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All about the Cruise

Winnipeg (CUP) — What is this strange cruise missile that is creating such a fuss?

The cruise is a small, easily transported and concealed weapon amalgamating the three most revolutionary technologies of this century: jet flight, the computer microchip and the atomic bomb.

The missile is about twenty feet long and two feet in diameter and can carry a two hundred kiloton nuclear warhead. Unlike all previous missiles, the cruise does not travel to its target on a trajectory path. It is equipped with a computer guidance system

and folding wing assembly that permits it to travel about 90 feet above the ground, eluding detection by radar.

One University of Winnipeg professor estimates the cruise is capable of "hedge-hopping" to follow variations in the earth's topography to within two inches accuracy. Once launched, there would be almost no defense against a cruise missile attack.

In 1979, NATO announces in Western Europe in the early 1980s to counter deployment of the Soviet-made SS20 missile. The SS20 has

multiple warheads, but follows a trajectory path. Soviets have not yet developed a "hedge-hopping" missile.

Disarmament talks stalled, and the United States is eager to deploy the cruise by late 1983 or 1984 before it can do that is to test the missile in a place with a lot of room.

That place is the border country north of Cole Lake, Alberta, where the Canadian military has an immense weapons testing range. The Canadian government is on the verge of signing an agreement to allow the Americans to use the range for testing. Only last-minute changes proposed by the Americans have delayed the agreement.

Peace activists claim the cruise missile is a first-strike weapon, meaning it could knock out most of the Soviet Union's missiles before the Soviet's could react. If the missiles are deployed in West Germany, the Soviets would only have four minutes warning before their missiles were destroyed, compared to 30 minutes for land-based Minutemen launched from the United States.

This will leave the Soviets no choice but to launch their missiles immediately, they think they're being backed or risk losing the say peace activists. Therefore think that deploying the cruise will greatly increase the risk of nuclear war.

Because it is being tested in Alberta, activists in Canada's fast-growing peace movement have focused their energies on "refusing the cruise".

And that's why a movement that was limping along in anonymity only a year ago was able to attract more than 15,000 people to an anti-cruise demonstration in Ottawa Oct. 30 and thousands more across Canada.

Computer literacy for you too

Montreal (CUP) Any student bright enough to learn how to write properly in the 80's should be able to operate a computer.

That's the idea introduced by the Engineering and Computer Science faculty to Concordia University's senate.

Charles Giguere, associate dean, said that in spite of budget cuts, the university had a duty to ensure that every student became computer literate. And every faculty in the university has a stake in the project.

Sean McEventure, principal of one of Concordia's colleges, said that since universities were leaders in society, "it's humiliating to think everyone's ahead of us in this area."

Across the country, governments and school boards have introduced computers into primary and secondary school systems. The Quebec government plans to put 40,000 computers into their schools over the next five years, but individual school boards have already set up computer courses for their students.

Liberal Education Critic Claude Ryan said that, "If we had had to depend on the Department of Education, we would still be waiting."

It is vital that Concordia find the money for a policy of computer literacy, said McEventure. It is unlikely that new money earmarked for this policy will be forthcoming from the Ministry of Education, as it is under severe financial restraint.

Giguere emphasized that computer literacy need not be an expensive undertaking, as he brandished a sleek six-inch long computer.

A whole array of new and expensive equipment might be underutilized or quickly outdated, while students and professors could work wonders with \$60 models.

Engineering and Computer Science Dean M. N. Swamy joined the debate saying anyone could learn how to use a computer.

"Even I, without knowing anything, programmed something this morning."

Traditional computer courses and programs in both colleges and universities simply cannot meet the demand of students of computer literacy or training.

And even those who manage to get into the programs have to hang tough. At Dawson College in Montreal, a "failure policy" was created this year that forces students who do not pass the two first year courses to leave the program.

In any case, traditional courses like these are not designed for students outside the computer field. Concordia faculty members say students of every discipline need computer literacy.

Concordia's senate passed a motion to introduce a computer course specifically designed for history students next year.

