

Transition to a Culture of Peace

World history as it is happening



The Pope, Religion and the Culture of Peace

Posted on [December 2, 2019](#)

(Une version française suit en dessous)

In [this month's bulletin of CPNN](#) I have written about the initiative of Pope Francis for nuclear disarmament, and, along with and the bishops and churches of the Amazon, for sustainable development and the rights of indigenous peoples, key components of the culture of peace.

One of the initial reactions to the bulletin was to object that the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church do not support the culture of peace insofar as they continue to call homosexuality a disease and to oppose abortion. This point of view considers that a person's sexual orientation and a woman's control over reproduction are fundamental human rights and hence components of the culture of peace.

Of course the Pope's remarks about homosexuality and abortion reflect a long-standing dogma of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as many other religious institutions.

This debate reminds me of the excellent discussion about religion and culture of peace published in 2000 by Elise Boulding in her book [Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History](#):

“Every religion then contains two cultures: the culture of violence and war and the culture of peaceableness. The holy war culture calls for mobilization against evil and is easily politicized. The culture of the peaceable garden relies on a sense of

the oneness of humankind, often taking the form of intentional communities based on peaceful and cooperative lifeways, sanctuaries for the nonviolent....” . .

In my opinion, the Pope’s initiatives go beyond the usual “two cultures” of religion. I see them as an important contribution to the agenda of history. Hence, at the conclusion of the bulletin I write that they “may be seen as a major step in the transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace.”

It is the general theme of this blog that there is an agenda of history in the sense that certain problems/challenges are more urgent than others. This theme is present in the remarks quoted in the bulletin by Cardinal Czerny at the final press briefing of the Amazon Synod, that the ecological and human crisis is so deep that without a sense of urgency “we’re not going to make it.”

Nuclear disarmament is such a problem/challenge. Unless we can achieve it, the other components of the culture of peace, including human rights, will never be achieved.

As for the ecological crisis and the necessity of sustainable development, there is a sense in which they are less urgent than nuclear disarmament. The ecological threat is real but while a nuclear war could completely destroy our world in a matter of hours and days, the ecological threat is a matter of decades and centuries.

Unlike the perspective that I am presenting, it seems that people, and especially the young generation, are more conscious of the ecological threat than the nuclear threat. For them the evidence of global warming is visible every day, while the nuclear threat remains abstract and hidden. Therefore, it is tactically and strategically effective that nuclear disarmament be linked as much as possible to the movements for sustainable development.

Of course, the two issues are profoundly related in the sense that both concern preservation of our planet, and like all components of the culture of war and culture of peace they are part of a cultural continuum. This was expressed by UN Secretary General [Antonio Guterres](#): “Today peace faces a new danger: the climate emergency, which threatens our security, our livelihoods, and our lives. That is why it is the focus of this year’s International Day of Peace.” And it was emphasized in the effective mobilizations for the International Day of Peace in France by Mouvement de la Paix and by the analysis for the occasion by their

spokesman [Roland Nivet](#): “Climate and peace are the same fight. The struggles for peace and climate, social justice and human rights, nuclear disarmament are linked. They unite us today and must be the cement of our unity of action for tomorrow.”

The initiatives of the Pope are especially timely because they support this linkage of nuclear disarmament and sustainable development and they send out this message to the Catholic churches around the world and their more than a billion religious followers.

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Le pape, la religion et la culture de la paix

Dans [le bulletin de CPNN de ce mois-ci](#), j’ai évoqué l’initiative du pape François en faveur du désarmement nucléaire et en faveur du développement durable et des droits des peuples autochtones, comme faisant partie des éléments essentiels de la culture de la paix. Ces derniers ont été faits avec les évêques et avec les églises de l’Amazonie.

L’une des premières réactions au bulletin a été de faire remarquer que le Pape et l’Église catholique romaine ne soutiennent pas complètement la culture de la paix dans la mesure où ils continuent de qualifier l’homosexualité de maladie et de s’opposer à l’avortement. Ces points de vue considèrent que l’orientation sexuelle d’une personne et le contrôle de la procréation par une femme sont des droits de l’Homme fondamentaux et donc des éléments essentiels de la culture de la paix.

Bien sûr, les points de vue du pape sur l’homosexualité et l’avortement reflètent une prise de position de longue date de l’Église catholique romaine, ainsi que de nombreuses autres institutions religieuses.

Ce débat me rappelle l’excellente discussion sur la religion et la culture de la paix publiée en 2000 par Elise Boulding dans son livre [Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History](#):

“Chaque religion contient alors deux cultures: la culture de la violence et de la guerre et la culture de la paix. La culture de la guerre sainte appelle à la mobilisation contre le mal et est facilement politisée. La culture du jardin

pacifique repose sur le sentiment de l'unité de l'humanité, prenant souvent la forme de communautés intentionnelles basées sur des chemins de vie pacifiques et coopératifs, des sanctuaires pour les non-violents.... “. .

À mon avis, les initiatives du pape vont au-delà des “deux cultures” habituelles de la religion. Je les considère comme une contribution importante à l'ordre du jour de l'histoire. Par conséquent, à la fin du bulletin, j'écris qu'ils “pourraient être considérés comme une étape majeure dans la transition d'une culture de la guerre à une culture de la paix”.

Le thème général de ce blog est qu'il existe un agenda de l'histoire en ce sens que certains problèmes – défis sont plus urgents que d'autres. Ce thème est présent dans les remarques citées dans le bulletin du cardinal Czerny lors de sa conférence de presse finale du Synode d'Amazonie, selon lesquelles la crise écologique et humaine est si profonde que, sans sentiment d'urgence, nous n'allons pas survivre.

Le désarmement nucléaire est un tel problème – défi ! À moins d'atteindre cet objectif, les autres éléments de la culture de la paix, y compris les droits de l'Homme, ne seront jamais atteints.

En ce qui concerne la crise écologique et la nécessité d'un développement durable, il est en quelque sorte moins urgent que le désarmement nucléaire. La menace écologique est réelle, mais son rythme est plus lent. Une guerre nucléaire pourrait complètement détruire notre monde en quelques heures et quelques jours alors que la menace écologique est une affaire de décennies et de siècles.

Contrairement à la perspective que je présente, il semble que les gens, et en particulier la jeune génération, soient plus conscients de la menace écologique que de la menace nucléaire. Pour eux, les preuves du réchauffement climatique sont visibles chaque jour, tandis que la menace nucléaire reste abstraite et cachée. Par conséquent, il est tactiquement et stratégiquement efficace de lier autant que possible le désarmement nucléaire aux mouvements en faveur du développement durable.

Bien entendu, les deux problèmes sont profondément liés en ce sens qu'ils concernent à la fois la préservation de notre planète et que, comme toutes les composantes de la culture de la guerre et de la culture de la paix, ils font partie

d'un continuum culturel. Dans ce sens, le Secrétaire général de l'ONU, **Antonio Guterres**, a déclaré: "Aujourd'hui, la paix fait face à un nouveau danger : l'urgence climatique, qui menace notre sécurité, nos moyens de subsistance, notre vie. C'est pourquoi cette année la Journée internationale de la paix sera placée sous le thème de l'action climatique." Et il a été souligné dans les mobilisations effectives pour la Journée internationale de la paix en France par le Mouvement de la paix et par l'analyse effectuée pour l'occasion par son porte-parole **Roland Nivet**: "Climat et paix même combat. Les luttes pour la paix et le climat, la justice sociale et les droits humains, le désarmement nucléaire sont liées. Elles nous unissent aujourd'hui et doivent être le ciment de notre unité d'action pour demain." "

Les initiatives du pape sont particulièrement opportunes, car elles soutiennent ce lien entre le désarmement nucléaire et le développement durable et envoient ce message aux églises catholiques du monde entier et à leurs fidèles qui sont plus d'un milliard.



The International Day of Peace

Posted on [October 2, 2019](#)

The International Day of Peace (IDP), as officially proclaimed by the United Nations, is certainly the most universal action for peace in our times, and there is no doubt that it contributes greatly to the consciousness throughout the world that we need to turn from the culture of war to a culture of peace.

With this in mind it would be good to be able to measure the IDP actions each year, to know if they are increasing or not, and to know if this is occurring throughout the world, or more in some regions than in others.

During the first decade of this century, extensive international surveys were conducted by the Culture of Peace Initiative (see surveys from 2005 and 2009 as [documented in Wikipedia](#)), but they were discontinued, and there was nothing to replace them until 2017 when I conducted the [first IDP survey from CPNN](#), searching for articles by Google and using other, less complete surveys.

This is now the third time that I have done the survey – not an easy task requiring something like 100 hours of labor – and I continue to find hundreds of events throughout the world, with the largest number from USA/Canada and Western Europe.

There is no doubt that, despite my best efforts, we continue to under-estimate the number and scope of actions involved. Many actions are not put on the internet. In addition to the languages recognized by the United Nations (English, French, Russian, Arabic, Chinese and Spanish), I have searched via Google in Ukrainian, German and Portuguese, but no doubt there are actions described in articles in other languages as well.

There are other surveys of IDP events, but it is difficult to assess their data in some cases.

Pathways to Peace, the successor to the Culture of Peace Initiative, provides a map where people can enter their actions for the IDP. [This year's map](#) has 642 entries, but perhaps half of them are from 2018, and perhaps half of the entries from 2019 are marked as meditation (not action in the sense defined by CPNN). The others from 2019 that are marked as music, march or multiple actions have been included in the CPNN survey.

The [Campaign for Nonviolence](#) lists CNV 3314 total actions, mostly in the United States, but this includes multiple actions by the 205 sites listed on their map. I have included all the 205 sites in the CPNN data.

[One Day One Choir](#) says that for the International Day of Peace “since we started in 2014, more than a million people around the world have connected with us to sing for peace and unity,” There are almost a thousand entries on their map of the world, but I could not use the data because it seems to be an accumulation of all the events since 2014, with no indication in what year or years the action occurred.

[The website of Montessori schools](#) says that “In 2017, “Sing Peace” involved over 150,000 children from some 65 different countries.” The site provides a listing of 1141 schools “signed up to sing” and these are shown on a map of the world,, but as in the case of OneDayOneChoir, it is not clear if this is an accumulation of data over many years or if it refers to actions in 2019.

In addition, I should mention the website of [Peace One Day](#) which states that “throughout the years, millions of people have been active on Peace Day in every country of the world. . . In 2016, after several years work with global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, it was estimated that 2.2 billion people had been exposed to the Peace Day message, that 940 million were aware of the day and that 16 million behaved more peacefully as a result.” But since the website provides no listing or source for particular events, I don't see how its claims. can be verified.

Failing to realize that the data from One Day One Choir and Montessori Sing Peace were not necessarily up-to-date, I included their data in the totals last year (2018). For that reason it makes no sense to compare this year's CPNN total of

655 to last year's total of 835. Although it is not possible to be precise, it seems likely that the number of IDP actions listed on CPNN might be as much as doubled if it were possible to obtain up-to-date information from One Day One Choir and the Montessori Schools.

Despite the incompleteness of the quantitative data, there is plenty of qualitative information to be found in the CPNN survey, as described in [this month's CPNN bulletin](#), and I think this justifies the labor involved. For example, it turns out that data cited from Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Ukraine, and Yemen are not reflected in the other surveys mentioned above.



What really happened in Zimbabwe

Posted on [September 8, 2019](#)

On September 7 the New York Times carried several very long articles about former Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe who had just died, saying that he was a “tyrant” and that he “presided over the decline of one of Africa’s most prosperous lands.”

At one point they describe his seizure of white-owned farms. “By 1998, although Mr. Mugabe had promised new land for 162,000 black families, only 71,000 white households had been resettled. Then came a dramatic turn. Starting around 2000, Mr. Mugabe’s lieutenants sent squads of young men to invade hundreds of white-owned farms and chase away their owners. The campaign took a huge toll. Over two years, nearly all of the country’s white-owned land had been redistributed . . . The violent agricultural revolution had come with a heavy price. The economy was collapsing as farmland fell into disuse and peasant farmers struggled to grow crops without fertilizer, irrigation, farm equipment, money or seeds.”

But we get a different story about this if we look for an African source, in this case [The East African](#).

“However, the land grab was instigated by Britain itself when it went against the spirit of the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement that stated that the former colonial power was to provide the funds for compensating Zimbabwean British settler farmers who were willing to sell their land back to the government. This agreement was signed by the Conservative Party under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher.

“When New Labour came to power in 1997 under prime minister Tony Blair, the UK government unilaterally scrapped the arrangement.

“President Mugabe was then adamant that his government would not initiate a land buy-out scheme for what had been stolen and taken for free from Africans. These facts were corroborated by the current British premier, Boris Johnson, when he was still a journalist.

“Mugabe then launched the so-called “Land Grab” that attracted economic sanctions from Western countries, making Zimbabwe a pariah nation, collapsing almost every sector of the economy.”

The New York Times article mentions only in passing the Lancaster House Agreement that ended colonial rule and provided for Zimbabwe’s independence, and they do not mention that part of the agreement was that the UK (and the US) would provide funds for land reform.

Nor do they mention that the UK unilaterally scrapped the agreement.

And in describing “the decline of one of Africa’s most prosperous lands”, the Times does not mention that Zimbabwe was the victim of economic sanctions.

In other words, “blame the victim!”

More detail is available in an [article by Thabo Mbeki](#) who succeeded Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa:

“When the war veterans and others began to occupy white-owned farms, we intervened first of all with Prime Minister Tony Blair in 1998 to encourage the UK Government to honour the commitment that had been made at Lancaster House in 1979 to give the Government of Zimbabwe the financial means to carry out the required land redistribution in a non-confrontational manner.

“This led to the September 1998 International Donors’ Conference on Land Reform and Resettlement held in Harare, which the British Government attended, but whose very positive decisions were not implemented, thanks to the negative attitude adopted by the very same British Government.

“Unfortunately, contrary to what the Conservative Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and John Major had agreed, Tony Blair’s Secretary of State for

International Development, Claire Short, repudiated the commitment to honour the undertaking made at Lancaster House.”

Reacting to the death of Mugabe, [Thabo Mbeki](#) gives us a very different assessment of his role in Africa:

“Mugabe will be remembered as outstanding fighter for the liberation not only of the people of Zimbabwe but also all other colonially and racially oppressed peoples”, Mbeki said. . . . “Zimbabwe has lost a father of the nation! As Africans, we have lost an eminent leader of our victorious struggle for national liberation!”

As for the New York Times, we should question their claim to print “All the News That’s Fit to Print.”



The UN Resolution for the Culture of Peace

Posted on [August 1, 2019](#)

(Une version française suit en dessous)

This summer and fall is seeing an increase in the number of **international conferences dedicated to the culture of peace** and basing their analysis on the Declaration and Program of Action for a Culture of Peace that was adopted 20 years ago by the UN General Assembly.

The UN resolution provides a holistic, positive view of peace. For each of the eight aspects of the culture of war, it proposes the alternative as described [here](#). The resolution proposes specific actions to promote each of these eight program areas. And furthermore, it calls for a global movement for a culture of peace through partnerships between an among international, national and civil society organizations promoted through systems of information exchange (such as the Culture of Peace News Network) on their initiatives.

The struggle for a culture of peace could gain much more force if this resolution were used as the basis for analysis and practice by more organizations around the world, but unfortunately it is relatively unknown.

The situation reminds me of the use of another landmark UN document, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR).

The adoption of the UNDHR by the UN General Assembly in 1948 did not immediately yield results. For the first 40 years the document sat on the shelf and was rarely mentioned, as shown in the following graph which shows the citations of human rights in academic publications as monitored by the Science Citation

Index. It has only in recent years that references have exploded into thousands of times per year.

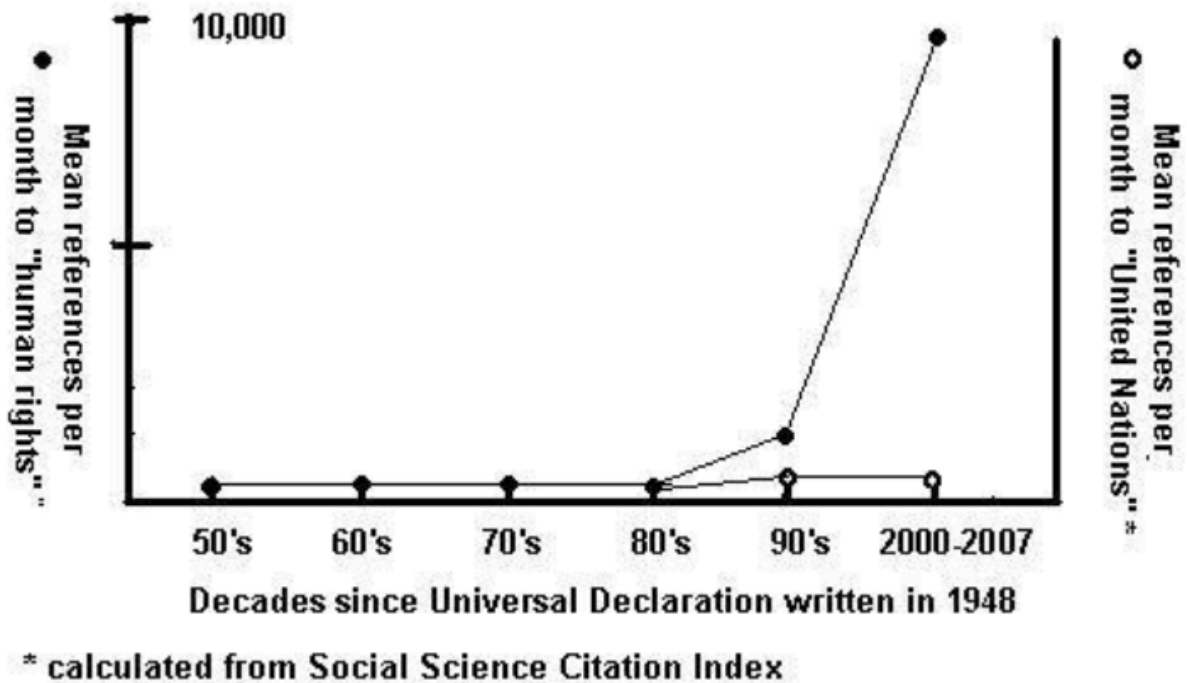


Figure drawn from my book [World Peace through the Town Hall](#).

Now over 70 years after its adoption, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been taken up by thousands of other organizations and struggles in all social movements as a powerful tool for justice.

We may assume that the increased attention to human rights after the 1970s was largely due to the Nobel Peace Prize of 1977 to Amnesty International because of their efforts for human rights.

Hopefully, we will not have to wait another 20 years for such effective use of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. The work for culture of peace has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in recent years, and if it were to be recognized by the Prize, that could help produce the kind of universal recognition and historical impact as that of the UNDHR.

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La résolution des Nations Unies pour la culture de la paix

Pour cet été et cet automne, le nombre de conférences internationales consacrées à la culture de la paix a augmenté. Leur analyse est souvent basée sur de la Déclaration et Programme d'action pour une culture de la paix adoptés il y a 20 ans par l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies.

La résolution de l'ONU offre une vision globale et positive de la paix. Pour chacun des huit aspects de la culture de la guerre, il propose une alternative (voir ici). La résolution propose des actions spécifiques pour promouvoir chacun de ces huit domaines de programme. En outre, il appelle à un mouvement mondial pour une culture de la paix par des partenariats entre des organisations internationales, nationales et de la société civile, promues par des systèmes d'échanges et d'informations (comme CPNN) sur leurs initiatives.

La lutte pour une culture de la paix pourrait gagner beaucoup plus de force si cette résolution était utilisée comme base d'analyse et de pratique par plus d'organisations dans le monde, mais malheureusement, elle est mal connue.

La situation me rappelle l'utilisation d'un autre document historique des Nations Unies, la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'Homme (DUDH).

L'adoption de la DUDH par l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies en 1948 n'a pas immédiatement donné de résultats. Pendant les 40 premières années, le document était sur l'étagère et rarement mentionné, comme l'illustre le graphique ci-dessous, qui montre les citations des droits de l'Homme dans des publications universitaires suivies par le Science Citation Index. Ce n'est que ces dernières années que les références ont explosé des milliers de fois par an.



Consciousness + Institutional Change = Culture of Peace

Posted on [July 2, 2019](#)

People are taking to the streets to defend human rights and demand democracy around the world, including Hong Kong, Russia, Sudan, Algeria, Czech Republic and Brazil as described on the pages of CPNN and reviewed in [this month's CPNN bulletin](#).

They join the millions of people who have taken to the streets for human rights and democracy in the last few years in [France](#) , [Germany](#) and the [United States](#).

And perhaps most important, it is the new generation that has often taken the lead, as we have seen in the [global student movement](#) to demand that we change the policies that are contributing to global warming. This is the [new generation](#) that is on the front lines every year to celebrate the international day of peace.

We see the development of a global, universal consciousness. But is it strong enough to counter the rise of authoritarian governance that is also developing at this moment of history, whether in the [rich counties](#) or in the [poor countries](#)?

In [my little utopian novella](#) I have imagined that people will take to the streets to resist the imposition of fascism after the present system crashes. It was fascism that was installed when the financial system collapsed in the 1930's?

I come from the generation of the 60's which also saw people taking to the streets to oppose the American war in Vietnam. In fact, in the 1990's when we looked around the table of UNESCO workers developing the Culture of Peace Program, it turned out most of us had been involved in the movements of the 60's

in one way or another in France, Ecuador, Costa Rica and the United States. The consciousness developed in the 60's came to fruition in the 90's.

But consciousness is not enough. We need institutional change towards a culture of peace such as the initiative developed thanks to the leadership of Federico Mayor at UNESCO in the 1990's. The [United Nations resolution for a culture of peace](#) which he inspired will have its 20th anniversary this September and will be celebrated at the annual [High Level Meeting on the Culture of Peace at UN headquarters](#).

To see and understand these institutional changes, we cannot depend on the commercial media to which they are almost invisible. This was the case with the UNESCO culture of peace initiative, which was never mentioned in the American press at the time despite our signed agreements with two American institutions with 50 million members, the American Association of Retired Persons and the National Council of Churches, and the [75 million signatures on the Manifesto 2000](#) obtained around the world.

At CPNN we provide an alternative media that seeks out news about institutional change towards a culture of peace. A good example is the adoption of restorative justice principles and practices by the entire judicial system of Brazil, [as described this month in CPNN](#). Over the years we have followed this initiative that was largely due to the work of [Judge Leoberto Brancher](#). I don't think it is by accident that prior to this he was involved in the development of city culture of peace commissions that came out of the UNESCO program and the UN Decade for a Culture of Peace.

We need more such institutional change if we are to harness the consciousness of people in the coming decade when the global financial system has crashed and a window of opportunity opens for us to move from the culture of war to a culture of peace.



Roadmap for peace activism

Posted on [June 1, 2019](#)

In [this month's bulletin of CPNN](#) we try to identify those to whom we can look for peace leadership in these turbulent times. Let us consider their actions and advice.

Let's listen first to the new generation of youth activists.

The Panafrican Panafrican Youth Network for the Culture of Peace has provided a [roadmap for actions in Gabon](#), which can serve as a model everywhere. It includes promotion of a culture of peace, support for the UN SR resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security, and development of social enterprises for youth employment.

The Resolution 2250 is especially important because provides a link between the developing global youth movement which has taken the lead in the fight to save the climate to global warming (see [blog this April](#)) and the United Nations which, despite its weakness at the present moment of history, is still our best hope for a future institutional base for the culture of peace (see blog on the [paradox of the United Nations](#)). Resolution 2250 was adopted as the result of several years of intensive [lobbying by youth organizations](#) for the UN to recognize and guarantee the role of youth in peacebuilding and violence prevention.

At the same time, let us also listen to “the Elders.” Mary Robinson, now President of the Elders, formerly President of Ireland and UN Commissioner for Human Rights, recalls [the founding of their organization by Nelson Mandela](#) in 2007. “At first I was quite skeptical. Isn't it a bit arrogant to want to be elders for the global

village. But as soon as he [Nelson Mandela] sat with us and talked, it was as if we had a mandate that was overwhelmingly important.”

The Elders continue to be involved as peacemakers around the world and to give us good advice. **Most recently in Ethiopia**, they have lauded efforts to establish universal health care. As stated by Mandela’s widow, Graça Machel, “Health is a human right, and health workers are human rights champions.” Among **other priorities identified by the Elders** are the development of Green economies, the continuation of the Colombia peace process, multilateralism as now championed by China (while it seems increasingly abandoned in the West), and a solution to the terrible suffering in the Middle East by means of a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine.

And let us listen to those who have won the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel Women’s Initiative recently brought 50 women from over 20 countries together in Monrovia, Liberia to discuss **feminism, power, activism and peace**. According to one of the participants, “the overarching theme was that we (women) are powerful and worthy; that we must claim our space, we must use our voice and we must not ask for permission to do so.”

One of the themes at Monrovia was the need for “self and collective care, wellbeing and healing as critical components in our struggles for rights, justice and peace. We heard from Jody Williams and Rigoberta Menchú Tum on how they look after themselves and how they continue to do the work that they do. Jody mentioned how easy it is to feel overwhelmed by urgency and righteous indignation, however with time she has learned the value of granting herself personal time and space. By exposing their own humanity and vulnerability, these powerhouse women let the young people in the room know that it’s ok to not feel strong sometimes.”

Another major theme at Monrovia was the need for alliance building, tapping into different networks on a local and global scale. There was a commitment to feminist leadership, to multi-generational organising and to building communities of care.

Alliance-building was also an important theme in the work of the Panafrican Youth Network for Peace Culture; they are urged to collaborate with other youth organizations for greater synergy and social impact.

A concrete example of alliance-building comes from the plans for the [17th World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates](#). In addition to at least 21 Nobel Laureates, the meeting expects to include representatives of the following Institutions: American Friends Service Committee, Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, International Peace Bureau, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, Albert Schweizer Institute, International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Amnesty International, Institute of International Law and the Kim Dae-Jung Presidential Library and Museum.

The preceding themes, activism, affiliation, personal integration and world historic consciousness, correspond to steps of consciousness development identified in the survey of great peace activists described in my 1986 book, [Psychology for Peace Activists](#). They provide a universal roadmap for the development of peace activism.

Let us continue to listen to the youth, to the women, to the Elders, to the Nobel Peace Laureates, and let us strengthen our commitment to activism, affiliation, personal integration and world historic consciousness as we work for the transition to a culture of peace !



Why Julian Assange is so important

Posted on [May 2, 2019](#)

Julian Assange has been arrested, imprisoned threatened with extradition to the US where he could face solitary confinement or death. It seems he is considered to be extremely dangerous by the US and its allies. Why? Because he has exposed the weakness of the culture of war – its secrecy and lies.

As we have analyzed [previously](#), there has been so much advance in both democracy and anti-war consciousness over the past few centuries that the state has found it increasingly difficult to get popular support for its wars, overt and covert, and its threats of war. People no longer will vote for this. To get around this problem and to continue its culture of war, the state has increasingly resorted to secret war, secret threats, and outright lies in order to justify its overt warfare. The war against Vietnam was justified by an invented attack in the Gulf of Tonkin. The war against Iraq was justified by the invented “weapons of mass destruction.”

The control of information has become a crucial means for the culture of war – without this control it cannot be sustained.

In the past, only a few of the secrets and lies of the US and its allies were revealed, such as the Gulf of Tonkin and the “weapons of mass destruction.” But thanks to Julian Assange and his organization Wikileaks, we have learned about many more secrets and lies in the past few years.

How do governments react? They certainly do not apologize and promise to tell the truth! Instead they try to control the media. As described in [CPNN this month](#),

freedom of the press is under attack. And government lying has become so commonplace that the current US president tells obvious lies almost every day and has surrounded himself with advisors that will do the same. In fact, the repeated lying by the US president and his advisors is one of the few conclusions of the long-awaited “Mueller report” in the US. But go one step further. Is the Mueller report telling the truth? Although the commercial media seems to think so, there are some independent observers who think that the Mueller report, like the Warren report after the assassination of Kennedy, may turn out to be an elaborate coverup. Given the current plethora of government lies, we should remain skeptical.

And how do the commercial media react? They criticize governments on many issues, but when it comes to questions of war and peace they repeat the governments’ lies without question. A case in point is the media coverage of events in Venezuela over the past few months. [As we have shown recently in CPNN](#), it is almost impossible to learn from the commercial media what is really happening in Venezuela. And most recently, the US government lies about the coup attempt were headlined without question, not only by Fox News, but by the New York Times, Washington Post, Guardian, BBC, etc.

This is not sustainable. As famously expressed by Abraham Lincoln: “You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.”

People no longer believe in their governments. One of the effects is their increasingly erratic voting patterns. People are now voting for the most anti-establishment candidates such as Trump and Bolsonaro. Consequent to this, the government policies that result have become increasingly erratic, upsetting the traditional balances and structures of international relations.

Now people are starting to disbelieve the mass media as well. What will be the effect of this?

One thing we can say for certain. These trends are not sustainable!

And they come at a time when there are other trends that cannot be sustained: the increasing gap between rich and poor, the destruction of the environment, the changing of the climate, the structure of global finance based on debt and

speculation that far exceeds actual production, burgeoning military production and sales, and the nuclear arms race increasingly out of control.

Analyzing the accumulation of such unsustainable contradictions in the Soviet Union in 1980, [Johan Galtung](#) predicted the collapse of the Soviet Empire by 1990. He was correct. And analyzing the accumulation of such unsustainable contradictions in the American empire, he has predicted its collapse by 2020. Yes, next year !

And speaking of the collapse of empire, we must consider the key role of confidence and lack of confidence of the people in their government and media.

I saw this living from time to time in the Soviet Union in the years before its collapse. People no longer believed their government or their media. As they said, you find no truth in Pravda and no true information in Izvestia. President Gorbachev tried to correct this with his “glasnost and perestroika” but it was too little and too late. When the Soviet economy crashed, the people did not come onto the streets to support their government or reconstruct it. Instead, they washed their hands of it, saying in effect, “let it crash, it is not worth saving.”

If the global economy crashes (next year?), who will come into the streets to save it?

When the global economy and national governments crashed [in the 1930's](#), what happened? We fell back on the culture of war in its extreme form, fascism. And eventually, world war.

Let us not allow this to happen again ! Let us prepare, instead, for a transition to the culture of peace.

In previous blogs we have explored the various trends that could potentially contribute to such a transition:

* a [global student movement](#)

* a [“rural-urban continuum”](#) based on solar energy and electric vehicles



CAN STUDENTS BECOME A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE?

Posted on [April 1, 2019](#)

3

As often remarked in this blog, the world is in such a mess that we need **radical action**. In fact we need revolutionary change.

But where can it come from? Who can be the revolutionary actors?

A century ago, it was thought by some that revolution would come from industrial workers.

They were constantly and obviously exploited by their capitalist bosses.

They were concentrated in large numbers in factories

They had the power to stop production by going on strike.

Today there are few such factories in the rich countries of the North. Factories have been automated or transferred to China and the poor countries of the South.

We don't hear anymore that factory workers will change the world.

On the other hand, as described [this month on CPNN](#), it seems we are now starting to see student strikes to demand that their governments address the problem of climate change. Can this movement become revolutionary?

Students are beginning to see that their world is being exploited by their governments and that their schools seem to be in complicity with the governments.

Students are concentrated in large numbers in schools.

Their strikes do not stop production in the short term, but in the long term their compliance is necessary if governments are to continue their inaction. At least that is the hope of the American Youth Climate Strike who say in their mission statement that “if the social order is disrupted by our refusal to attend school, then the system is forced to face the climate crisis and enact change.”

Students today have a tool that was not available to workers a century ago. They can connect up rapidly everywhere by means of social media. An example of this is the initiative of Greta Thunberg whose actions have inspired the student movement around the world. Her twitter accounts and [her website](#) list events in 1325 places in 98 countries going on strike on March 15, including Washington DC, Moscow, Mumbai, Shanghai, Lagos, Rio de Janeiro, Sydney, Nuuk, Paris, Nairobi, Santiago, New York, London Hong Kong, Berlin, Tel Aviv, Toronto, Beirut, Zurich, Kyiv, Havana, Cork, Kampala, Buenos Aires, Seoul, Cape Town, Kyoto, Mexico City, Brussels, Por Vila, Los Angeles, Rome, Kuala Lumpur, Madrid, Auckland and Södertälje just to name a few.

What else does this student movement need to become truly revolutionary?

They would become more powerful by broadening their agenda to include other issues related to the question of environmental catastrophe. One such issue should be [nuclear disarmament](#), given that a nuclear war would be even more catastrophic than global warming. In the long run both are important components of a global agenda to move from the culture of war to a culture of peace.

And they need to develop alliances with other movements that contribute to a culture of peace. One such alliance is the movement for equality of women, given that women have always been exploited and kept down by the culture of war and have usually taken the lead in movements for peace.

The largest mobilizations of the student strike movement have taken place in the rich countries of Europe and North America. To become more effective they need

to link up with students in the poor countries of the South, understanding and supporting their needs for education and development. This is not simple, since schools in the North may seem irrelevant, even oppressive, while education in the South is more often seen as liberation.

Insofar as the student strike movement broadens its agenda, other movements would be wise to accept their leadership. It may not always be easy for older generations to accept the leadership of the young. This was a problem in the 60's in France when the organized workers refused to march with the revolutionary students, and in the US when the older peace activists refused to accept any leadership from the youth such as those of SDS (the Students for a Democratic Society). On the other hand, in South Africa, when the students took up the struggle against apartheid, their leadership was widely accepted by the older generation who were in prison or exile, and, as a result, this led to one of the greatest victories for justice in our times.

All this may seem fantastic in the face of the monolithic American empire and its alliances throughout the world, but, as often remarked this blog, [the empire is crashing](#) and we are coming into times of extraordinary change – and opportunity as well as danger. Let us hope that the students can rise to the challenge of leading us towards a better world.



How to prepare for a global financial crash: Rural-urban continuum and electric vehicles

Posted on [March 1, 2019](#)

In this blog we have often proposed that the culture of war is not sustainable and that [the American empire is destined to crash](#) for the same reasons that the Soviet empire crashed. It can be an opportunity for a transition from the culture of war to a culture of peace. However, the crash of the American empire may well be accompanied (caused) by a global financial crash with suffering for ordinary people, as it did for the Soviet people 30 years ago.

In a financial crash the cities are especially vulnerable. They depend on daily food deliveries to supermarkets that often come long distances by plane and truck.

It is precisely this delivery system that is at risk in a global financial crash. Not to mention industrial agriculture. Both depend on adequate supplies of gasoline and diesel fuel for trucks, planes and tractors, and the fuel, in turn, is largely dependent on a global system of oil tankers which, in turn, depends up/on consistent financial support.

To cite a historical precedent, following the financial crash of 1929, the number of freighters at sea fell drastically due to lack of financial support. In 1929 the world was less urbanized and the cities were less dependent on food deliveries by plane and truck. Much of their food came from local suppliers who were, in turn, less dependent on industrial methods.

That is no longer the case. Small local farms have been replaced by industrial agriculture that is concentrated in regions far from most cities.

One solution to this problem lies in [the recent proposal of José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\)](#), addressing a UN conference discussing common challenges to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as climate change and food security: “Sustainable development calls for the strengthening of rural-urban linkages based on a territorial approach,” he said, pushing for “a rural-urban continuum.”

In fact, this process is already underway on a small scale as cities develop networks of farmer’s markets linked to small farms in the region around them, and as young people increasingly turn to subsistence farming near these cities.

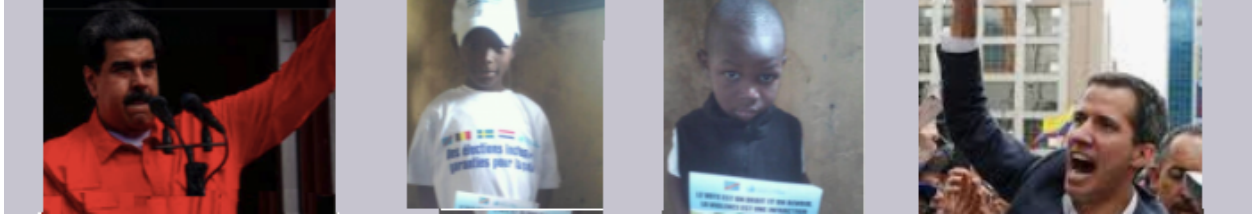
There is a second component needed for this solution: a shift from dependence on fossil fuel for trucks and tractors to use of electric trucks and tractors recharged by solar-powered charging stations.

The Chinese are at the forefront of this with their [shift to electric vehicles](#), and their development of [solar energy](#). We need to learn from them.

A shift to electric tractors and solar charging stations on farms is especially important, but we have little indication that this process has even begun.

How much time do we have to make these changes? Impossible to say. Johan Galtung has predicted the [end of the American empire by the year 2020](#). Will it be accompanied and/or caused by a global financial crash?

In any case, it is not too early to begin the transition to a “rural-urban continuum” based on solar energy and electric vehicles.



Where is democracy?

Posted on [February 1, 2019](#)

(Une version française suit en dessous)

In the past few months we have a tale of two elections.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, after a difficult election campaign ([described in CPNN](#)), there is serious reason to believe that the election results were fixed to favor a candidate favorable to the huge mining interests in that country. Although [the African Union](#) and the catholic churches of the Congo have questioned the results, none of the major powers of Europe, North America, etc. have spoken up.

The opposite has occurred with regard to the election results last year in Venezuela. All of the major powers of Europe and North America and their allies have claimed that the election results were fraudulent and they have announced their support for the losing candidate. He just happens to support the major capitalist interests in the huge petroleum industry of that country, unlike the President who claimed the election victory.

Such hypocrisy!

Not only do the governments of the major capitalist countries take these positions, but the [major mass media follows the government lines](#).

This is not new.

In recent years we saw the “successful” overthrow of the President of Libya (put “successful” in quotation marks, because the country has been in chaos ever since). Was it by accident that Libya has major oil exports or that the overthrown President was a major financial supporter of the African Union?

And we have seen the unsuccessful, but extremely bloody attempt to overthrow the President of Syria.

Where is democracy? It seems to be held hostage to neo-colonialism, the continued exploitation of minerals and oil from the poor countries of Latin America and Africa and manipulation of the governments in those countries to allow this exploitation. Although the mainstream media did not cover their remarks, [several countries](#) addressed this in the recent meeting of the UN Security Council called by the United States to gain UN support to overthrow the Venezuelan government.

The delegate from Cuba said that the current United States Administration appears to have “dusted off the Monroe Doctrine”, and in a fresh extension of imperialism in the region, gone so far as to say that all options are on table. And the delegate from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines recalled that the history of Latin America and the Caribbean is indelibly scarred by military interventions and imposition of dictator Governments.

Let us not forget Salvador Allende!

To further understand the process, we can go over 50 years to the precise analysis of neo-colonialism that was made by the Kwame Nkrumah, the President of Ghana. I have quoted his analysis extensively in my [History of the Culture of War](#). Here are some excerpts:

“Faced with the militant peoples of the ex-colonial territories in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, imperialism simply switches tactics. Without a qualm it dispenses with its flags, and even with certain of its more hated expatriate officials. This means, so it claims, that it is ‘giving’ independence to its former subjects, to be followed by ‘aid’ for their development. Under cover of such phrases, however, it devises innumerable ways to accomplish objectives formerly achieved by naked colonialism. It is this sum total of these modern attempts to perpetuate colonialism while at the same time talking about ‘freedom’, which has come to be known as neo-colonialism.

“Foremost among the neo-colonialists is the United States, which has long exercised its power in Latin America. Fumblingly at first she turned towards Europe, and then with more certainty after world war two when most countries of that continent were indebted to her. Since then, with methodical thoroughness and touching attention to detail, the Pentagon set about consolidating its ascendancy, evidence of which can be seen all around the world.

Who really rules in such places as Great Britain, West Germany, Japan, Spain, Portugal or Italy? . . . Lurking behind such questions are the extended tentacles of the Wall Street octopus. And its suction cups and muscular strength are provided by a phenomenon dubbed ‘The Invisible Government’, arising from Wall Street’s connection with the Pentagon and various intelligence services ...”

In the culture of war, democracy is fragile and expendable. But the culture of war is also fragile and will eventually crash. When it crashes, we will have the chance to establish a new system with a culture of peace and a democracy that is sustainable. But how can this be done?

*** * * * ***

Où est la démocratie?

Ces derniers mois, deux élections ont pris place.

En République démocratique du Congo, après une campagne électorale difficile, [décrite dans CPNN](#), il y a de bonnes raisons de croire que les résultats des élections ont été fixés de manière à favoriser un candidat favorable aux énormes intérêts miniers de ce pays. Bien que [l’Union africaine](#) ainsi que les églises catholiques du Congo ait mis en doute les résultats, les grandes puissances d’Europe, d’Amérique du Nord n’ont rien dit.

Le contraire s’est produit en ce qui concerne les résultats des élections de l’année dernière au Venezuela. Toutes les grandes puissances d’Europe et d’Amérique du Nord et leurs alliés ont affirmé que les résultats des élections étaient frauduleux et ils ont annoncé leur soutien au candidat perdant. Il arrive justement à soutenir les intérêts capitalistes majeurs de l’immense industrie pétrolière de ce pays, contrairement au président qui a remporté la victoire électorale.



The Doomsday Clock

Posted on [January 2, 2019](#)

(Une version française suit en dessous)

Looking back at 2018, we see progress in all of the areas of a culture of peace except one: disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament. Symbolic of this, last year the “**doomsday clock**” of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists was reset to only two minutes before midnight, the shortest it has been since 1953!

An accompanying article recalls a 1982 television film depicting the effects of a nuclear war on a Kansas town which was viewed by 100 million people and which helped inspire President Ronald Reagan to reach a disarmament agreement with Russian President Gorbachev a few years later. The author of the article concludes:

“There are striking parallels between the security situations today and 35 years ago, with one major discordance: Today, nuclear weapons are seldom a front-burner concern, largely being forgotten, underestimated, or ignored by the American public. The United States desperately needs a fresh national conversation about the born-again nuclear arms race—a conversation loud enough to catch the attention of the White House and the Kremlin and lead to resumed dialogue.”

This reminds me of a novel that I wrote back in 1965 called simply “**PEACE.**” Like many of my generation I was greatly troubled by the Cuban missile crisis a few years before which served as a wake-up call that we could destroy our entire civilization with a nuclear war. So I wrote a novel imagining that a series of accidental nuclear explosions and the threat of nuclear blackmail, combined with a peace movement centered around “Peace News” (much like CPNN), led eventually to a World Peace Treaty and nuclear disarmament.

More recently, in 2011, I came back to this theme in a two-act theatre play called “**Freud’s Last Death**” which takes place in the 1986 in a bunker buried deep below ground in what was then the Soviet Union. We meet Colonel Stanislav Petrov, retired from the Soviet Air Defense Forces, who refused to launch a nuclear attack against the West despite the fact that the radar showed missiles on the way to destroy the Soviet Union. That part of the play reflects an actual event that occurred in 1983. We carried two articles about this in CPNN, [in 2004](#) and again [in 2012](#), and a film about it was released [in 2014](#). [Petrov died in 2017](#) in poverty, and his story remains relatively unknown. Symbolically, it seems, even the links in the CPNN articles are no longer valid.

In the play we also meet Sigmund Freud, whose brain has been kept alive by a scientific “miracle,” and we question him about his belief that humanity is condemned because of a “death instinct.” At the time of the play, Gorbachev and Reagan are meeting in Iceland where they will reach agreement for the most important nuclear disarmament initiative in history. The danger of a nuclear war was reduced, but not eliminated,.

The play concludes:

The “initial disarmament agreements have been overcome by a new arms race. There are now over 30,000 nuclear weapons under the control of nine states, with other states planning to manufacture them. A global nuclear war would still risk the destruction of all life on the planet. And as for the death instinct, scientists still do not know if it exists or not.”

Here we are, entering 2019, without progress towards nuclear disarmament.

Will humanity survive until 2020? Or will the nightmare of nuclear war intervene?

It's time to wake up!

L'horloge Doomsday

En regardant [l'ensemble de l'année écoulée](#), nous constatons des progrès dans tous les domaines d'une culture de la paix, à l'exception du désarmement, et en particulier le désarmement nucléaire.

Symbole de cela, l'année dernière, le ["Doomsday Clock"](#) du Bulletin of Atomic Scientists a été réinitialisé à seulement deux minutes avant minuit, son minimum depuis 1953 !

[Un article d'accompagnement](#) rappelle un film télévisé en 1982 décrivant les effets d'une guerre des armes nucléaires sur une ville du Kansas, vue par 100 millions de personnes et qui a incité le président Ronald Reagan à conclure un accord de désarmement avec le président russe Gorbatchev quelques années plus tard. L'auteur de l'article conclut:

“Il existe des parallèles frappants entre la situation sécuritaire actuelle et celle d'il y a 35 ans, et une discordance majeure: aujourd'hui, les armes nucléaires sont rarement une préoccupation majeure, elles sont en grande partie oubliées, sous-estimées ou ignorées par le public américain. Les États-Unis ont désespérément besoin d'une nouvelle consultation nationale sur la course aux armements nucléaires qui est relancée, mais une consultation suffisamment forte pour attirer l'attention de la Maison-Blanche et du Kremlin et pour amener à la reprise du dialogue. ”

Cela me rappelle un roman que j'avais écrit en 1965 et qui s'appelait simplement ["PEACE."](#) Comme beaucoup de membres de ma génération, la crise des missiles



Rationale for an Alternative to the UN Security Council

Posted on [December 3, 2018](#)

In [last month's blog](#), after writing about the impending crash of the American empire and the window of opportunity this will create to change the global system of governance from the culture of war to a culture of peace, I returned to a previous theme of an Alternative UN Security Council.

It has been pointed out to me that I did not provide a very explicit rationale about this proposal and why it should be given priority. So let me try to do that now in terms of the following strategy and tactics involved.

1) The United Nations is capable of promoting a culture of peace, as we showed at UNESCO during the 1990's when Federico Mayor was its Director-General. We initiated [culture of peace programs at a national level in El Salvador and Mozambique](#) that brought together the opposing sides of the civil wars in those countries to work together in projects of education, science, culture and communication. In one case the project was funded by one of the major donors to the UN (Germany) and in that case the program was successful. However, the major powers pointedly refused to fund the other projects, and despite the efforts of UNESCO and our partners "on the ground" the culture of peace programs could not be sustained. National programs foreseen in Russia, the Balkans and elsewhere could not even get started. An account of the one successful project in El Salvador is available [here on the Internet](#).

2) Our experience at UNESCO shows that the peace capacities of the United Nations cannot be achieved so long as the UN is run by the Member States. In fact the Member States of the UN Security Council are the states who are responsible for wars and preparation for wars, such as the possession of nuclear weapons. This can be understood from [the history of the culture of war](#) which shows that over time the state has come to monopolize and embody the culture of war. Other entities that previously made war (cities, tribes, criminal

organizations, etc.) have been “pacified” by the states and deprived of their war-making capacity. Meanwhile, the preparations for war remain the dominant expense of the state, and the huge military expenditures of the state have engendered a **military-industrial-financial complex**. This was even true in the old Soviet Union, **as we found out at the end of the Soviet empire**. A self-perpetuating cycle has resulted, as the military-industrial-financial complex promotes and ensures the election of a pro-military government.

3) There is a growing anti-war consciousness of the peoples of the world in contradiction to the policies of their national governments. We see this growth in anti-war consciousness in the news covered by the Culture of Peace News Network. See, for example, the **increase in participation in the International Day of Peace** from year to year.

4) There is a contradiction between the growing anti-war consciousness of the people and the continued priority of the culture of war by the state. So far this contradiction has been handled by the state and its allies in the military-industrial-financial complex in two ways.

a) First, they control the mass media and emphasize enemy images and news of violent events in order to convince the people that military preparedness is necessary.

b) Second, national elections have become more and more expensive and hence more dependent on funding from the military-industrial-financial complex. Anti-war candidates cannot get the funding they need to win on a national scale. As a result, almost no congressman or senator in the United States votes against the military budget, even if a majority of the voters that elected them may be anti-war.

5) Putting together the above, it would seem that the transition to a culture of peace needs a United Nations that is run by the peoples of the world rather than the Member States. This may be expressed in terms of the charter of the United Nations, which begins, “We the Peoples. . .”

6) If history did not have major qualitative, revolutionary changes, but simply continued with only gradual change, it would seem that a United Nations run by the Peoples would never be possible.

7) However, there is **good reason to believe that the American empire will soon crash** because of its over-militarization similar to that which caused the crash of the Soviet empire. Many other countries will crash as well, similar to what happened to Eastern Europe after the fall of the Soviet Union. This may open a window of opportunity during which the United Nations is more or less abandoned by the states and open to a radical refoundation. In fact, we have already seen in the last few decades the United Nations is abandoned by the major states when there is a crisis. The economic crisis of 2008 was handled directly by state ministries and power was not given the UN entities, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Similarly, the great powers avoid the United Nations when it comes to nuclear policy and rely on ad-hoc inter-state forums and agreements to contain nuclear proliferation. Also, the great powers do not seriously engage the United Nations in confronting the problem of global warming and climate change. As for military interventions, the great powers try to get consensus on the Security Council, but they go ahead with invasions and attacks when they cannot obtain it.

8) We don't have to wait for the crash of the American empire to begin preparing. Given all of the above strategic considerations, we could create an unofficial Alternative Security Council (ASC). This would be an effective tactic for at least two reasons.

a) Wide dissemination of regular press releases by the ASC would support and strengthen the anti-war consciousness of the peoples of the world that "another world is possible." It would start them thinking that the United Nations could be reformed in a way that would support peace instead of war.

b) Experience gathered by an ASC could provide a valuable input into the institutional changes that would be needed for an eventual refoundation of the United Nations based on "We the Peoples" instead of the Member States. Perhaps the eventual institutional arrangement would be different from the ASC, but the principles would be similar.

9) The effectiveness of an ASC at this time, especially its press releases and their effect on the peoples' consciousness would depend upon the perceived stature and democratic representation of the members of the ASC. For this reason, a good choice would be an ASC composed of mayors and ex-mayors of major cities in all regions of the world (for example, two each from East Asia, South Asia, Arab states, former Soviet states, Africa, Europe, South America and North America).



As the Empire Crashes

Posted on [November 2, 2018](#)

As the American empire begins to crash, capitalism becomes desperate and takes off its gloves. We see its fist; [all of the characteristics of the culture of war](#) carried to extreme. In fact, that is the simple nature of fascism, the culture of war carried to extreme.

Trump in the USA, Erdogan in Turkey, now Bolsonaro in Brazil. The capitalists finance their campaigns in a desperate effort to protect their wealth.

History is repeating. Hitler, too, was backed by big capitalists at a time when the Weimar Republic was failing. This is not generally known because the records of German industry for that period are kept secret and the unfortunate historian who tried to document this back in the 1980's, a young graduate student at Princeton named [David Abraham](#), was drummed out of the profession as a reward for his research.

All of the aspects of the culture of war are exaggerated now. Enemy images are used to label scapegoats (immigrants, leftists, muslims, will the scapgoating of jews be next?). Military budgets are bloated. Democracy is jettisoned in favor of authoritarian regimes. Educational systems are devoted to producing a generation of passive citizens believing in the glory of past wars. Information is controlled and whistle-blowers punished. Human rights are trampled. The earth is plundered for its resources.

And as always the case with the culture of war, women are oppressed and victimized. This was the theme of [this year's Nobel Peace Prize](#), as the Nobel Committee joins an impressive list of organizations around the world that are working for women's equality and an end to violence against women, in the face of increased pressures against women's rights.

As an example, consider how Trump, Erdogan and Bolsonaro deal with the question of abortion. **Trump's opposition to abortion** has been concretized in his choice for the Supreme Court, a man who is pledged to overthrow abortion rights in the US. **Turkey's Prime Minister Erdogan** has described abortion as tantamount to "murder", angering women's rights groups and sparking an intense debate in the mainly Muslim nation. And now **Brazil's Bolsonaro** is strongly opposed to abortion. Writing on Twitter on 12 October he said: "The money of Brazilians will not finance NGOs that promote that practice."

It should be obvious that all of these policies of the culture of war are linked to each other, and hence the struggles for peace, human rights, democracy, sustainable development, education, the free flow of information and equality for women also need to be linked together in one great unified movement.

It's too late to stop the system from crashing. Just as the Soviet Union crashed because it poured its wealth into the bottomless pit of military spending, so, too, the United States has been doing the same for decades already. There is no one in the Congress opposed to the military budget, as they are all in debt to the military-industrial complex. And Trump, of course, is making it worse. We will soon arrive at the tipping point when the dollar crashes like the ruble crashed before it.

But we can begin already to construct what will come after the crash. **We need a whole new system of governance** in the world that is devoted to the culture of peace! The maximum unity is needed if we are to achieve this.



The answer is blowing in the wind

Posted on [October 7, 2018](#)

(Une version française suit en dessous)

During the week (actually it took two weeks) during which I was seeking out the information about the observation of the International Day of Peace, I came across [the article published by Unfold Zero](#) about two meetings at the United Nations on the same day concerning nuclear weapons. The major nuclear states (USA, France, UK, China and Russia) all went to a meeting for non-proliferation and boycotted the meeting for nuclear disarmament. As the article correctly concludes, the nuclear states “place very little priority on their obligations to eliminate their own weapons of mass destruction, focusing instead on preventing others from acquiring such weapons.”

The contrast could not be stronger between the actions of these national governments and the great numbers of schools, cities and towns, civil society organizations and individuals everywhere in the world who took part in [the International Day of Peace](#).

Having used more or less the same methodology this year as last year, we can see that the involvement in the International Day of Peace is increasing in most of the world. In fact, this is probably the best measure we have of the increasing anti-war consciousness of the peoples of the world.

Not only does this mean that new people, localities and organizations enter the celebration of Peace each year, but we can imagine as well that for those who have been involved before, there is an accumulation and strengthening of their anti-war consciousness.

And most important of all, the greatest part of the celebrations took place in schools with schoolchildren taking part in the International Day of Peace. This gives us great hope for the future. We are raising a new generation who, hopefully, can finally undertake the abolition of war.

The schoolchildren took part in a wide variety of actions for the Day, but for me the most symbolic was their release of balloons and doves into the sky, and their watching them disperse with the wind, as if they were going around the world. After all, the sky is something we share with everyone else in the world. Symbolically, “the answer is blowing in the wind,” as in the anti-war song written by Bob Dylan in my generation opposed to the Vietnam War.

The continuing growth of anti-war consciousness, as expressed by “the answer blowing in the wind,” is absolutely essential to our hopes for peace, including nuclear disarmament and the abolition of war. Perhaps it is not enough, as I have often emphasized in this blog, since we also need to develop [an institutional framework for peace](#). But even if it is not enough, it is still essential and indispensable.

Let us be like the children and launch our balloons and doves and desires for peace onto all the winds and involving all the peoples of our planet ! And knowing that the days are numbered for the national governments that hold onto nuclear weapons as instruments of power, let us look forward to the day when their power has crashed and they are replaced at the United Nations by true representatives of the people conscious of the need for a culture of peace.

* * * * *

La solution souffle dans le vent

Au cours de la semaine (en fait, cela a pris deux semaines) au cours de laquelle j’ai cherché des informations sur l’observation de la Journée internationale de la paix, je suis tombé sur [l’article publié par Unfold Zero](#) à propos de deux réunions le même jour aux Nations Unies sur les armes nucléaires. Les principaux États nucléaires (États-Unis, France, Royaume-Uni, Chine et Russie) se sont tous rendus à la réunion sur la non-prolifération et ils ont boycotté ainsi la réunion sur le désarmement! Comme l’article le conclut à juste titre, les États nucléaires “n’accordent pas de priorité à leur obligation d’éliminer leurs propres armes de

destruction massive, mais se concentrent plutôt sur l'empêchement des autres d'acquérir de telles armes”.

Le contraste ne pouvait pas être plus fort entre les actions de ces gouvernements nationaux et le grand nombre d'écoles, de villes et villages, d'organisations de la société civile et d'individus du monde entier qui ont participé à [la Journée internationale de la paix](#).

Après avoir utilisé plus ou moins la même méthodologie cette année que l'année dernière, nous pouvons constater que la participation à cette Journée s'intensifie dans la plupart du monde. En fait, ces chiffres sont probablement la meilleure mesure que nous ayons de la conscience croissante des peuples du monde entier contre la guerre.

Cela signifie non seulement que de nouvelles personnes, localités et organisations y participent chaque année, mais nous pouvons également imaginer que, pour ceux qui ont été impliqués auparavant, leur conscience anti-guerre s'accumule et se renforce.

Et le plus important de tout, la plus grande partie des célébrations de la Journée a eu lieu dans les écoles avec des écoliers. Cela nous donne un grand espoir pour l'avenir. Nous élevons une nouvelle génération qui, espérons-le, pourra enfin entreprendre l'abolition de la guerre.

Les écoliers ont pris part à de nombreuses actions pour la Journée, mais pour moi, le plus symbolique a été de lâcher de ballons et de colombes dans le ciel et de les regarder se disperser avec le vent, comme s'ils partaient faire un tour du monde. Après tout, le ciel est quelque chose que nous partageons avec tous les autres peuples du monde. Symboliquement, “la solution souffle dans le vent”, comme dans la chanson anti-guerre écrite par Bob Dylan de ma génération opposée à la guerre du Vietnam.

La croissance de la conscience anti-guerre, exprimée par “la solution qui souffle dans le vent”, est absolument essentielle à nos espoirs de paix, y compris le désarmement nucléaire et l'abolition de la guerre. Comme je l'ai souvent souligné dans ce blog, cela n'est peut-être pas suffisant, car nous devons également mettre en place [un cadre institutionnel pour la paix](#). Mais même si cela ne suffit pas, cela reste essentiel et indispensable.

Soyons comme les enfants et lançons nos ballons, nos colombes et nos désirs de paix dans le vent pour arriver dans tous les coins de notre planète! Et sachant que les jours sont déjà compté avant que les pouvoirs nucléaires tombent dans un crash économique, attendons avec impatience ce jour quand leur pouvoir se sera écrasé et quand ils seront remplacés aux Nations Unies par de véritables représentants des peuples conscient de ce qui souffle dans le vent !



The Paradox of the United Nations: Peace vs. Culture of Peace

Posted on [September 2, 2018](#)

If we consider the purpose for which the United Nations was formed: “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,” it is failing badly. This spring, when we hoped that the United Nations would convene a High-Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament, the meeting was **cancelled due to pressure from the United States and its allies**. And most recently, we see that **the proposal for a peacekeeping force** to protect the Palestinian people cannot be implemented because of the American veto.

This month in the CPNN bulletin, we look at recent moves towards peace in the Philippines, Colombia, Korea and Ethiopia/Eritrea. What is remarkable is the absence of the United Nations from these initiatives. Only in Colombia did the United Nations play an important role by supervising the **disarmament of the FARC guerilla army**.

This impotence of the UN is not new. We saw it two decades ago when **our work for peace in El Salvador and Mozambique** was not supported by the US and its allies.

On the other hand, if we look at the culture of peace, the 90% of the iceberg of peace which is not visible on the surface, we see that the UN is continually developing a culture of peace at the local level.

Education for peace: the **‘Back to Learning’ education campaign of UNICEF** will benefit half a million children in South Sudan.

Democratic participation: UN Women contributed to the [historic leap in Tunisia](#) where women now make up 47 per cent of local government.

Sustainable development: [UNESCO and UNWTO are encouraging cultural tourism](#) as a means of fostering sustainable development.

Women's equality: As described in their annual report, [UN Women](#) is supporting women politicians, electoral officials, voters, lawmakers, civil society activists and many others to claim their equal right to lead and be heard.

Human rights: [Although the task is often frustrating](#), the United Nations Commission on Human Rights works for implementation of the UN Declaration on Human Rights which is the keystone of work in this area.

Tolerance and solidarity: The United Nations continues to support youth projects for tolerance and solidarity through the [Youth Solidarity Fund](#).

Free flow of information: In Africa UNESCO supports the development of [local radio initiatives against gender violence](#).

Disarmament: Although the UN is failing at the highest level for disarmament, it is quite capable of action when the member states support it, as described above in the case of Colombia.

And on a more general level, the United Nations continues to hold annual [high level forums](#) dedicated to the development of a culture of peace and UNESCO continues to support the development of a [culture of peace in Africa](#).

Imagine how effective the UN could be if the stranglehold of the member states as expressed by the veto of the United States were to be replaced by a radical revision of the UN management with direction by representatives of cities or parliaments, as [I have repeatedly proposed!](#)



Movement for Sustainable Development: Model for Culture of Peace?

Posted on [August 2, 2018](#)

From the beginning, sustainable development has been considered to be an essential component of the culture of peace, one of the eight action areas of the [Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace](#), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1999.

In our [analysis of the National Culture of Peace Programme in El Salvador](#), published in 1996, Francisco Lacayo Parajon considered that the global ecological movement provided the best model for the development of a global movement for the culture of peace. He described seven stages of its development, beginning with the adoption of a new paradigm, open to the participation to various sectors, so long as they share the same basic principles and culminating in its internalization in the daily life of people, until it becomes a benchmark of a great majority of societies.

Is the global movement for sustainable development still a good model for the culture of peace? I think the answer is yes, but in a way we did not envisage in 1996.

To some extent, it is true as we predicted that the new paradigm of sustainable development has become accepted and integrated into the thinking of a large proportion of humanity. But there is a new and different stage emerging now, as described in [this month's bulletin of CPNN](#), based on simple economic forces. This can be seen in the changing nature of fossil fuel divestment: Originally, it “was entirely driven by moral concerns— institutions pulled their money out of oil, gas, and coal companies because they didn’t want to be contributing to the destruction of a stable climate. [Now, divestment is increasingly seen as a smart financial move](#) for investors.” An [example of this comes from India](#) where “new

renewable energy is less expensive to build than it costs to run most of the existing coal fired power in the nation—let alone construct new plants.”

Should we be surprised that economic forces turn out to be the most powerful factor in social change? Not if we were [Karl Marx](#) 150 years ago who analyzed historical change as follows: the era of social revolution is preceded by a transformation of the material productive forces of society, i.e. its economy, due to their conflict with the previous material productive forces which have become fetters. Put in terms of example of India, the reliance on coal-fired power is becoming more expensive than the new technologies of wind and solar power.

But is this relevant for the movement for a culture of peace? Yes, if we take seriously the analysis made several decades ago by the economist Lloyd Dumas in his book [The Overburdened Economy](#). He shows that in the long run military production is a burden to the economy, draining its talent and material resources away from production which is useful for people. This was, in fact, the reason for the collapse of the Soviet economy (and Soviet empire) at the end of the 1980's and it seems likely to produce the collapse of the American economy (and American empire) in the next few years. Recalling how the collapse of the Soviet empire produced a collapse of the linked economies of Eastern Europe, we should understand that the collapse of the American empire will have a similar effect throughout the world due to the interdependence of economies which has increased over time.

Already we see that the paradigm of a culture of peace, as opposed to a culture of war, is becoming internalized in the consciousness of a large proportion of humanity.

Can we not expect that the closer we come to a collapse of the present system, the more it will become evident that wise financial investment should seek out productive sectors instead of militarized sectors of the economy? If and when this occurs, then the time will be ripe for a social revolution from the culture of war to a culture of peace.



“Slow News” vs “Fast History”

Posted on [July 2, 2018](#)

[This month’s CPNN bulletin](#) describes the “slow news” of culture of peace as it has been developing for some time now in Africa. The reforestation of the [Great Green Wall](#) and the [Plant a Million Trees initiative](#) seem to symbolize the slow pace of the process, especially when one recalls that the pre-colonial peace mechanism of Africa was to meet and resolve conflicts under the village tree.

At the same time [this blog last month](#) suggested that history is moving much faster than we think and that the collapse of the American empire is likely to come within the next two years.

This leads me to the question: Can the slow development of the culture of peace make it possible for a transition from the culture of war to a culture of peace when the American empire crashes?

I realize that it is out of fashion since the crash of the Soviet empire, but the best analytic framework to understand history is still that of dialectics as conceived by Hegel, refined by Marx and put into practice by Lenin. As Lenin wrote in [his letter to the American workers](#) in 1918:

“Historical action is not the pavement of Nevsky Prospekt.” It does not proceed “easily and smoothly.” Instead, it proceeds

“by leaps, catastrophes, and revolutions.” Put another way, there are times when the pace of history accelerates.

It seems likely that there will be an acceleration in the development of the culture of peace in the next two years as more and more people realize that the system is collapsing and needs to be replaced. I can see that there has already been such an acceleration in the last year or two, especially since the election of President

Trump in the United States. Trump’s policies are the most evident symptom of the process, already many decades in the making, that brings us to the end of the empire. We have entered a period of accelerated history; both negative and positive forces are speeding up.

The key question is whether we are preparing the specific institutional frameworks that are needed for the transition? **I have previously suggested** that we need international frameworks for culture of peace that are above the level of the individual nation-states.

One such framework could be the African Union (AU) which is included in the “slow news” from Africa this month. As an international body, above the level of the nation-state, the AU is relatively free from the culture of war, and it has already made some initiatives towards a culture of peace.

Of course, the AU does not have many resources. Its previous benefactor, Muammar Gaddafi, was assassinated at the initiative of the EU and the United States, especially due to **the policy of Hillary Clinton** who was the American Secretary of State. We don’t know precisely why Clinton undertook this policy, but it seems likely that it was, at least in part, to deprive the AU of Gaddafi’s support. After all, it

was during her tenure that the United States was **secretly establishing military bases throughout Africa**. To some extent the support previously provided to the AU by Gaddafi has been taken up by China, but will this be continued or expanded after a crash of the American dollar? Maybe not, since China is heavily invested in the dollar and may have to reduce its overseas commitments.

For a while it seemed that UNASUR could develop as a regional organization for the culture of peace, but recent developments in Latin America have undermined that possibility. As described in an article from the **ALBA movement**, the major countries of UNASUR have withdrawn their support for the leadership of Bolivia which was dedicated to the culture of peace: “The sovereign and integrationist vision promoted by Bolivia and the other countries of ALBA-TCP is opposed by the war strategy of other UNASUR members, subordinated – as throughout history – to the imperial powers, at this moment in particular to the United

States , whose elite tries to control again what they consider their backyard. For this purpose it is the political, media, economic and military siege against Venezuela and the diplomatic offensive against Unasur and CELAC.” [translation from the Spanish by CPNN.

As long as international organizations are based on nation-states, they are dominated directly by the culture of war (such as the UN, the EU, etc.) or else they are dominated indirectly through sabotage, as in the case of the African Union and UNASUR. This is not surprising when we consider **the history of the culture of war** and we find that over the course of the centuries it has become monopolized by the state.

At one time, there was some hope that the socialist countries might be able to play a positive role for peace, but they, too, were cultures of war. And in a struggle between a socialist culture of war and a capitalist culture of war, it has always been the capitalists who win because they profit more from international exploitation. This was very evident towards the end of the Cold War when the Rand Corporation, an American culture of war think-tank, was paid to assess the economic relations between the Soviet Union and their “satellite countries” of Eastern Europe. They found that **the net flow of wealth was from the center (the Soviet Union) towards the periphery (Eastern Europe)**, true to the principle of socialist solidarity. This is the opposite of the relationship between the imperial capitalist powers and the countries of the South. This becomes evident when you take into account **the economic transactions that are secret and illegal.**

For this reason, I have tended to put a priority on institutional frameworks for peace based on regional or global organizations of parliamentarians or cities instead of states, but for the moment it seems that they are also in a “slow mode” of development.

It seems that time is running out . . .



Why There is So Much Anger

Posted on [June 7, 2018](#)

(Une version française suit en dessous)

Wherever we turn, people are angry. In France and United States where I live, voters are angry and turn their anger against immigrants and people of color. And they vote for the Front National and for Donald Trump. And the struggle in the US between students protesting against school massacres and linking them to gun sales, on the one hand, and the National Rifle Association (NRA), on the other hand, is fueled by anger on both sides.

To understand this, I go back to the studies I did as a scientist which are summarized in an Internet book called [The Aggression Systems](#).

Of special importance is the analysis of how the aggressive behavior of our animal ancestors was transformed through the course of evolution into the human behavior of “righteous indignation against perceived injustice.” Here is a technical analysis from [one of my scientific papers](#) translated into more simple language:

Over the course of evolution the aggressive behavior common to all mammalian ancestors was modified and has come to serve many functions in human beings, including the way people make history.

1) The first modification concerned the kinds of stimuli that provoked aggression. In our most ancient animal ancestors, the stimuli consisted of permanent qualities of the other animal. For example, males attacked other males because of their male odor. Over the course of evolution, and especially in our primate

ancestors, aggression came to be stimulated as well by the actions of the other animal. For example, among the monkeys of Japan, the dominant male will attack young animals if they approach the traps that have been set by the scientists who study these animals.

2) A second modification that we can also see in the Japanese monkeys consists of a process of internalization by which the young animal learns which actions are to be punished. This corresponds to the human “superego”, i.e. learning what behavior is “good or bad.” When they become adults, these monkeys reproduce the punishment they received by punishing young animals that show “bad” behavior, for example going too close to the traps. Note here that we need to recognize the importance of “punishment” in the course of human evolution. We see its effect in the anger of children when they cry out “that’s not fair !”

3) A third modification, which takes place only at the level of human society, is the ability to conceptualize institutions and social systems and to respond to their actions with punishment and anger, just as one might respond to the “bad” actions of another individual.

4) Fourth, and, finally, there is the ability to incorporate this “righteous indignation” into a **complex pattern of consciousness development**, including action, affiliation and analysis by which individuals become powerful forces in history.” In the case of great peace activists, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, their righteous indignation became **the emotion that fueled their social activism.**

Here, it is important to recognize that the anger of righteous indignation is directed not at some abstract social injustice, but rather at the *perceived injustice* in the eyes of the person concerned. If the person concerned believes that social ills are caused by immigrants or people of color or of women who seek abortion, then their “righteous indignation” is directed against them. Those who vote for LePen in France or Trump in the United States are often motivated by their anger against immigrants and people of color as well as against “establishment” political parties whom they perceive to be favoring these immigrants and people of color. If the person believes that sales of assault rifles leads to school massacres, then their righteous indignation may be directed against the NRA. On the other hand, NRA members believe they are protecting the American Constitution which gives citizens the right to bear arms. It is important to keep in mind here that another person’s *perception of injustice* may be very different than your own.

Let me return here to the initial question, why is there so much anger at this period of history? The reason is simple. There is more injustice now. The rich have become richer and the poor have become poorer. There is more inequality and there is more exploitation. There are more people displaced by war and more preparation for new wars. These problems are perceived in different ways by different people. But they are perceived!

There was a time, a few generations ago, when many poor and working people adhered to socialist or communist trade unions and political parties that convinced them that they should be united across the lines of social class and ethnic origin and that they should direct their anger against the boss or the capitalist system. But militant trade unions and communist parties have been greatly weakened, and the people they would have recruited in an earlier era are now recruited by populist politicians and media who divide and rule by blaming immigrants or people of color for the deteriorating standard of living of the poor and working people.

I am not writing this in order to excuse racism and xenophobia, but rather to help us all understand the profound crisis in which we find our world. It will not help for us to attack the anger of the people. That will further divide us. Instead, [to quote Martin Luther King](#), “the supreme task is to organize and unite people so that their anger becomes a transforming force.” We don’t have to look far to find an example of how this can be done. [The Poor People’s Campaign that is underway now in the United States](#) takes its inspiration directly from Martin Luther King to organize and unite people against “[the evils of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation and the nation’s distorted morality.](#)”

* * *

Pourquoi y a-t-il tant de colère dans le monde?

Partout où nous nous tournons, les gens sont en colère. En France et aux États-Unis où je vis, les électeurs sont en colère et tournent leur colère contre les immigrés et les personnes de couleur. Ils votent pour le Front National ou pour Donald Trump. La lutte aux États-Unis entre les étudiants protestant contre les rapports entre les massacres d’écoles et les ventes d’armes, d’une part, et la National Rifle Association (NRA), d’autre part, est alimentée par une colère réciproque.

Pour comprendre cela, je reviens aux études que j'ai faites en tant que scientifique et qui sont résumées dans un livre sur Internet intitulé [The Aggression Systems](#).

L'analyse de la façon dont le comportement agressif de nos ancêtres animaux a été transformé au cours de l'évolution en un comportement humain d'«indignation juste contre l'injustice perçue» revêt une importance particulière. Voici une analyse technique d'un de mes articles scientifiques traduit en langage clair:

Au cours de l'évolution, le comportement agressif commun à tous les ancêtres des mammifères a été modifié et sert maintenant de nombreuses fonctions chez les êtres humains, y compris la façon dont les gens font l'histoire.

1) La première modification concernait les types de stimuli qui provoquaient l'agression. Chez nos ancêtres animaux les plus anciens, les stimuli dépendaient des qualités permanentes de l'autre animal. Par exemple, les mâles ont attaqué d'autres mâles à cause de leur odeur masculine. Au cours de l'évolution, et en particulier chez nos ancêtres primates, l'agression a été également stimulée par les actions de l'autre animal. Par exemple, parmi les macaques du Japon, le mâle dominant va attaquer les jeunes singes s'ils s'approchent des pièges qui ont été fixés par les scientifiques qui étudient ces animaux.

2) Une deuxième modification que nous pouvons également observer chez les singes japonais consiste en un processus d'intériorisation par lequel le jeune animal apprend quelles actions doivent être punies. Cela correspond au «surmoi» humain, c'est-à-dire apprendre quel comportement est «bon ou mauvais». Quand ils deviennent adultes, ces singes reproduisent la punition qu'ils ont reçue en punissant à leur tour de jeunes animaux qui montrent un «mauvais» comportement, en allant par exemple trop près des pièges. Notez ici que nous devons reconnaître l'importance de la «punition» dans le cours de l'évolution humaine. Nous le voyons son effet dans la colère des enfants quand ils crient «ce n'est pas juste!»

3) Une troisième modification, qui a lieu seulement au niveau de la société humaine, est la capacité de conceptualiser les institutions et les systèmes sociaux et de répondre à leurs actions par la colère, tout comme on peut réagir aux mauvaises actions d'un individu.

4) Quatrièmement, et, finalement, il y a la capacité d'incorporer cette «indignation vertueuse» dans **un schéma complexe de développement de la conscience**, y compris l'action, l'affiliation et l'analyse par lesquelles les individus deviennent des forces puissantes dans l'histoire. Dans le cas des grands militants de la paix, tels que Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela et Martin Luther King, leur indignation était devenue **l'émotion qui alimentait leur activisme social**.

Ici, il est important de reconnaître que la colère de la juste indignation n'est pas dirigée contre une injustice sociale abstraite, mais plutôt contre *l'injustice perçue* aux yeux de la personne concernée. Si la personne concernée croit que les maux sociaux sont causés par les immigrés, les gens de couleur ou les femmes qui se font avorter, alors leur «juste indignation» est dirigée contre eux-la. Ceux qui votent pour LePen en France ou Trump aux États-Unis sont souvent motivés par leur colère contre les immigrés et les personnes de couleur ainsi que contre les partis politiques en place qu'ils perçoivent comme favorisant ces immigrés et ces gens de couleur. Si la personne croit que les ventes de fusils d'assaut conduisent à des massacres d'école, alors son indignation sera dirigée contre la NRA. D'un autre côté, les membres de la NRA croient protéger la Constitution américaine qui donne aux citoyens le droit de porter des armes. Il est important de garder à l'esprit que la perception de l'injustice d'une autre personne peut être très différente de la vôtre, voire à l'opposé.

Permettez-moi de revenir ici à la question initiale, pourquoi y a-t-il tant de colère à cette période de l'histoire? La raison est simple. Il y a d'avantage d'injustice maintenant. Les riches sont devenus plus riches et les pauvres sont devenus plus pauvres. Il y a plus d'inégalité et il y a plus d'exploitation. Il y a plus de personnes déplacées par les guerres et plus de préparation à de nouvelles guerres. Ces problèmes sont perçus de différentes manières par différentes personnes. Mais ils sont perçus!

Il y a quelques temps, il y a quelques générations, de nombreux travailleurs et pauvres adhéraient à des syndicats et à des partis politiques socialistes ou communistes qui les convainquaient qu'ils devaient être unis sans tenir compte de leur classe sociale ni de leur origine ethnique, et qu'ils devaient diriger leur colère contre le patron ou le système capitaliste. Mais les syndicats militants et les partis communistes ont été fortement affaiblis, et les personnes qu'ils auraient recrutées dans une époque antérieure sont maintenant recrutées par des politiciens et des médias populistes qui divisent et gouvernent en accusant les immigrés ou les gens de couleur de la détérioration du niveau de vie de la population. pauvres et travailleurs.

Je n'écris pas ceci pour excuser le racisme et la xénophobie, mais plutôt pour nous aider à comprendre la crise profonde dans laquelle nous trouvons notre monde. Cela ne nous aidera pas à critiquer la colère du peuple. Cela nous divisera davantage. Au lieu de cela, [pour citer Martin Luther King](#), «la tâche suprême est d'organiser et d'unir le peuple afin que leur colère devienne une force transformatrice». Nous n'avons pas à chercher loin pour trouver un exemple de la façon dont cela peut être fait. [L'actuelle Campagne des Pauvres](#) aux États-Unis s'inspire directement de Martin Luther King. Elle organise et unit le peuple contre «[les maux du racisme systémique, la pauvreté, l'économie de guerre, la dévastation écologique et la moralité déformée de la nation](#)».