

Dangers of Peace

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Bulletin Quotes: (Referred to in the text)

“ [Primates] fight when they think they can get away with it but they don’t when they can’t. And that’s the lesson that I draw for humans.” –Richard Wrangham, anthropologist, *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence*

“Foster economic ties and the reason for warfare, which is usually resources, will probably dissipate.” -- Frans de Waal, Yerkes National Primate Research Center

“Studies of apes and humans have found that while females fight less frequently than males, when they do fight, they hold grudges much longer.” –Frans de Waal, Yerkes National Primate Research Center

“Empowering females may reduce the rate of violence committed within and by a nation.” –Douglas Fry, anthropologist Abo Akedemi University, Finland

“[Authors] have been perpetuating fairy tales about [low] levels of violence among hunter-gatherers and other pre-state people.” –Steven LeBlanc, archaeologist, Director Harvard’s Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology.

“I think once we face the problems underlying the origins of tribalism and religious extremism—face them frankly and look for the roots—then we’ll find a solution to those in terms of an informed international negotiation system. We have no option but optimism. –Edward O. Wilson

“If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.” Also, “Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow man.” --Gandhi

“The way things have always been is not necessarily the way they will always be. When there is a...threat to be faced, people can be divided by it and fight each other, or they can come together and work together and find a solution to their problems together. Every... challenge has the power to divide—and the power to unite. Believe in Peace.” -- Wilfrid J. Wilkinson, president, Rotary International

OPENING WORDS:

Just as I was completing the writing of this talk, *The Dangers of Peace*, the Spring 2008 issue of UU World with its article on war by Paul Rasor arrived on my doorstep. The thrust of *Prophetic Non-violence: Toward a UU Theology of War and Peace* is on war decisions from the perspective of UU's as policy critics versus my discussion of proactive paths to global peace. I highly recommend that, if you haven't read Rasor's piece, you do so. It's appropriate as the issues of just wars vs. pacifism are to be taken up again by UU's in the next few years as our denomination periodically goes through another cycle of looking at our "official" UU position which is supporting just wars.

To further whet your appetite toward Rasor's article let me touch on some points in his writings. He notes the traditional UU openness to a policy that includes the concept of just wars. Regarding the pacifism element within our membership, noting twenty-nine varieties of pacifism, some based upon a religious-like fervor more than a thought to the real world, he states, "To put it in terms we liberals are familiar with, just war is grounded in reason, not revelation." His words sensitize us to the challenge that we must explore ways in which the just war perspective and the pacifist traditions of some of our members can be seen as mutually supportive rather than mutually exclusive. He continues and I quote, "...we need to be careful to welcome and honor (our fellow UU's) who hold different views...we don't have a very good record on this (or on avoiding the dangers of what we decide is our own political correctness). The ostracism suffered by those UU's who held minority positions during WWI and Vietnam reflects an unfortunate streak of illiberal self-righteousness that runs deep..." (Unquote.) The process is now

underway to help UU develop a revised Statement of Conscience regarding just wars targeted for completion in 2010. We here at UUFR can choose to participate in that study activity and process through our own discussions and representation to our denomination. For anyone who missed the article, it's on line at UUA.org.

The talk I've prepared for you this morning is not from the perspective of the sideline critic or activist passing judgment on the decisions of others. What is encouraged this morning is to take a big step back toward a broader view, and explore the issue of paths to world peace as though you were in the shoes of the decades-long policy makers, those who accept the burden of making the tough decisions, the buck-stops-here people. You may hear something this morning that makes sense to you or may inspire you to offer, from this lectern, an alternative path to peace or a different balance of priorities with its own reasoning and projections. Thinking through the challenge of world peace can lead to cocktail and dinner discussions with friends and family that will encourage talk about viable paths to peace to the point that the most practical may prevail, guiding the actions of "We, the People" as we steer our leadership toward this common hope and goal and emblazon progress along that path upon our human agenda.

MEDITATION: For meditation this morning, I like to suggest something a little different. Slowly read each of the quotes in the bulletin beginning with primates at the top and on to our current human race. Note the sources. Invest a bit of time contemplating the implications of each quotation.

MAIN TALK--

An overarching theme of we Unitarian Universalists is peace. How could we be other than that based upon our seventh principle which states: We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part. “Respect” connotes preserve rather than attack. “...of which we are a part” excludes the possibility of the “others,” a necessity in the order of battle. And our sixth principle, “The goal of a world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all,” is even more direct and a definition of freedom.

It is hard to make the case that the species, *Homo Sapien*, has natural tendencies toward peace. Certainly our pre-historic and proto-historic data tells a different story.

Ethnohistorian John Hann writes of the pre-Spanish contact Southeastern American Indian, “the warrior ethos was geared to chronic raiding against enemy tribes...the exploits performed and scalps taken enhanced status as well as wealth from booty and slaves captured.”

The percent of Native American war deaths research accumulated by Lawrence Keeley in *War Before Modern Civilization* offers:

Northern British Columbia 1500 BCE to 500 CE –	32% of deaths due to war
British Columbia 500-1774--	27%
Illinois 1300 to contact	16%
Southern California 100-1100--	10%
Central California 1500 BCE – 500 CE--	5%
Ancient Mexico--	5%

Lest we think this is “them”, not our Old World ancestors,

Ukraine (Mesolithic)-- 15%

Brittany 6000 BCE-- 8%

Individual anecdotes illustrate. George Washington, in 1754, attacked a party of Frenchmen south of Fort Pitt, killing ten and capturing the remaining twenty-two thus firing the first shots of the Seven Years’ War (in North America known as the French and Indian War), which took the lives of more than a million soldiers and civilians, cost France all of Canada, the Great Lakes, and the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. Has there been progress in reducing war deaths? Well somewhat.

Western Europe 17th Century-- 2% killed in war

U.S. & Europe 20th Century-- 0.5%

In the 20th century that’s still millions of precious lives killed in war action plus all the equally precious individual non-Europeans that were allies, or the focus of the killings. If we consider peace follows war, we can get a sense of whether the danger to our country of achieving peace is increasing or decreasing. With all the respect and sanctity that each of these soldiers deserve, let’s take a closer look at U.S. soldiers lost over time. These are U.S. forces including the worst single period of time, average deaths per day, and what percent of the total U.S. population at the time those war deaths represented.

<u>WARS</u>	<u>U.S. Killed</u>	<u>WORST</u>	<u>Ave/Day</u>	<u>% POP.</u>
Revolutionary War	25,000	140 in day	11	1.1 %
Civil War	600,000	3,700 in day	599	1.9 %

World War I	116,516	19,000 in 30 days	279	1.3 %
World War II	405,399	6,300 in day	416	0.3 %
Korean War	36,574	297 in day	45	0.02 %
Vietnam	58,200	616 in 5 days	26	0.03 %
Kuwait/Iraq	382	28 in day	9	0.0001 %
Afghanistan/Iraq	4,425	137 in 30 days	2	0.001 %

I have great grandfathers, uncles, and cousins among these numbers making them very personal to me and, I suspect, you do as well.

Peace always follows war. Sometimes it's enduring, sometimes it is tenuous, sometimes it is temporary. From the initial point of conflict, getting to that peace is always dangerous. We could interpret these figures as indicating, at least, as becoming less costly in lives lost as % of population. More on this later. How do we make peace stick? How can society combat war? How do we minimize the danger of obtaining peace? Can our UU seventh principle encompass an actionable concept, a path to peace?

To begin, let us consider where once commonplace war has yielded to lasting peace.

From 1763 to 1815, those newcomers to the U.S. and Canada, were involved in a more or less running battle that included Britain and France that varied from war to intimidating interference. The last almost 200 years has seen peace and vibrant trade among these particular nations.

The Europeans had been battling for millennia in tribal, religious sect, and state-on-state wars. The last 60 years has seen peace and, miracle of miracles, a unification making a return to the old killing ways nearly unthinkable. From Finland to Portugal, from Italy to the Low Countries, peace and mutually beneficial trade reigns. That wall of inclusiveness has been drifting east into communist block and Islamic lands.

A clutch of Eastern countries have switched to trade and peace. Consider Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia among others where war among them or with any of the European based bunch is increasingly hard to fathom.

What changed in these lands? Why is a return to those old ways of greed and settling national grievances now unthinkable among those countries with such a violent history? Allow me to suggest three reasons that add up to the individual citizens of those countries now have too much to lose.

First, personal comfort. Relative to previous generations, the people of these countries live a life of unimagined luxury. Globalization has brought material goods far exceeding their basic necessities making a life of relative comfort available to all who make an effort. Health and physical well-being continues to improve decade by decade. A mere 300 years ago there was really not a large difference between the living conditions of paupers and kings. Homes were universally hot, cold, and drafty. Filth, offal, and stench were a shared problem. Disease was an ever present threat. Periodic starvation of some portion of the population assured. Children, like as not, died -- sometimes taking their

mothers with them. Life expectancy was less than half what it is today. And crime and violence were a constant presence.

Second, democracy. To varying degrees, the citizenry of all of these countries know they have within their power to greatly influence their leadership, and they do so on some sort of regular basis. The range of influence varies from ability to throw the bums out every two years to the option of peacefully massing in the streets to redirect their leaders.

Contrast that with the Zimbabwe model where differing with the leader is a death sentence. In the peace countries, the citizenry ultimately rules. A better word is freedom.

Third, interdependency / interconnectedness. The people of these countries ARE the global economy. They may have Finland's Nokia phone, Canada's Blackberry, U.S. medicines manufactured in Spain, a Korean car of Italian styling using British technology and German engineering built in Thailand, Malaysia's DVD player of Japanese design, while wearing clothes of French inspiration while dining with foods grown, prepared, seasoned, and presented in a mixture of any or all of these lands. Beyond the material are the ideas. And those ideas scream around the world via the Nokia, the Blackberry, the laptop, and any other device that allow people in those countries to learn, question, and share with others. And that sharing, that freedom, and that questioning--is real power.

This group of peoples at peace with one another share physical comforts, interconnectedness of products and ideas, and an expectation that, collectively, they

influence their personal destiny with minimum interference by their governments.

Outside this group, there is less such personal confidence, less freedom, less peace.

Using policy thinker Tom Barnett's words: "We begin to see the world for what it truly is: divided into societies that are actively integrating themselves into globalization's Functioning Core and those that remain trapped in its Non-Integrating Gap—that is, largely disconnected and not benefiting from the global economy and the rule sets that define stability." Barnett shortcuts the terms for these two groups to "Core" and "Gap" and defines these two parts of the world in his book, *The Pentagon's New Map*. He goes on to postulate, "It is this disconnectedness that defines danger. Disconnectedness allows bad actors to flourish by keeping entire societies detached from the global community and under their control. Just as important, however, is the result that by expanding the connectivity of globalization, we increase peace and prosperity planet-wide."

Eradicating disconnectedness, therefore, becomes the defining security task of our age.

A word about Barnett's words "the rule sets that define stability:" As each of us functions within a rule set defined by our culture and laws, there is a rule set that defines the interaction of states and global business. Violation of the rule set results in reduction or withdrawal of support and interaction until such violations cease. Venezuela's nationalization of oil fields, Russian businesses ignoring contracts, are two examples of not abiding by the rule set. A more dramatic example is the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

The globalization rule set for conflict resolution recognizing mutual well-being is superior to killing your trading partners.

The leaders of some countries of the Gap have seen the advantages and joined the Core. Under the reformist leadership of Deng Xiaoping in the early 1980's, China focused on internal economic reform that unleashed a decade of impressive growth. Popular pressures for political reform naturally ensued culminating in the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989. Following the bloody crackdown, China focused more on reforming its legal rule sets regarding international business versus those involving political freedom. This choice set in motion a huge influx of foreign capital across the 1990's, transforming China from an emerging market to a global manufacturing superpower, a key party to globalization's Functioning Core. It would not have happened without foreign capital.

A Chinese participant in the democracy movement explained how this rule-set shift changed his outlook: "Before Tiananmen, we believed that freedom is 90 percent political and 10 percent economic. A few years later, we came to realize that real freedom is 90 percent economic and 10 percent political." You may find this change of heart troublesome, but think about your own daily life. Isn't that second formula a better description of how things really work? Is China a democracy yet? No. But it will be in the near future because by synchronizing their internal economic and legal rule sets with those of globalization's Functioning Core, China will end up accepting far more internal change than its Communist leadership ever bargained for. My brother in Shanghai, has said, "Tom, this is a totally different China economically and politically than you knew in

the late 1980's" The rate of change is unbelievably fast. A globalized populace takes the possibility of war off the table.

Some of you hate it when I talk numbers. But please grit your teeth for a moment to understand that funds available for investment in North America, Europe, and Asia Core countries accounts for 80 % of the world's long-term investment. The Soviet bloc is allotted 3 %, Middle East and Africa's 2 % each. All of Latin American has attracted only 9% with the vast bulk of that going to Core members Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. (Don't confuse this with government funds which are insignificant compared to world business.) If you want to join the Core, you MUST be able to access that investment money—plain and simple. That fundamental reality of this global economy explains further why we won't be going to war with China. Simply put, those flows continue to reshape the international peace environment. China has to double its energy production if its planned growth is actually going to occur. To make all that energy happen, China has to build an amazing amount of infrastructure to import it, process it, generate the needed energy products, and deliver it to buildings and vehicles. That infrastructure will cost trillions with a capital "T". For really big funds, there are only two financial communities that can handle that sort of request: Wall Street and the EU. So when you add it up, for the Chinese to get their way on development, they need to be friends with the Americans, the Europeans, plus the energy resources of the Muslims and the Slavs. Doesn't exactly leave a lot of civilizations to clash with, does it?

Time restraints keep us from delving into India. Watch India. For if such interconnectedness succeeds in that democratic society where half of the population is impoverished and one quarter are Muslim, then it can succeed just about anywhere.

Expanding the Interconnected Globalized Core is a path to peace, a path to peace for the long term. A path each of us could adopt and actively discuss to help keep our collective eye on the ball. You, a decision-maker, can begin to see that path to peace and the steps that move the world in that direction. It will take decades, many decades.

There is an issue intimately related to the ability of these countries to maintain an economic focus. The world organizations like the UN have no muscular cop on the beat to deal with the neighborhood rowdies--thus that responsibility falls to those who have the resources and sense of caring for the welfare of others to get that job done. As in the villages of history, that job falls to the big guy, whether he likes it or not, Don Knott's Deputy Barney Fife of Mayberry, being the noteworthy exception. It's the price we pay for making it unnecessary for others more capricious to build up their muscle and it frees their resources to focus upon progress. With this responsibility come dangers of peace.

What we get in return for doing these difficult things is the end of war as we know it. We get a global economy--nobody left on the outside, noses pressed to the glass. We get a definition of what constitutes the finish line in this global war on terrorism. In sum, shrinking the Gap gets us the final piece to the puzzle that is global peace. The end of the

Cold War solved the threat of global conflict, and America's continued willingness to play cop has effectively ended state-on-state war like Iraq / Kuwait. What stands between us and the goal of making globalization truly global is the threats posed by the forces of disconnectedness and the bad *individual* actors that plague the Gap. Defeat them by denying them the Gap as their own and the Core wins this war on terrorism. About here, some say, "plain and simple." I disagree. How about plain and tough.

But that involvement must have follow through. For if we simply engage in drive-by regime change without waging the peace that must follow all such wars, then those victories will remain forever hollow, and they will necessarily be repeated time and time again. Desert Storm was a hollow victory because it did not help the people of Iraq become more integrated into the global economy and thus safely netted into the Core's collective security. Such security allows the redirection of resources driven by a positive vision of the future rather than dread of the next need to shed blood. The Balkans are on a completely different track today from the one they were on just a few years ago. Central Asia will hopefully be a different place a generation or two from now because of the commitments we have made. Without security, that region could expect nothing better than serving as a playing board for a "great game" unfolding between a host of regional powers (Russia, China, India, Iran, Turkey), none of whom possesses the wherewithal to actually increase regional security.

Analysts recognize that when the Gap strikes out at America, it has little to do with the policies of one administration or another. It has to do with America being intimately

identified with a historical process that some within the Gap fear will destroy the world they know and love—and they are right. Globalization will eventually remake the entire Gap into an image we in the Core recognize more than those currently trapped there.

Other religions are picking up the gauntlet. Various versions of the prosperity movements are attracting followers in developing countries, as well as in poorer areas of the U.S., precisely because they are beginning to value success in this world as much as holiness in another. Alan Wolfe, writing in *The Atlantic* (Wolfe is Director of Boisi Center for Religion and Public Life, Boston College): “These movements can be rightly accused of theological thinness, but not of adherence to old-fashioned doctrines. Their goal is not to question the modern world’s riches but to bring them within reach of more people. Example: The Pentecostal Gospel of Prosperity in Nigeria a new creation, an Islamic organization focused upon economic empowerment which now has 1.2 million members in Nigeria alone.

What part do we play in this path to peace? I spoke earlier about the importance of interconnectedness and the resulting sharing of information. That sharing builds bridges. And maybe building bridges is the short cut way of defining the plan, this plan for world peace. Building bridges leads to breaking down walls and barriers freeing people to make their own decisions thus pursuing their own aspirations and goals.

If you adopt the peace plan of bringing more and more countries and people into the Core, the interconnected mutually dependent economic sphere, would one not cheer the

spreading of the economic base worldwide and boo those who obstruct expansion of investment and trade in countries who so desperately need the jobs and the inter-connectedness? People prefer home and family with economic growth in their midst vs. traipsing across deserts desperately trying to find it. Or would you rather have the people of that portion of the world on the outside, nose pressed to the glass, feeling left out and angry, because of restrictions you decided upon because you don't like their current politics or past human rights record?

This is American optimism that is infecting the rest of the connected world. Marketing fear to the public is extorting the public's sense of hope in the future, and this is wrong, as wrong as abandoning people struggling toward the Core. It is wrong because America's hope in the future is what has for well over two centuries driven the success of our country. Life consistently improves over time, but does so only because individuals, communities, and nations, yes, and UU churches, take upon themselves not only to imagine a future worth creating but actually work to build it.

Adopting that optimism may make us a bit of a freak in the looking at the future business because of all the pessimistic sorts who love to point out how everything is going to hell in a handbasket, followed by "so here's my advice on how to survive the coming catastrophe..." These gloom-and-doomers will always go on about how all the "chaos" is increasing while the good life is slipping away. But that just isn't the world history we have been fortunate to witness over our lifetimes in spite of the ever present fear mongers. We know that the rise in globalization beginning with Europe and Japan after

the Second World War to today has had an awful lot to do not just with expanding that wonderful world we recognize, but also in shrinking those horrible neighborhoods where war and poverty was once an immutable force, an intractable problem, a fact of life.

What is the true source of lasting peace – interconnected peoples working individually and together for their own betterment under a democratic system with hope for a continually improving future wherein they can always, and easily, throw their own elected bums out if they begin to interfere too much with that vision of the future.

The first and primary step is to believe, believe that in time peace will happen. The Rotary International Presidential Peace Forum this weekend in Windsor, Ontario has as its theme statement “Peace is Possible.” Spread that belief. Build that confidence.

Committing friends, family, and the world to that path can be our legacy.