

## Book Reviews

**E. Shragge, R. Babin, and J.G. Vaillancourt, (Editors).  
ROOTS OF PEACE:  
THE MOVEMENT AGAINST MILITARISM IN CANADA.  
Toronto: Between the Lines, 1986.  
203 pp. \$12.95**

*Roots of Peace: The Movement Against Militarism in Canada* is a collection of articles on a wide range of peace-related issues, from Canada's role in NATO to liberation struggles in the Third World. The book's contributors include disarmament activists, feminists, community organizers, academics, and a retired general. However, despite this diversity of issues and perspectives, the book's 13 articles leave one with a single, two-part message. The first part: Canada is a full and voluntary player in the arms race. We are told to look beyond Washington and Moscow to find reasons for increased global militarization. We should look closer to home, at our communities, our places of work. We should look to Canada's economic system, its profit from arms sales, its treatment of women and developing nations, its relationship with the U.S.

The second part of the book's message is that Canadians can do something to halt the arms race. The reader is advised, however, to put little hope in politicians or superpower summits. Again, we should look closer to home, at ourselves, our involvement in efforts for peace.

The book has two sections: "An International Perspective on the Peace Movement" and "Organizing for Peace." The first section places Canadian involvement in the arms race into a global context and deals with some of the larger issues: Canada's role in NATO and its relationship to the U.S., disarmament movements in Europe, the Third World and superpower politics, the need for a non-aligned peace movement, and that perennial question, "What about the Russians?"

The second section describes specific examples of what the Editors call "detente from below"; that is, a grassroots movement of ordinary people committed to breaking the cycles of power and paranoia which keep all of us locked in the arms race. There are two chapters on women and peace, one on the history and rationale of the Nuclear Free Zone movement, another on the role and record of Quebec's trade unions in disarmament efforts, a critique of Canada's nuclear export policy, an assessment of efforts to lobby politicians on issues of peace and, finally, a chapter on the future of the Canadian peace movement.

In the first chapter, "Canada, the United States, and the Western Alliance," Major-General (ret.) Leonard Johnson argues that Canada's membership in NATO and its subservience to U.S. defence policy help perpetuate the belief that there can be a military solution to what is, finally, an international political problem. He recommends a revised Canadian defence policy, one which is less dependent on U.S. policy and puts a greater emphasis on defence of Canada. Johnson also argues that Canada must take a stronger and more critical stand on American militarism and interventionism.

The second chapter, "The Empire Strikes Back," by Bryan Palmer, provides a detailed and well documented history of the Cold War and Canada's compliance with U.S. escalation of the arms race.

Johnson and Palmer contend that each stage in America's growing militarism has been justified by raising the spectre of Communism and supposed Soviet expansionism. Canada is implicated in this as well. As David Mandel points out in "The Soviet Union and the Peace Movement," Canadian troops use the Soviet Red Army as their imaginary foe in war games.

Mandel's discussion makes interesting reading because he examines the Soviet angle, while Johnson and Palmer offer a predominantly Western perspective. Mandel also subscribes to the belief that Soviet arms escalation has most often been a defensive reaction. Since the second world war, the Soviets have consistently lagged behind the U.S. in nuclear arms, if not numerically (a misleading measure), then certainly in terms of technical sophistication. Mandel extends this analysis to explain Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe and Afghanistan as essentially defensive. But as he himself says, "To explain is by no means to justify" (p. 69).

Mandel does a good job with a difficult topic. Western peace activists have often been denounced as Soviet dupes or agents for their failure to discuss critically Soviet domestic and foreign policy. Mandel does this without falling into the simple-minded logic and aggressive rhetoric of the Cold War. Although no apologist for the Soviets, he does help deflate the myth of the Soviet "threat."

The third chapter, "Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Alignment in Europe," by Dan Smith, makes a case both for non-alignment – that is, favouring or promoting neither superpower or power bloc – and for unilateral disarmament – the decision by a nation or group of nations to dismantle its nuclear weapons without waiting for agreement on reciprocal measures by other countries. Caught between two heavily armed, hostile rivals, and considered by many the likely arena for initial exchanges in a U.S.-Soviet nuclear confrontation, Europe has a choice between playing the deadly power bloc game or breaking the Cold War dynamic by taking independent initiatives. Like Europe, Canada is sandwiched between the superpowers.

The fourth chapter, "Towards a True North-South dialogue," by Pierre Beaudet, offers the developing nations' perspective on militarism and suggests that peace activists in Europe and North America have much in common with those struggling for national liberation in the Third World. Although the former are involved in an East-West conflict and the latter in a North-South conflict, Beaudet argues that there are common goals and enemies. The same political and economic factors which cause imperialistic intervention in the Third World cause the arms race: spheres of influence, the voracious appetite of capitalism, fear of Communism, and ever increasing militarization.

The final chapter of the first section, "Non-Alignment and Detente from Below," by Babin, Shragge, and Beaudet points out that both superpowers benefit from the Cold War – politically, militarily, economically. Fear of the enemy – the "other" – fuels the arms race, increases military production, cows reluctant allies, and keeps nations dependent on their superpower champion for defence. The authors recommend "an alternative dialogue between the populations in the West and the East" (p. 79). This "detente from below" is especially important, they say, between the independent, or non-aligned, peace activists of West and East.

The second section of the book examines some of the approaches and issues relevant to "detente from below." "A Feminist Approach to Militarism and Peace," by Phyllis Aronoff, relates our individual lives to the mechanics of power throughout our society:

Making the link between the personal and the political means understanding that our personal relationships are shaped by the power dynamics integral to our society. Thus the exploration of our personal experience is an important means of understanding larger political dynamics. (p. 96)

And, of course, vice versa. In an economy controlled by men and militarism, social programs suffer most: health care, education, day care,

shelters for women. Furthermore, women are barred from the political process which creates these imbalances of power and money.

Marion Kerans argues that women are "a nation in exile," subject to the same economic and political exploitation as developing nations, in "The Women's International Peace Conference – A Report." It is a good companion piece to Aronoff's; both explore the ways in which militarism directly affects allocation of resources for women and violence against women.

Andrea Levy provides some of the history and rationale of the Nuclear Free Zone (NFZ) concept in her chapter, "Community Disarmament Initiatives." The creation of approximately 3,000 NFZs in 18 countries around the world has been criticized as a largely symbolic gesture, but Levy demonstrates that the discussion, organization, and education which results when local groups attempt to have their communities declared NFZs has led to initiatives that make the often abstract and distant issues of militarism concrete and local.

Eric Shragge and David Mandel provide a good example of the kind of local initiative Levy describes in their chapter on "Trade Unions and Peace – Lessons from Quebec." The authors argue that it is important to involve the unions in the struggle for peace, because unions have always been associated with progressive political causes and are integral links in the Western economic system, a system which has always been eager to benefit from the capital-intensive business of arms production.

Closing the arms factories is clearly not the answer; manufacturers of arms employ thousands of workers. Shragge and Mandel suggest a two-stage solution. First, governments generally, and Quebec specifically, should transfer their money and support away from the highly technological, capital-intensive production of weapons to such labour-intensive and/or socially beneficial sectors of the economy as education, health care, housing, and day care. The second stage of their solution requires the conversion of military industries to the production of socially useful goods.

Perhaps the most damning chapter of the book, in terms of Canadian national policy, is "Fuelling the Arms Race – Canada's Nuclear Trade," by Gordon Edwards. Edwards provides a well-written and chilling picture of Canada's practice of selling nuclear reactors and uranium: "Without uranium, there would be no nuclear weapons . . . . And almost from the beginning of the nuclear age Canada has been the world's largest exporter of uranium" (p. 137).

Edwards describes Canada's nuclear trade with Argentina, India, Pakistan, South Africa, and France, all countries which have refused to sign

the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Canada has sold reactors to Taiwan and South Korea and negotiated to sell one to Turkey. In return, our government extracts a "promise not to use nuclear materials or technology supplied by Canada for military purposes" (p. 141). We can extract the promise but we cannot enforce it.

Paul Cappon's chapter, "The Movement and the Levers of Power," is distressing news. The "Levers of Power" is an ironic reference to our politicians – municipal, provincial, federal – who, in Cappon's experience, are in fact powerless, unable or unwilling to act. Poorly informed, committed to short term self-survival, caught up by the political and economic forces of the arms race, our politicians are ill-suited to take the political stands necessary to halt militarism. He suggests that our only hope lies in by-passing the ordinary political process and building widespread public support for alternative disarmament positions by breaking free from the psychology of propaganda and the mentality which dehumanizes "the enemy" as justification for a high level of military preparedness.

In the book's final chapter, "Directions for the Canadian Peace Movement," Editors Babin, Shragge, and Vaillancourt recommend some issues and actions they believe should be peace movement priorities – the need for non-alignment and unilateral initiatives, the rejection of Cold War rhetoric and the bipolar logic which divides us East and West, the call for an expanded analysis which links jobs with bombs, patriarchy with militarism, and disarmament with the Third World. Unlike the well meaning but politically naive demands for peace which characterized the Canadian peace movement just a few years ago, this final chapter, and the book as a whole, offers a well analyzed and articulated solution to our current nuclear problems.

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**George Ignatieff.**

**THE MAKING OF A PEACEMONGER:  
THE MEMOIRS OF GEORGE IGNATIEFF.**

Canada: Penguin Books, 1987.

257 pp. \$9.95

This is an autobiography (first published by the University of Toronto Press in 1985 and now by Penguin Books) by a man, a great Canadian, who has been called a peacemonger. Hence its title.

George Ignatieff, the son of a Russian aristocrat, went to Britain with his family as refugees in 1919; he was six years old. In 1928, he came