

Catastrophe stalks century's end

By Scott Clayton

The experts all agree that the odds are high of a nuclear war happening by the year 2000 that will wipe out man and his creations.



The speakers at last Friday's McLaughlin College forum on *Disarmament and Arms Control: Alternatives for the Future* see restriction and reduction of nuclear and conventional arms as the best bet for survival, albeit with different opinions on the methods and practicalities of limitation strategy.

The problem of nuclear arms proliferation is twofold. The maximum point of the problem is the arms race of the superpowers; primarily the USSR and the USA,

but also in recent years, China. The minimum point of the problem, quickly reaching a critical state in the 70's, is the acquisition of nuclear weapons by lesser powers, notably India, Brazil, and South Africa.

The transfer of conventional arms to the third world is of paramount importance today, as the war now raging between Somalia and Ethiopia, with both sides using Soviet supplied tanks, guns and planes potentially illustrates.

The views expressed at the conference ranged from idealist to realist. The idealists see immediate disarmament as the only hope, whereas the realists, including representatives of Canada's Department of External Affairs, stressed the complexities and confusion of international politics and the realities of working within the present world framework.

William Epstein, a Canadian who has been involved in the United Nations, often in the area of disarmament, expressed the "Doomsday" view of nuclear armaments. He said that arms control measures such as test bans, and SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) talks between the USSR and the USA are all "rubbish". Epstein stated that the United States, with its ICBM's alone, could obliterate every city in the Soviet Union with a population of over 100,000, one hundred times over. He maintained the Russians could do likewise twenty times over.

Atomic war could be brought about by human error, escalation of small conflicts, proliferation, terrorism, or madness. The only recourse, believes Epstein, is immediate and effective reduction and

limitation of nuclear and conventional arms.

Kenneth Williamson, former Canadian Ambassador to Turkey, representing the Canadian Department of External Affairs at the meeting, expressed his views and those of the Canadian government on the global situation and the upcoming United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, 23 May-28 June, 1978.

Williamson emphasized the importance of communication

through such avenues as the SALT talks and the UN special session.

The short range goals of the Canadian government are a comprehensive test ban, the setting of safeguards governing the export of reactors to non-atomic club countries, and a convention on chemical warfare.

The realities of the world situation, stated Williamson, include the power of the military and the military-industrial complex

among the super-powers, and the complex and confusing problems of dealing with the differing attitudes and values of countries around the globe.

The basic premise of the conference was that nuclear armaments must be restricted, and if possible eliminated, and both the idealists and the policy makers seemed to accept each others views as valid, in spite of their differing senses of urgency.

Zimbabwe in agony

By Mac Musaby

"What is the use of so much blood, if in the end we remain subjected to a state which, even if ruled by Africans, only serves the rich and the powerful? A state which maintains a police force that seizes and tortures the people, and an army that fires on the masses. What does it matter, even if all the generals were black?"

These were the words of Joseph Dube, the Caribbean representative for the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) addressing a meeting designed to take a close look at the recent political developments in Southern Africa and especially Zimbabwe. The meeting was sponsored by the Third World Students Union.

Speaking to a modest gathering of York students last Friday, he stated that the latest Anglo-American attempts to arrive at a peaceful solution to Zimbabwe's problems could be understood only in the context of current stage of national liberation struggle in that country.

"The future of the present situation in Zimbabwe is the rapid decline of the Smith's regime's grip on the country and a growing awareness among whites that they can no longer continue exploiting the African masses the same old way," Dube claimed.

The current armed struggle in Zimbabwe has been penetrating more deeply into the country while the nationalist movements are deepening their influence among the black population.

According to Dube this combination of mass work and skilful military tactics by the liberation forces of ZAPU (Zimbabwe African Peoples Union) and ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) known as the Patriotic Front, has undermined the Smith regime and poses the possibility of its gradual disintegration.

He claimed that this was the main reason for Smith's rethinking and for talks of an "internal settlement", combined with the desperate effort by U.S., and British imperialism to defuse the struggle.

Dube sees the Smith internal settlement as, "some kind of deal

with moderate nationalists and those not involved in the guerrillas' struggle, based on apparent concessions to black majority rule with the retention of real power for the whites".

Dube also described the so-called Anglo-American proposals as "the Western imperialist master plan" to press for a negotiated plan for whites of foreign investment. Zimbabwe, with London and Washington acting as "honest brokers".

"They (just like Smith) desire the emergence of a nominally independent, neo-colonial black government which would not challenge the economic position of whites or foreign investments." For Dube, they have no wish to see the more radical process of armed struggles of Guineau Biassau, Angola, and Mozambique repeated.

He later went on to give an example of this view by expressing the Smith regime's unwillingness to yield anything less than a full guarantee for a continued role in a transitional government, white control of judicial and security forces, massive foreign compensation, the protection of private investments and an end to guerrilla struggle.

Of course these conditions, unopposed by the nationalist leaders such as Sithole and Muzorewa, were unpalatable for the Patriotic Front.

Dube stated that for the black majority, the question of the transfer of power will not be decided by an Anglo-American package leading to a possible neo-colonial solution, but by the African people themselves, through the means of armed struggle.

Dube concluded his remarks by saying, "When your house is burning, it is no use beating tom-toms. We are not going to eliminate domestic and foreign agents of imperialism by shouting insults against them. For us the best or worst shout against white supremacy that has made our people suffer centuries, is to take up arms and fight. This is what we are doing, and this is what we will go on doing until all foreign domination of our African homeland has been totally eliminated."



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