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Vacation with Lindsay

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A ROLE FOR UNESCO IN UN PEACEKEEPING: CULTURE OF PEACE

Using the analogy based on our work of ratio of nervous system to muscular and vegetative systems (Mink, Blumenschine and Adams), 5% of all UN Peacekeeping budgets should be devoted to a program of a culture for peace administered by UNESCO. According to the analogy, the Security Council forces – the blue helmets – are the muscle of peace, but we must have a brain as well to transform the consciousness of the people of the region and the consciousness of the UN soldiers themselves.

Whereas the "muscle" – the military operations – are somewhat short term in operation, the "brain" – the cultural operations – have a long term goal – the establishment of a new culture in which war is no longer useful for the resolution of conflict and the making of progress.

There are two inter-related aspects of the cultural operation: working with the consciousness of the soldiers – the blue helmets and their officers; and working with the peoples of the region concerned. These two aspects of the cultural operation need to be integrated in the course of planning.

Consciousness of UN military forces

The UN military forces must develop a consciousness unlike that of traditional militaries. Instead of the enemy image of traditional militaries that is used to degrade the enemy with sexism, racism and cultural chauvinism, we must develop programs for respect of cultures and respect of women. As in traditional militaries this should be done through the medium of cultural entertainment. Experts would develop programs of entertainment involving contemporary international artists (e.g. rock stars) and programs involving specific cultural activities – both the music and arts of the cultures from which the soldiers come – and the music and arts of the peoples where they are deployed. Women must provide cultural rather than sexual themes in this entertainment and there must be explicit condemnation of sexist and racist stereotypes. The soldiers must also share in the process of developing a new vision of peace in the area concerned including democracy and peaceful economies.

Consciousness of the Peoples under Pacification

If the peacekeeping is to be permanent, a new consciousness of respect, democracy and peaceful economic development must be developed in all the people of the region. We may divide this – for operational purposes – into educational, scientific and cultural aspects

Culture

Cultural programs should be developed immediately to utilize the peaceful potential of the indigenous cultures and to sponsor multi-cultural events in which all the peoples of the region can experience each other's cultures in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect. As much as possible the local populations should be mobilized and paid to participate in these events. Programs should be developed to be sustainable in the long term, developing an economic base for their permanent institution and development. UNESCO's role should be catalytic rather than administrative.

Education

Educational programs for a culture of peace should be developed using as far as possible local educators. These programs should develop multi-cultural respect to replace enemy images and a vision of peace with optimism for the future to replace the myths of pessimism – racism, sexism and violence. Programs should utilize all media – books, posters, plays, television, music, etc. and be at all levels primary through adult.

There should be a "feedback" process in which the developments in this particular cultural context would be brought back to UNESCO for the development of universal educational materials that can be used in future peace-keeping operations as well. This will require scientific evaluation of the work – treating each operation like an experiment from which universal lessons can be learned.

Science

We must develop a scientific method for peace. All of the cultural and educational work should be evaluated quantitatively by social scientists in order to perfect the methods and to develop better materials for future operations. In addition, a world-wide network of monitoring stations of social scientists should be set up to measure the degree of conflict in each part of the world so that outbreaks of violence can be predicted and wherever possible prevented by peacekeeping work that does not require violence.

The development of democracy and of equitable and peaceful economic relations must become the object of scientific study and experiment. Each peacekeeping operation must lead to democracy with full, multi-cultural participation and sharing of power. And it must lead to development of an economy that can develop without exploitation, violence, or the manufacture of military equipment for profit. The lessons that are learned in one part of the world must be made available to all other parts of the world through scientific publication and through accurate popularization of these scientific findings in the mass media. Scientists have a responsibility to ensure that their findings are used for human progress.

Therefore, a part of each peace-keeping operation should include teams for multi-disciplinary scientific study – involving not only international scientists, but also the development and training of scientific personnel and institutions in the countries where the peacekeeping operation takes place.