

## CORRECTIONS

- (39) David Hart WAS there, at the June meeting, at McMaster. What's more, he was one of the speakers (see RSN30-2), and -- in his quiet, understated way -- gave one of the more enjoyable talks of the weekend (on how British Labor failed to follow BR's advice.) Omitting all mention of David from our report on the '81 meeting was undoubtedly the worst error we've made in 31 newsletters, and we regret it very much.
- (40) André Bacard's correct address is Box 5121, Stanford, CA 94305. He would like to hear from members who live in, or plan to visit, the Bay Area.

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT  
continued

- (41) END. A lot of Europeans want nuclear weapons kept out of Europe, and have been demonstrating in large numbers to say so (18). The founder of the movement for European Nuclear Disarmament (END) is E. P. Thompson, says The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

In the Bulletin's words (January 1981) p. 6 →

**The Bulletin invited Professor Thompson to comment on a few of the many books on nuclear holocaust. In this article the author does so, and then moves on to a comprehensive and challenging assessment of the nuclear menace in Europe.**

This is how the Bulletin identifies Thompson, p. 8 →

E. P. Thompson, historian and writer, founder of the Center for the Study of Social History at the University of Warwick (U.K.), is currently a visiting professor, Brown University, Providence, R.I. 02192. He is the author of *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963) and *Writing by Candlelight* (1980). He is the founder of the movement for European Nuclear Disarmament (END), and co-editor of *Protest and Survive* (1980).

And here is the Thompson article, pp. 6-13:

## The END of the line

Nigel Calder is a most able practitioner in the "high popularization" of science and technology, and his work demands respectful attention.<sup>1</sup> *Nuclear Nightmares* is an instant party-stopper, and a book to press into the hands of your flippant nephew or giddy niece. More seriously, it deserves a general readership, as a brisk and informed run-through of the technological and strategic infrastructure of World War III. We are provided with several chilling scenarios as to its probable occasion, and if the book is not supplemented with further (and very different) reading, it will lead readers only into the immobility of despair.

*The Military Balance*, published annually by the International Institute of Strategic Studies, acquires in Calder's pages a biblical authority. Europeans in the past year have come to look skeptically (even sourly) upon the reputed objectivity of that "International" Institute. They have noted that the public interventions of some of its staff and council in the debate surrounding the decision to "modernize" NATO's nuclear forces have been indistinguishable from those of NATO apologists, and that a large advance

in weaponry in favor of the Warsaw powers was registered in the 1980 *Balance* by the expedient of changing the rules and counting in new ways.<sup>2</sup> This alarmist evidence was eagerly blown up in the U.S. press on the eve of the election. Many of us in Europe these days tend to turn for evidence to institutes in Stockholm (SIPRI), West Berlin, the Sussex Arment and Disarmament Information Unit and, in the United States, to such sources as this *Bulletin*.

What Calder does is to show the massing of weaponry, its sophistication, the logic of interlocking strategies, and the several points where "deterrence" may pass swiftly into war in a compulsive process in which peoples and governments have become "the servants rather than the masters of that which they have created." Those words are George Kennan's, and Calder's book might be taken as a densely-observed extended illustration of Kennan's more general summary:

"... that immensely disturbing and tragic situation in which we find ourselves today: this anxious competition in the development of new armaments; this blind dehumanization

of the prospective adversary; this systematic distortion of the adversary's motivation and intentions; this steady displacement of political considerations by military ones in the calculations of statesmanship; in short, this dreadful militarization of the entire East-West relationship in concept, in rhetoric, and in assumption, which is the commanding feature—endlessly dangerous, endlessly discouraging—of this present unhappy day."<sup>3</sup>

Yet I cannot disguise my view that Calder's book, as well as others in this growing genre, are also symptoms of this unhappy day. They neither challenge nor, in any fundamental way, do they diagnose. Rather, they exhibit precisely "the steady displacement of political considerations by military ones." The sophistication of the technological reportage masks an inadequacy in the treatment of political process. The brisk bravura of Calder's style presses always toward the exotic and exclamatory mode of science fiction: it has no terms for graver meditation on our predicament, and no space for the measured analysis of the actions of states. Louis René Beres's *Apocalypse* prompts the same reflections: carrying some useful information, and also more

positive proposals than Calder does, its analysis of political process is nevertheless sadly defective.<sup>4</sup>

What happens in these cases is that analysis is forced, unwittingly, into the parameters of a self-fulfilling argument. Founded upon the evidence of weapons and strategies, whose rationale is always that of "deterrence," there is no space in which the validity of any alternative rationale can be allowed or examined. We are inside the rationale which has led us to this unhappy day, and which will shortly lead us to worse, and we can never get out. Whether the balance of evidence or perception is tilted towards the West or East (how many systems?, what worst case expectations?), the analysis is confined *within the same parameters*: that is, within the leap-frog logic of deterrence. Within this logic the hawks of each side feed to each other arms and provocations. They strive for "parity," envisage "gaps" and "windows of opportunity." Through never-ending negotiations at the highest level they adumbrate elaborate devices of "control" and trade-off, which their clever games-players then seek to evade or to turn to new advantage, and thus generate more thrust in the course toward collision.

Operating within such parameters,