

Military fad reflects changing attitudes

By HOLLY ROBINSON
Reporter

Tiny soldiers are appearing in department stores and grammar schools. Clad in camouflaged garb, they are armed with plastic machine guns and make-believe grenades. Is G.I. Joe taking over?

Most children dressed as diminutive soldiers say no, but actions speak louder than words. One 12-year-old boy sporting camouflage from headband to sneakers said he wears the army gear just because he likes it. As he blasted his tank's lasers at the enemy in a video arcade, he said he did not associate the clothing with the military and did not plan to enlist in the armed forces.

United States Air Force recruiter Sgt. Zeke Hernandez confirmed the youngster's views. He said the outbreak of fatigues is just a fad.

"People just like the style," he said. "If everyone who buys fatigues were asked to sign a form saying they are going to join the military, they wouldn't do it."

Melissa Benjamin, a saleswoman for Kay-Bee Toys, disagrees. She says the military clothes and toys influence children strongly and are not harmless fads.

G. I. Joe is the most popular war

"People are not against the military like they were during Vietnam," Sean Sorrels, a sales clerk at Bryan Surplus and Supply said. He also called the interest in military gear a fad.

"Nobody's in the mood for war, but people are a little more patriotic now than they were in the Vietnam era," he said.

toy, with not only action figures like Flamethrower and Blowtorch but a wide range of guns, tanks, jeeps and missiles. Benjamin said the toy was not selling well in the late 1960's, so it changed to an adventure figure in the 70's. Now the toy has shrunk from a Barbie-sized figure to a 3-

inch figure and is back to military. Benjamin said the figure is not only military, it is tough military.

G. I. Joe comic books also are popular with children. They are far from comic, however, using violent

the military items are more than style. He said parents buy their children what the children want and probably don't think of the outfits as military.

"Parents dress their kids up like they're going to war and in 15 years when they have to go for real, they're going to be upset," he said.

Jacobs said that the children who want army clothes usually are too young to remember the Vietnam War and the violent protests against it in the late 1960's.

"I remember I was 15 when the last plane was shot down over Vietnam," he said.

Jacobs said that though the clothing is sold as hunting wear, it is not bought for hunting.

"It's definitely militaristic," he said.

John Gibbs, Jacobs' co-worker, also said the clothing, which ranges from caps and scarfs to Army-style fatigue pants and tennis shoes, is associated with the military.

"It has a lot to do with the resur-

gence of the military and it being more respectable now," he said.

Sean Sorrels, a sales clerk at Bryan Surplus and Supply, said that though business is better, America is not dressing for war.

"People are not against the military like they were during Vietnam," he said. Sorrels also called the interest in military gear a fad.

"Nobody's in the mood for war, but people are a little more patriotic now than they were in the Vietnam era," he said.

Melissa Benjamin, a saleswoman for Kay-Bee Toys, said the situation is more serious than just a fad. She called the wave of military clothing and military toys a "bad attitude." She said children are copying what they see on television. And there is much to see.

Teenagers sing jodies (military chants) to sell Purina's Hi Pro dog food while Marines sing the praises of Church's fried chicken and Diet Coke.

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Hindu leader visits campus, stresses interfaith harmony

By HOLLY ROBINSON
Reporter

Hindu religious leader His Divine Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj and nine saints visited the Texas A&M University campus Thursday to discuss Hinduism and give blessings.

After prayers were sung by the saints, Dr. Harry Lipscomb, Professor of Family and Community Medicine at Texas A&M, spoke about the importance of religion in today's society. He said that time should be devoted not only to science and material wealth, but also to religion.

"We have not yet discovered the importance of matters of the spirit," he said.

Dr. Richard Stadelmann, assistant professor of philosophy and human-

ities, also spoke at the meeting. He said people should not neglect the part of the soul and of life that motivates them — faith.

"We should train not only in the area of military skills, but also in the areas of love, unity, and hope," he said.

Vivekjian Swami, one of the saints, presented the lecture in English. He explained how Hinduism began and outlined the principles of Hinduism — truth, compassion, non-violence, and celibacy. He also gave examples of the disciplines in the Hindu life. Hindus are urged not to steal, not to drink alcoholic or toxic beverages, not to eat meats, and not to smoke. Cleanliness also is stressed.

Swami encouraged interfaith har-

mony. He said he would urge a skeptic to have more faith in his own religion rather than convert to Hinduism. He said that all religions believe essentially the same thing and thus should embrace each other rather than condemn each other.

Pramukh Swami Maharaj, believed by many followers to be an appearance of God, said that to be truly happy, a person must look within himself. He blessed everyone with happiness and gave individual blessings after the meeting.

The meeting concluded with an Indian dinner.

Pramukh Swami Maharaj and his saints will continue their tour of the Western world with visits to Houston and Sugar Land.



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What's up

Wednesday

MSC AFTER HOURS: deadline for applications to teach classes during the Fall semester is today.

FIELD HOCKEY CLUB: will practice at 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday on Cain Field. Everyone is invited to attend.

Friday

INTER-VARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: is sponsoring a free pizza party with live music and volleyball. The party begins at 4 p.m. at Hensel Park. Call 693-9284 or 845-3950 to R.S.V.P.

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL: is sponsoring an orientation program on student life and studies for graduate students at 1:30 p.m. in Rudder Forum.

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL: is sponsoring a "Get Acquainted Party" for all graduate students and faculty at 8 p.m. in Quonset Hut B.

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