be a tendency to confuse a perceived failure of the peace movement with the 'end of the world': the end (failure) of attempts to prevent nuclear war, which is the end of the previous (pre-nuclear war) 'world' of the peace movement, is unconsciously identified with the end of the *real* world. This may lead to a tendency to exaggerate the effects of nuclear war.

In actuality, any nuclear war would be primarily the consequence of the institutions of the war system. Any suggestions emanating from this realm that the peace movement is somehow to blame would merely be an exercise in scapegoating. But it is important for peace activists to be aware that their own efforts, organisations and aspirations are not the be-all and end-all. Peace activists should realise that the necessity of their efforts will not be ended with the coming of nuclear war, but rather multiplied. Strategies should not be built on the idea that everything ends when nuclear war starts, but must be resilient in the face of crises and failures.

**Day-to-day life.** Most people's lives are based on a firm foundation of underlying regularity, pattern and routine: job, home life, friends, recreation, commitments, aspirations. Often this is finely tuned and balanced: one may be struggling to maintain house payments, to do the right thing to obtain a future job or promotion, or to maintain important or sensitive personal relationships. All this is tied in with a delicately balanced rationale for existence: doing the right things in terms of family, friends, work and social issues.

Day-to-day life is severely threatened by the idea of nuclear war, which is one reason why many people blot the idea from their conscious minds. All one's plans for rearing one's children, doing one's duty at home or on the job, or retiring comfortably are thrown into jeopardy. One way to avoid the problem is to believe that nuclear war is the end: if it comes, everything disappears, including personal worries and difficulties. Perhaps even a greater threat to day-to-day life is the possibility of *survival* in a major social trauma such as nuclear war. In the ensuing chaos, one's previous achievements and current abilities may become totally irrelevant: one may have to start from scratch in the quest for food, clothing, shelter, new personal relationships and meaning for life in a post-nuclear war world. Old hierarchies may be toppled or severely challenged: the ability



to manage a government department, write advertising copy or sell merchandise may become irrelevant. This would be especially threatening to many who currently are highly successful in the eyes of the world.

Personally, after I became aware of the evidence concerning the effects of nuclear war, it took me quite some time to adjust to the idea of survival and existing in a post-nuclear war world. It seems plausible to me that the tendency to believe the worst about nuclear war owes something to a reluctance to envisage a drastic change in one's day-to-day life or to realise the pointlessness of many of the ordinary activities which give most people their sense of identity.

It is vitally important that activists *do* think through their response to survival of a nuclear war. Even if nuclear war never occurs, this is still valuable, since nuclear war is not the only social crisis that can dramatically alter our usual lives. If the war system is to be transformed, almost certainly it will require vast social changes for which activists need to be prepared psychologically and organisationally.

**Reformist political analysis.** Closely linked with pessimism about the effects of nuclear war and emphasis on worst cases is a political strategy that provides little fundamental challenge to prevailing social institutions. As I argued in chapter 1, the bulk of efforts against war are based on convincing or pressuring elites to change policies. The solution promoted by many such efforts is essentially disarmament within the frameworks of present social, political and economic structures. The institutional structures in which corporate managers, party bureaucrats and other elites are dominant would still be intact: only the bombs would be gone.

But if hierarchical organisational forms, large differences in power, prestige and wealth, and the state system are sources of the nuclear threat, why should disarmament be pursued in a way which leaves them intact? The apparent answer is the very magnitude of the nuclear threat itself. The danger from nuclear war is believed to be so enormous, immediate and final, that policy change at the top is assumed to be the only hope. There simply doesn't seem to be enough time for struggles at the grassroots lasting decades or centuries. Exaggeration of the effects of nuclear war thus promotes the approach of appealing to elites. For example, Carl Sagan, in raising the alarm about the catastrophic effects of 'nuclear winter' in the popular media, has advocated acting against nuclear war by writing letters to the presidents of the United States and the Soviet Union.

When state elites are seen to hold the future of the world in their hands through their delicate hold over initiation of nuclear war, then any destabilising challenges to the power structures on *either* side become dangerous and to be avoided. This becomes a prescription for reformism,

rather than promotion of more fundamental changes as the road to a world without war.

The greater the magnitude and immediacy of disaster that nuclear war seems to pose, the greater the injunction to avoid dangerous destabilising tactics and strategies. It may be for this reason that governments have not made greater attempts to counter the notion that nuclear war is the end of civilisation or life on earth. The more extreme the disaster, the more apathetic the people become and less likely they are to challenge the powers that be. Military and political planners do not think in these terms, naturally, and so on occasion publicly promote measures for civil defence or for fighting limited nuclear wars, so stimulating a hornet's nest of citizen concern and opposition.

Doomsdayism has often been linked with conservative or reformist politics, as in the case of environmental doom. Lack of a long-term grassroots strategy against war, and disinclination to undertake such a path, tend to lead to ever greater extermination rhetoric. A more realistic assessment of the consequences of nuclear war needs to be accompanied by a non-reformist political strategy for challenging the war system, such as the grassroots strategy outlined in previous chapters.

**Media.** The media tend to promote drama and death, and hence promote exaggeration and emphasis on worst cases in relation to nuclear war, and promote those who take these emphases. This arises partly from the lack of continuity and social context in most media stories, and from providing sufficient bad news (death, destruction) so that the consumers of the media can delight in the 'good' news (advertising of products, one's own ordinary untraumatic life). These tendencies in the media are accentuated by centralised control over the form and content of the media.

**Cataclysm.** Cataclysms are usually seen as more significant than constant or routine processes which have the same net effect. Large airplane crashes receive intense publicity, whereas the road toll — or the toll of starvation, disease and poverty — less often rate attention. Although there may be an innate tendency to notice unusual events, social mechanisms could readily be developed to focus appropriate attention on non-spectacular problems. The emphasis on cataclysm is reinforced by the media and by the conservative nature of day-to-day routine.

Nuclear war is seen as the ultimate cataclysm, and this leads to emphasis on worst cases. The challenge for peace activists is to shift the focus of attention from the cataclysm of nuclear war to the routine effort needed to build opposition to the war system — itself a routine operation.

### **Is nuclear war irrational?**

Many people see the nuclear arms race as 'irrational' or 'out of control'. In this framework, nuclear war is seen as the outcome of an irrational or out-of-control process, and hence not something which one can really think about rationally or plan for.

Yet many key elites do plan for nuclear war and do have a measure of control over the nuclear arms race. From *their* particular frame of reference — which in practice sets a high priority on maintaining existing power structures — their behaviour *is* rational. Most members of the public, on the other hand, do not have much control over the nuclear arms race. It is from their frame of reference — which sets a higher priority on preserving human life and using resources to best advantage, for example — that preparations for nuclear war can be seen as indeed irrational and out of control.

Thus, what is rational from the point of view of those elites who prepare for nuclear war can be at the same time irrational from the point of view of many of the relatively powerless majority who will suffer the consequences. This difference is not new, and was apparent for example during the Indochina war, in which US forces destroyed many villages in order to 'save' them.

Although the possible consequences of nuclear war are much greater than the consequences of many other problems arising out of the modern industrial society, this does not mean that the reasons for the problem are fundamentally any different. Just as the systematic murder of Jews and others under the Nazis was carried out by fairly ordinary people living and working in a social and institutional framework not greatly different from prevalent ones today, so nuclear war will be unleashed and waged by ordinary well-meaning people doing their job in a familiar bureaucratic and ideological framework. Far from being irrational or mystical, the forces behind the nuclear arms race are mostly all too familiar. What is changed is the magnitude of the consequences.

By thinking that the arms race is 'irrational' or 'out of control' per se, development of strategies which challenge and replace the war system is severely curtailed. There is a great need to understand the routine and common forces which drive the arms race, to communicate that understanding broadly, and to integrate the development of this understanding with challenges to these routine forces.

### **Will nuclear war be short?**

A common view, routinely promulgated by the peace movement in particular, is that nuclear war will be short: all over in a few days or even

hours. This is a possibility, but by no means the only one. Another possibility is the exchange of a few nuclear weapons — or just the declaration of all-out war — followed by months of political and military preparation and jockeying before full-scale nuclear attacks, in the manner of World War Two. Even after a major exchange of nuclear weapons, there easily could be weapons left over for further use, for example in bargaining or taking hostages.

A long nuclear war, or an extended crisis associated with the threat of nuclear war, would pose severe problems for antiwar groups. These possibilities seem to have been ignored, for reasons similar to those for believing that major nuclear war would kill most of the world's population or destroy civilisation.

### Can nuclear war be limited?

It often has been argued that the use of a few nuclear weapons could lead, gradually or suddenly, to an all-out nuclear war between the super-powers. But it is also at least possible that a nuclear exchange could occur *without* this leading to all-out war.

- \* A nuclear war might be waged solely in the Middle East.

- \* An 'exchange' might occur consisting of nuclear attacks by US forces on remote installations in southern Soviet Union and by the Soviet forces on remote US installations in Australia.

- \* 'Tactical' nuclear weapons might be used in a confrontation restricted to Europe, or to the border region between China and the Soviet Union.

The likelihood of any such possibilities is a matter of some dispute. What should not be in dispute is the *possibility* — whatever assessment is made of its likelihood — that a nuclear war can occur which is less than all-out global nuclear war.

Antiwar people and others spend a lot of time arguing that limited nuclear war is virtually impossible. Their main reason for arguing against military strategies for limited nuclear war seems to be that this possibility makes nuclear war more plausible. But plausible to who? Military and state elites are not likely to be swayed by arguments advanced by the antiwar movement (though they may be swayed by its political strength). So the argument that limited nuclear war is impossible has impact mainly on the public, which is pushed into all-or-nothing thinking, leading to apathy and resignation or to frenzied appeals to elites.

Much of the argumentation presented by antiwar people criticising the concept of limited nuclear war seems almost a reflex action against military planning. It is important to realise that strategic planning about limited nuclear war is not automatically suspect just because such thinking is done by military planners. It is entirely possible for antiwar activists to think



about and to prepare their own plans to confront the political consequences of nuclear war, and furthermore to do this in a way which reduces the likelihood of nuclear war in the first place, as I will describe in the next chapter.

If the peace movement is to argue that nuclear war cannot be limited, then it should do so on the basis of a careful political analysis and in the context of an ongoing strategy against war. It may be that the argument that nuclear war cannot be limited, like the view that nuclear war is the final catastrophe, is based on a limited political analysis and is in many ways counterproductive in its effects.

### **Conclusions**

I have argued that some of the stock beliefs of the peace movement — that nuclear war will be the end of civilisation or of life on earth, and that nuclear war is irrational and cannot be drawn out or limited — need critical reassessment. To a considerable extent these beliefs seem to be both a cause and an effect of a limited political strategy for challenging the institutions which create the threat of nuclear war. A belief in nuclear extinction encourages a belief that a moral appeal to elites can be successful, since the logical case against nuclear war is so strong. Similarly, the moral protest orientation of peace movements is reinforced, since grassroots strategies seem to take too long. And nuclear war can become a priority issue leading to the subordination of other struggles which deal with the same systems of oppression.

One implication of this analysis is that antiwar activists need to be prepared for the political consequences and aftermath of nuclear war and nuclear crisis, and to build this preparedness into present campaigns. If they do not do this, the task will be left to the military and political elites.



---

## Nuclear war: prevention by political preparation

---

Unless nuclear weapons are totally eliminated, it is a virtual certainty that nuclear war will occur eventually. The likelihood of nuclear war in any given year may be small, but it is definitely not zero. For example, it is known that US policy-makers have seriously considered using nuclear weapons unilaterally on a number of occasions. Even a small risk, repeatedly taken, gives rise to a near certainty of eventual disaster.

Two developments have increased the risk of nuclear war in recent years. First is the deployment of highly accurate strategic missile systems in the US and the Soviet Union, plus developments in anti-submarine warfare and communications and control systems. This is increasing the chance that one of the superpowers will launch a 'first strike' in an attempt to destroy the opponent's nuclear inventory. Second is the spread to more and more countries of the capability to make nuclear weapons, fostered by the expansion of the nuclear power industry. It seems likely that this nuclear proliferation will be aided at some stage by laser enrichment of uranium, a technique which will dramatically reduce the obstacles to obtaining nuclear weapons. The question in such circumstances is not if nuclear war will occur, but when, what kind and on what scale.

The risk of nuclear war could be removed if all nuclear weapons were eliminated: total nuclear disarmament. How could this happen? I have argued in this book that convincing elites or mobilising public opinion to influence elites is insufficient, and that what is required is grassroots initiatives mobilising large numbers of people in activities that challenge war-linked institutions and which create new institutions.

It is far from certain that struggles for such institutional change will succeed worldwide in 20, 50 or 100 years. Indeed, any realistic assessment of the strength of the present peace movement, in terms of its ability to fundamentally affect arms races and their institutional bases, would have to admit its extreme weakness. The peace movement seems highly unlikely to bring about nuclear disarmament within the next few years, and hence it should be prepared for the possibility of nuclear war. A long-term strategy against war must provide the basis for eliminating the war system both before and after nuclear war or nuclear wars, and at the same time minimise the chance of nuclear war occurring in the first place.

As I argued in the previous chapter, a limited nuclear war could provide

the pretext for the establishment of repressive civilian or military rule in any number of countries, such as Italy, Australia or the US, even if they were not directly involved in the war. The opportunities for grassroots mobilisation against war would be greatly reduced even from their present levels. For such developments the people and the peace activists of 'the world are largely unprepared.

As well as encouraging moves towards repressive rule, the political and social upheaval resulting from nuclear war could also provide major opportunities for rapid and beneficial social change. Several factors would operate here.

- \* There would be worldwide anguish and outrage at any significant use of nuclear weapons against populations. This emotion could easily turn against established institutions.

- \* A nuclear war involving the US, Soviet Union and Europe would weaken or destroy the bases for imperialism and neocolonialism in poor countries, and stimulate widespread revolutionary action that could not be contained by local elites left without rich country support.

- \* In areas directly affected by nuclear attack, the destruction of established institutions would allow the creation of new structures. Although war is mainly an outgrowth of particular political structures, war itself in turn has a strong influence on political institutions. In the Soviet Union, this is called 'the reverse effect of war on politics'. For example, the final stages of an unsuccessful war provide favourable conditions for disintegration of the armed forces and hence some sort of revolutionary change.

Historically, periods of economic or military crisis often have preceded revolutionary change, though not always with desirable results. Crises provide opportunities for groups which are organised and prepared. In the case of nuclear war, present states have made some arrangements to preserve their type of rule after nuclear war. The preparations of the British government for survival of the state during and after nuclear war are described, for example, by Peter Laurie in his book *Beneath the City Streets*. By contrast, the peace movement is almost entirely unprepared to respond to a crisis engendered by nuclear war.

The primary objective of national security bureaucracies in the event of nuclear war is the survival of the state. This has two components: continued defence against the outside enemy, and defence against challenges raised by the internal population. The health and welfare of the general population is a secondary consideration, mainly important in its effects on the two primary goals. This emphasis is reflected in preparations for the survival of key officials, for continuity of official communications and procedures for decision-making, and for quelling 'civil disturbances'.

In the absence of any significant countervailing force, a nuclear war will

not be the end of war but the beginning of the age of many nuclear wars. Although nuclear war may lead to mass revulsion, there will also be strong state and citizen pressures for retaliation, revenge, efforts to 'do better next time' and not to be caught unprepared. The rise of Nazism after World War One should point to the danger. Scenarios for World Wars Four, Five, Six and so forth may be repulsive, but cannot be discounted solely for this reason.

During World War Two, several key groups in the US, such as the Council on Foreign Relations, developed plans for the post-war world. More generally, post-war political and economic considerations played a large role in many decisions, military and otherwise, during the war. The same pattern is being and will be replayed prior to and during a nuclear war. It is not for lack of anything better to do that nuclear strategists have elaborated numerous scenarios for nuclear war, recovery and future wars. During and after a nuclear crisis or war, powerful interest groups will attempt to sway developments through management of the news, mobilisation of sympathetic groups, creation of scapegoats, suppression of dissent, and many other techniques familiar today. If these developments are to be opposed, peace activists need to be prepared to act during nuclear crisis and nuclear war and afterwards.

Preparation for nuclear war by the peace movement could increase the chances of success in struggles for social justice, especially in the poor countries, during a period of chaos in the rich countries resulting from nuclear war or crisis. Furthermore, decisions by small activist groups in the midst of crisis potentially can have important long-range effects by raising otherwise submerged issues and perspectives. Even in the midst of catastrophe, strategy and struggle can make a big difference.

But these possibilities provide relatively little consolation for the human disaster of nuclear war, and certainly would not justify any policy which significantly increased the risk of nuclear war. It is their implications for the present that peace movement activities relating to nuclear war must be assessed.

It is my belief that preparation for nuclear war by the peace movement would reduce the chance of nuclear war by providing a visible threat to the otherwise unchallenged continuance of existing political institutions. The institutionalised risk of nuclear war will seem less acceptable to elites if one consequence of continued preparations for war were a major challenge to the complete system of political and economic power and privilege.

Nuclear weapons states have refrained from nuclear war thus far not primarily because of the widespread perception of the human disaster of nuclear war but because of the possible political consequences. This is apparent from the published accounts of occasions when US political and

military elites considered using nuclear weapons, for example in Vietnam. A prepared peace movement would ensure that the political consequences of using nuclear weapons were as serious as possible.

There are a number of principles which seem appropriate for peace movement planning for nuclear crisis, nuclear war and its aftermath. Peace movement planning has to be based on an open rather than a hidden agenda. A full peace movement strategy must take into account supporters and sympathisers as well as opponents in working out how to take full advantage of the crisis. Most importantly, strategies, methods and organisational forms are required which are relevant both in the nuclear crisis, nuclear war and its aftermath, *and* for ongoing activities today. Just as antiwar group organisational structures should be designed to handle infiltrators, so these structures — and other aspects of efforts against war — should be designed to operate in the event of nuclear war.

And, vice versa, the type of preparations for nuclear war decided upon should be compatible with current effectiveness. Only if the threat of institutional revolution in the event of nuclear war is also raised in the present is it likely that disarmament as a reform will seem to elites as the lesser of two evils.

In spite of the attention I am giving here to preparing for nuclear war, the prospects for a post-nuclear war world seem rather dismal to me. Aside from the massive loss of life and continuing human suffering caused by nuclear war, moral barriers against the future use of nuclear weapons would be greatly reduced. During the Spanish Civil War, the terrorist aerial bombings of civilian targets by German and Italian forces caused world outrage. But not long after, such bombings became standard policy for the 'enlightened democracies'.

It seems likely that the human spirit will not be crushed even by widespread nuclear war. But preparation for survival of nuclear war should not be an end in itself, but rather the stimulus to more effective efforts at prevention. To reiterate: nuclear war would be an enormous disaster in human terms and also almost certainly in political terms. If nuclear war occurs, political preparation can at most lessen the extent of the disaster. Nuclear war is not a solution to the problem of oppressive institutions. The major importance of political preparation for nuclear war is to help prevent it in the first place. It is in this light that the following suggestions should be considered.

### **Resistance against state repression**

As mentioned earlier, one likely consequence of nuclear war or even the threat of it is declaration of states of emergency by governments, detention of 'subversives' (trade union leaders, leaders of opposition parties, leaders

of leftist groups, ethnic groups, feminists, etc.) and perhaps formal military rule. Plans, infrastructure and methods for such repressive measures already exist in many countries, having been developed to defend the status quo against various citizen-based initiatives. Furthermore, many plans for state action in the event of nuclear war, such as control over any evacuations, seem specifically oriented to perpetuate the state structure rather than to defend people.

The peace movement as well as the general population are not prepared for these contingencies, partly because nuclear war is seen as 'the end'. Yet if significant segments of the population were able to resist repression, to push for democratic initiatives and establish an alternative voice to that of the state in a nuclear emergency, the government and military would be much more reluctant to risk the occurrence of nuclear war. When the population is prepared, a nuclear war becomes a threat to the state itself as well as to the population.

Resistance to repression is important now as well as in a nuclear emergency, and hence preparation, training and formulation of strategies with this aim in mind serves a double purpose, and also links peace movement activities with other social movements.

Resistance to repression is an enormous topic, and only a few ideas are offered here. Important principles include:

- \* nonviolence;
- \* local autonomy;
- \* non-hierarchical structure;
- \* popular understanding and involvement;
- \* training;
- \* provision of infrastructure;
- \* use of methods of resistance as part of a wider programme of grassroots social action.

Some of the many reasons for nonviolence were raised in earlier chapters. A pragmatic reason for the futility of armed struggle in modern industrial society. A broader base of support can be obtained through nonviolent struggle since there is an opportunity for everyone to participate and a reduction of secrecy and of centralised control of activities. Nonviolent methods usually involve a lower level of suffering. Finally, nonviolent struggle can lay the basis for a nonviolent society. Much of the literature on social defence can be used in planning to resist repression, by shifting the usual focus on national defence by nonmilitary means to community defence.

Local autonomy in resistance to repression is essential in the actual event of nuclear war because it is likely that many surviving communities will be physically isolated, communications networks destroyed and many



official 'leaders' of the resistance either killed in the war or arrested. Even in a nuclear crisis without nuclear war, local autonomy in resistance is desirable because dominant communications channels are likely to be controlled by the state and official resistance leaders are likely to be either arrested, coopted, or infiltrated and subverted. Local autonomy in resistance to repression also can be linked with local structures for self-reliance and self-management.

Non-hierarchical structures are essential to resistance to repression for similar reasons to those for local autonomy: if 'leaders' are arrested, incapacitated or killed, others will be able to take their place with relatively little loss of effectiveness. Hierarchical structures are prime targets for infiltration or for destruction through arrest of leaders. Non-hierarchical structures are also compatible with initiatives for self-managed economic and political structures.

Local autonomy and non-hierarchical structures must be coupled with popular understanding and involvement in the plans for resistance. A significant fraction of the population needs to understand the reasons for resisting, to be ready to take the responsibility to act, and to grasp the essentials of nonmilitary methods and their relation to the goals to be obtained. They also need to be involved in decision-making in all these matters. This need not mean a large organisation specifically geared to resistance to repression. More reasonably, it will involve active interest and involvement by a few individuals who introduce the ideas and methods in groups in which they are already involved, such as unions, workplaces, schools, churches and local communities.

A minimal level of formal organisation plus a maximum level of popular involvement in resistance activities are also desirable to prevent the resistance becoming too cautious or dogmatic, which may result from dependence on particular leaders or experts. This is especially the case in preparing for nuclear war, in which flexibility and spontaneity by informed and aware groups of people are at a premium, since the experts are likely to be wrong and the long-standing leaders out of touch.

Beyond understanding strategies and methods of resistance against repression, it is important to train for resistance. For example, factory workers can practise disabling their equipment with minimal damage and responding to occupation, radio station employees can stage simulated 'resistance broadcasts', computer operators and programmers can practise disabling or reprogramming computer systems, community groups can practise removing street signs and house numbers and hiding 'dissidents', organising food distribution and so forth. In many cases training can be part of a current social action campaign.

Along with training, preparation for resistance against repression would

desirably include a minimal infrastructure. Examples are broadcasting and receiving equipment not dependent on electricity supplies, typing and duplicating facilities, and inventories of vital facilities in local communities such as supplies of food and clothing. For example, it would be useful to have plans for an 'underground' press producing newsletters and leaflets and plans for a distribution network. Initially this might be no more than an inventory of manual typewriters and manual printing equipment. The infrastructure for resistance against repression should be planned in conjunction with the wider strategy for resistance. For example, the underground press might be designed as a backup or supplement to the established press, which in some cases would be part of the resistance, or would only cooperate under duress (and, if prepared, inefficiently) with a repressive regime.

If resistance to repression were only seen as something that might be needed in the event of a nuclear war, it would not have much appeal and would be a rather negative exercise. Therefore it is important to integrate planning and training for such resistance with current campaigns against repression or for social reform, when possible. Since militarism and state repression derive from the same root, it makes sense to build very strong links between antiwar activists and those who are struggling against state power, such as groups opposing political police, civil liberties groups, groups defending the rights of minorities, women, gays and prisoners, and groups supporting freedom of information and other checks on bureaucracies.

Also important in connecting resistance to repression with a wider vision and programme for grassroots social change is establishing strong links — as already exist in many cases — between antiwar groups and Third World groups struggling for justice and equality. Third World justice struggles are a continuing threat to the war system. In a nuclear crisis or war, there would be strong pressures from exploiting groups to continue or expand repression and exploitation, for example to provide for recovery from nuclear attack. Preparation by opposition groups in exploited countries to oppose repression in a nuclear crisis could both reduce the risk of nuclear war and lay the basis for ever stronger challenges to the institutions underpinning war. This will be especially effective when opposition groups in both power blocs — for example both in Eastern Europe and Latin America — act in tandem.

### **Survival and self-reliance**

In the event of a nuclear war, it is important to know how to and be ready to take simple steps to increase one's chance of survival. At the

same time, there is a serious danger that concern about personal survival can become a preoccupation which reduces efforts to remove the sources of war.

The chance of personal survival can be increased, though certainly not guaranteed, by such measures as sheltering in strong buildings (basements if possible), evacuation of likely target areas, and just lying down if one is outside. These matters are dealt with in a number of publications.

The amount of emphasis to be put on survival should be decided on the basis of a close political analysis. In capitalist society with its high degree of individualism, many people will think only of themselves and, for example, build personal fallout shelters. States, if they raise the issue of nuclear attack at all, prefer to focus on protection, since this diverts attention from collective challenges to the institutional roots of war. Hence it is undoubtedly correct for people to challenge this emphasis and to make efforts to increase their collective chance of survival by prevention rather than protection. Indeed, E.P. Thompson says that "Protest is the only realistic form of civil defence".

Yet some minimal understanding and preparation for survival should not be rejected outright, for three reasons. First, considering that so many people *are* concerned about personal survival, peace activists can usefully link advice about protection with campaigns of protest and building of alternatives. This will be especially effective when the best protection is evacuation — as it is in many cases — but authorities counsel staying at home.

Second, knowledge of the effects of nuclear war and protection against them is vital to activists who are prepared to take political action at the time of a nuclear emergency, whether or not nuclear war actually eventuates. If unrealistic ideas and vague fears abound, the chances of maintaining antiwar campaigns or countering repression will be greatly reduced.

Third, while protest is surely necessary and proper, it may not be enough. Nuclear war may come despite the best efforts of all opposed to it. To ignore this possibility and not prepare for it is to ignore the realities of history. For European Jews in the 1920s and much of the 1930s, a slogan of 'protest and survive' might have been appropriate, perhaps even after the Nazi policy of extermination commenced in 1941. But since protest against the Nazis was not guaranteed to succeed, coordinated preparation to confront the worst eventuality would have served a valuable role. Were not Danish Jews correct to evacuate rather than stay and protest?

Disaster planning by states is usually organised centrally and hierarchically and is essentially military in style. If there were full participation of the public in disaster planning, preparation and training, the implications of this process would be different. By encouraging participation and self-

reliance, more opportunities could be opened for resisting state control during emergencies.

One aspect of personal survival is health care. It would be advisable for the general population, and antiwar activists in particular, to have a general understanding of the health effects of the blast, heat and radiation from nuclear weapons. Also valuable would be knowledge of basic ways of treating the injured, such as stemming bleeding, cleaning and bandaging open wounds, and providing fluids and rest. Of course, in many cases such as severe burning only the provision of sophisticated medical facilities and attention can offer much hope of survival. But this is not a reason to discount the role of basic measures of care and hygiene for those less seriously injured.

A number of medical professionals opposed to nuclear war have made statements to the effect that the medical problems created by nuclear war are untreatable, and hence nuclear war must be prevented. The conclusion is admirable, but the argument is dubious. Health professionals assume that only *professionals* will be treating the injured in the event of nuclear war, clearly an impossible task even before allowing for the doctors killed in the nuclear attack itself. But health care need not be monopolised by professionals. Non-professionals who understand the basics of first aid and hygiene can accomplish much in an emergency situation, indeed often as much as professionals who do not have access to sophisticated medical technology.

By understanding the physical dangers of nuclear attacks and knowing basic measures to reduce them, and understanding the essentials of first aid and hygiene, people are in a better position to take positive moves — to struggle against war and repression — in a nuclear crisis. In other words, by knowing what to do if it is necessary to protect and survive, people are in a better position to protest.

In the longer term aftermath of nuclear war — after the first few weeks and months — survival may still be difficult due to disease or lack of food or shelter, for example. Because breakdown of central services — electricity, fuel, transport, water — may persist in many areas, it may be desirable to plan for some degree of local self-sufficiency. This means such things as collecting water, growing food and making clothing.

The implication here is not to encourage a migration to self-sufficient rural cooperatives. Rather it is to build stronger links between those in what might be called the oppositional antiwar movement — those who lobby, protest and otherwise struggle against war and its underpinnings — and those involved in 'alternative lifestyles' which are built around local self-reliance, sharing of skills and communal life.

Each group has things to offer to and learn from the other. 'Alternative lifestyles' provide an alternative to present society which avoids narrow

professional roles, hierarchical organisations and centralised power of existing society which plays such a large part in the war system. By adopting some of these focusses, the peace movement not only gains some preparation for surviving nuclear war but more importantly can build a broader foundation for an alternative to war. But 'alternative lifestyles' by themselves can provide an excuse for dropping out of conventional society and avoiding constantly confronting and challenging it directly. Social activists in the peace movement and elsewhere, by linking with those building the 'alternative society', can help make its vision more politically effective.

To illustrate the links possible here, consider the area of transport. After a nuclear war, it will be vitally important for physically separated groups to contact each other. A form of transport is needed that is resilient against central physical destruction and against social breakdown. Bicycles and foot (and possibly horses) are candidates. It so happens that these are the modes already favoured by environmentally conscious people. In other words, present-day environmental/lifestyle campaigns for redesign of cities for transport by bicycle and foot point to the direction for resilient transport in a post-nuclear war world. This provides a basis for collaboration in current campaigns and planning.

Similarly, the problem of post-nuclear war networking — putting separated groups in contact by local radio, couriers, via trade, etc. — has much in common with the present problem of linking locally autonomous action groups.

In most cases, the form of social organisation most resilient to nuclear attack — decentralised, locally self-reliant, deprofessionalised — is also most desirable at other times as well. This convergence provides a basis for extending the social base and avenues for action of those working against war.

### **Moral dilemmas**

In the event of a nuclear war or even of a nuclear crisis, many people will have to make difficult moral decisions. For example:

- \* How much time and effort should be spent trying to save the injured or relieving the pain of the terminally ill?
- \* Should euthanasia be considered for those certain to die?
- \* What priority should be put on saving one's own life?
- \* What should be done about refugees or marauders who descend on a self-reliant community?
- \* Should one evacuate to relative security?
- \* What actions should be taken to oppose repression?
- \* How should decisions be made about allocating scarce supplies of food, or places in fallout shelters?



The answers to such questions are not easy. In the urgency and pressure of crisis, actions may be taken for wrong reasons: moral principles and sound political strategy may be overwhelmed by emotional impulses. Hence it is important to begin to think through possible moral dilemmas, to work out aspects of the ethics of a post-war situation, beforehand.

Not only will such preparation be important in the event of a crisis, but it will help to test and clarify present-day campaigns and priorities for their ethical soundness and consistency, including stances towards issues such as abortion, revolutionary violence, revolutionary nonviolence, pacifism, and starvation in poor countries.

During the 1930s and World War Two, most governments put severe constraints on Jewish immigration from Nazi Germany and Nazi-occupied countries, and these restrictive immigration policies prevented many Jews and others from escaping death in Nazi concentration and death camps. The same restrictive policies stimulated the Zionist movement and thus contributed to the continuing Arab state-Israeli confrontation in the Middle East. There was not a great deal of protest against the 1930s immigration policies and indeed there was much popular support for the restrictions. Yet these relatively unchallenged policies had frightening and indirect consequences. This example suggests that social activists need to think about their attitudes toward immigration and refugees both in the event of nuclear crisis and war and as a current ethical problem. A similar examination of other war-related and repression-related dilemmas would also be worthwhile.

### **Peace conversion**

In the context of nuclear emergency or nuclear war, campaigns around peace conversion assume a new role and importance. In the throes of a nuclear crisis or the aftermath of nuclear war, opportunities may arise for direct action to disarm or convert military facilities. For example, if a limited nuclear war occurred in the Middle East or Europe, the popular upsurge of opinion might support worker or citizen intervention in nuclear weapons production facilities. Or in the aftermath of a major exchange of nuclear weapons between the US and Soviet forces, there could still be armed nuclear submarines roaming the world's oceans, looking for a place to dock. What would be needed then would be popular support for disarming and/or disabling the submarine and its missiles, and for opposing local military elites or political opportunists who might try to use the submarine's firepower for their own purposes. This means knowing how to undertake the nuts and bolts of disarmament, and having experience and plans for approaching sympathetic workers or members of the military to gain their help in disarming or converting the facility.

Peace conversion in a nuclear crisis or war can be seen as playing a key role between resistance to repression and survival and self-reliance. Resistance to repression is essentially a defensive stance, to maintain existing freedoms, although these may be strengthened and extended in the course of struggling for them. Survival and self-reliance are required to protect life and livelihood in the face of nuclear attack; they can also lay the basis for alternative institutions built around local self-reliance, which are also the basis for organising to resist oppression. Between these, peace conversion goes beyond resistance to repression to take positive actions for disarmament, and more broadly, dismantling existing political and economic institutions on which the war system is based. Peace conversion in doing this also provides breathing space for efforts at survival and self-reliance and building of alternative institutions based on decentralisation, lack of formal hierarchy, and wide participation.

After the surrender of Nazi Germany in 1945, the Allied conquerors in many cases installed Nazis in positions of power because it seemed that no one else could do the job. Unless the peace movement makes preparations, a similar train of events could eventuate after a nuclear war, with architects of nuclear arms races administering post-war recovery through familiar institutions. Those who would oppose such a development should be involved in preparations for organising society after a nuclear war or a major nuclear crisis. In other words, preparation for peace conversion in a crisis, and present campaigns for peace conversion, should be extended to encompass institutional conversion.

As in the case of resistance to repression, and survival and self-reliance, methods for preparation for a nuclear emergency also make sense in non-crisis situations, and can as well reduce the risk of nuclear war by threatening the post-war political survival of those groups which have the greatest stake in the war system. For example, plans can be made for 'ordinary people' to occupy bomb and fallout shelters which are designed or reserved for state elites. This makes sense in the actual event of nuclear war, since afterwards the elites would be no more useful to the rest of the community than anyone else. For present campaigns, such plans would expose the anti-democratic basis behind war preparations and efforts to 'protect' the population. Finally, if their shelter space were jeopardised by the 'masses', elites undoubtedly would be much more reluctant to risk the possibility of nuclear war.

### **Psychological responses to nuclear war**

Preparation for nuclear war includes personal psychological preparation, which includes both coming to grips with the possibility of nuclear war

and personal death, and developing an ability to survive psychologically an actual nuclear war and remain an effective social activist.

Coming to grips with the possibility of nuclear war and personal death must be developed in tandem with developing an antiwar strategy that takes into account the political reality of nuclear war, as has been discussed earlier.

Psychological preparation for a nuclear emergency involves personal and group mechanisms for responding to:

- \* scapegoating (blaming the war or deaths on particular groups);
- \* uncontrolled rumour;
- \* apocalyptic preoccupations (fundamentalist religious revivals, etc.);
- \* passive submission to demagogues and opportunistic groups;
- \* reliance on 'leaders', outside orders, and one-directional communication channels;

All these things are happening today. Present methods for responding to and countering them need to be strengthened and made resilient in the face of the greatly increased pressures in a nuclear crisis.

Personal and group psychological survival in the aftermath of a nuclear war, or in any major social upheaval, depends on personal resources, feelings of intrinsic worth and other features of what people *are* rather than what they have achieved or accumulated. Psychological strength will be unlikely to be found among those whose self-image is filled from television or drugs, is defined by others, or is defined by bureaucratic institutions. Most people in society fall into these or other similar categories: starting from scratch without present psychological crutches would be for many people an immense task. This is a problem that affects grassroots social action generally. Hence getting to the bottom of fears about nuclear war and about surviving nuclear war is potentially a liberating process for present-day social activists.

The will to survive involves the following:

- \* establishing a goal;
- \* thinking of gradual steps to achieve it;
- \* acquiring specific skills through training;
- \* removing fear through knowledge.

In the case of nuclear war, the last step means removing the fear of radiation and nuclear war through some general understanding of their effects. Likewise, efforts to survive in present society while at the same time helping to achieve social improvements can benefit through understanding the individual and collective pitfalls, failures and disasters that can occur. In neither case does understanding and overcoming fear of the undesirable mean that one's opposition is necessarily compromised. Rather it can be made more effective. The goal is not the mentality of 'survive but do not protest', but rather 'protest with knowledge'.

## **Postscript**

The inevitability of social 'progress' has been an article of faith for many intellectuals for several centuries, for example for most liberals and Marxists. An examination of the war system does not encourage this belief in 'progress'. Peace movements through their greatest efforts have made only the slightest impact on the institutions underlying war, and indeed for the most part the efforts of peace movements have not even been aimed at these institutions. Furthermore, pro-military social forces have seldom used their full strength against peace movements, for example via war and political repression. My assessment is that the future will bring a variety of nuclear wars and many further catastrophes of repression and genocide, along with further general expansion and strengthening of state bureaucracies and militaries in particular.

Yet the picture is not entirely negative. Social ideals and social movements continue to flourish, and many advances have been made. Social critique is much more insightful than one or two centuries ago. More importantly, many more social activists are now aware of the importance of the organisation and dynamics of their own groups and of social action campaigns than even a few decades ago. A similar increase in awareness of dominant institutions causing social problems and how to go about transforming them is not out of the question.

More and more social activists seem aware of their own roles as people conditioned and restrained by society, but consciously acting towards their goals within these recognised constraints. Such partially self-aware struggles hold considerable promise, but what they can achieve in changing powerfully entrenched institutions remains to be seen.



---

## Terminology

---

In talking about peace and war, and many other topics, one can use a variety of words and phrases. The choice of terminology is important for achieving clarity, mutual understanding, and conciseness. Terminology also always carries value connotations, and a choice of a particular word often reveals a person's social or political perspective. Words such as 'democracy', 'communism' and 'fascist' have been used for political purposes so systematically that using them to refer to a definite set of social practices in everyday discourse is quite difficult.

For social activists, choice of terminology is important for all these reasons. It is worth questioning the way words are used. Feminists have realised the way language embodies and helps perpetuate sexism. Other social activists need to make similar analyses and promote appropriate changes in language. On the other hand, it is important to avoid being dogmatic about terminology. Some social movements have a rigid set of permissible words, and those not aware of the niceties of radical culture can be put down or dismissed simply for using the 'wrong' words. This is especially insidious when the winds of fashion change the acceptable radical vocabulary.

Personally, I don't think there are any 'correct' or 'incorrect' expressions in an absolute sense. Different words are useful for different purposes on different occasions. What social activists can do is try to develop and use a vocabulary which serves their aims. These aims should, I think, include:

- \* communicating between activists;
- \* communicating between activists and non-activists;
- \* accurately reflecting social values in vocabulary;
- \* fostering grassroots mobilisation.

On this last point, slogans have often been important in social struggles, and the development of appropriate slogans incorporating social meaning and attractiveness is an important aspect of many social action campaigns.

What I do here is describe some of the reasons for my own use of particular expressions. No doubt a better set could be chosen.

**'Strategy'**. This refers to a coordinated and usually comprehensive plan to move from a present situation to a future goal, taking into account social conditions and supporting and opposing social forces. 'Tactics' are activities used to obtain short-term sub-goals; various tactics may be used



in overall strategy. 'Campaigns' can be seen as components of strategies. All these words are associated with military planning and action, yet nevertheless they seem to be the most specific and well understood terms for referring to planning and action by social movements.

**'Grassroots'**. This seems to be one of the few short expressions available to refer to activity emerging from the base of society. It has a connotation of spontaneity. An alternative is to refer to the people, as in 'people's strategy against war'.

**'Movement'**. This refers to a more-or-less organised set of people and groups acting in support of a particular social goal. Many social movements are not very organised or coherent, yet the term 'movement' seems the most useful one available. An 'activist' is any person taking action in support of a particular goal, often, but not necessarily, as part of a movement.

**'War'**. I use this term to refer to organised violence carried out by military forces on behalf of states. My usage thus excludes racial violence within a state, violence by men against women (except as part of war in my sense), oppression through enforced poverty, or fighting between individuals. These types of violence are important, and should not be ignored. But my feeling is that to extend the word 'war' to include all types of violence is to make it more difficult to discuss and analyse the different, though linked, social problems.

**'Peace'**. I avoid the use of this word, since it means too many things to different people: absence of war, absence of oppression, absence of mental distress, happiness, harmony, etc. That is why I refer to 'uprooting war' rather than, for example, 'sowing peace'. I could have chosen to define my preferred meaning for peace, but I decided that the chance of being misunderstood was somewhat less by referring to opposition to war. However, the phrases 'peace movement' and 'peace conversion' are so standard that I have felt obliged to use them.

**'Nonviolent'**. I use the term 'violence' to refer to physical violence against humans: beatings, killings, genocide. Others prefer to include any form of restraint or hurting of feelings — so-called 'mental violence' — but I feel such a broad meaning makes communication too difficult. By restricting 'violence' to physical violence, 'nonviolent action' can include protests, boycotts, strikes, occupations and alternative institutions with no confusion. This is not to condone, for example, malicious emotional manipulation. But to oppose something, it should not be necessary to call it 'violent'.

**'Social defence'**. There are several alternative expressions available and

in use. 'Civilian defence' is not a good term because it is easily confused with civil defence. 'Civilian-based defence', the phrase used by Gene Sharp and others in the United States, is clearer, but it is a mouthful to say, and this I feel is a strong disadvantage in promoting it. 'Nonmilitary defence' is too vague. 'Nonviolent defence' is the expression which I previously preferred. It is descriptive, but has the disadvantage of being negative in construction and of incorporating the word 'violent' to which many people react in stereotyped ways. Finally, 'nonviolent defence' suggests passiveness to some people. Ulf Norenus suggested to me that 'social defence' is a better term, since it is the social fabric which is being defended. I agree. 'Social defence' is short, distinctive and describes a fundamental feature of nonviolent community resistance to aggression. It has the disadvantage of having little meaning to those who do not know what is being referred to. But this is an advantage too, since preconceived opinions evoked by the words 'civilian', 'military' or 'violent' are not mixed in. The term 'social defence' stakes out new conceptual territory.

**'Self-management'.** This is a standard term, but has the serious disadvantage of evoking the standard image of 'management'. An alternative expression is 'participatory democracy' which has even more syllables and which has the difficulty of competing with standard images of (representative) democracy. Johan Galtung and others have championed the term 'self-reliance' which has many advantages, except for an association with self-sufficiency especially in the economic area.

**'Elites'.** After some deliberation, I chose this term to refer to the social groups with the greatest control and influence over other people and over the pattern of development of society. For my purposes the term 'elite' has an appropriate negative connotation, but it has the disadvantage of suggesting in some quarters that a person is highly talented. By referring to political elites, economic elites and so forth, this latter connotation perhaps can be avoided. Another disadvantage is that the term refers to individuals rather than institutions — but it is necessary to talk about the individuals sometimes. Alternatives include:

'power-holders' which incorrectly suggests that power is 'held' by people rather than being a relation between people;

'decision-makers' which incorrectly suggests that others do not make decisions;

'rulers' which suggests direct personal domination rather than participation in institutions characterised by hierarchy and inequality;

'ruling class' — an improvement over 'rulers' — which still suggests straightforward domination of one group over another and which is often associated with a Marxist analysis of capitalist society, with the capitalist class assumed to be the sole ruling class.

**'The administrative class'**. I am not perfectly happy with this expression but, as described in chapter 10, it seems to me more appropriate than the alternatives: 'the intellectual class' suffers from the connotations of the word 'intellectual' in English; 'the professional-managerial class' is simply too long; and 'the New Class' is too vague. While the expression 'administrative class' tends to focus attention on a group of people, 'class' in the Marxist sense does refer to a set of social relations which is also my concern. There are quite a few alternatives which could be used to focus on the social relations of administration: 'technocracy', 'professionalism', 'administration', 'administrative elitism', 'administrative rule' and 'administrative dominance'.

**'State socialism'**. The standard term for the general public is 'communism', but state socialist societies do not have a close relation to the original conception of communism as a system in which goods are owned in common. 'State socialism' also usefully emphasises the key role of the state. Other possible expressions, which include 'bureaucratic socialism', 'state capitalism' and 'totalitarianism', are often used to convey a particular analysis of state socialism.

**'Social change'**. Ian Watson reawakened me to the point that social change is happening all the time, and that, what social activists are trying to do is to direct social change in particular ways, as indeed are various other groups in society such as state elites. The aim is not social change or a 'new society' per se, but particular kinds of social change (and stability) towards a particular kind of society, such as a society organised around self-management.

---

## References

---

The literature on peace and war is enormous, and when works on self-management, bureaucracy, the state and so forth are added, the sum total is daunting to say the least. Out of the material I have read myself, included here is only a select list. Listed are some of those works which I have found most useful, together with relevant works by authors cited in the text (some of which do not fall into this category). I have tried to keep the number of works mentioned small, and therefore many valuable items are not listed here. One important restriction, due to my own cultural and language limitations, is that most of the material listed here originated in English-speaking countries.

I would be happy to respond to the best of my ability to any requests for further information or references, and to any questions, comments or criticisms: write to me care of Canberra Peacemakers, GPO Box 1875, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia.

Before listing references relevant to the various chapters, I list some key journals and books.

### Journals

For keeping up with the latest and most incisive thought and action about challenging the war system, I have found the following journals most useful.

*Our Generation*, 3981 boulevard Saint-Laurent, Montreal, Quebec H2W 1Y5, Canada. Published four times per year, *Our Generation* includes in depth radical analyses on a range of issues, in particular peace, feminism, ecology, labour studies and urban transformation. The critique and programme developed within the journal is sustained and focussed and hence highly valuable.

*Peace News*, 8 Elm Avenue, Nottingham 3, UK. Published fortnightly, *Peace News*, subtitled 'for nonviolent revolution', features numerous articles, news reports and reviews. A range of issues are treated beyond immediate peace and war issues, such as sexual politics, prisons, and the environment. Nonviolent alternatives and struggles against oppression are dealt with using the perspectives of feminism, anarchism, socialism and the environmental movement. The articles are usually too short to develop

arguments in depth, but the key issues are almost invariably raised, and the reviews point to much of the important contemporary work.

*Social Alternatives*, C/- Division of External Studies, University of Queensland, St Lucia, Queensland 4067, Australia. Appearing several times per year, *Social Alternatives* has covered a wide range of issues, including black alternatives, anarchism, multiculturalism, environment and, in particular, peace. The basic approach is oriented towards nonviolent, fundamental change in institutions. Most of the articles are substantial, though sometimes rather academic in style.

### Some important books

Virginia Coover, Ellen Deacon, Charles Esser and Christopher Moore, *Resource Manual for a Living Revolution* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1981). This manual has been widely used for nonviolent action training since the mid-1970s and thus has had a large influence on a range of social movements. As well as basic material on nonviolent action training, the book also includes material on a theory of social change, working in groups, developing communities of support, personal growth and organising. As a resource manual it has proved invaluable, but there has been a tendency in some places to focus too much on the techniques offered, and to use the manual uncritically. One problem with the manual is that the perspective offered is usually individual-oriented, without enough attention to social structures and opposition forces being confronted. In summary: use often but with care.

Johan Galtung, *The True Worlds: A Transnational Perspective* (New York: Free Press, 1980). Galtung is one of the most prolific and insightful writers on peace issues from a grassroots perspective. His collected essays on peace research have been published in five volumes; *The True Worlds* provides a useful summary and update. Galtung adopts a wide ranging perspective, looking at structural violence, global dynamics, nonmilitary defence and many other topics. While his insights are superb and frequent, his style is rather academic and the implications of his analysis for social action are not always so clear.

André Gorz, *Strategy for Labor: A Radical Proposal* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967). In this classic book Gorz presents a penetrating critique of capitalist society and work relations, and argues the case for workers' self-management achieved through grassroots action via 'nonreformist reform'. Gorz goes well beyond the usual labour strategies, but his analysis is limited to capitalist societies and he adopts an uncritical Marxist perspective on the state.

George Lakey, *Strategy for a Living Revolution* (New York: Grossman, 1973). This inspiring book presents a five-part programme for nonviolent



social revolution. Lakey's treatment is excellent for putting grassroots efforts into a wider perspective on social change, and for an explicit and commonsense orientation to nonviolent revolution. The main limitation in my opinion is his lack of deeper analysis of the prevailing social institutions and forces which will oppose or attack social movements.

Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973). This is the now classic documentation of methods of nonviolent action and of the theory underlying the effectiveness of this action. Knowledge of the types of and experiences with nonviolent action is essential for nonviolent social activists, but the power theory presented by Sharp is more dubious. Sharp focusses on the acceptance or acquiescence by populations to ruling institutions, implying an approach to social change by the exercise of willpower. He provides little insight into the social structures which mobilise support for oppressive institutions. Sharp's theory of power has been very influential in the nonviolent action movement, without sufficient critical examination. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* needs to be supplemented by an incisive structural analysis of social institutions, whether Marxist or otherwise.

## Introduction

Mentioned:

Karl Hess, *Community Technology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979).

David Morris, 'Adam Morgan revisited: lessons from community technology' (essay review of Karl Hess, *Community Technology*), *Self-Reliance*, number 19, May - June 1979, pages 3, 10 - 11.

David Morris and Karl Hess, *Neighborhood Power: The New Localism* (Boston: Beacon, 1975).

Kirkpatrick Sale, *Human Scale* (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1980).

## 1 Limitations of Standard Antiwar Methods

A good fraction of this chapter is based on considerably revised portions of my article 'Mobilising against nuclear war: the insufficiency of knowledge and logic', *Social Alternatives*, volume 1, numbers 6/7, June 1980, pages 6 - 11.

Mentioned:

Richard J Barnet, *The Economy of Death* (New York: Atheneum, 1969) and *Roots of War* (New York: Atheneum, 1972).

Robert Cooney and Helen Michalowski (editors), *The Power of the People: Active Nonviolence in the United States* (Culver City, California: Power of the People Publishing Project, 1977).

William Epstein, *The Last Chance: Nuclear Proliferation and Arms Control* (New York: Free Press, 1976).

Johan Galtung, *The True Worlds: A Transnational Perspective* (New York: Free Press, 1980).

Ralph Miliband, *The State of Capitalist Society* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969).

Bob Overy, *How Effective are Peace Movements?* (London: Housmans, 1980 and 1982).

Nigel Young, *An Infantile Disorder? The Crisis and Decline of the New Left* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977).

On the limitations of the 'revolution first' perspective see for example Michael Albert, *What is to be Undone: A Modern Revolutionary Discussion of Classical Left Ideologies* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1974).

## 2 Principles for Antiwar Strategies

On grassroots organising, see for example: Si Kahn, *Organizing, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982); Ed Hedemann (editor), *War Resisters League Organizer's Manual* (New York: War Resisters League, 1981).

On fostering internal democracy in social action groups, see for example: Virginia Coover, Ellen Deacon, Charles Esser and Christopher Moore, *Resource Manual for a Living Revolution* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1981); The Training/Action Affinity Group of Movement for a New Society, *Building Social Change Communities* (Philadelphia: Movement for a New Society, 1979).

## 3 Social Defence

Most of the first section of this chapter ('What is social defence?') is taken or adapted from Canberra Peacemakers' 1982 broadsheet 'Social defence', written mainly by Sky Hopkins, Claire Runciman, Frances Sutherland and myself. Information on the historical examples presented is provided in Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973).

On social defence see:

American Friends Service Committee, *In Place of War* (New York: Grossman, 1967).

Anders Boserup and Andrew Mack, *War Without Weapons: Non-violence in National Defence* (London: Frances Pinter, 1974).

*Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, volume 9 number 4, 1978.

Johan Galtung, *Peace, War and Defense. Essays in Peace Research, Volume Two* (Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers, 1976).

Gustaaf Geeraerts (editor), *Possibilities of Civilian Defence in Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Swets and Zeitlinger, 1977).

Gene Keyes, 'Strategic non-violent defense: the construct of an option', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, volume 4, number 2, June 1981, pages 125-151.

Stephen King-Hall, *Defence in the Nuclear Age* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1958).

Theodore Olson and Gordon Christiansen, *Thirty-One Hours* (Toronto: Canadian Friends Service Committee, 1966).

Adam Roberts (editor), *The Strategy of Civilian Defence: Non-violent Resistance to Aggression* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967).

Adam Roberts, 'Civil resistance to military coups', *Journal of Peace Research*, volume 12, number 1, 1975, pages 19-36.

Gene Sharp, *Social Power and Political Freedom* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1980).

Of these, for me the most stimulating have been Roberts (1967), Boserup and Mack, and Galtung.

On nonviolent action generally see:

Robert Cooney and Helen Michalowski (editors), *The Power of the People: Active Nonviolence in the United States* (Culver City, California: The Power of the People Publishing Project, 1977), which includes a massive bibliography.

Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973).

#### 4 Peace Conversion

On the Cruise Missile Conversion Project see MacLean Wells, 'Group politics, class politics, and the peace movement', *Our Generation*, volume 15, number 1, Winter 1982, pages 29-32.

On peace conversion in California see *Plowshare Press* published by the Mid-Peninsula Conversion Project, 222C View Street, Mountain View CA 94041, USA.

On the Lucas initiatives see Hilary Wainwright and Dave Elliott, *The Lucas Plan: A New Trade Unionism in the Making?* (London: Allison and Busby, 1982).

#### 5 Self-management

Mentioned:

Jane J. Mansbridge, *Beyond Adversary Democracy* (New York: Basic Books, 1980).

On self-management and struggles towards it see:

C. George Benello and Dimitrios Roussopoulos (editors), *The Case for Participatory Democracy: Some Prospects for a Radical Society* (New York: Grossman, 1971).

Carl Boggs, 'Marxism, prefigurative communism and the problem of workers' control', *Radical America*, volume 11 number 6 — volume 12 number 1, November 1977 — February 1978, pages 99-122: a good summary of self-management as a strategy, with a critique of important historical episodes.

Daniel Guérin, *Anarchism: From Theory to Practice* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970): a short and to-the-point case for anarchism, building on historical examples.

Ph. G. Herbst, *Alternatives to Hierarchies* (Lieden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976): a treatment of possibilities for networks and other horizontal organising principles.

Detlef Kantowsky, *Sarvodaya: The Other Development* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980): description and analysis of the modern Gandhian movements for constructive village development in India and Sri Lanka.

Staughton Lynd and Gar Alperovitz, *Strategy and Program: Two Essays Toward a New American Socialism* (Boston: Beacon, 1973).

Davis Morris and Karl Hess, *Neighborhood Power: The New Localism* (Boston: Beacon, 1975): description of efforts towards and possibilities for neighbourhood self-management.

Colin Ward, *Anarchy in Action* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1973; Freedom Press, 1982): the case for self-management.

On the Upper Clyde experience and work-ins see Ken Coates, *Work-ins, Sit-ins and Industrial Democracy: The Implications of Factory Occupations in Great Britain in the early 'Seventies* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1981).

On defence in Yugoslavia see Adam Roberts, *Nations in Arms: The Theory and Practice of Territorial Resistance* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1976).

On cooperatives see Jenny Thornley, *Workers' Co-operatives: Jobs and Dreams* (London: Heinemann, 1981).

## 6 Grassroots Mobilisation

Mentioned:

Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Vintage, 1979). This is an important work relevant to social action of all kinds.

On the limitations of civil disobedience, see Stephen Vogel, 'The limits of protest: a critique of the anti-nuclear movement', *Socialist Review*,

number 54, November-December 1980, pages 125-134, whose conclusion supporting referenda has its own limitations.

Chris Rootes, 'The civil liberties campaign in Queensland: lessons for the future', *Social Alternatives*, volume 3, number 2, March 1983, pages 55-60, offers some valuable insights about how appealing to a certain section of the population can limit the mobilisation potential of an issue.

See also:

Dave Dellinger, *More Power Than We Know: The People's Movement Towards Democracy* (Garden City: Anchor, 1975): experiences and insights from a long-time revolutionary about movement tactics, strategy, organisation and nonviolence.

Peter Hain, *Radical Regeneration* (London: Quartet, 1975): a readable account covering direct action, protest and community politics as the bases for moving towards participatory democracy.

## 8 The State

Mentioned:

John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982).

Leo Kuper, *Genocide* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981).

Robert Nisbet, *Twilight of Authority* (London: Heinemann, 1976).

Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979): social revolution depends not only on class conflict but also vitally on the structure of state organisations and their relations to domestic class and political forces, and to their position with respect to other states.

On state mobilisation of local participation see Peter Hain, *Neighbourhood Participation* (London: Maurice Temple Smith, 1980).

On the anarchist critique of the state see for example Michael Bakunin, *Bakunin on Anarchy* (edited by Sam Dolgoff) (New York: Vintage, 1971); P.A. Kropotkin, 'The state: its historic role', in *Selected Writings on Anarchism and Revolution* (edited by Martin A. Miller) (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1970), pages 210-264.

On globalism see for example Richard Falk, *A Study of Future Worlds* (New York: Free Press, 1975); Johan Galtung, *The True Worlds: A Transnational Perspective* (New York: Free Press, 1980).

On the state see also:

Harold Barclay, *People Without Government* (London: Kahn & Averill with Cienfuegos Press, 1982): examination of societies without a state.

Fred Block, 'The ruling class does not rule: notes on the Marxist theory of the state', *Socialist Revolution*, number 33 (May-June 1977), pages



6-28: an excellent perspective on the structural mechanisms which shape the capitalist state.

Ralph Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969): an insightful Marxist treatment.

Franz Schurmann, *The Logic of World Power: An Inquiry into the Origins, Currents, and Contradictions of World Politics* (New York: Pantheon, 1974): an analysis of the interplay of ideology and bureaucracy in the dynamics of the state and the military.

Nigel Young, 'Transnationalism and communalism', *Gandhi Marg*, number 52, July 1983, pages 191-208: insights about the types of groups most likely to transcend state frameworks, and about the role of war resistance in challenging the state.

## 9 Bureaucracy

Mentioned:

Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974).

Fred Emery and Einar Thorsrud, *Democracy at Work* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976).

Friends of the Earth (Canberra), 'Bureaucracy' (Canberra: Friends of the Earth, 1983, available from FOE, GPO Box 1875, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia).

André Gorz, 'Workers' control is more than just that', in: Gerry Hunnius, G. David Garson and John Case (editors), *Workers' Control: A Reader on Labor and Social Change* (New York: Vintage, 1973).

Henry Jacoby, *The Bureaucratization of the World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

Stephen Marglin, 'What do bosses do? The origins and functions of hierarchy in capitalist production', *Review of Radical Political Economics*, volume 6, number 2, Summer 1974, pages 60-112.

James Robertson, *The Sane Alternative: A Choice of Futures* (St Paul, Minnesota: River Basin, 1980).

Deena Weinstein, *Bureaucratic Opposition: Challenging Abuses at the Workplace* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979).

Trevor A. Williams, *Learning to Manage our Futures: The Participative Redesign of Societies in Turbulent Transition* (New York: Wiley, 1982).

Ferdynand Zweig, 'The art and technique of interviewing', in *The Quest for Fellowship* (London: Heinemann, 1965), pages 244-255.

See also:

Katherine Stone, 'The origins of job structures in the steel industry', *Review of Radical Political Economics*, volume 6, number 2, Summer

1974, pages 113-173: an analysis of the way employers have used job structures to control workers.

## 10 The Administrative Class

The portions of this chapter on science and war are largely taken from a paper of mine published in Arthur Birch (editor), *Science Research in Australia: Who Benefits?* (Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University, 1983), pages 101-108.

Mentioned:

Barbara and John Ehrenreich, 'The professional-managerial class', in: Pat Walker (editor), *Between Labour and Capital* (Brighton: Harvester, 1979), pages 5-45.

Alvin W. Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class* (London: Macmillan, 1979).

See also:

Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1970); *Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1975): in these and other books Illich presents an incisive critique of professionalised services, but he does not discuss strategy for transformation.

George Konrád and Ivan Szelényi, *Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* (Brighton: Harvester, 1979): a valuable study of the role of intellectuals in society, and especially the Eastern European intelligentsia's rise to power.

Brian Martin, 'The goal of self-managed science: implications for action', *Radical Science Journal*, number 10, 1980, pages 3-17.

Piet Thoenes, *The Elite in the Warfare State* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966): a sociological treatment.

## 11 The Military

Mentioned:

Stanislav Andreski, *Military Organization and Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968).

Katherine Chorley, *Armies and the Art of Revolution* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943).

Martin Oppenheimer, *The Urban Guerilla* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1969).

Lawrence B. Radine, *The Taming of the Troops: Social Control in the United States Army* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1977).

D.E.H. Russell, *Rebellion, Revolution and Armed Force: A Comparative Study of Fifteen Countries with Special Emphasis on Cuba and South Africa* (New York: Academic, 1974).

Ellen Kay Trimberger, *Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats*

*and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt and Peru* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1978).

On the technology of social control see Carol Ackroyd, Karen Margolis, Jonathan Rosenhead and Tim Shallice, *The Technology of Political Control* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977).

For insights about political organising in relation to military forces see also Jack Woddis, *Armies and Politics* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1977).

See also Robert Nisbet, *The Social Philosophers: Community and Conflict in Western Thought* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1973), who spells out the links between the military and other fundamental features of Western Society.

## 12 Patriarchy

Mentioned:

Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarisation of Women's Lives* (London: Pluto, 1983).

See also:

Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976): many examples of the extent of rape, and a speculative argument that rape is the origin of male domination.

Wendy Chapkis (editor), *Loaded Questions: Women in the Military* (Amsterdam/Washington DC: Transnational Institute, 1981).

Jo Freeman (editor), *Women: A Feminist Perspective* (Palo Alto: Mayfield, 1979): on strategy, see especially the chapters by Jo Freeman on 'The women's liberation movement' and by Barbara Bovee Polk on 'Male power and the women's movement'.

Pam McAllister (editor), *Reweaving the Web of Life: Feminism and Nonviolence* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1982).

Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism* (London: Merlin, 1979): on the importance of feminist insights for the organisational features of the socialist movement.

Lydia Sargent (editor), *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1980): a range of views on the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism.

## 13 State Socialism

Mentioned:

Stephen King-Hall, *Defence in the Nuclear Age* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1958).

Étienne de La Boétie, *Anti-Dictator* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942).

Charles Levinson, *Vodka Cola* (London: Gordon and Cremonesi, 1979).

Ivan Szelényi, 'Socialist opposition in Eastern Europe: dilemmas and prospects', in: Rudolf L. Tökés (editor), *Opposition in Eastern Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), pages 187-208.

J.M. Zube, *An ABC Against Nuclear War* (Berrima: J.M. Zube, 1975): this and many other libertarian works by Zube and others are available from John Zube, 7 Oxley Street, Berrima NSW 2577, Australia.

See also:

Rudolf Bahro, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (London: NLB, 1978): a critique of 'actually existing socialism' and presentation of a perspective on a cultural revolution.

*Critique* (31 Cleveden Road, Glasgow G12 0PH, Scotland): "an independent journal devoted to a critical analysis of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and to the further development of Marxist theory".

Chris Harman, *Class Struggles in Eastern Europe, 1945-1983* (London: Pluto Press, 1983): examination of working class revolts from a Trotskyist perspective seeing Eastern societies as 'state capitalist'.

David Holloway, *The Soviet Union and the Arms Race* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983): an analysis of the Soviet military's role internationally and domestically.

Martin Shaw, *Socialism and Militarism* (Nottingham: Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Spokesman Pamphlet 74, no date, about 1981): an attempt to establish the existence of a Marxist anti-militarist tradition.

## 14 Other Factors

Mentioned:

Leopold Kohr, *The Breakdown of Nations* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957).

Kirkpatrick Sale, *Human Scale* (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1980).

See Ashley Montagu, *The Nature of Human Aggression* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) for the argument that human aggression is of social rather than genetic origins.

## 15 Nuclear Extinction?

This chapter is a revised version of my paper 'Critique of nuclear extinction', *Journal of Peace Research*, volume 19, number 4, 1982, pages 287-300. See also my article 'The global health effects of nuclear war', *Current*

*Affairs Bulletin*, volume 59, Number 7, December 1982, pages 14-26. Many further references can be found in these articles.

Mentioned:

Jonathan Schell, *The Fate of the Earth* (New York: Knopf, 1982), especially page 93.

Nevil Shute, *On the Beach* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1959).

See also:

Jeannie Peterson (editor), *Nuclear War: The Aftermath* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1983): scientific studies of the effects of nuclear war, but based on a scenario which includes many more civilian targets than military planning would dictate.

## 16 Nuclear War: Prevention by Political Preparation

This chapter is a revised version of my paper 'How the peace movement should be preparing for nuclear war', *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, volume 13, number 2, June 1982, pages 149-159.

Mentioned:

Peter Laurie, *Beneath the City Streets: A Private Inquiry into Government Preparations for National Emergency* (London: Granada, 1979).

E.P. Thompson, 'Protest and survive', in E.P. Thompson and Dan Smith (editors), *Protest and Survive* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980), page 57.

See also:

Jonathan Glover, *Causing Death and Saving Lives* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977): a useful treatment relevant to thinking through moral dilemmas, though there is no discussion of nonviolent alternatives.



# Index

- Aborigines 108  
 academics  
     and bureaucracy 143-146, 150  
     and social change 180-181  
 Action for World Development 108  
 activists: see social action groups  
 administrative class 161-183, 184-185, 194, 275  
 adversary democracy 79-80  
 affinity groups 81, 96, 129, 130  
 Afghanistan 44, 223, 225  
 Africa 242  
 ageism 231  
 aggression, innate 19, 235-236  
 agricultural breakdown 241  
 Alabama 86  
 Algeria 24-25, 27, 28, 50, 112  
 Allende 69  
 alternatives  
     to the administrative class 172-175, 182, 194  
     to bureaucracy 158-160  
     to hierarchical institutions: see self-management  
     lifestyles 266-267  
     to the military 194; see also social defence  
     to institutions 63  
 Amateur Chamber Music Players (ACMP) 68  
 amateurs 64-65  
 American Embassy, Canberra 225-226  
 Amnesty International 26, 108, 226  
 anarchism, anarchists 17, 72, 78, 117, 120-122, 123, 124, 205  
 Andreski, Stanislaw 188-189  
 animal liberation 231  
 animals 230-231  
 anthropology 68, 195, 235  
 anticommunism 212-213, 226  
 ANZAC Day 208  
 apartheid 119  
 Arab countries 27, 268  
 Archimedes 171  
 Argentina 194  
 Armenians 112  
 Armidale 102  
*Armies and the Art of Revolution* by Katherine Chorley 190-192  
 assertiveness 202-203, 207  
 Asiatic despotism 137, 139  
 asylum 221-222  
 Australasia 242  
 Australia 8, 35, 36, 38, 65, 82, 89, 94, 102, 105, 108, 127, 132, 151, 152, 155, 208, 220, 225-226, 239, 256, 259  
 Australian Council of Trade Unions 155  
 Australian Labor Party 8, 36, 92, 102, 152, 155  
 Australian National University 99  
 authoritarian states 141, 186; see also state socialism  
 autonomy, local, in resistance to repression 262-263  
 Bangladesh 119, 132  
 Barnett, Richard 5-7  
 behaviourism 170  
 Bendigo 107  
*Beneath the City Streets* by Peter Laurie 259  
 Berlin 23, 26  
 Berrigans 59  
*Beyond Adversary Democracy* by Jane Mansbridge 79  
 Boétie, Étienne de la 218  
 Bolsheviks 69, 70, 210, 213  
 Bond, Ron 101  
 Boserup, Anders 31  
 Boston Women's Health Collective 208  
 bourgeoisie 161; see also capitalism  
 Bourne, Randolph 115  
 Braverman, Harry 140  
 Breuilly, John 133  
 Britain 8, 56, 57, 70, 71, 90, 101, 112, 177, 189, 194, 217, 218, 219, 220, 259; see also England  
 British Columbia 242  
 British Society for Social Responsibility in

- Science 177
- Buddhists 213
- Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 176
- bureaucracy 135-160, 161-162, 166, 167, 184-185  
     grassroots mobilisation within 96  
     and military 184-188  
     and patriarchy 198-200, 207  
     in social movements 82, 96-97  
     and the state 114  
     and state socialism 209
- Bureaucratic Opposition* by Deena Weinstein 141
- bureaucratic socialism 142, 209; see state socialism
- The Bureaucratization of the World* by Henry Jacoby 137
- bureaucrats 18, 136, 153, 198-199; see bureaucracy
- Burma 192
- burnout of activists 89, 100, 103, 106, 110
- CS-A aircraft 158
- Cambodia 119; see also Kampuchea
- Cambridge 101-102
- Camelot, Project 168
- Campaign Against Racial Exploitation 108
- Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) 8
- campaigns 273
- Canada 55, 105
- Canberra 38, 89, 90, 95, 98-99, 102, 105, 108, 109, 150, 178, 208, 242
- Canberra Learning Exchange 108
- Canberra Peacemakers 33-41, 47, 49, 90-93, 106, 181-182, 224-226, 242
- Canberra Programme for Peace Committee 90-91, 102
- Canberra Times* 110, 226
- capitalism 2-3, 5, 6, 17, 114, 116, 117, 120, 121, 122, 133, 137, 140, 142, 143, 161, 163, 172, 177, 183, 199, 202, 209, 212-214, 218, 237  
     and the war system 227-229
- cataclysm 254
- Catholic Church 25, 161
- CB radio 37
- Central America 242
- chamber music 64-68
- Chile 69, 225, 249
- China 2, 15, 48, 90, 112, 115, 127, 137, 209, 210, 211, 212, 223, 224, 240, 241, 242, 245, 251, 256
- Chorley, Katherine 190-192
- Christian communities 39
- Christians 117
- CIA 225
- civil defence 241, 254, 265, 269, 274
- civil disobedience 9-10, 88-89, 95-96, 155
- civilian-based defence 274; see social defence
- civilian defence 274; see social defence
- civilisation 251
- civil rights movement 86
- class 2, 112, 231; see also capitalism, administrative class, self-managerial class
- clergy 6, 115
- climatic changes from nuclear war 241
- Cloward, Richard 96
- combat soldiers 196
- Combine Shop Stewards' Committee (Lucas Aerospace) 56-57
- Commune, Paris 69-70, 192
- communes, rural 82-83
- communications media 130, 162, 224, 254, 264
- communism 15, 209, 272; see also state socialism
- communist parties 15, 121, 162, 209, 211, 214
- Communist Party, France 84
- community  
     against the state in social defence 28-29  
     groups and social defence 39-40, 52  
     security 41-42, 131, 154  
     and self-management 67  
     destruction of by the state 116
- Community Action on Science and Environment (CASE) 178-179
- computing 169, 233
- confrontation versus cooperation 49
- Congress, US 5, 6
- conscription 28, 236
- consensus decision-making 20, 78-80, 81, 205
- Conservation Council 110
- conservatism of the military 186-187
- conservatives 122-124, 212-214, 254
- conversion 193, 194; see also peace conversion
- Cooley, Mike 58
- cooperation, in self-management 66-67
- cooperatives, co-ops 75, 80, 129, 148, 159,

- 266
- cooption 46-47
- coordination in self-management 80-82
- corporations: see capitalism
- corporatism 142
- Council on Foreign Relations 260
- counter-revolution 84-85
- crime 126, 132, 155
- crisis 18, 238-239, 257-270
- Cruise Missile Conversion Project (CMCP) 55-56
- Cuba 2, 209, 223
- Cultural Revolution, Chinese 211, 223
- cutting edge, in grassroots mobilisation 88-89
- Czarist regime 115, 210; see also Russian Revolution
- Czechoslovakia 2, 24, 27, 31, 35, 49, 132, 216, 223, 225
- Darwinism 236
- day-to-day life 252-253
- death
  - fear of 248, 270
  - in the media 254
- debureaucratisation 194; see also bureaucracy
- decentralisation 48, 67-68, 95
- decision-makers 274; see elites
- decolonisers 154
- defeatism 249
- Defence Department, Australia 49, 151
- Defense Department, US 158
- Defence in the Nuclear Age* by Stephen King-Hall 31, 217
- de Gaulle 24
- delegates 80-81
- democracy 272; see also self-management
  - moulded by the state 117
- Denmark 25, 31, 265
- deprofessionalisation 177-178; see also professions
- design, purposeful, for self-management 68-69
- destabilisation 46
- DeWitt, Hugh 56, 60
- dictatorship of the proletariat 121, 209
- disarmament 3, 4, 12, 13, 21
  - people's 53, 58-59
  - direct 58-59
- dissidents 141, 158, 216
- division of labour 130, 135, 139-141; see also gender division of labour
- doctors 196, 266; see also medicine
- Does Khaki Become You?* by Cynthia Enloe 195
- domination of nature 230-231
- doomsdayism 254
- doublethink 251
- dual power 77-78
- duelling 138
- Eastern Europe 209, 210, 213, 216, 264
- East Germany 216
- East Timor 44
- Ebert, Theodor 31
- Ebert government 23
- economic breakdown 241
- economic growth 129-130, 232
- economic system 129; see also capitalism, state socialism
- The Economy of Death* by Richard Barnett 6
- education system 131, 174, 180-181; see also schools
- efficiency of bureaucracy 140-141, 158
- egalitarian groups 20, 181, 205; see also social action groups
- Egypt 112, 137, 185
- Ehrenreich, Barbara and John 163
- electoral system 127-128, 131, 202
  - and demobilisation of social movements 7-8, 97
- elites
  - convincing them 1, 3-5, 11, 31-32, 54, 176-177, 207, 253-254, 256-257, 258
  - influencing them via public pressure 1, 5-9, 11, 31, 177, 258
  - influencing them via nonviolent action 10-11
  - self-management for 83-84
  - political, in the administrative class 162
  - scientific 233
  - terminology of 274
  - women as 201-202
- Elliott, Dave 56
- El Salvador 30, 44
- enemies 18; see also openness
- Emery, Fred 141, 143
- empires 188
- energy 21, 46-47, 68; see also nuclear power
- England 100; see also Britain
- Engels 2

- Enloe, Cynthia 195  
 environment 2, 13, 15, 125-126, 205, 230-231, 254  
 Epstein, William 3-4  
 equality  
     within institutions, as a strategy  
     against patriarchy 200-202  
     in self-management 66  
 Eskimos 195  
 Estonians 133  
 ethnic groups 112, 129, 165, 199, 229-230;  
     see also racism  
 Europe 114, 137, 161, 172, 213, 230, 240,  
     241, 245, 259, 265, 268; see also  
     Eastern Europe  
 European Nuclear Disarmament 217  
 euthanasia 25, 267  
 exaggeration 239, 249-251, 253  
 executive of the state 131  
 experts 81, 174; see also professions  
 exposure of values 174-175, 194  
 extinction from nuclear war 238-257
- factory system of production 140  
 Falk, Richard 125  
 Falklands 194  
 fallout 240, 242-243, 244-245, 246, 267,  
     269  
 family 123-124  
 fascism 161, 272; see also Nazism  
*The Fate of the Earth* by Jonathan Schell  
     243  
 fear-mongering 248  
 fear of death 248  
 federations 80, 159  
*The Female Eunuch* by Germaine Greer 108  
 feminine values 195, 197, 200  
 feminists 19, 41, 124, 148, 153,  
     187, 202, 204-208, 230, 237; see also  
     patriarchy  
     and reconstruction of institutions  
     207-208  
 feudalism 114, 137-138, 161, 172  
 fires from nuclear war 240-241, 246  
 first strike 239, 258  
 Fitzgerald, A. Ernest 158  
 flexibility and self-management 68  
 Force Ten 108  
 France 24-25, 69, 70, 84, 90, 112, 192  
 Franco 70  
 Franklin River 92-93  
 fraternisation 191, 193, 220  
 Freedom from Hunger Campaign 108  
 French Revolution 114-115, 117, 138, 190-  
     191  
 Friends of the Earth 82, 105-106, 110, 149-  
     152, 157  
 funding of science 168-169
- Galtung, Johan 4, 31, 42, 125, 274  
 game theory 170  
 Gandhi 31, 45  
 Gandhian movement 15  
 gays 42, 148, 187  
 gender 197, 202, 203  
 gender division of labour 195, 196, 198,  
     200, 227  
 genetic influence on aggression 19, 236  
 Genghis Khan 235  
 genocide 119-120, 234, 271  
*Genocide* by Leo Kuper 119  
 Germany 23, 25-26, 69, 71, 112, 220, 261;  
     see also Nazism, East Germany  
 globalists 124-125  
 God 107, 109  
 Goebbels 220  
 Goldthorpe 151  
 Gorz, André 150-151  
 Gouldner, Alvin 163  
 gradualism 17  
 grassroots 273  
 grassroots mobilisation 86-97, 130, 200,  
     204, 272  
 grassroots organising 20  
 Greece 194  
 Greenham Common 206  
 Greer, Germaine 108  
 Griew, Robert 98-100  
 guerrilla warfare 16, 22, 44-45, 48, 72, 196  
 guilt 249
- Harwood, Chris 224  
 health care 266; see also medicine  
 heterosexism 13, 187; see also gays  
 hierarchy 16-17, 65-66, 76, 164, 252-253  
     in bureaucracy 135, 139-141  
     in the military 185-186  
     and patriarchy 198-199  
     in resistance to repression 262-263  
     and in social action groups 204-206  
 Hilton Hotel, Sydney 36

- Hiroshima Day 90, 151
- Hitler 25, 34, 43, 220, 235
- homosexuality 42; see gays
- honour system 74-75
- Hopkins, Sky 34
- Houston, Texas 74
- How Effective are Peace Movements?* by Bob Overy 10
- Hungary 2, 26, 69, 216, 223
- Hunt, Janet 100-104
- Hydro-Electric Commission 92-93
- ideology
  - of the administrative class 165
  - of individualism 136
  - of rational ideas 167
  - of science 171
  - of social action groups 99, 100
- immigration 128-129
- individualism 136
- individuals
  - in bureaucracies 136
  - inside institutions 156
  - changing them as a strategy against patriarchy 202-203
  - and social activism 98-111
  - mobilised against the state 130
  - mobilised for the state 118
  - and the war system 112, 235
- India 15, 31, 242
- Indochina War 8, 228
- Industrial democracy 143-146, 147, 150; see also workers' control
- industrialisation 231-232
- industrial revolution 140
- infrastructure 61-62, 262, 264
- innate violence 235-237; see also genetic influence on aggression
- insiders and outsiders 179-180
  - linked in strategy against institutions 152-155, 175, 206-207
- inspection 53
- institutions
  - changing them as a principle for anti-war strategies 12-13, 136
  - local 123, 125; see also communities
  - long march through 156
  - as distinguished from people 18
- intellectuals 31, 163, 167, 216, 217, 271, 275
- International Socialists 47, 95
- Iran 26-27, 115, 225
- Ireland 242
- Irish Republican Army 48
- irrationality of nuclear war 255, 257
- Israel 27, 90, 112, 196, 268
- Italy 69, 259, 261
- Jacoby, Henry 137
- Japan 178, 185, 239, 240, 245, 251
- Jews 26, 112, 119, 133, 255, 265, 268
- jobs 60-61
- jury system 73-74, 81-82
- Kahn, Si 20
- Kampuchea 211; see also Cambodia
- Kapp Putsch 23, 27, 28, 50
- KGB 224-225
- Krushchev 219
- King-Hall, Stephen 31, 217-220
- knowledge
  - and the power of the administrative class 164-166, 174-175
  - spreading of 52, 58, 160
- Kohr, Leopold 234-235
- Korea 112; see also North Korea
- Kropotkin, Peter 117
- Ku Klux Klan 50
- Kuper, Leo 119
- Labor and Monopoly Capital* by Harry Braverman 140
- Labor Party, Australia: see Australian Labor Party
- Labour Party (Britain) 8, 56
- labour unions: see unions
- The Last Chance* by William Epstein 3
- Latin America 168, 264
- Latvians 133
- Laurie, Peter 259
- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory 54-57, 59-60, 233
- Learning to Manage Our Futures* by Trevor Williams 145
- left 47-48, 214-215
- legal system 162
- Lenin 121, 210
- Leninism 14, 210
- Leonardo 171
- lesbians 42; see also gays



- letter-writing 88  
 Levinson, Charles 214  
 liberal democracy 162; see also social  
     democracy  
 liberal feminism 201  
 liberals 3  
 liberation struggles 16, 44-46  
     nonviolent 30, 45  
 libertarian  
     approach to state socialism 220-223  
     socialism 120; see also anarchism  
 libraries 73  
 Lifton, Robert 248  
 limited nuclear war 238, 242, 254, 256-257,  
     258-259  
 Lithuanians 133  
 Litton Industries 55, 57  
 Livermore Action Group 55-56, 59  
 living the revolution 15, 148-149, 159  
 lobbying 88, 157  
 local institutions 123, 125; see also  
     communities  
 long march through institutions 156  
 long-term perspective as a principle for anti-  
     war strategies 17-18  
 Lorenz, Konrad 236  
 Los Alamos National Laboratory 55, 59, 233  
 lot system 73-74, 81-82, 129, 159  
 Lucas Aerospace 56-58, 61, 84, 158  
*The Lucas Plan* by Hilary Wainwright and  
     Dave Elliott 56  
 Luton 151
- Mack, Andrew 31  
 Malvinas 194  
 Mansbridge, Jane 79-80  
 Mao 211-212  
 marginalisation 82-83  
 Marglin, Stephen 140  
 Martin, Brian 104-107  
 Marx, Karl 2, 121, 210  
 Marxism, Marxists 2, 14, 47-48, 95, 120-121,  
     163, 205, 210, 237, 271, 274, 275  
 masculine values 171, 186, 195, 197, 200,  
     203  
 means and ends 14-15  
 media: see communications media  
 medicine 133, 162, 164, 172-175, 266  
 Megalo screen printing collective 39-40  
 Melbourne Church of England School 107  
 mental workers 163
- Mexico 192  
 Michels, Robert 82  
 Middle East 238, 242, 256, 268  
 Miliband, Ralph 7  
 military 131, 135, 138, 184-194, 195, 202,  
     220-221  
 military coup 14, 23, 24-25  
 military defence 21  
     as an antiwar method 1-2  
*Military Organization and Society* by  
     Stanislav Andreski 188  
 military sociology 188-189  
 Minamata disease 178  
 mobilisation  
     within bureaucracies 96, 142-143,  
     198-200  
     grassroots 86-97, 130, 200, 204, 272  
     of masculine values 113, 198-200,  
     203  
     mutual 198-199  
     for the state 117-119  
 modernisation 123  
 Montgomery, Alabama 86  
 moral dilemmas 267-268  
 movement 273  
 Movement Against Uranium Mining 109  
 Movement for a New Society 20  
 music 63-68  
 mutual mobilisation 198-199  
 mutual support, in grassroots mobilisation  
     87-89
- Nagasaki 30  
 Nasser 185  
 National Development and Energy, Depart-  
     ment of 151, 157  
 nationalisation 125, 147  
 nationalism 133  
 national socialism: see Nazism  
 nations 133  
 nature, domination of 230-231  
 Nazism, Nazi Germany 25-26, 42, 43, 48,  
     119, 139, 161, 220, 249, 255, 260,  
     265, 268, 269  
 negotiations 4  
 neighbourhood security: see community  
     security  
 Netherlands 25, 31, 178  
 neutralism 126  
 New Class 163, 275  
 Nisbet, Robert 123

- Nixon, Richard 104
- noncooperation in social defence 22-23
- nonmilitary defence 273; see social defence
- Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) 3
- nonviolence
  - as a principle for antiwar strategies 15-16
  - in resistance to repression 262
  - in social defence 29
  - terminology of 273
- nonviolent action 157; see also social defence
  - as an antiwar method 9-11
  - training 43, 91-92, 262-264
- nonviolent defence 274; see social defence
- Norenus, Ulf 274
- Northern Ireland 30, 189
- North Korea 209
- North Vietnam 17
- North West Cape 36
- Norway 25, 144
- nuclear disarmament 3-4, 13
- nuclear freeze 14, 126
- nuclear power 21, 33, 46, 130, 146, 149, 169, 174, 234
- nuclear war 13, 19, 30, 36-37, 177, 271
  - effects of 240-241, 243-246
  - extinction by 238-257
  - limited 238, 242, 256-257
  - prevention by political preparation 258-270
  - rationality of 255, 257
- nuclear weapons 2, 3, 13, 30, 53, 54-55, 130, 221-222, 233-234
- nuclear winter 241-246
- Nurrungar 36
- Nuremberg Trials 225
- Oceania 242
- officer corps 184-186; see also military
- Oklahoma 104
- oligarchy, iron law of 82
- Olympic boycott 223
- On the Beach* by Nevil Shute 243
- openness 18-19, 48-49
- operations research 169
- Oppenheimer, Martin 48, 189
- orchestras 64-65, 67-68
- organising 20
- Organizing* by Si Kahn 20
- overkill 242
- Overy, Bob 10
- ozone 240, 243-244, 245
- pacifism 117
- Pakistan 119
- Palestine 44
- Paris 69, 70, 192
- parks, public 73
- Parks, Rosa 86
- Parliament House, Canberra 155, 181
- Partial Test Ban Treaty 7
- participation 129
  - in the military, and stratification 188
  - as a principle for antiwar strategies 16-17
  - in resistance to repression 262-263
  - in science 176
  - in social action 87-89
  - in social action groups 20, 76, 205
  - as a feature of social defence 28
  - mobilised by the state 118, 130
  - workers' 72, 118, 147
- participatory democracy 274; see self-management
- parties, political: see electoral system, vanguard parties
- partisan warfare: see guerrilla warfare
- patriarchy 113, 130, 142, 165, 171, 185, 186, 195-208, 227, 237
  - and bureaucracy 198-200
- peace
  - camps 206
  - conversion 20, 51-62, 193, 268-269, 273
  - education 180-181
  - movement 8, 9, 13, 40, 87, 205, 217, 252, 260-261, 271, 273
  - terminology of 273
- Peace News* 14
- periphery, weakening the 132
- Perth 98
- Peru 185
- pessimism to justify inaction 247
- Pine Gap 36
- Piven, Frances Fox 96
- planning and defeatism 249
- Plumwood, Val 163
- Poland 25, 36, 211, 214, 216, 223
- polarisation 153
- police 18, 131, 153, 154-155, 162
- The Politics of Nonviolent Action* by Gene Sharp 218

*Poor People's Movements* by Frances Piven  
and Richard Cloward 97

pornography 203

Portugal 242

poverty 13, 125-126

power-holders 274; see elites

*The Power of the People* 9

President of the United States 131

principles

for antiwar strategies 12-20

as important in themselves 19-20

prison system 131-132, 154, 162, 186

privilege of administrative class 165-166

production, questioning of 51-52

productive labour 203

professional-managerial class 163, 275

professions 162-163, 166-167, 170-171, 266

Project Camelot 168

proliferation of nuclear weapons 3-4, 258

propaganda

democratic 218-219

stunts 219

prostitutes 195-196

Prussia 70, 192

psychology 170

of bureaucrats 136

of individuals mobilised for the state

118

of individuals mobilised against the

state 130

used for control in the military 187-

188

responses to nuclear war 269-270

of women 201-202

public opinion 6-7, 9

public servants 38-39, 150-152

Quebec 132

Queensland 102-104

Quisling 25

racism 2, 13, 20, 29, 118-119, 125-126, 130,

143, 227, 229, 231, 234, 237, 250

and the war system 229-230

Radine, Lawrence 187-188

radio 35-38, 264

Radio Free Europe 218

rallies 88, 89, 90

rape 195, 196, 204, 208

rationality of nuclear war 255, 257

*Rebellion, Revolution and Armed Force* by  
D.E.H. Russell 192

Red Brigades 48

Red Guards 211-212

reformism 253-254

relevance, in grassroots mobilisation 87-89

religion 165, 168, 230; see also Catholic

Church

repression, political 13, 25-27, 261-264,

269, 271

reproductive labour 203

revolution

from above 185

first as an antiwar method 2-3

living the 15, 148-149, 159

and the military 190-193

and state socialism 222

*Revolution from Above* by Ellen Kay

Trimberger 185

Rexdale, Canada 55, 57

Rice University 74, 104

right 122-124, 212-214

Roberts, Adam 31

Robertson, James 154

*The Roots of War* by Richard Barnett 5

rulers 274; see elites

ruling class 274; see elites, class

Runciman, Claire 34

rural communes 82-83

Russell, D.E.H. 192

Russia, Russian 15, 226; see also Soviet

Union

Russian Revolution 69-70, 84, 115, 121,

190-191, 210, 211

Sagan, Carl 253

Saigon 17

Sale, Kirkpatrick 234-235

San Francisco 55, 59

scale 219; see also size

scenarios

of nuclear war 238-239

and social defence 44

Schell, Jonathan 243-246, 248

schools, schooling 101, 133, 162, 164-165,

187

science, scientists 6, 18, 162, 163, 168-172,

176-180, 233, 246

Science for the People 177

science shop 177-178

Scotland 132

- Scott Bader Company 71  
 screen printing 39-40  
 secret police 210; see also spy agencies  
 sectarian groups 19, 47-48, 94-95  
 self-managerial class 182-183  
 self-management 20, 63-85, 159, 172, 183  
     and bureaucracy 143-152  
     in science 176-180  
     terminology of 274  
 self-reliance 40, 173-174, 194  
     and nuclear war 264-267, 269  
     in social defence 30  
     terminology of 274  
 self-sufficiency 274; see also self-reliance  
     under feudalism 137-138  
 separatism 19, 153, 205-207  
 separatist movements, national 132-133  
 sexual harassment 203-204  
 sex versus gender 197  
 sexism 2, 13, 15, 20, 29, 125-126, 187, 195,  
     227, 229, 231, 234, 237, 250  
 Shah of Iran 26-27  
 Sharp, Gene 22, 31, 32, 34, 218, 274  
 Shute, Nevil 243  
 size 67, 234-235  
 skills, spreading of: see spreading  
 Skocpol, Theda 114  
 Smith, Adam 140  
 social action groups  
     and academics 180-181  
     and bureaucracies 156  
     and consensus 78-80  
     experience and equality in 181-182  
     hierarchy in 204-206  
     ideology of 99, 100  
     and the military 190  
     professionalisation of activists in 180  
     in the area of science 177-180  
     and self-management 75-76, 148-152  
     and technology 234  
     and women 204-206  
 social attack 29-30  
 social change 275  
 social defence 20, 21-50, 91, 126, 129, 173,  
     181, 188, 193, 194, 217-220, 226,  
     273-274  
 social democracy 8, 156-157, 214, 215  
 socialism, socialists 121, 147, 202, 209, 211  
     in a state mould 117  
 social welfare 133-134  
 socio-technical design 144  
 soldiers 18, 19, 153, 195-196, 220-221; see  
     also military  
 Solidarity 211  
 South Africa 31, 90, 119-  
 South America 242  
 South Vietnam 17  
 South-West Coalition 92  
 soviets 69  
 Soviet Union 1, 2, 4, 14, 24, 27, 35, 49, 80,  
     90, 132, 133, 161, 209, 210, 211,  
     213, 216, 217, 219-220, 221-222,  
     223, 224, 225, 226, 234, 238, 239,  
     240, 241, 243, 244, 245, 249, 253,  
     256, 258, 259, 268; see also Russian  
     Revolution  
 Spain 17, 69, 72, 239  
 Spanish Civil War 17, 69-70, 72, 261  
 Spanish Collectives 122  
 specialisation 165, 192; see also division of  
     labour  
 speciesism 231  
 sport 236-237  
 spreading knowledge and skills 52, 58, 78,  
     160, 174-175, 176, 194  
 spy agencies 131  
*The State in Capitalist Society* by Ralph  
     Miliband 7  
 Stalin 25, 43  
 Stalinism 139  
 state 2, 3, 112-134, 135, 137, 161, 184-185,  
     227-229, 259  
 state capitalism 209, 275  
*States and Social Revolution* by Theda  
     Skocpol 114  
 state socialism 2, 3, 17, 114, 120-121, 141-  
     142, 161, 183, 190, 209-226, 275  
 state system 113, 130-131  
 statist left, failure of 214-215  
 strategy  
     to transform bureaucracy 152-155  
     on the military 193-194  
     against patriarchy 200-208  
     principles for antiwar strategies 12-20  
     for self-management 76-78  
     lack of in social action groups 76  
     against the state 129-132  
     against state socialism 215-226  
     terminology of 272-273  
 stratification 188  
 strikes 71  
 structural violence 15-16, 195  
 Student Christian Movement 109  
 students 6, 14, 18, 71, 74-75, 99, 145, 165;

- see also schools  
 Supreme Court, US 86  
 survival of nuclear war 253, 264-267, 269  
 Sutherland, Frances 34  
 Sweden 31, 71, 72-73  
 Switzerland 72-73  
 Sydney 36, 105  
 symbolic actions (in social defence) 22  
 symptoms of the war system 1  
 synergistic effects of nuclear war 241  
 Szelenyi, Ivan 216
- tactics 272  
*The Taming of the Troops* by Lawrence Radine 187  
 Tasmania 92-93  
 Tavistock Institute 143-144, 145  
 tax withholding 88  
 technology  
   as a root of war 232-234  
   high 130, 187, 189  
 Telecom Australia 37, 145  
 Terania Creek 149  
 terminology 272-274  
 terrorism 48  
 Texas 74  
 thermodynamics 169  
 Third World 16, 115, 167, 212-213, 251-252, 264  
 Thompson, E.P. 265  
 Thorsrud, Einar 143  
 Tibet 132  
 time for activism 76  
 Toowoomba 102  
 Toronto 55  
 torture 26, 27  
 totalitarianism 209, 275  
 trade unions: see unions  
 training: see nonviolent action training  
 transnational corporations 133; see also capitalism  
 transport 267  
 Trimberger, Ellen Kay 185  
 Trist, Eric 143  
 Trotskyism 2, 47  
 truth 218-219  
   as a principle for antiwar strategies 19  
 Tulsa 104  
 Turkey 112, 185  
*Twilight of Authority* by Robert Nisbet 123
- Unemployed Workers' Union 99  
 unemployment 126, 133  
 unilateral disarmament 126  
 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR):  
   see Soviet Union  
 unions, trade 6, 57, 155, 158, 214; see also  
   Solidarity, workers' control  
 unitary democracy 79-80  
 United Kingdom: see Britain  
 United Nations 119, 124  
   Second Special Session on Disarmament 7  
 United States 1, 4, 5, 9, 14, 27, 36, 54, 68, 80, 86, 87, 90, 91, 104, 105, 123, 131, 132, 151, 168, 177, 225-226, 233, 234, 238, 239, 240, 241, 243, 244, 245, 246, 253, 255, 256, 258, 259, 260, 268, 274  
 University of California Nuclear Weapons Laboratories Conversion Project (UCNWLCP) 54-56, 59  
 University of Western Australia 145  
 unthinkability 251  
 Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (UCS) 70-71  
 uranium mining, movement against 89, 94-95, 149, 152, 155  
*The Urban Guerrilla* by Martin Oppenheimer 48, 189  
 vanguard parties 2, 14, 94, 122  
 Vauxhall 151  
 Vermont 79  
 Victoria 102, 107  
 Vietnam 2, 8, 15, 48, 104-105, 112, 127, 196, 209, 210, 211, 213, 261  
 violence  
   and social defence 43-44  
   and the statist left 215  
*Vodka Cola* by Charles Levinson 214  
 Vogt, Roland 49  
 Voice of America 218, 219
- Wainwright, Hilary 56  
 Walters, Rosemary 107-111  
 war  
   and the administrative class 166-168  
   and bureaucracy 135-139  
   and capitalism 227-229  
   as a category 113  
   and classes 112  
   and domination of nature 230-231  
   and individuals 112, 235



- and industrialisation 231-232
- and innate violence 235-237
- and the military 184-185
- multiplicity of roots 237
- in non-industrialised societies 195
- and patriarchy 113, 195-200
- and racism 112, 229-230
- and science 168-172
- and size 234-235
- and the state 115-117, 119
- and state socialism 209-212
- system 1
- and technology 232-234
- terminology of 273
- War Resisters League 55
- Watson, Ian 275
- weather prediction 170
- Weimar Republic 23
- Weinstein, Deena 141, 150
- welfare system 131, 133-134
- West and nuclear extinction 251
- Western Australia 145
- whites 165, 251; see also racism, ethnic groups
- Williams, Trevor 145, 154
- Windpower 63-65, 73
- wives 195-196
- women: see patriarchy, feminism
- women's protest, as a strategy against patriarchy 206-207, 208
- worker's control 70-72, 129, 146-148
  - and social defence 42, 52
- workers' participation 72, 118, 147
- work-in 70-71
- world government 124
- World War One 8-9, 15, 87, 115, 117, 172
- World War Two 54, 86, 169, 172, 184, 218, 228, 256, 260, 268
- World War Four 239, 260
- 2XX 35-38
- Young, Nigel 8, 67
- Yugoslavia 48, 71, 72, 73, 212
- Zionism 268
- Zube, John 11, 217, 220-223
- Zweig, Ferdinand 151



FREEDOM PRESS have been publishing anarchist literature since 1886. As well as books, pamphlets and leaflets, we have published journals throughout this period: *Freedom* (1886-1927), *Spain and the world* (1936-39), *War Commentary* (1939-1945), and *Freedom* from 1945 is still going strong. In all more than 3000 issues (now available on microfilm). As well as being one of the oldest of the alternative publishing groups, FP is probably unique in that neither editors, writers nor authors have ever been paid for their work.

At our premises in Angel Alley (next door neighbours include the Whitechapel Art Gallery and Aldgate East tube) we have a bookshop which carries a large selection of books, pamphlets and periodicals, including French, Spanish and Italian language publications. The bookshop runs an efficient mail order service to all parts of the world.

This book, like *Freedom* and a growing number of alternative publications is being printed on the premises by Aldgate Press, a successful cooperative venture made possible in the first place by the FRIENDS OF FREEDOM PRESS.

We will be glad to send specimen copies of *Freedom*, our publications and booklist, as well as information about the FRIENDS OF FREEDOM PRESS to all enquirers. (Please include 30p in stamps to cover postage.)

**FREEDOM PRESS in Angel Alley**  
**84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1.**

**Uprooting War** is unlike the numerous treatments of the dangers of war, the benefits of disarmament or the need for government or citizen action. It is about developing strategies for grassroots activists to challenge and replace the war system. Brian Martin presents a wide-ranging critical analysis of social institutions and as well draws upon his experiences as a social activist.

The peace movement has used methods such as lobbying, rallies and civil disobedience. All of this has been important, but it has had little impact on military races. The trouble is that only a few campaigns seriously challenge the hierarchical power structures which underlie preparations and resort to war.

**Uprooting War** aims to encourage serious thinking about strategies against war which involve confronting institutions such as the state, bureaucracy, the military and patriarchy. Some of the alternative directions examined are social defence, peace conversion, and building self-managing political and economic institutions.

The author also presents some controversial proposals for politically preparing for the actuality of nuclear war while at the same time helping to reduce its likelihood.

**Brian Martin**, born 1947 in Gary, Indiana, lives in Canberra, Australia, and works as an applied mathematician. He has been active for many years in the radical science, environmental and peace movements, and has written widely in these areas.