



DIALOGUE

"THE WAY OF PEACE, IS THE WAY OF TRUTH"

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VOL. 4 NO. 7

COSTA RICA

JULY 1987



THE ARMS CULTURE: A STRATEGY BUILT UPON OUR FEAR

SAN JOSE, INFORPEACE. Today's so-called "Arms Culture" has taught society and every individual in it, through strong conditioning, how to reason, to feel, and to evaluate situations. Military prestige and our acceptance of weapons as necessities lie at the root of this conditioning.

An arms fetishism, especially in advanced weapons systems, has become a central and determining element in contemporary culture and ideology, encouraging us to legitimize a world order based on military conceptions of peace and prompting the continual growth of arsenals whose potential is practically inconceivable.

Today, we all form part of a weapons culture where scientists, intellectuals and the protectors of national security interpret this ideology for the public through the press and propaganda, directly transmitting the values and images of weaponry through the mass media. Arms growth has not only penetrated the very process of our cultural production, but it is also a product of many cultural activities.

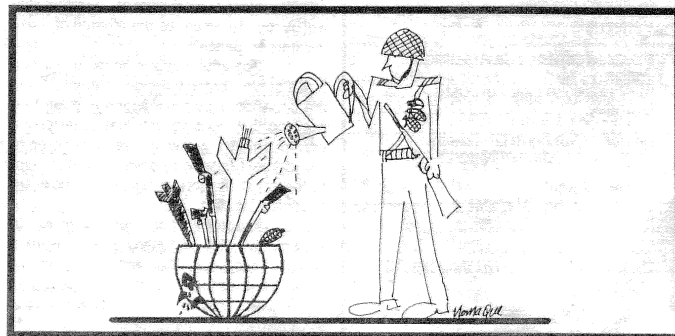
At present, arms systems figure among the most sophisticated artifacts that modern science and technology have produced. Moreover, the weapons culture functions like an ideology based on its own symbols, ideas, myths and practices.

The industrialization of war and the creation of permanent armies have converted soldiers into a paid work force at the service of the state. The accumulation of military capital, the

automation of war and the appropriation of science to develop technology with immense destructive capability have converted both soldiers and the civilian population into targets for arms systems, in a kind of tyranny of consumerism where the people themselves have become isolated consumers of lethal merchandise: namely, weapons.

In terms of weapons capable of massive destruction, the distinction between soldier and civilian disappears. Civilians, of course, without the benefit of choice, stand in the front row as targets for arms, while governments, which are supposed to represent the people, can choose among a wide range of possibilities: from unilateral disarmament (that is, the decision not to convert the populations of other states into targets), to multilateral negotiation for arms control, to a decision to speed up the arms race. Nevertheless, all modern governments, or more specifically, their statesmen, military representatives and arms producers, zealously reserve the right to make the final decision on peace or war, while their citizens, besides being forced to accept the danger of annihilation, are encouraged to identify with the very instruments capable of causing their own destruction.

Knowledge, as such, has been converted into power through the process of history, where it has been appropriated for profit, power and military advantage. In addition, however, it has generated a wide range



of cultural stages, which even includes computer games.

This manipulation of knowledge that we see today, began with World War II and the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, where the destructive potential of nuclear energy became clear. The cold war between East and West broke up the military alliance built in opposition to the axis powers, and the great machines for defensive weapons production, created during the war, became the bedrock of a permanent economy based on arms, which helped to sustain post-war economic recovery.

At the same time, behind all the constitutions, national security agencies were formed, which actively sought control over the direction of scientific progress as well as public opinion through the mass media.

Moreover, the imperial relationship between colonial powers and less-developed countries gave way to continual exploitation within the framework of formal independence sustained by arms and doctrines of national security borrowed from the superpowers.

Thus, after a period of stability and economic growth in the two and a half decades following World War II, an international crisis developed, which was fanned by economic recession.

From spears to rifles to tanks, combat planes, and missiles, instruments of coercion by men against men were produced, acquired, deployed and used by the governing classes to sustain their power.

Consequently, weapons are not only methods for winning battles or preventing war; they have also become myths of power and, as such, they collectively represent the political programs of the people who control them.

One of the main reasons to justify the production of nuclear arms capable of such massive destruction has been deterrence, understood as "the veiled threat," to prevent conflict. The theory of deterrence, however, besides being a rigorous intellectual system, is a form of practical wisdom devised to guide the options adopted by strategists and statesmen.

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WORLD PREMIERE PREVIEW OF HURRICANE IRENE VIDEO

TO BE FEATURED AT THE NEW MUSIC SEMINAR IN
NEW YORK CITY, JULY 12-15, 1987.

PETER GABRIEL WILL BE THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT THE
SESSION ON "MUSIC FOR PEACE" AND WILL SHARE THE
DETAILS OF THIS HISTORIC EVENT WHICH BROUGHT
TOGETHER LITTLE STEVEN, HOWARD JONES, LOU REED,
JACKSON BROWNE, YOUSSEU N'DOUE, STAS NAMIN, TAKAKO
SHIRAI, YOSHIRO KAI, SANDII AND REBECCA.

FULL COVERAGE OF THE EVENT WILL BE PROVIDED
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