

disgust may have shown the Soviet leaders that Russia as well as America must pay a political price for wielding military power. If this thinking helps to keep Soviet divisions away from the Polish factories, then the decisions of the Canadian and other governments to stay away from the Games, and the sacrifice of individual athletes involved, were justified.

#### Footnotes

1. John Palmer, "Europe reluctant to antagonise the Soviet Bear", *Guardian Weekly*, 27 Jan. 1980; Scott Sullivan, "The Shaky Alliance", *Newsweek*, 12 May 1980; John Pinkerman, Washington syndication, "Bring So-Called U.S. Friends Back into Line", *Gleaner* (Fredericton), 27 May 1980.
2. Joseph C. Harsch, "Carter has Alliance Repair Job on His Hands", *Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 1980; John Vinocur, "West German Faith in US Fades", *New York Times*, 5 June 1980.
3. Manfred Worner, "SALT II: A European Perspective", *Strategic Review*, vol. 7, no. 3 (1979), pp. 9-15; Brian Crozier, *Strategy of Survival* (New York, 1978); Joseph D. Douglass Jr., *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War* (Stanford, Calif., 1979); "Dump US or Detente, Soviets Tell Europe", *Gazette* (Montreal), 7 Feb. 1980.
4. See "The Strategic Intentions of the Soviet Union", *ISC Special Report* (March, 1978); Laurence W. Martin, "Strategic Shocks and Illusions", *Annual of Power and Conflict 1979-80* (London, 1980), pp. 1-8; Jeffrey Record, "France 1940 and the NATO Center 1980: A Disquieting Comparison", *Strategic Review*, vol. 8, no. 3 (1980), pp. 67-74.
5. The campaign was based upon official Soviet statements, supported by Soviet press assets in the West, local communist parties and the "Front" organizations. In early October 1979 statements on European disarmament accounted for 20% of all Soviet propaganda output. Boris Ponomarev, Leonid Zamyatin, Valentin Falin and Vadim Zagladin were among senior Soviet Party officials who toured Western Europe, wrote articles or orchestrated the campaign.
6. "The Cruise Blues in Tiny Thetford", *Newsweek*, 16 June 1980; Andre Fontaine, "No Deals on Theatre Weapons", *Le Monde*, 20 June 1980; Geoffrey T. Godsell, "Controversy Over Euromissiles Growing", *Christian Science Monitor*, July 1980.
7. See Richard Lowenthal, *World Communism* (London, 1964), p. 28: "In the Bolshevik view only these organs could paralyse the bourgeois state machine and destroy it at its roots. . .".

## The Man on the Toronto Subway

by Dominick Graham

"War is a continuation of the politics of particular classes in their pursuit of class goals." The class system is the cause of wars. Classes that are antagonistic and exploit one another are innate to the capitalist system. Therefore wars will continue as long as capitalism exists. Wars "will cease to exist only with the destruction of capitalism and the victory of the socialist order in the world."

These terse sentences describe Marxist-Leninist dogma on the cause of wars. They point to the form that wars will take and they warn the reader of the

Marxist meaning of peace. They promise permanent war until the Marxist version of peace is attained. For a peace that purports to end war is a deception "calculated to perpetuate the system of exploitation and war" unless it signals the victory of the socialist order. Until then, war in the form of class struggle, to Marxist-Leninists, is as permanent as the struggle against sin on earth to the Christian. Both take an apocalyptic or millennial view of the future.<sup>2</sup>

Until the millennium wars must be branded as capitalist ventures. Categorized as world war between opposing social systems, war in defence of the Socialist Fatherland, civil wars, national liberation wars or wars between bourgeois states, all are the creation of the capitalist class system and are easily turned inwards on the capitalist aggressor. The socialist states and the proletariat are represented as innocent victims of an aggressor or as having been provoked by him. *Marxist-Leninist states will pursue the permanent struggle on their behalf within capitalist states in the name of peace.* For peace can come only if the proletariat triumphs. However, in established capitalist states, triumph comes only through revolution, since the "exploiting class" will not surrender the "ready-made state machinery" unless compelled to do so. Therefore, war and revolution are but the faces of a Marxist Janus. We cannot have one without the other.

*These are the ideas of Soviet writers and political leaders. They are systematic and appear to be simple to understand and to apply. They are useful. What have Western writers to offer on the cause of wars and their termination in society?*

Western theories about the causes and nature of war and its prevention are diverse.<sup>3</sup> The economic causes include tension between haves and have nots and quarrels over territory and markets. National and dynastic rivalries, ideological and religious disputes and the recourse of subject peoples to arms have played their parts. Less precise explanations lie in Malthusian pressure and Man's natural aggression. There is a conspiracy theory in which "the merchants of death" are prominent. The outbreak of the First World War, a happy hunting ground for material on the subject, has been attributed to the break-down of political systems: through incompetence or irrational development no person or body had authority or the will to throw the switches and to prevent the derailment of the whole rickety train. By laying the blame for the war on the system this interpretation is similar to that of the Marxists.

In comparison with the Marxist-Leninist presentation, the Western one is unsystematic and contradictory. It does not offer a simple model that can be understood by the man on the Toronto subway. And that is as it should be if we are seeking truth in the Western philosophical tradition. We do not, overtly, at least, manufacture interpretations of the past expressly to influence the present and future. The Soviets do exactly that.<sup>4</sup> In George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the lights burned late into the night at the Ministry of Truth as workers incinerated out-dated interpretations (and their authors) and created new ones. Interpretations had to achieve a synthesis between the heavenly city of the state philosophers — the apocalypse towards which everyone and everything moved as it should — and those facts that it was expedient to reveal. For the Soviet citizen history is propaganda; for the Westerner it is, simply, rather unimportant. He often equates history with opinion. Does such a fundamental difference in treating the past matter?

Of course, western historical interpretations are not bland, nor are they as naturally pluralistic as has been suggested. But to the man on the subway historical complexities are futile exercises, like determining how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. He views the past in black and white. War is between "them" and "us". It ought to be fought for a just cause and, when it is, "we" win. In defeat, the loser is the villain: the winner gets to wear the white hat. Like his Moscow counter-part he is cynical about the past but he is less well-served by his interpretation of it. First, it leads him to treat peace and war as the discrete conditions that he believed them to have been in 1939. Secondly, while it fits what he knows about the Second World War, it does not help him distinguish just from unjust wars in the contemporary world. For he thinks like a pre-Marxist: seeking security of mind in family and country, right or wrong, he is uncomfortable with conflicts that bear equivocal Marxist labels emphasizing class loyalty.

In the last 35 years, his thinking on war has been shaped by the greatest and most successful just war in history. The people of Britain, America and the Commonwealth, he is told, switched almost overnight from a peace of appeasement to a just war that ended in triumph. Almost everyone over the age of 55 looks back to 1945 as a time of certainty when right had just triumphed over evil. His country was unified and class conflict seemed to be in recession. Since then, however, his great ally who shed his blood on the steppes and in the forests has become his adversary. Why that happened remains a subject for considerable historical debate, but in the final analysis the west confronted an opponent not unlike the one they had just defeated. The former ally now vowed to "bury" them. What disturbs Mr. Subway is that the world situation appears to bear a close resemblance to the one described in communist propaganda. As the small boy, cast in the role of Adam in his school play complained, "it's the snake that has all the lines." Indeed, the snake was a very persuasive person when he explained his view of the real world. Perhaps, Mr. Subway asks himself, Lucifer was not as bad as God declared when he fell from grace?

War as an instrument of national policy is declared to be outdated and, after Hiroshima, both foolhardy and immoral. Mr. Subway is glad of that and turns to his newspaper to read, with some philosophical detachment, about the one hundred and one armed conflicts in which he is not involved. Most of them appear to him to be internal conflicts in which an unpopular government is behaving illiberally. He concludes that only good can come from the victory of the opposition which seeks to free the country from the grasp of a greedy dictator and his family, a white minority, an immoral international corporation bent on profits at any cost, and the presence on its soil of a Western military base. In supporting all these just causes in his mind, subscribing to relief funds and even writing letters to the papers about the situation, he may feel that the white hat still fits his head.

But the thunder grumbles in the background and his sky darkens when he realises that he is personally involved in the kind of war that the Marxist-Leninists insist that they are bound to win. For Mr. Subway's government is depicted as being responsible for the very situation that his charitable donations are designed to alleviate. He is told that his hard work in the 'fifties and 'sixties, that made his society rich and prosperous by world standards, does not stand to

his credit. He had believed that others, if they would restrain their extreme political theories, could have the same success. Yet the system of those decades in his own country is under fire from various and legitimate political groups. He was sympathetic when intellectuals condemned American intervention overseas in the 'sixties and 'seventies, but now he is confused when they are silent about Soviet actions that appear to be similar. Used to the secure feeling that there was a national stance that could be adopted in these matters he is lost in the new climate of opinion.

Mr. Subway is not a politician, a diplomat or a corporate executive. He is not immediately affected by, let alone able to influence, the stability of Bolivia or the external policy of his own country. He does not really believe that what happens in Bolivia matters to him. And if he cannot influence the issue it is better not to risk ulcers by worrying about it. He knows that he is lucky to be riding on the Toronto subway, his sun-browned face revealing week-ends at the lake, rather than mending broken windows in El Salvador. Yet, there is the nagging doubt whether they may not be right who assert that when a Marxist government gains power it never relinquishes it. Is it possible that his country and its allies will be gradually isolated, islands of democracy in a sea of dictatorships of one kind or another, each coming to power with just causes emblazoned on its banners?

This gives him a slight feeling of unease. And as he dismounts at Bloor-Yonge he wonders whether he should put his white hat away in the cupboard. Perhaps he needs a hat of a different colour?

#### Footnotes

1. Thomas W. Wolfe, "The Communist Theory of War", in *Marxism, Communism and Western Society: A Comparative Encyclopedia* (New York, 1972-73), vol. 8, pp. 307-318.
2. The term apocalypse is usually applied to the last book of the New Testament and is the revelation of St. John the Divine concerning the state of the world in a new age beyond sin and suffering. The Alexandrian philosopher, Origen, developed the idea that there would be no final conflict between Paganism and Christianity but a thousand years in which truth would gradually spread throughout the world. The millennium and the apocalypse are spiritual-allegorical ideas deeply rooted in western minds. There is a need for them particularly in the form advanced by Origen. There is little pleasure in the pessimistic emphasis on apocalypse as a final ending. Strangely, nuclear physics underlines this need.
3. Norman Gibbs, "The Western Theory of War", *op. cit.*, pp. 299-307.
- 4 It should be noted that the intellectual experience of the confrontation between the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions in the later Medieval Europe, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, were received in Russia vicariously. Cf. Cyril E. Black, ed., *Rewriting Russian History*, (New York, 1962).