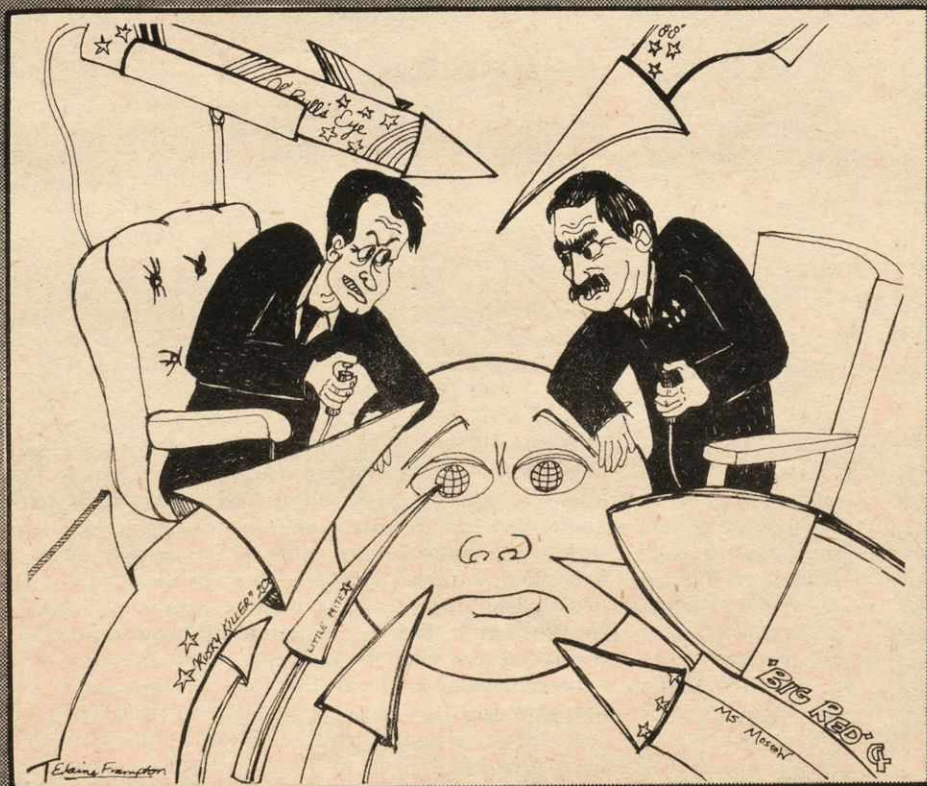


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ARCUP International

ARCUP International; looking beyond the commercial press



The cliché "the world is small" has a lot to do with instant media coverage of world events. Minute by minute updates on the American hostages "flight to freedom", the latest union decisions in Poland, and the value of our dollar, become a part of our daily lives as soon as we turn on the morning radio and pick up a newspaper.

We have an uncanny international "sense", a continuous awareness of events and their perceived implications, as they happen.

To what extent, however, are we victims of headlines and news flashes? Is our anger over the invasion of Afghanistan a result of an understanding of the Soviet Union's policies with respect to its satellite countries, or is it a reaction fostered by extensive coverage in *Time* magazine of the "Soviet threat"?

There is an invisible danger in relying on an information source such as *Maclean's*, *Time* and the *CBC*, that represents a narrow North American point of view when interpreting international events.

Who is responsible, who is to blame and how we deal with the world's crises, are decisions that demand an understanding of the ever-changing political and social make-ups of the world's societies. This depth of perception is just not available to us from the commercial media.

As an alternate press, student papers are attempting through ARCUP International to provide some deeper analysis of current world issues. Each monthly insert will be composed of articles by people who through their studies and experiences can give a more comprehensive insight into a central international issue.

ARCUP International is the result of a co-operative effort by the eight student newspapers in the Atlantic provinces, members of Atlantic Regional Canadian University Press (ARCUP). The Atlantic is one of four regions in the national Canadian University Press student newspaper co-operative.

The world is constantly changing and so is the student press.

ARCUP International has had its precedents. "Atlantic Issues" was a collection of articles dealing with international issues that have similar implications for both the Atlantic provinces and Third World countries. Until recently,

Atlantic Issues was published periodically by local Oxfam committees and the *Dalhousie Gazette*. The *Gazette* has had its own "Dal International", an insert produced in the 1978/79 publishing year.

The communist countries of China and the Eastern bloc, encompassing two-thirds of the world's population, is a major cause of fear and incomprehension to the West. ARCUP International's first issue takes a look at politics and people in the east.

Communism is often seen by Westerners as a clearly defined evil force. James Eays describes the historical American fear in an article in this publication, writing that,

"... the force which has given paranoid interpreters their longest scope is that which after the Great War was called the Red Menace, after the Second World War, the international communist conspiracy, and today is referred to more prosaically—but often no less paranoically—as the Soviet threat."

The oversimplified point of view Eays refers to would benefit from a more informed look at forces within communist society, such as that expressed by a member of the Soviet intelligentsia, the outspoken Andrei Sakharov:

"... in the Soviet Union, the ideological epicentre, and in China as well, Communist ideology is not a complete fraud, not a total delusion. It arose from a striving for truth and justice, like other religious, ethical and philosophical systems. Its weakness, its failure and its degradation—evident from the very beginning—represent a complex historical, scientific and psychological phenomenon that requires separate analysis."

Popular images such as Chairman Mao or masses of Chinese people riding bicycles are brought to mind at the mention of China.

From dissidents in Hungary, through agricultural objectives in China and refugee camps in Indochina, to an analysis of Soviet and American mutual paranoia, ARCUP International peers behind the common images associated with communism. This week's staff hopes the perceptions found in the following articles will serve to supplement the reader's intake of daily "hard news".