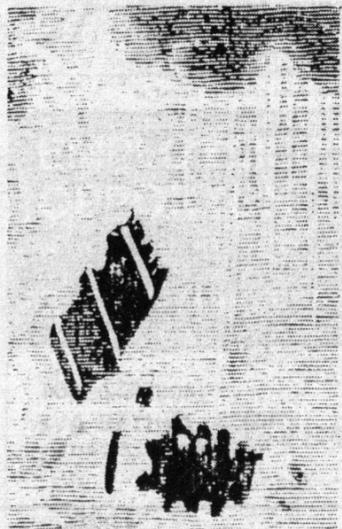


and country from Hitler's fascists, not with saving the entire Soviet Union. They consider their local member Soviet Socialist Republic to be their country and patriotism towards the Union is secondary.

That distinction is important in the development of the peace community in the Soviet Union. The people saw the USSR as a union of nations, which could only stay together if the citizens came to understand the cultures and identities of the rest of the Soviet nations. From this premise grew their ideas for world peace.

For them to value and seek peace with Western countries, the Russian people had to see them as people with similar concerns and lives. Thompson said that when the Cana-



dian group visited a Russian youth center, the teenagers were anxious to know about Canada, particularly what their Canadian counterparts did.

"They felt if they could see what our teenagers did in our youth centers and we could understand what they did in theirs, then we'd see that the others were not monsters and then, of course, there would be peace," said Thompson.

But while Thompson believes that it is important to get rid of the perception that the Russian people are the enemy of Western people and vice versa, he realizes that fostering goodwill between countries means nothing unless the governments agree.

"It is now a problem of governments. It is now possible to wreak terrible havoc on another country without the cooperation of the masses. But (the Russian people) have not realized this. They are operating on a mental picture of war which is basically on a World War Two level. Intellectually, they know what nuclear weapons mean but they still live in a world where heroes are made in wars," said Thompson.

But Thompson said while the local peace groups operate on perceptions and memories of past wars, the members of the Soviet Peace Committee expressed views of peace that were similar to those of most Western peace activists.

"They (the Central Peace Committee) feel that any dependence on nuclear, biological or chemical weapons needs to be disowned in order to arrive at any semblance of peace in our modern world," said Thompson.

The Central Peace Committee sees a nuclear-free world as one where each nation has enough conventional weaponry to defend itself but not to attack other countries. This agreement between the super powers, known as Sensible Adequacy, is the Peace Committee's concept of dis-

armament. With this plan, they see a world free of nuclear arms by the year 2000.

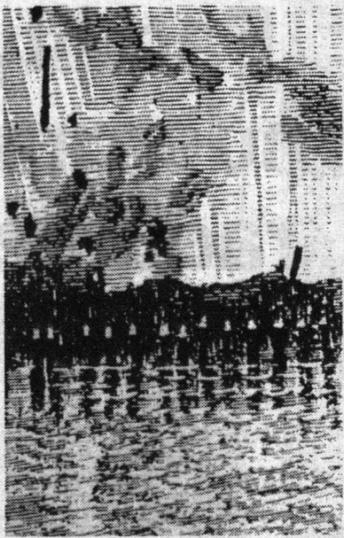
Thompson said he was pleasantly surprised to hear the national peace organization espouse similar views of Canadian peace groups when the local Soviet peace chapters had little in common with Canadian activists.

The Canadian delegates attended an information session with representatives of the Soviet government that Thompson perceived as an attempt to receive feedback on their defence policies from peace activists around the world.

While many Westerners may write off the Soviet information session as propaganda, Thompson said he and the other delegates were impressed by the sincerity and openness of the Soviet officials as they tried to answer the delegates' questions on defence spending and arms production.

Thompson noted a great disparity between the operating budgets of Canadian and Soviet peace groups. The Soviet peace movement receives 1 per cent of the \$800 million raised by the people for charitable projects through craft sales, private donations and benefit concerts by groups such as the Bolshoi Ballet. The people are even willing to work over-time and donate their extra wages to peace work, which is certainly not likely to happen in the United States or Canada in the near future.

But Thompson was most impressed by the apparent influence the Central Peace Committee has on the government's defence policies. He said the CPC had contacts within the Soviet government, comparable to members of Senate in the Canadian government, who passed on the CPC's suggestions for disarmament to the appropriate government official for action.



Meanwhile, Canadian peace groups must urge their members and the residents of their areas to write their Member of Parliament to request that a disarmament issue be raised in Parliament. But this is a time-consuming and often futile process, especially when compared to the Soviet method.

But Thompson said while he and his colleagues learned much about successful peace activism from their Soviet colleagues, he still questions their glorification of war heroes and dying for their country.

"Peace is the most important thing in the world to them, but they seem to define it differently. If it can be achieved through disarmament, great, but if not, everyone must hold themselves ready to sacrifice themselves in war if necessary."

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