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## Mulroney off to top UN position?

Who would feel more betrayed than the Canadian electorate if our Prime Minister was appointed UN secretary general?

His supporters (both of them) would never forgive him for abandoning them after they stuck with him through the many disasters his government has endured.

His own MPs, and especially his Quebec caucus, would probably fall apart, and give in to the desire to join the Reform Party and the Bloc Quebecois respectively.

But it wouldn't just be his supporters who would be upset. After more than six years of Tory rule, Mulroney's voluminous detractors are dreaming about the certain punishment he will receive in the next general election.

If he gets the top UN job, not only do they have to suffer the humiliation of watching their great enemy take a step up in global profile, but they would also have to face a much less hated Tory leader in the next general election.

But the chances of Mulroney getting the job are nil. Not only are the African delegates demanding an African, but Mulroney himself seems absolutely resigned to seeing the country, and his party, through the next round of constitutional bargaining.

What is curious about the whole affair is just how his name got on the ballot in the first place? It's hard to imagine that he would be nominated without some form of his consent, however subtle.

If I was cynical, which I'm not, but if I was, I would guess that our prime minister somehow convinced someone to nominate him, perhaps in a ploy to increase his stature at home.

Coming as it does on the heels of his uncharacteristically hard-line stand on human rights at the Commonwealth Conference in Zimbabwe, it's easy to see a cynical plan to boost domestic popularity.

Remember how much more Mikail Gorbachev started travelling when his popularity began to sag at home? It seems every week he was either in the US, making a speech at the UN, in Germany to cheering crowds, being received by the Pope.

Of course, we all know what happened to him.

While the same is not likely to happen to Mulroney, it's also very likely that, no matter what amount of travelling he does, and no matter what any other world leader may say about him, it's not going to do him much good at home.

While it may be easier to fly to Harare than reduce unemployment, or be nominated for secretary general of the UN than reduce taxes, it's these kinds of things that will impress Canadians.

But it's hard to imagine, no matter what happens, a situation in which Canadians will re-elect his government.



## Phrase of the century

Well, the end of the century is less than a decade off, and you can bet your Bartlett's Quotations that the editors of Maclean's, Time and Newsweek will soon start pumping out special "commemorative" issues, summing up the highs and lows of the past hundred years of human achievement.

They'll talk of Bell's telephone and Edison's lightbulb. They will remind us of Gandhi's grace and Hitler's infamy.

The editors will quibble over the most famous phrase of the twentieth century. Some will say it was Churchill's "blood, sweat and tears" Others will vote for Neil Armstrong's "one small step for man..." One or two might give the nod to McLuhan's "the media is the message."

Not me. My vote for the most significant phrase of the twentieth century goes to a children's poster that appeared back in the 1960's. It was a simple question scrawled naively in black poster paint on a piece of green construction paper. It asked:

**WHAT IF WE GAVE A WAR AND NOBODY CAME?**

The Poster didn't get a lot of national attention in the sixties. I saw it reproduced on T shirts at folk festivals once in a while, but that was about it.

The slogan disappeared, but not the sensibility. The notion that wars are something that each of us can choose not to fight, sank beneath the human consciousness like one of those delayed reaction depth charges destroyers drop on submarines.

If you've been listening closely over the past few years you might have heard the detonations.

There was a loud one in the courtyard of Malacanang Palace in The Philippines a few years back when Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos tried to crush the popular movement that eventually drove them from the country. It all came down to one moment when the Philippine army, it's tanks and soldiers massed and menacing, was ordered to fire on the

demonstrators in front of the palace.

The troops refused, and the Marcos dynasty shuddered and died in that instant.

Who can forget the Chinese student, white shirted, standing calmly in front of -- and stopping -- a line of government tanks in Tienanmen Square?

It happened in Romania when the disgustingly corrupt Ceausescu regime ordered the troops to massacre protestors.

Once more, the troops refused.

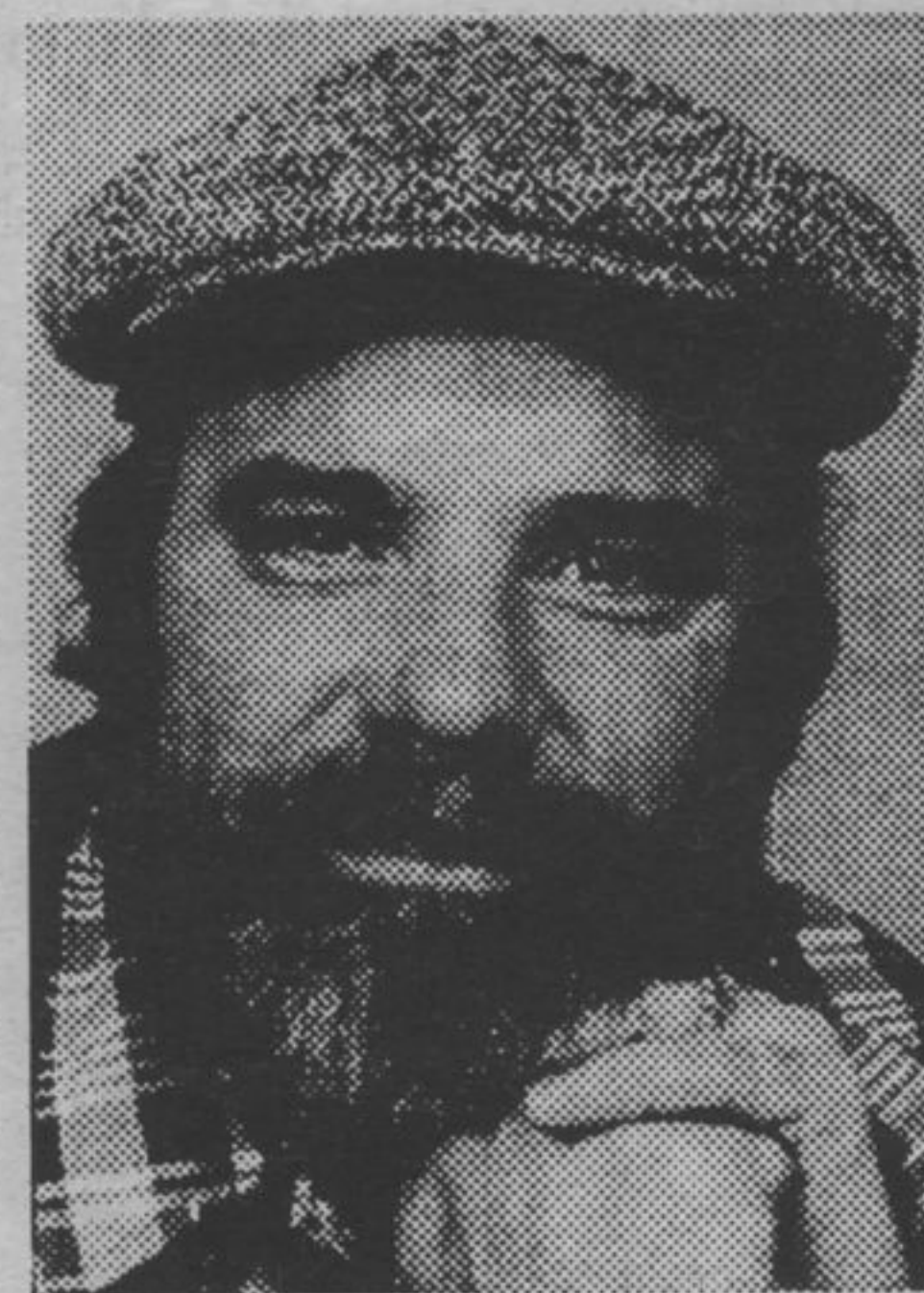
And it's just been revealed that, but for a handful of soldiers, the recent attempted Soviet coup d'etat would have been a bloodbath. One of the coup leaders, chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov, ordered a KGB anti-terrorist unit to storm the Russian parliament building and capture President Boris Yeltsin. The troops refused. "We couldn't fight against our own people" said a KGB officer, "and this our

former chairman didn't take into consideration." All these moments show great bravery on the part of unarmed protestors, but that's not the point. We've always had handfuls of brave people ready to die for the beliefs. What's revolutionary is that each incident features soldiers thinking for themselves.

What a frightening prospect for the military mind.

If I had my way, I'd flood the world with T-shirts with the slogan WHAT IF WE GAVE A WAR AND NOBODY CAME? emblazoned on the front. And on the back of the shirt I'd print a photo from one of the Gulf War videos that U.S. military censors refuse to release. It shows Iraqi soldiers being sliced in half by helicopter cannon fire. A senior Pentagon official explained the censorship, saying "If we let people see that kind of thing, there would never again be any war."

Gosh, we couldn't have that, could we?



Arthur Black

## Letters to the Editor

The Terrace Bay Schreiber News welcomes letters to the editor on any subject.

Letters must be signed and have the phone number and address of the author for verification. We will not knowingly print false libelous or anonymous comments.

Letters to the Editor are important to community newspapers. They serve to reflect opinions of members of the community we serve. However, we must insist on these rules to ensure that this very important forum is used responsibly.

Letters can be mailed to the News, Box 579, Terrace Bay, P0T 2W0, or dropped off at the News office, 13 Simcoe Plaza in Terrace Bay.