



## MY KIND OF BOMB

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Last month, in the afterglow of the Reagan administration's admission that, yes, it had decided to assemble the neutron bomb, I plugged my ears and prepared for the worst.

You will recall that the Pericles of Plains, Georgia, had decided to leave the neutron bomb in pieces so as not to arouse the successors of Bertrand Russell and Nikita Khrushchev. Well, according to Washington's cognoscenti, now even our NATO allies favor deterrent weapons that are unusable. Poor Ron had really stepped into it this time, and so I awaited a painful brouhaha. Yet, Ron apparently remains in favor with the gods. Europe took the decision calmly, and once again the cognoscenti are wearing the dunce's cap. The French applauded. Others winked and passed on.

The only noticeable squawks came from the same old hen houses: those situated in Scandinavia, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and various left-wing haunts here and abroad. Of the aforementioned squawkers I believe our Soviet friends have the most to squawk about. They now have more than 40,000 tanks ready to bring proletarian revolution to Western Europe. Were war to ignite between the Soviets and the West, those tanks would blitzkrieg across the European plain with devastating force. Unless NATO resorted to tactical nuclear weapons, many analysts fear that these tanks would roll up to the English Channel in a matter of days. In their wake would be destruction, death, and the KGB. So much for Europe.

But tactical nuclear weapons are ferociously destructive, and concentrating their destructive force on a

*Adapted from RET's weekly column syndicated by King Features.*

specific target is impossible. Once set off, these weapons indiscriminately destroy lives, both civilian and military. The prospect of using them in Europe has caused anxiety within the NATO alliance for years, much to the joy of Soviet strategists whose growing armor increases that anxiety still more.

Now along come those inventive Yanks with a tactical nuclear weapon that can be hurled at oncoming tanks, killing only their crews and infantry support, and leaving nearby civilian

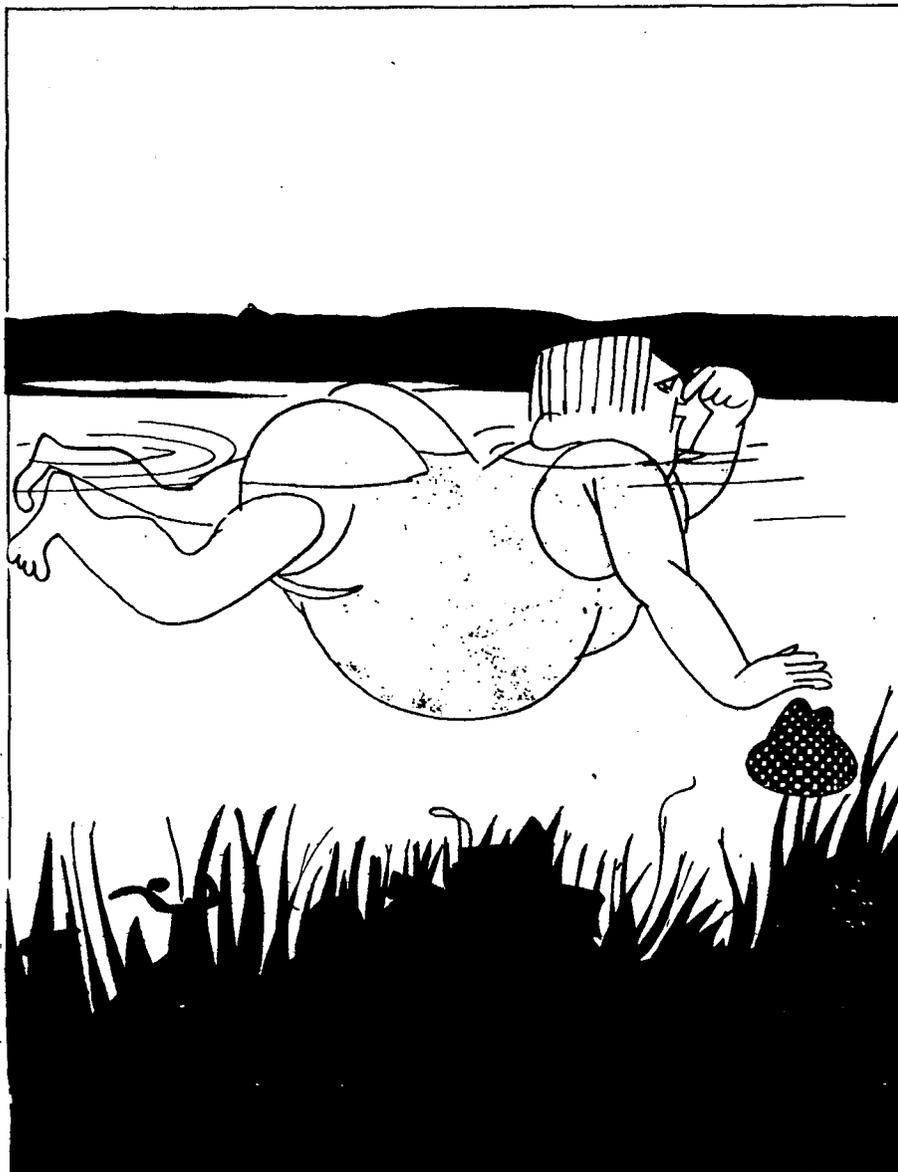
populations and buildings intact. It is all very good news for those who want to see Europeans freed from the disabling fear of an imminent Soviet invasion and from the enervating pessimism that has so recently haunted their foreign policies. It is also good news for those who admire European architecture and for those who deal in the used tank market.

Yes, the Soviets are irate, and they have every reason to be. They have spent a lot of very dear rubles on that tank force of theirs, but what

good will it be if its crews are certain to be turned into terminal cases as soon as they cross into Western Europe? Let us try to look at the neutron bomb from the Soviet Union's point of view. A war that only kills soldiers? What kind of war is that? The Politburo's favorite human beings are soldiers. A war that does not destroy nearby villages? When the Red Army goes into battle it relishes the destruction of villages. Any Afghan peasant can tell you that.

For that matter, when the Red Army mixes it up, the primary objective seems to be not victory but the utmost slaughter and destruction. Not only are villages laid waste, but whole cities and countries, too, the better to raise up a new order in the image and likeness of Dr. Marx and to give Soviet commanders a sense of achievement. The neutron bomb does not merely threaten the mammoth Soviet tank force, it also takes the fun out of the Soviet style of battle. Neutron warfare is sissy warfare.

Contrary to the neutron bomb's critics who insist that the bomb will dangerously disturb the balance of forces in Europe, the bomb will help to re-establish that balance and in a very benign way. It puts up a fence against potential invaders, while adding very little to the West's offensive capability. Offensive war is what the friends of peace should oppose most staunchly. We must be most concerned about the huge SS-20 missiles that the Soviets have targeted on Western Europe, and the Pershing and cruise missiles with which we plan to counter them. Let us seriously negotiate the removal of these monsters. As for the neutron bomb, remember the poesy of Robert Frost: Good fences make good neighbors. □



## MY KIND OF ART

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Columnist George F. Will has seen enemy action on many fronts, often acquitting himself quite well. True, he is somewhat too prone to controversy for my tastes, but he is generally intelligent and humane. Last month, however, there sounded in his commentary a very ugly note, which, I suppose, we progressives should have anticipated. Will dis-

approves of contemporary art. In fact, he holds it up to derision.

Will has taken his conservatism too far this time. Of course, on matters of contemporary aesthetics there is always room for informed give and take, but what is so funny about modern masterworks such as "Vertical Kilometer," a kilometer-long brass rod, buried in a kilometer-long

hole? Despite the fact that generous connoisseurs were willing to pay \$300,000 for it, Will thought it was very funny. And what is so humorous about "Room Temperature," featuring a water bucket, four apples, six balloons (uninflated), and two flies? The flies, after all, had expired.

Will derided these works along

with others in his syndicated column. And now he is paying dearly for his Philistine outbursts. All across the Republic newspaper correspondence columns are filling with reproachful letters from assistant professors of art. Sometimes they come from associate professors and even full

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## C A P I T O L I D E A S

## EVERY WORD OF IT TRUE

by Tom Bethell

Once upon a time I had tea with Kitty and Malcolm Muggeridge at their Sussex farmhouse, and the conversation soon turned to a most remarkable article which had been published that morning in the (London) *Daily Telegraph*. The article, by a certain P. T. Bauer, decisively refuted in as many paragraphs half a dozen prevalent ideas about the Third World: Colonial rulers didn't steal the rubber from Malaysia or the tea from India; on the contrary, they planted it there in the first place. If Third World countries have been exploited by the West, how come those countries with little or no contact with the West turn out to be the most backward of all? Foreign aid to Third World countries not only has done no good; it has actively interfered with economic advance in those countries. And so on. As you can imagine, it made for delicious reading among us *Daily Telegraph* addicts (retired colonels, former colonial administrators, deposed monarchs, and so forth).

Muggeridge seemed to have been put in rare good form by the article. "Every word of it true!" he exclaimed, raising a cup of (Indian) tea to his lips. "Who is this Bauer?" he then wanted to know.

Regrettably, I had to confess my ignorance. But I have often since tried to imagine his astonished

delight had I been able to identify the gentleman then and there. Bauer was the professor of economics—the chairman of the department!—at none other than the London School of Economics, itself founded by Kitty Muggeridge's aunt and uncle, Beatrice and Sidney Webb. The school, of course, has turned out to be a prime incubator of socialism, and a principal carrier of the germs thereof to distant parts, notably the Third World. The knowledge that so sensible a man as P. T. Bauer was now installed as professor of economics at

the dreaded school founded by his in-laws would, I have since thought, have done much to clear away (for a week at least) the clouds of pessimism that gather so readily about the Sage of Robertsbridge.

Bauer is now 66 years old, and I gather recently stepped down as chairman of the LSE economics department. But he recently favored us with a visit to Washington, having been invited to speak to some clergymen by Michael Novak of the

American Enterprise Institute. He also spoke at a luncheon organized by the Council for a Competitive Economy. Here I had an opportunity to meet the great man (he is small, feisty, exuberant, and Hungarian), grasp him by the hand, and offer both congratulations to him and condolences to the ghosts of Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

Bauer's arrival in the United States coincided with the publication of his new book *Equality, The Third World and Economic Delusion* (Harvard University Press). This is essentially a reprint of the various articles he has written on foreign aid over the past ten years, but there is also quite a bit of new material. Those who have not already read such Bauerian gems as "Western Guilt and Third World Poverty," (originally published in *Commentary*), or his articles in *Encounter*, and are interested in aid, ideology, and international economics should make every effort to get hold of this book.

It is unusual, I think, to come across in any field such a complete and decisive demolition of the conventional wisdom. This is doubly surprising inasmuch as Bauer seems to have been alone in the endeavor, and the field itself is a large and important one. Foreign aid has somehow managed to wrap itself in such an intimidating cloak of necessity and finality that controversy has fled. It is inconceivable, for example, that an editorial should appear in the *New York Times* questioning the value of international transfer payments, or casting doubt



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