

Newsletter



VETERANS AGAINST NUCLEAR ARMS

VÉTÉRANS CONTRE LES ARMES NUCLÉAIRES

VANA Ontario-Québec Region February 2003 Volume 17, N° 1

NEXT MEETINGS — ALL DAYTIME

We are trying out daytime meetings, as requested. Here we go.

TUES., FEB. 25 — 10:00 a.m. — ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH, 3RD FLR, 117 BLOOR ST. E.

SPEAKER — Surprise!! Surprise!!

BRIEF LIAISON REPORTS - Connie Gardner, Glenn Bedell, Bea Levis, Marion Frank, Joyce Sutherland

NO DAYTIME PARKING. If you have climbing problems, disembark from the subway on the North side of Bloor, take the escalator up to the ground floor, and then cross to the south side.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 22 — 10.30 a.m. — UKRAINIAN HALL¹, 1604 BLOOR ST. W.

REFRESHMENTS

BRIEF BUSINESS MEETING

PROGRAM — Bill Harasym

Learn about a great Ukrainian poet and peaceful patriot, **Taras Shevchenko**. Bill will guide us around the **Taras Shevchenko Museum** next door. Parking is available. Easy subway route.

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TUES., JUNE 3 — 10:30 a.m. — CRUISE AROUND TORONTO BAY on the JAGUAR II

Our cruise is kindness of **VANA** member Mac Makarchuk, who slashed his prices for us. **VANA** is underwriting \$900 for the cruise. We ask you to pay only for the gorgeous lunch on board - \$17 each. Leave at 10.30 a.m. — back by 2:00 p.m.

PLEASE BRING GUESTS - WE NEED A MINIMUM OF 40 CRUISERS. Otherwise **VANA** has to make up the difference.

PLEASE BRING your \$17 to the February 25 meeting if possible, or perhaps mail it to Eileen Swinton by mid-March. We need to have a good idea of numbers.

¹ Association of United Ukrainian Canadians

NEWS FROM THE CANADIAN NETWORK TO ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS

CNANW Meeting, Ottawa, October 29-30, 2002

by Connie Gardner, Toronto

With thanks for sending me to these inspiring meetings.

The October meeting of the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (CNANW) was another winner, marked by glimpses of encouraging Parliamentary discussions, illustrious visitors, and an actual success! Seventeen of the eighteen member organizations were represented, and at a special meeting with the Middle Powers Initiative (see below), we were joined by representatives from ten other groups, including the Mennonites, the Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Canadian Medical Association, the Polaris Institute, the North-South Institute, and the South Asia Partnership. We felt very much a part of a grand widespread movement.

CNANW has consistently heard from US generals and admirals and even a former Secretary of Defense, appealing for Canadian pressure on the US to abandon nuclear armaments. This time the appeals, in the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, were extremely powerful.

One came from Bruce Blair, a former US missileer -- a man who had been trained and ready to fire nuclear missiles. Bruce Blair is now President of the Center for Defense Information in Washington DC, and his argument was chilling: that the Russian nuclear establishment is disintegrating. Its forces live below the poverty line and must moonlight to survive. They arrive at work exhausted. Alcoholism is common. They are ripe for error in interpreting what they see on a screen, and their extreme poverty makes them ripe for bribery by terrorists wanting nuclear materials. Accidental launch, and proliferation to terrorist interests, are inevitable. Russia and the US each have, by a new treaty, 2000 nuclear weapons, each one 200 megatons, 40 times the strength of that which devastated Hiroshima. A launch warning permits two minutes to decide whether or not to cancel. In a mere 30 minutes any launching would explode the equivalent of 80,000 Hiroshima bombs. Bruce Blair's appeal? TAKE THEM OFF ALERT!

The other came from former Prime Minister of Canada, Kim Campbell, now head of the Middle Powers Initiative (MPI). For more than a decade MPI has been organizing "non-aligned" countries, that is, those which are neither nuclear powers nor "have-not nations", to push for nuclear disarmament in private diplomatic moves and at the United Nations. We were surprised at, and impressed with Kim Campbell's apparent conviction and her effectiveness. Her message was that nuclear disarmament is not a pacifist issue; it is a hard-nosed security issue. Nuclear weapons are useless against terrorist acts, and the certainty of their proliferation makes any power more vulnerable with them than without them. (This is exactly the same message that that committee and the CNANW heard two years ago from General Lee Butler and Robert McNamara.) "Tactical" (smaller) ones are as bad or worse because more usable. Do not let Canada be elbowed aside. We have paid with blood and years of diplomacy, we have troops in 15 countries now, and we have clear right to speak and be heard. Her appeal? SPEAK UP!

The members of the Parliamentary committee responded with good questions, including one from Art Eggleton about Canada's participation in missile defence, a thorny issue when he was Minister of Defence.

But what impresses me most with CNANW meetings, and with this one in particular, is the network's intelligence in choosing a focus, as well as the rate of its successes. General background success is clear from its cordial and candid relations with its contacts in Foreign Affairs and National Defence, and its links with the MPI and the New Agenda Coalition (now the New Agenda Group). More specifically:

🇨🇦 CNANW was instrumental in including "smart mines" in the Land Mines Treaty when the US wanted to exempt them, because its chair, Bev Delong, was an observer in the negotiations, and she sent all representatives information no one else had about smart mines.

🇨🇦 CNANW's call for a flood of letters supporting the New Agenda Coalition resolution (proposing nuclear disarmament) in the UN General Assembly is partially responsible for Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham's decision that, for the first time, Canada vote "Yes" for nuclear disarmament, against all other NATO nations, most of whom as usual abstained rather than cross the US.

The CNANW's immediate goals are:

- (1) To be admitted as a Non-governmental Organization (NGO) to the UN negotiations on the Non-proliferation Treaty;
- (2) To press in Parliament, newspapers, religious groups, professional groups, and NGOs, for Canada to resolve the contradiction between its anti-nuclear weapons policy, and its membership in NATO, calling attention to the inconsistency of NATO's pro-nuclear stance and its members' participation in the Non-proliferation Treaty; and, as part of this, to bring about a "Consultation" (convened by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for experts from Canadian NGOs) on nuclear weapons;
- (3) To hold a round table for Parliamentarians, activists, and experts, about "tactical" nuclear weapons (e.g., "mini-nukes" or "bunker busters"); and to hold another round table for these and representatives of businesses involved in satellites and satellite communications, about the dangers of debris in space, particularly radioactive debris; and
- (4) To create an student intern program, to work on a web page interesting to their age group, and to assemble a kit for school curricula, and translate materials into French.

IN MEMORIAM

HENRI BEAUCHAMP

by Alan Brown, Montréal

On Thursday January 16, Henri Beauchamp died peacefully, with his wife Colette and her daughter by his side. It was the final end of a long sickness with Alzheimer.

Henri served with the RCAF for three years during World War II. Afterwards he worked for La Presse for many years and was a devoted long time president of its typographer's union. He also founded the Pensioner's Association of La Presse.

With the encouragement of Giff Gifford, Henri became the founding president of [VANA/Québec](#) and spoke at [VANA](#) conferences throughout Canada as well as at veteran's meetings in the United States. Henri was a proponent of peace and humanism. He modestly left instructions that there be no service or ceremony, and that offerings might be made in his name to the United Nations Association of Canada or to the Fund of Solidarity for Human Rights for the Palestine People.

Adieu, Henri - et merci.

VICTOR BOLDT

by Don Keating, North Bay

Victor Boldt suffered a massive heart attack and died on December 23, 2002, at age 78. Victor had retired from teaching history in public schools.

I met Victor Boldt soon after I moved to North Bay in 1988. He was a veteran with overseas experience. I was a veteran with no overseas experience.

Victor responded to a group I was putting together, Veterans Against Nuclear Arms, and has been a faithful member to the day of his death.

He contributed articles regularly to the North Bay Nugget, on such topics as The Gulf War, Genocide in Iraq, The Roots of 9/11, The Road to Kosovo. As late as mid-December he submitted articles for our [VANA/D.R.E.C.](#) website.

He will be missed.

WHAT VANA MEMBERS CAN DO FOR PEACE

✚✚ Many of us are visiting our MPs, and taking neighbours with us.

✚✚ Write to the Prime Minister, to Bill Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to John McCallum, Minister of Defence, and to your own MP, about the contradiction between Canada's anti-nuclear weapons policy, and its membership in NATO. Congratulate Bill Graham on Canada's historic "yes" vote on the New Agenda Coalition resolution last fall. Urge legislation outlawing work on nuclear weapons. Urge no Canadian contributions of space, expertise, or uranium to other countries' nuclear programs. Urge strong pressure to de-alert and de-couple all nuclear weapons.

✚✚ Oscar's PEEL-and-STICK LABELS

Oscar Rogers has been very creative and generous - providing all of us gratis with peel-and-stick labels for letters: NO BLOOD FOR OIL; WAR ITSELF IS TERRORISM; POVERTY FEEDS TERRORISM. Oscar reports that it is catching on - lots of requests for repeats. Just send him a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Every bit helps to spread the word.

✚✚ Interesting to VANA: The new War Museum in Ottawa mentions in its prospectus nothing about Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nor about nuclear weapons. Write to Sheila Copps, Heritage Minister, and to Joe Geurts, CEO of the War Museum: How will it cover the nuclear age? How will it cover veterans' views, including VANA's? To Sheila Copps, what plans are there for a museum commemorating Canada's long history of peacekeeping?

✚✚ See insert about rally on February 15

BAGS of RICE

There is a grassroots campaign underway - similar to the one that induced Eisenhower not to bomb China. Perhaps it will influence President Bush. Simple but powerful.

Place 1/2 cup uncooked rice in a small plastic bag (a snack-size bag or sandwich bag works well). Squeeze out excess air and seal the bag. Wrap it in a piece of paper on which you have written, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him." *Romans 12:20*. Please send this rice to the people of Iraq; do not attack them.

Place the paper and bag of rice in an envelope (either a letter-sized or padded mailing envelope -- same cost to mail) and address it to:

President George Bush
White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500 U.S.A.

Attach \$3.55 in postage for surface mail, or \$5.45 for airmail. **Not cheap - but cheaper than a war.** Drop this in the mail TODAY. Please act NOW so that President Bush gets the letters before the report from the inspectors comes out on the 27th of February.

For this protest to be effective, there must be **hundreds of thousands** of such rice deliveries to the White House. Please forward this message to your friends and family.

PEOPLE VERSUS PLUTOCRACY: THE VOICE OF THE INTERNET

by Ted Mann

On January 14th an e-mail arrived entitled "The fastest growing anti-war movement in history". It outlined a series of protests in the USA that never got into the mainstream media. I quote "To give just a few examples, the National Council of Churches, the National Organization for Women, Win Without War, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, John Sweeney (president of the AFL-CIO), and the Sierra Club have all voiced their opposition to an invasion of Iraq."

Northern California is a pivotal centre of US anti-war activity. Some people don't wait for marches and, in the inimitable tradition of the Bay Area's activism, find their own distinctive way to protest the war. In West Marin, for example, 50 women recently disrobed and spelled out the word peace with their naked bodies on Love Field in Point Reyes. "Beautiful and brave to lay naked in the rain for a just message," commented one passer-by.

On January 22nd, a Quaker woman friend sent me an email about women for peace. It began "Today 25 Congresswomen in the US House of Representatives walked out and refused to participate in the vote to give Bush war powers. They were led by Barbara Bell of California and they took up residence on the White House lawn. They say women can change the world. Here is a chance!" It appears that a nationwide effort against war is now in motion and e-mail users are invited to forward a petition on this issue to as many people as they know. I predict that this kind of petition will be a powerful force in the USA to stop the war. The petition begins,

"Women United Against War: as women embracing life and peace, we declare ourselves opposed to any military action against Iraq...we call on you in Congress to oppose any military action... we understand that warfare creates endless cycles of violence, destruction and death, impoverishing us spiritually and economically warfare destroys family life, throwing whole communities into exile and turning children into orphans... We believe this is a defining moment in the life of our country. We will either take our place in the family of nations as seekers of peace and justice or we will start down a terrible road to war...We oppose all elected officials who support this war. There is no issue greater than the cause of peace."

An earlier e-mail from Len Gelfand outlined how a number of US cities passed resolutions through their elected councils opposing a military strike against Iraq. Syracuse joined over 30 city councils that had passed similar resolutions. Activists in many other cities such as New York and Chicago are currently campaigning to convince their councils to pass resolutions. Throughout the Vietnam War, peace activists in Syracuse tried but failed to pass an anti-war resolution. Now, even before a big military offensive has begun, the resolution passed. The city council resolutions differ in content but all oppose unilateral action against Iraq by the USA.

To get these resolutions passed meant the activists had to get resolutions from a variety of local organizations, and religious and political groups and this provided the opportunity for open discussion about the war. The resolutions were sent to the US President. Unions, colleges, universities and community organizations are also busy passing their own anti-war resolutions.

The sociologically most arresting of my ten emails came from a site called "From the Wilderness" (copvicia.com). It was entitled "Pre-emptive Impeachment: Law professor stands ready to draft articles for any member of the House." January 4, 2002 — "We sentenced Nazi leaders to death for waging a war of aggression," says International Law Professor Francis A. Boyle of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. "By contrast, Prof. Boyle wants to impeach George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and John Ashcroft for their plans to invade Iraq and create a police state in America."

Boyle is asking the American public to **push for impeachment** and has offered assistance in drafting the articles, as well as engaging in non-violent direct action, peaceable assembly and petition for redress of grievances. Boyle says one million people need to peaceably take to the streets with signs, banners and voices shouting, "Impeach Bush!" The bottom line: it's really up to the citizens of the United States of America.

Canadians need to enlist American friends and associates in this campaign. Phone and write them today!

VANA/D.R.E.C. WEBSITE

by Ian Cameron, President, D.R.E.C.

We have an excellent website at www.vana.ca. Branches should follow Vancouver's lead and have their branch Newsletters posted by David Williams at diwilliams@rogers.com. Branches should also use the calendar to post meeting dates, functions etc.

If any **VANA** member wishes to use the discussion format on www.vana.ca, please contact Ian Cameron at ian@web.net. He will send instructions to you by e-mail. Let's use it!

This year we want to activate the Gifford scholarship section and the Speaker's bureau section and look to establishing a **VANA** Views section where individual members can post their views.

Suggestions for other "buttons" on www.vana.ca should be e-mailed to Ian Cameron before mid-February at ian@web.net.

As an introduction to the web page, put www.vana.ca into your search engine and see what pops up. (Try Google.)

DON'T YOU WORRY

by Murray Thompson

Don't you worry, honey child,
Don't you cry no more,
It's only a little old nuclear thing
In a little old limited war.

It's just a fancy warhead, child,
In a little old tactical shell,
And all it'll do is blow us all
To a little old limited hell.

GUESS WHERE YOUR DOLLARS GO?

e.g. What does one newsletter cost?

a. \$ 75 b. \$ 175 c. \$275 d. \$375

(See below)

ONE NEWSLETTER COSTS:

Professional setup	\$140.
Photocopy	61.
Stamps	80.
Envelopes	<u>5.</u>
	\$286.

We need your 2003 renewal.

Veterans Against Nuclear Arms — Ontario/Québec Region

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