

# letters

## Khaki fantasy

This is an open letter to all those young men (and perhaps some women) who rushed right on down to the Marine Recruiting Center — or even thought about it — to fight for their country against the "hostile" forces in Grenada.

I wonder if part of your heroic fantasy includes coming home a paraplegic, a quadriplegic, arriving back in the States with no penis or perhaps half of your face missing, your ear drums blown out. I'll bet not. Most young Americans have been socialized for violence as larvae on the football field so they can emerge, powerful and invincible but-terflies of the battlefield.

Violence is a way of life in America. Fifty percent of all women are beaten by their partners. Child abuse statistics are painfully overwhelming. The elderly are being told they must forgo medical treatment and the basic necessities of life (food and shelter) so we're safe from communism — safe to live in poverty? Do we in America really have it so together that we can justify policing the world enforcing our "better way of life"?

So, those of you ready to be maimed for freedom, examine your mental construct for the experience of war. What kinds of images come to mind with words like FIGHT, KILL, WIN? Before you make the biggest decision of your life, go talk to a Vietnam combat vet. There are countless thousands who went to war in Vietnam with sincere but naive ideas of "making the world safe for democracy." Talk to someone whose values have been changed by the experience of war and find out why. Visit a VA hospital. Observe there the ghosts of heroes past. Talk with them. Ask them if they feel the world is a better place to live through their violent efforts. Wonder about the kind of education you've been given in America. Wonder why you never had a class in conflict management, international relations and problem-solving, non-violence. Consider that there might be some alternative ways to serve humanity besides the donation of life and/or limb. Ecologically, this planet is hellbent for destruction. There has yet to be found an answer to the problem of nuclear waste. Acid rain has already destroyed thousands of lakes and polluted acres of land. 50,000 people die of starvation every day on our planet earth. Solar technology offers us much hope as a power source but more people are needed to educate the public and convert obsolete systems and minds.

Using violence to solve problems has been the "American way" since Columbus intentionally gave small pox infested blankets to the Indians.

By continuing this Neanderthal approach for the resolution of differences in ideology with other

countries, the U.S. military and the Soviet military now threaten the existence of every human being, plant and animal.

If you really want to fight a war, please let it be the war on ignorance, arrogance and global injustice perpetuated by the Reagan administration — all puppets for multinational corporations.

To roughly quote former presidents John F. Kennedy and Ike Eisenhower, we must learn to live together in peace or we will die together in the flames of hell.

**Leslie Hunter**  
university staff

## Ominous

In their understandable concern and preoccupation with the deployment of U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles to Western Europe anti-nuclear war demonstrators have overlooked an equally ominous development: the soon to be consummated sale of Trident submarine missiles to Britain. This largely unnoticed action will be the most destructive arms sale in history as it will enable the most marginal of nuclear powers not only the ability to maintain its nuclear capabilities but to dramatically expand them.

With little debate the United States agreed in 1978 to sell Britain about 100 Trident missiles, to replace the aging Polaris submarine missiles purchased nearly 20 years ago. Equipped with the British Chevaline warhead, these missiles will give Britain more than ten times as many warheads capable of striking Soviet territory as today. This one sale will transform Britain, changing it from a regional power to a superpower.

The sale will further complicate the Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) talks. The Soviets continue to insist that Britain and France be

included in any European theatre talks. Their insistence is based on understandable fears that British and French modernization will add far more accurate missile warheads to Western inventories than the Pershing and cruise deployment.

A U.S. decision not to make the sale, combined with a British decision to phase out the remaining Polaris boats, could be an important part of a European INF agreement. It would also aid the global non-proliferation effort which is badly in need of help.

Those concerned about averting nuclear war should protest this sale.

**David Isenberg**  
Eugene

## Senseless

It is Friday. As I sit here in a stoned condition, I ponder the enigma of my future. What do the signs of Grenada and Lebanon lead me to believe?

You see, like a fool, I was stupid enough to register for the draft, thinking of course that the world was in a stable condition. But, I learn of 200-plus Marines dying in Beirut. It seems so much like the past; the Reagan administration willing to let a few boys die overseas in an effort to justify a war.

I also learn of Grenada. We are essentially at war with Cuba. What effect does that have on relations with the Soviet Union? The visions of a nuclear freeze dim as relations dwindle. Yes, I would say my future looks bleak.

When the draft is enacted in the next year, will I go voluntarily? At this point, I think not. I can't help feeling that current conflicts in the world are senseless. Should not rationality prevail? Cannot good overcome evil? Peace defeat conflict?

**Christopher Green**  
political science



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