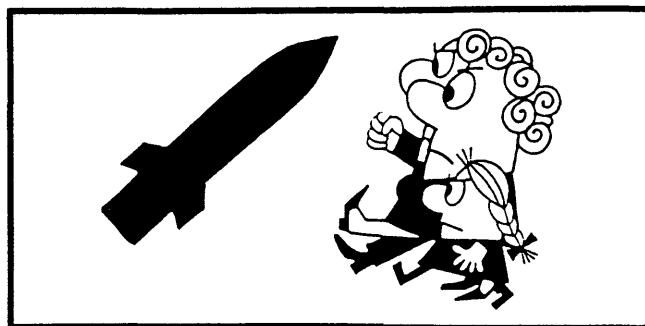


NEWS



International Philosophers for Peace

In RP41 we reported the formation of International Philosophers for the Prevention of Nuclear Omnicide (IPPNO). The group has now held its first international conference. The following is an edited version of the report on the conference by John Somerville, the co-chairperson of the North American section of IPPNO.

At the XVIIth World Congress of Philosophy, 1983 (Montreal), a group of philosophers representing a great diversity of views on the basic issues of traditional philosophy found that they were united by a new cosmic fear. This fear, which indeed haunts the whole contemporary world, arises from the historically new and increasingly evident capability of nuclear weaponry to annihilate the whole human world in one relatively brief conflict.

It was clear that to continue to call such a conflict 'war' would be dangerously misleading because the thing that has always been called war, and has been with us since the beginnings of human society, has always been survivable by humankind, and has sometimes been conducive to social progress. Since the new weaponry, if used, could exclude even survival, let alone progress, nuclear conflict would be not only quantitatively but qualitatively different from war as we have always known it. Therefore, a new name that expresses the qualitative difference is needed. Hence the term nuclear omnicide - the killing of all humans by some humans, including themselves.

The need to prevent this kind of total and final suicide is obviously much greater and much more urgent than the need to prevent ordinary or conventional war. Hence, International Philosophers for the Prevention of Nuclear Omnicide (IPPNO). The keynote of its first International Conference was sounded by the Reverend Theodore Hesburgh, President of the University of Notre Dame, when he declared, 'There is no greater problem in the world today than the nuclear threat to humanity.... Unless we solve it there will be no more moral problems because there will be no more human beings to have moral problems.'

IPPNO's first International Conference was held in St. Louis, Missouri, partly in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association May 1-3, 1986, then continuing at St. Louis University through May 5. Its General Theme, 'Philosophy and the New Problem of Nuclear Omnicide - Analysis, Education, Action', was addressed by more than seventy prepared speakers from eleven countries and four continents in two multidisciplinary panels and eleven symposia meeting in morning, afternoon and evening sessions.

While the problem of preventing omnicide is peculiarly philosophical in the sense that philosophy in general has always been concerned with the nature and fate of the totality of which humankind is a part, and religious philosophy long ago created eschatology as a study of the

possible ending of the human world, it is also obvious that other disciplines can and must contribute to this problem in its contemporary setting. Thus, membership in IPPNO is open not only to professional philosophers but to other professionals interested in cooperating with the efforts of philosophers in this regard, and the conference itself was inscribed as 'a contribution to the United Nations International Year of Peace'.

In keeping with this approach the multidisciplinary panels, organized by Alexander Gralnick, M.D., Medical Director of High Point Hospital, brought together specialists from the fields of medicine, psychiatry, international affairs, nuclear weaponry and industrial engineering as well as religion and philosophy. In these panel discussions, 'Towards Preventing Nuclear Omnicide', the United Nations was represented by Ben Sanders of its Department for Disarmament Affairs, the (American) Center for Defense Information by its Director, Rear Admiral Gene LaRocque, U. S. Navy (Ret.), the USSR Academy of Sciences by the Director of its Institute of Philosophy, Professor Vladimir Mshvenieradze, and by Professor Alexander Kalyadin of its Institute of World Economy and International Relations, medicine and psychiatry by Dr Helen Caldicott, founder of Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Dr Alexander Gralnick of the Einstein College of Medicine, international affairs by Edward Doherty, retired U.S. foreign service officer, present advisor to the United States Catholic Conference, industrial engineering by Professor Seymour Melman of Columbia University, and religion by the Reverend T. Michael McNulty, S.J., of Marquette University. United States Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger was invited, but did not respond.

The symposium topics were as follows: (1) Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Sanity; (2) Star Wars and Earth Peace; (3) Ideology, Human Rights and World Peace; (4) Politics, Religion and Omnicide; (5) Nuclear Deterrence, Omnicide and Morality; (6) Third World Perspectives and Nuclear Issues; (7) Education for Peace in a Nuclear World; (8) Philosophy, Religion, Art and Industry in the Peace Movement; (9) Human Civilization, Ordinary War and Nuclear Omnicide; (10) Analytical and Political Issues in the Contemporary Peace Movement; (11) Educational and Psychological Factors in the Prevention of Nuclear Omnicide.

What of the future of IPPNO? The constitution provides that full-scale international conferences should be planned biennially, but should not take place twice in succession in any country strongly identified with either NATO or the Warsaw Pact. The reasoning behind this provision is that the primary danger of full-scale nuclear conflict (omnicide) is centered in the relations between the USA and the USSR, since the nuclear arsenals that could annihilate the human world are sited in those two countries. It follows that the international dialogue that is most necessary and urgent in the interest of mutual understanding, increased cooperation and the strengthening of peace must be carried on between those two countries.

Since IPPNO's first full-scale international conference took place in the USA it was hoped from the start that the second would be possible in the USSR. This hope came to

fruition in the confirmation given in St. Louis by the Soviet representatives that the philosophers of the USSR were prepared to host the second International Conference of IPPNO in Moscow in the latter part of June, 1989. This date rather than 1988 was chosen because 1988 is the year of the XVIIIth World Congress of Philosophers in Brighton, England, where IPPNO has already proposed a smaller-scale international program on the day reserved for meetings of philosophical societies. A similar meeting on the philosophy of peace is also being planned by the North American Section of IPPNO together with representatives of the Polish journal, *Dialectics and Humanism*, including its Editor, Professor Janusz Kuczyński. This meeting will be held in December, 1986, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association in Boston.

IPPNO's constitution also provides that each new International President be chosen from the country that undertakes to host and organize the next full-scale International Conference. Since this means that the international presidency changes with relative frequency, it was agreed that IPPNO should have two permanent secretariats to provide for continuity and cooperation in the keeping of records and documents, payment of dues (\$10 a year), and providing assistance to the organizers of the successive international conferences. It was further agreed that one of the secretariats, functioning in English, should be located in North America, and the other, functioning in Russian, in the USSR, each headed by a Co-chairperson elected for a term of six years by the membership of its own geographical area. Each co-chairperson will be responsible, separately and independently, for organizing the staff of the respective secretariat. At the St. Louis business meeting the North American delegates elected John Somerville as North American Co-chairperson.

It was agreed by all that IPPNO should set up a quarterly *Journal of International Dialogue* which would be published in two editions, one in Russian and one in English. Each of the two journals would be organized and funded separately and independently. Although the contents of each journal would thus be determined by its own editors, each editorial staff is encouraged to include international personnel, and material published in either journal would be available for translation in the other.

Whatever the form and contents of the respective journals, their common and central aim would always be dialogue that seeks common ground for the prevention of omnicide, the strengthening of peace, the increase of mutual understanding and cooperation. The ideal would be dialogue characterized by a sense of historically unprecedented emergency, seeking specific actions or steps that can be mutually helpful now. In keeping with such an aim each issue of each journal would have at least a third of its articles written by authors living and working in countries outside of the geographical-national limits and cultural conditions of the area in which the given journal is published. The readership of each journal should thus be made aware of living problems, ways of thinking, arguments, fears and hopes of which they had little or no previous knowledge. Agreement on ends does not automatically create agreement on means, in regard to which differing views need to be argued out. Such articles could be answered, and the answer could be answered, in dialogue significantly different from academic polemics that has no sense of urgency, and is unconnected with specific actions and socio-political programs. It would be different also from political polemics of the cold war type which is centered on what we can disagree with and condemn rather than what we can agree with and cooperate with. In mutually helpful dialogue no subject matter is barred, but success depends on the tone, which should be that of friend to friend.

It was decided to set up a number of committees that would help to carry out the work of IPPNO. Centered as

it is upon the active prevention of nuclear omnicide, that work must extend beyond the purely cognitive aspects of knowledge and understanding. It must include affective qualities as well. That is, it must not only be aimed at teaching people facts they do not yet know about nuclear omnicide. It must also be aimed at making them really believe facts they already know, so that they will act upon them, which is a good test of genuine belief, especially in circumstances of an emergency. The incredible truth must be made credible, and indignation must be demonstrated to be a virtue. Feelings must be activated and emotions engaged. The best, perhaps the only, way to do this is to enlist the cooperation of the arts, including, perhaps especially, the popular arts. Thus a Committee on the Arts was formed.

A Committee on Peace Education was seen as equally necessary. Peace education as a separate discipline is gradually spreading, within different educational systems, from early grades to the university level, and in the 'grass roots' community. Since the problems arising from the existence of omnicidal nuclear weapons represent the most important and urgent component of this new discipline, its whole content and direction of development are of vital concern to IPPNO. This concern is perhaps felt with a special sharpness in the United States where, as 'peace education' increased and spread among school systems and institutions of higher learning there was also an increase of the tendency to construe peace education as something not centrally concerned with the prevention of wars between nations, but rather with 'the management of conflicts,' with ways of 'conflict resolution' in general. With this tendency the center of gravity shifts away from international politics to personal and group relationships uncontaminated by politics. What develops is not only something far different from the original intention of the discipline (however 'safer' this different focus may be) but something that diverts attention away from the nuclear threat now confronting the entire contemporary world.

As a result of what happened in World War II, which was the most destructive conflict in human history up to that point, the United Nations as a world organization was established for the specific purpose of making sure that any disputes that might henceforth arise among nations would be settled peacefully by means of processes, rules and channels of negotiation agreed to by all nations, and always subject to further modification through agreed procedures. It stands as the most inclusive and extensive institution of its kind ever created. Its charter provisions, in terms of their method of adoption and their content, are in the mainstream of the modern democratic tradition. Though its jurisdiction is limited by collective agreement, and is sometimes flouted and evaded by state actions that openly violate the terms of agreement, its clearly stated principles, if observed and further extended, could effectively abolish war in general and the threat of nuclear omnicide in particular.

However, the facts of contemporary history show numerous instances of the deliberate choice of aggressive military actions to deal with disputes arising between nations rather than to choose the processes of peaceful settlement set up in the UN charter and implemented by its organs and agencies. Even worse in a sense are continued instances of the deliberate and explicit threat of the first use of nuclear weapons, repeatedly rejecting majority vote after majority vote (eleven times) in which the UN General Assembly explicitly condemned the first use of nuclear weapons as something that would be a crime against humanity and a violation of the United Nations charter. Therefore, one of the main lines of IPPNO's efforts must be to emphasize the immense danger that lies in violating the UN charter, or rejecting the repeated judgments of its most inclusive organ, or withdrawing from further participation in key agencies of the United Nations.

A Committee on United Nations Affairs was therefore

set up with the aim of spreading the fullest possible knowledge of the uniquely important role of this world organization in the search for international peace, of encouraging all people to avail themselves of the vital information it provides to the public, and of encouraging all governments to use its resources to the fullest extent.

As the problem of preventing nuclear omnicide has similarly important relationships with social institutions like religion and industry, similar committees were set up in relation to them. In literal fact, if we look upon IPPNO as part of the effort to ensure a physical future for humankind in the face of the present nuclear threat of physically annihilating everything human, then everything human ought to resist. Every human institution ought to make its contribution to this uniquely fateful effort. It has often been said that the only thing capable of uniting all humankind in a common struggle would be some monstrous enemy suddenly appearing from outer space with weapons capable of exterminating every inhabitant of the earth. That enemy is no longer in the outer space of exaggerated imagining. It now confronts us daily in the all too real nuclear arsenals that could, by human decision or human accident, be exploded at any moment.

Cogito

A new philosophy magazine, *Cogito*, has been launched by the Cogito Society in association with the University of Bristol. Its aim is to introduce philosophy to a potential audience that is interested in the subject but lacks the training needed to tackle difficult texts. The magazine's declaration of intent reads as follows:

Cogito will be particularly valuable to sixth-formers, some of whom are for the first time being offered the opportunity to study Philosophy at A-level. It will provide an introduction to central philosophical issues in a way which avoids the obfuscating jargon that has rendered much of recent academic philosophy inaccessible to non-specialists.

The Cogito Society is not committed to any particular school or method of philosophy. Its central objectives are to promote discussion and interest in philosophical ideas, and to campaign in consonance with these aims for the extension of educational facilities to enable the greatest number of people to benefit from a philosophical education.

The magazine is informative rather than doctrinaire. While every care will be taken to avoid undue simplification, material will be presented in a lively and readable form. The magazine will also include a number of rubrics not usually found in Philosophy journals. Interviews with leading philosophers and prominent personalities engaged in public debate about topical moral issues will be combined with news from the world of Philosophy, readers' letters, competitions, puzzle pages, etc.

Articles, moreover, will not merely report in a distilled or summary fashion on past and current views and theories. By presenting issues within a context which emphasises their relevance and importance, *Cogito* aims to engage its readers in Philosophy, not simply report on it. It thus pursues what from ancient times was understood to be one of the main tasks of Philosophy, that it should encourage an inquiring temperament and the sceptical re-examination of accepted beliefs, and promote creative dialogue rather than a narrow-minded academic pursuit or a self-indulgent

intellectual game. In the spirit of these aims, *Cogito* addresses itself to its readership, young and old, and asks for its support.

The Cogito Society programme commences with the publication of the first full issue in January 1987. Not yet available from newsagents, *Cogito* is published once a term. The annual subscription fee is £4.00 for the magazine, £6.00 for Society membership and magazine subscription. (Society membership gives you the right to vote on editorial policy and activities of the Society at the Annual General Meeting.) Please send all cheques or postal orders to *Cogito*, University of Bristol, 9 Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1TB. Please state number of copies required.

Once More on 'Realism and the Human Sciences'

A Conference on 'Realism and the Human Sciences' was held at the Architecture Department of Strathclyde University, Glasgow, on 26-28 September 1986. The idea for this conference grew out of a conference on the same theme (reported by Andrew Collier in RP44) held in Sussex in December 1985. Like that earlier conference, the Glasgow conference provided a mutually supportive context for people working with realist ideas in different disciplines, whilst at the same time giving space for dialogue with non-realist traditions. For me, one of the most stimulating sessions was devoted to the latter purpose. Barry Barnes gave a carefully and sensitively argued statement of the interface between realism and his own 'minimally realist' form of relativism. Unfortunately there was insufficient time really to explore the important questions raised by Barry's talk.

The conference had started on Friday evening with an extended statement by Roy Bhaskar of his thoughts on the topic of dialectics, presented in the context of his own earlier work in the philosophy of the natural and human sciences. On Saturday there were, in addition to the session on sociology of knowledge, plenary sessions on feminism and psychoanalysis, and workshop discussions on aesthetics, theory of knowledge, and economics. Sue Clegg's discussion of the concept of patriarchy and the usefulness of realist philosophy to feminist work stimulated a very productive discussion. The session on psychoanalysis featured a fascinating exchange between David Will and Michael Rustin on the intellectual procedures involved in arriving at interpretations in the therapeutic process. The workshop I attended was introduced by Alison Assiter, who presented a psychoanalytical interpretation of the dominance of visual metaphors in the theory of knowledge, focusing (there I go again) on the philosophy of Descartes.

Sunday's sessions included reflections on realist method in the human sciences from John Allen and John Urry. These had, for me, a special interest, in that they both posed interesting and important questions from the standpoint of substantive research in the human sciences, and combined to show how big an impact realism is capable of making on the way research is done. The final session began with talks by Andrew Collier and myself on realism and emancipation. Though there were some important points of difference, both contributions centred on the value of realism for theoretical work in the social sciences which will sustain non-utopian emancipatory strategies.

In general, I felt the conference was, like its predecessor in Sussex, very successful. The main drawback was that the programme was too densely packed,

given the high quality of the discussion of presented papers. If there are to be future conferences on the same theme (and I hope there will be) I think we should have fewer presentations, and more space for open-ended discussion. The balance between providing a forum for mutual communication between people committed to realist approaches, and opening up areas of realist philosophy to criticism from other approaches was, again, I think, about right. Several of us felt that a future conference would benefit from a further session on realism and feminism which featured an anti-realist feminist position.

Ted Benton

Groupe D'Etudes Sartriennes

The Groupe d'etudes sartriennes (general secretary: Genevieve Idt) was set up in 1979 to further the study of the philosophical, literary and political work of Sartre. It has an international membership and holds regular weekend seminars in Paris every June. The proceedings of some of these are now available in no. 1 (60FF) and no. 2/3 (90FF) of the Etudes sartriennes, available from the Centre de Semiotique textuelle at the Universite de Paris X, Nanterre 92001, France; further issues are in preparation.

Further details are available from the British representative Annette Lavers (Department of French, University College London WC1E 6BT) or from the US representative Michel Rybalka (708 Radcliffe, University City, Missouri 63130).

The other British members of the organising committee are Howard Davies (Department of Language and Literature, Polytechnic of North London, London NW5 3LB) and Christina Howells (Wadham College Oxford).

Deep Ecology

Subsequent to our publication of Richard Sylvan's 'A Critique of Deep Ecology' in RPs 40 and 41, RP received a substantial (28,000 word) reply to Sylvan by Warwick Fox. Due to the length of this reply we were unable to consider it for publication in RP. A revised version of it has, however, now been published as: Warwick Fox, 'Approaching Deep Ecology: A Response to Richard Sylvan's Critique of Deep Ecology', Occasional Paper no. 20, Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania (113pp). It is obtainable for A\$12 plus A\$3 for handling and surface mail to Europe (A\$7 air mail) from: The Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, GPO Box 252c, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia 7001.

Errata

There were three misprints in Edmond Wright's *Dialectical Perception: A Synthesis of Lenin and Bogdanov* published in RP 43:

(i) In the final quotation from Bogdanov occurred the sentence 'The objectivity of a physical sequence consists in its uncertainty.' It should have read 'The objectivity of a physical sequence consists in its universality.' This was an unfortunate misprint as it affected the criticism of Bogdanov which followed, where Bogdanov was to be shown as inconsistent, on the one hand allowing that one of his Two Men working together could correct the other and thus alter what was regarded as 'universal', and yet on the other privileging the public agreement. It was in fact the common Wittgensteinian error of conflating public as meaning 'involving many persons' with public as meaning 'majority'. The meaning of words is arrived at by a system that involves many persons, in which one person's subjective understanding of the meaning of a word can correct the majority's understanding. Wittgenstein is usually read ambiguously as suggesting that the majority's meaning is always correct and that it is impossible to give a word a private meaning, when what is obviously the case is that a private understanding of a public word can sometimes be better than that of the majority opinion.

(ii) In the footnotes the last reference should read: Wright, E. L. (forthcoming, 1987), 'A Dialectical Theory of Perception', in Kazimierz Jodkowski (ed.), Realism, Rationality, Relativism, Vol. 9, Marie-Curie University, Lublin.

(iii) The correct names of the two Ivans in Gogol's story are Ivan Ivanovitch and Ivan Nikiforovitch.

Correction

Two corrections should be made to Russell Keat's 'The Body in Social Theory: Reich, Foucault and the Repressive Hypothesis', published in RP 42, Winter/Spring 1986:

(1) In the fourth line of the penultimate paragraph, 'rightly' should be replaced by 'wrongly'.

(2) The bibliographical reference to Foucault's 'Power and Norms' should be 'in M. Morris and P. Patton (eds.), Power, Truth, Strategy, Feral Publications, Sydney, 1979, pp. 59-66', and not 'in D. F. Bouchard (ed.), Michel Foucault: Language, Counter-Memory, Practice, Blackwell, Oxford, 1977'.