

Timeline

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Terror, Love, and the State of the World

by **John Robbins**

John Robbins is the author of many bestsellers, including Diet For A New America and his recently released The Food Revolution. The son of the founder of the Baskin-Robbins ice cream empire, Robbins walked away from a life of immense wealth to “pursue the deeper American Dream, the dream of a society at peace with its conscience because it respects and lives in harmony with all life forms. A dream of a society that is truly healthy, practicing a wise and compassionate stewardship of a balanced ecosystem.”

If we are serious about stopping terrorism, then our goal must be to reduce the level of fear, injustice, and poverty in the world.

Approximately 3,000 people perished in the September 11th attacks. Our nation still reels from such despicable brutality. But those who died from the attacks on that tragic day were not alone. On September 11th, 35,000 children worldwide died of hunger. A similar number of children died on September 12th, and again on the 13th, and on every single day since.

In today's world, made transparent by television and other telecommunications, any country that attains prosperity unshared by its fellow nations can expect to attract resentment and hatred. In a time when a handful of desperate and suicidal people can devastate the most militarily powerful nation in the history of humankind, any effort dedicated to defeating terrorism must also be dedicated to the goal of bringing justice and prosperity to the poor and dispossessed.

To advance human security and control terrorism, we must not find only the brutality of the September 11th attacks to be totally intolerable. We must also find intolerable that one billion people worldwide struggle to survive on \$1 a day, that more than one billion people lack access to safe drinking water, and that 3 billion people have inadequate access to sanitation. We have not hesitated to build an international coalition and to spend hundreds of billions of dollars to defeat those who launched the attacks of September 11th. What if we were equally as dedicated to building an international coalition to eradicate hunger, to provide clean water, to curb infectious disease, to provide adequate jobs, to combat illiteracy, and to end homelessness?

This goal is too costly, many say. But this is not true.

The cost of our initial military response in Afghanistan will top \$100 billion beyond our already enormous annual defense budget of \$342 billion. What could we accomplish if

we spent even a small fraction of that on programs to alleviate human suffering? In 1998, the United Nations Development Program estimated that it would cost an additional \$9 billion (above current expenditures) to provide clean water and sanitation for everyone on Earth. It would cost an additional \$12 billion, they said, to cover reproductive health services for all women worldwide. Another \$13 billion would be enough not only to give every person on Earth enough food to eat but also basic health care. An additional \$6 billion could provide basic education for all. These are large numbers, but combined they add up to \$40 billion—only one fifth as much as the \$200 billion the U.S. government agreed in October 2001 to pay Lockheed to build new F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) jets.

Might the United States remember in all of this that we have a deep and paramount interdependence with the well-being of all of the world's peoples? Will the day come when the United States fulfills our true national purpose and achieves lasting national security? If this is truly our goal, and if we devote our actions and resources to its accomplishment, the support for the bin Ladens of the world will begin to diminish. We'll know we've begun to create a world where terrorism can't find a foothold when we commit ourselves and our resources to the building of a peaceful world with as much dedication as we've committed ourselves to war.

We'll know we've begun to defeat terrorism when we see the connection between the \$5 trillion the U.S. has spent on nuclear weapons since World War II and the homeless children shivering in the cold, the battered women who have no shelter, and the families broken by grinding poverty; when we see the connection between the \$1 billion a day we've spent every day for decades on the military and the hungry people who have no hope, the children dying from preventable diseases, and the families who sell their daughters into sexual slavery because they see no other way to survive. We'll know we've begun to create true national security when we define the greatness of our civilization not by our military capabilities, but by our ability to bring out the best in ourselves and others, and by the quality of life we leave our children.

We'll know we're on the right track when we begin producing and eating food that is healthy for our bodies and healthy for the Earth, and we no longer find acceptable the existence of human hunger anywhere on the planet.

We'll know we're building security when we give up our dependency on oil, and develop an economy based instead on hydrogen, wind power, solar power, and other nonpolluting, safe, and renewable sources of energy.

We'll know we've begun to create a safer world when we design our public policies and personal lifestyles not just for individual advantage, but for the greater good of the whole Earth community. Then our religious and spiritual lives will make us more human, more humble, and more able to live with respect for all beings. We'll know we're upholding

the human spirit when the power we seek is the ability to nurture and befriend, and when the success we pursue is one in which all beings share because it is founded on reverence for life.

In times of fear, most people step back and wait to see what others are going to do and what's going to happen. Some people, though, see the situation as an opportunity to step forward and take a stand. The more of us who in our hearts and lives take a stand for the creation of a thriving, just, and sustainable way of life for all, the less likely it is that the bin Ladens of the world will accomplish their purposes, and the greater the chance that it will be love and not fear that will prevail.

It is to the planting, nurturing, and harvesting of fruits worthy of all that is good and beautiful in us that we must now, as never before, dedicate our lives. Now, as never before, the world needs our wisdom, our cooperation, and our understanding that all humanity is connected.

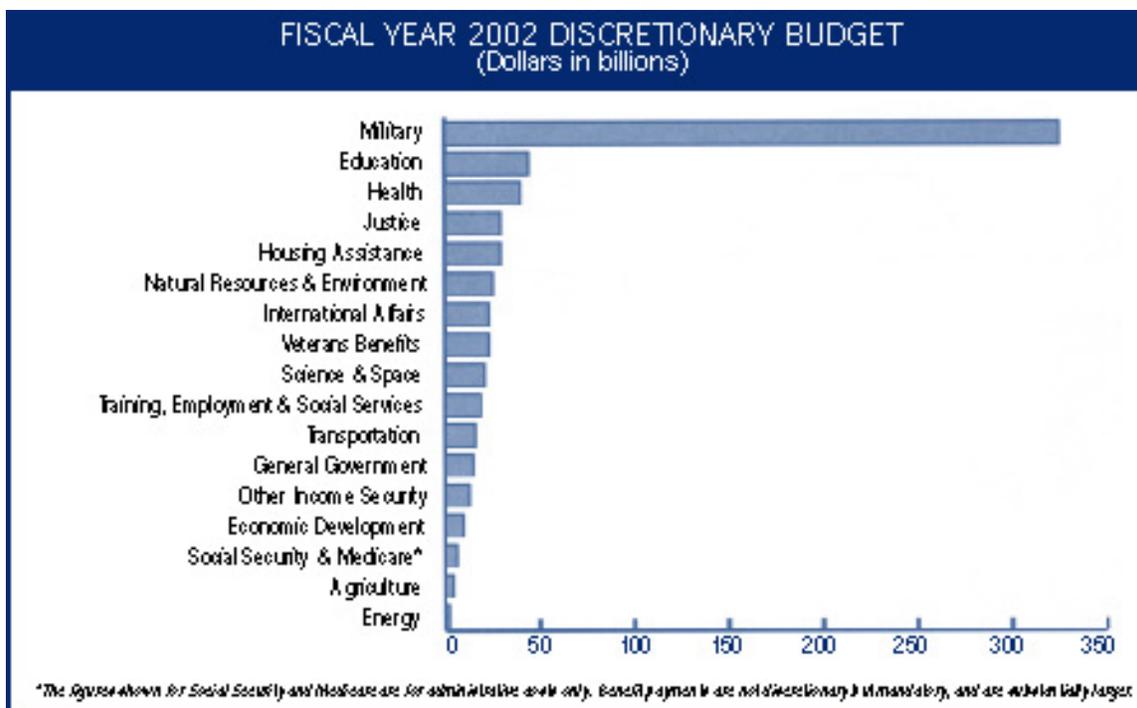
BIG Bucks for the Military

The following analysis was obtained from www.cdi.org, the website of the Center for Defense Information.

The administration is requesting \$396.1 billion for the military in fiscal year 2003 (\$379.3 billion for the Defense Department and \$16.8 billion for the nuclear weapons functions of the Department of Energy). This is \$45.5 billion above current levels, an increase of 13 per- cent. It is also 15 percent above the Cold War average, to fund a force structure that is one-third smaller than it was a decade ago.

In addition, each year Congress funds hundreds of military programs not included in the administration's requests for the Pentagon. To date, CDI has identified nearly \$6 billion in such funds.

CDI notes: "The tragic events of Sept. 11 and the campaign in Afghanistan have raised fundamental questions about the shape and composition of future U.S. forces, requiring the Pentagon to think harder than ever about a new strategic vision aimed squarely at the threats of the 21st century. True transformation will not be accomplished simply by spending more—only by spending better." CDI has identified 15 examples of Pentagon programs that "could, and should, be either canceled or significantly re-shaped...and which will save a minimum of \$147 billion over the next 10 years."



Kofi Annan

The Nobel Committee awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2001, in two equal portions, to the United Nations (UN) and to its Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. This piece is excerpted from the Nobel Lecture given by Kofi Annan on December 10, 2001

Today, in Afghanistan, a girl will be born. Her mother will hold her and feed her, comfort her and care for her—just as any mother would anywhere in the world. In these most basic acts of human nature, humanity knows no divisions. But to be born a girl in today's Afghanistan is to begin life centuries away from the prosperity that one small part of humanity has achieved. It is to live under conditions that many of us in this hall would consider inhuman.

I speak of a girl in Afghanistan, but I might equally well have mentioned a baby boy or girl in Sierra Leone. No one today is unaware of this divide between the world's rich and poor. No one today can claim ignorance of the cost that this divide imposes on the poor and dispossessed who are no less deserving of human dignity, fundamental freedoms, security, food, and education than any of us. The cost, however, is not borne by them alone. Ultimately, it is borne by all of us—North and South, rich and poor, men and women of all races and religions.

Today's real borders are not between nations, but between powerful and powerless, free and fettered, privileged and humiliated. Today, no walls can separate humanitarian or human rights crises in one part of the world from national security crises in another.

Scientists tell us that the world of nature is so small and interdependent that a butterfly flapping its wings in the Amazon rainforest can generate a violent storm on the other side of the earth. This principle is known as the “Butterfly Effect.” Today we realize, perhaps more than ever, that the world of human activity also has its own “Butterfly Effect”—for better or for worse.

We have entered the third millennium through a gate of fire. If today, after the horror of 11 September, we see better, and we see further, we will realize that humanity is indivisible. New threats make no distinction between races, nations, or regions. A new insecurity has entered every mind, regardless of wealth or status.

The 20th century was perhaps the deadliest in human history, devastated by innumerable conflicts, untold suffering, and unimaginable crimes. Time after time, a group or a nation inflicted extreme violence on another, often driven by irrational hatred and suspicion, or unbounded arrogance and thirst for power and resources. In response to these cataclysms, the leaders of the world came together at mid-century to unite the nations as never before.

A forum was created—the United Nations—where all nations could join forces to affirm the dignity and worth of every person, and to secure peace and development for all peoples. Here states could unite to strengthen the rule of law, recognize and address the needs of the poor, restrain man’s brutality and greed, conserve the resources and beauty of nature, sustain the equal rights of men and women, and provide for the safety of future generations.

We thus inherit from the 20th century the political, as well as the scientific and technological power, which—if only we have the will to use them—give us the chance to vanquish poverty, ignorance, and disease.

A genocide begins with the killing of one man—not for what he has done, but because of who he is. A campaign of “ethnic cleansing” begins with one neighbor turning on another. Poverty begins when even one child is denied his or her fundamental right to education. What begins with the failure to uphold the dignity of one life, all too often ends with a calamity for entire nations.

In this new century, we must start from the understanding that peace belongs not only to states or peoples, but to each and every member of those communities. Peace must be made real and tangible in the daily existence of every individual in need. The rights of the individual are as fundamental to the poor as to the rich; they are as necessary to the security of the developed world as to that of the developing world.

From this vision of the role of the United Nations in the next century flow three key priorities for the future: eradicating poverty, preventing conflict, and promoting

democracy. Only in a world that is rid of poverty can all men and women make the most of their abilities. Only where individual rights are respected can differences be channeled politically and resolved peacefully. Only in a democratic environment, based on respect for diversity and dialogue, can individual self-expression and self-government be secured, and freedom of association be upheld.

In a world filled with weapons of war and all too often words of war, the Nobel Committee has become a vital agent for peace. Sadly, a prize for peace is a rarity in this world. Most nations have monuments or memorials to war, bronze salutations to heroic battles, archways of triumph. But peace has no parade, no pantheon of victory.

What it does have is the Nobel Prize—a statement of hope and courage with unique resonance and authority. Only by understanding and addressing the needs of individuals for peace, for dignity, and for security can we at the United Nations hope to live up to the honor conferred today, and fulfill the vision of our founders. This is the broad mission of peace that United Nations staff members carry out every day in every part of the world.

The idea that there is one people in possession of the truth, one answer to the world's ills, or one solution to humanity's needs, has done untold harm throughout history—especially in the last century. Today, however, even amidst continuing ethnic conflict around the world, there is a growing understanding that human diversity is both the reality that makes dialogue necessary, and the very basis for that dialogue. We understand, as never before, that each of us is fully worthy of the respect and dignity essential to our common humanity. We recognize that we are the products of many cultures, traditions, and memories; that mutual respect allows us to study and learn from other cultures; and that we gain strength by combining the foreign with the familiar.

In every great faith and tradition one can find the values of tolerance and mutual understanding. The Qur'an, for example, tells us that “we created you from a single pair of male and female and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other.” In the Jewish tradition, the injunction to “love thy neighbor as thyself,” is considered to be the very essence of the Torah.

This thought is reflected in the Christian Gospel, which also teaches us to love our enemies and pray for those who wish to persecute us. Hindus are taught that “truth is one, the sages give it various names.” And in the Buddhist tradition, individuals are urged to act with compassion in every facet of life.

Each of us has the right to take pride in our particular faith or heritage. But the notion that what is ours is necessarily in conflict with what is theirs is both false and dangerous. It has resulted in endless enmity and conflict, leading men to commit the greatest of crimes in the name of a higher power.

It need not be so. People of different religions and cultures live side by side in almost every part of the world, and most of us have overlapping identities which unite us with very different groups. We can love what we are, without hating what—and who—we are not. We can thrive in our own tradition, even as we learn from others, and come to respect their teachings.

This will not be possible, however, without freedom of religion, of expression, of assembly, and basic equality under the law. Indeed, the lesson of the past century has been that where the dignity of the individual has been trampled or threatened—where citizens have not enjoyed the basic right to choose their government, or the right to change it regularly—conflict has too often followed, with innocent civilians paying the price, in lives cut short and communities destroyed.

The obstacles to democracy have little to do with culture or religion, and much more to do with the desire of those in power to maintain their position at any cost. This is neither a new phenomenon nor one confined to any particular part of the world. People of all cultures value their freedom of choice, and feel the need to have a say in decisions affecting their lives.

The United Nations, whose membership comprises almost all the states in the world, is founded on the principle of the equal worth of every human being. It is the nearest thing we have to a representative institution that can address the interests of all states, and all peoples. Through this universal, indispensable instrument of human progress, states can serve the interests of their citizens by recognizing common interests and pursuing them in unity. No doubt, that is why the Nobel Committee says that it “wishes, in its centenary year, to proclaim that the only negotiable route to global peace and cooperation goes by way of the United Nations.”

I believe the Committee also recognized that this era of global challenges leaves no choice but cooperation at the global level. When states undermine the rule of law and violate the rights of their individual citizens, they become a menace not only to their own people, but also to their neighbors, and indeed the world. What we need today is better governance—legitimate, democratic governance that allows each individual to flourish, and each state to thrive.

You will recall that I began my address with a reference to the girl born in Afghanistan today. Even though her mother will do all in her power to protect and sustain her, there is a one-in-four risk that she will not live to see her fifth birthday. Whether she does is just one test of our common humanity—of our belief in our individual responsibility for our fellow men and women. It is the only test that matters.

Remember this girl, and then our larger aims—to fight poverty, prevent conflict, or cure disease—will not seem distant, nor impossible. Indeed, those aims will seem very near,

and achievable—as they should. Because beneath the surface of states and nations, ideas and language, lies the fate of individual human beings in need. Answering their needs will be the mission of the United Nations in the century to come.

Cautions on the War on Terrorism

Editorial by Mac Lawrence

“Every nation has its war party. It is not the party of democracy. It is the party of autocracy. It seeks to dominate absolutely. It is commercial, imperialistic, ruthless. It tolerates no opposition....”

”In times of peace, the war party insists on making preparation for war. As soon as it is prepared for war, it insists on making war. If there is no sufficient reason for war, the party will make war on one pretext, then invent another, possibly more effective pretext after war is on.

“Before war is ended, the war party assumes the divine right to denounce and silence all opposition to war as unpatriotic and cowardly.”

Senator Robert M. La Follette (R-Wisconsin), 85 years ago in a speech called “The Right of the Citizen to Oppose War and the Right of Congress to Shape the War Policy.”

I’ve spent time on the Internet recently, reading background material on the various hot spots in the world, and editorials in Western, European, and Asian newspapers and websites.

An increasing amount of what’s out there is critical of U.S. actions in combating terrorism. Some recent headlines: “Why the ‘War on Terror’ Won’t Work;” “To Keep a Population in Line, Wage Perpetual War Against a Vague Enemy;” “A Hot-Headed Government;” “We Have Met the Enemy and He is Us;” “The War Party Tolerates No Opposition;” “Americans Must Stand Firm Against War;” “Bush’s Policies Give Allies Reason to Worry;” “Why Does Islam Hate America;” “The Great Deception: Elusive Enemy, Endless War.”

There are also criticisms of specific U.S. actions: “Bush Playing Dangerous Games in Korea;” “U.S. Unwelcome in Philippines;” “U.S. Campaign Poses Threat in Central Asia;” “Stop Expansion of U.S. Intervention in Colombia;” “Why U.S. Arrival in Georgia Has Moscow Hopping Mad.”

The most recent threat by the U.S. to use nuclear weapons (addressed by Canadian Senator Douglas Roche elsewhere in this issue) has spawned such headlines as “Relearning to Love the Bomb;” “Nuke ’em;” and “Dr. Strangelove with a Texas Drawl.”

Cartoonists and writers had a field day when the Pentagon announced its newly created Office of Strategic Influence, whose purpose was widely reported to be the distribution of false and misleading news stories to the foreign press. Some headlines: “That Incredible Pentagon;” “The Office of Strategic Bald-Faced Lies;” “Deja Vu All Over Again;” “The Lying Machine;” and “I Do Hope They Lie to Us—I Want to Believe in My Government.” When the proposed office was dropped, one columnist predicted that the disinformation function might well be taken over by the newly formed Information Awareness Office, to be run by John M. Poindexter, who was convicted in 1989 of conspiracy, making false statements to Congress, and obstruction of justice.

After reading editorials like these, plus editorials which agree with the direction the U.S. is taking, there are some obvious conclusions. One is that nothing is simple— every situation is a lot more complex than it seems. Which means that there are more ramifications to any particular action than can be foreseen: the Law of Unintended Consequences. Since so many of the consequences can turn out to be negative, it means that even if you do achieve your objective, the total loss—to you and others— is often more than the gain. As many observers in the U.S. and elsewhere point out, America’s “ready, fire, aim” responses to the terrorist attacks of 9-11—understandable as they are—were way too hasty.

Reading these editorials also reinforces the validity of other principles that I believe apply to all human interactions. One is that violence breeds violence, and is therefore never a creative solution to a conflict. “Live by the sword, die by the sword.” Another is that in long-standing and emotional conflicts, no matter what solution is reached, fanatics on both sides will resent it and may well continue the violence. A third is to never discount the impact of religion. As Pascal once noted, “Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.”

Some of the articles that followed the headlines didn’t actually make their point very well. Other writers laced their editorials with sarcasm, a technique which never works for me. Many editorials, however, were thoughtful and informative, including some that so thoroughly covered a complicated issue—such as the role oil has played in the recent history of Afghanistan—that I actually thought I understood the subject.

Here are some of the more incisive items I found. Some are recent, some old.

“Almost daily, we hear new accounts of successful raids on high-level Taliban and al Qaeda cadres, only to learn later that we killed, wounded, and/or captured innocent villagers, our political allies, and our allies’ friends. We are fast making a lot of enemies.

We pay relatives of those we kill \$1000 in compensation. But in the Hindu Kush mountains, compensation only delays revenge. Ultimately, blood must be answered with blood.” Lincoln Keiser, professor of anthropology at Wesleyan University and author of *Friend by Day, Enemy by Night*, a study of blood feuds in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

“The bulk of the more than \$2 billion annual U.S. aid [to Egypt] goes to the military. Huge public housing projects, built far from the city centers in the desert, sit empty. Unemployment, especially among college graduates, has been rising. One-third of the work-force still hold government jobs that pay so little that most people have to take on another job or two. Predictably, the disappointed youth of Egypt and Saudi Arabia turn to religion for comfort. They blame the government but are fearful of expressing their anger openly. They blame outsiders—in the Middle East, that is the seemingly all-powerful United States—who seem to have everything.” Susan Sachs, *The New York Times*.

“This war on terrorism may eliminate a few terrorists. But without basic reforms, it will be like killing a few mosquitoes and leaving the swamp.” Mohamed Zarea, Cairo.

“One critical question as we enter this new ‘Cold War’ is whether we have learned the lessons of the last one—or whether we are destined to repeat its mistakes. Will we again overemphasize military force to achieve our goals and ignore the nonmilitary instruments of statecraft? We must avoid making the new Cold War an all-consuming fight—one in which we carelessly sacrifice other important foreign-policy interests and values to serve the cause of defeating global terrorism.” Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Kinsay, senior fellows at the Brookings Institution.

“If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?” Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

“Last week I was asked by the Peacetime Foundation of Taiwan to join a protest against the current use by the U.S. of cluster bombs. These, known in Chinese as ‘mother-and-son bombs,’ aim to spread death and injury to as many living targets as possible rather than damage a specific installation. They consist of a canister that opens in the air and dispenses smaller bombs which explode, throwing some 200,000 projectiles in every direction. In Vietnam, B-52s often dropped explosives on military structures, napalm to scorch out their contents, then cluster bombs to kill people trying to help their burning comrades. Small wonder some people are protesting, even in pro-American Taiwan.” Bradley Winterton in the Taipei Times, reviewing the book *A History of Bombing* by Sven Lindqvist, of which he says: “At times hard to read, [the book] tells us not only of the tools of warfare and their use in history, but the darkness at the heart of nations bent on using them.”

“To prevent terrorism by dropping bombs on Iraq is such an obvious idea. If only the U.K. had done something similar in Northern Ireland.” Terry Jones of Monty Python’s Flying Circus.

*“The military buildup seems to have little to do with the actual threat, unless you think al Qaeda’s next move will be a frontal assault by several heavy armored divisions. We nondefense experts are a bit puzzled about why an attack by maniacs armed with box cutters justifies spending \$15 billion on 70-ton artillery pieces, or developing three different advanced fighters.” Paul Krugman in *The New York Times*.*

“Dealing with fanatics who think they are doing God’s will by slaughtering other people is, without doubt, the single most important task facing the nations of the world. We need to find ways to do so without turning people and their homes in other nations into ‘collateral damage’ and without turning America into an example of the very despotism it seeks to destroy. If the past six months have taught us anything, it ought to be the recognition that the struggle in which we are engaged is for the hearts and minds of impoverished, marginalized, angry people around the world. That struggle won’t be won with howitzers and helicopters.” Hubert G. Locke, former dean of the Daniel J. Evans Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Washington, Seattle.

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Jews and Palestinians Talk It Over

by Mac Lawrence

It’s been nearly ten years since a group of Jews and Palestinians first met at the San Mateo, California home of Len and Libby Traubman to form a Living Room Dialogue Group. Could they learn to listen to each other’s stories and opinions, and to value each other? They could. Could they work together on joint projects to help bring other Jews and Palestinians together? They have.

The group’s success (see *Timeline* May/June 1996) has helped bring the dialogue concept national attention and has led to the formation of many other groups based on the same format. How many Jewish/Palestinian dialogue groups are there now? Best estimates are in the dozens. There are five alone in San Diego, California, one of which received a multi-page article recently in the *Christian Science Monitor*. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Reform Movement body, has recently recommended such dialogue to its new arm—Seeking Peace, Pursuing Justice.

“The idea has expanded worldwide,” says Len, now retired from his pediatric dental practice to devote full time to this project. He and Libby, both long-time members of the Foundation for Global Community, have sent guidelines to more than 1,000 individuals in 600 institutions in more than 400 cities, 38 states, and in cities from Sidney, Australia to Calcutta, India.

To keep in contact with those most interested in the dialogue process, Len and Libby maintain an e-mail circle of over 900 personal contacts in North America and the Middle East. They share information, articles of significance, and some of the inspirational messages they receive. In one typical message, a college student writes: *“Dear Len: Hi! Again thank you so much for doing this. All day long I have been mesmerized with your website and am picking through everything trying to read everything. It is overwhelming in such a good way because for two years I have looked for something like this, and to finally find it now is amazing.”*

The student then requests a whole series of publications referenced on the Traubman website, and concludes: *“If this is too many to send, I understand, so at least [I hope] you can send the one about Israeli-Palestinian Awareness Week. Also please feel free to send me anything, and do not worry about if it is too much. Believe me it could never be too much. I want to get my hands on as much stuff as possible because I really want this group to work out and I want to do it right. Shalom and Salaam.”*

A Jewish student studying for a year in Cairo shared her experience in Egypt: *“Dialogue brought together people who not only had different life experiences and family histories, but lived in different cultures with different values, expectations, and reactions to world events. Dialogue proved to be very powerful.”* “We get messages like this every day,” notes Len.

Technology is often accused of distancing people. It can, however, be used to bring people together. In addition to the technology of e-mail and websites, the development of Web cameras turns out to be a winner. In January, the Traubman dialogue group organized a two-hour video conference with a new Middle East dialogue group in Nashville, Tennessee, using an inexpensive Web camera and speaker-phones. One participant said: “I am so glad that we in Nashville have been able to expand our dialogue to include you and yours. I need to focus on the positive results of individuals learning more about other individuals, on the human side of the cultural and social divides in America and in the world.” Another noted: “I’m still trying to find the words to adequately convey my experience of Monday afternoon. I can only say that, in true dialogue style, I am changed and hopeful that Monday was the start of something big!” The same Web camera technology has also been used by students at New York University to link up with students in Cairo, and by the University of Illinois, Chicago, to connect with Birzeit University in Ramallah, Palestine.

How has the recent spate of violence affected the living room dialogue groups? “It has deepened everyone’s dedication,” says Len. “We do not go up and down with the headlines. More and more, we are being asked into synagogues, college campuses, and high schools. The media call us. These groups just seem to be a model of hope. I believe people’s minds, hearts, and doors are opening to each other.”

Can this way of dialoguing actually have an effect on the violence in the Middle East? The dialogue group participants have an answer: There are things that governments can do that people cannot, like forging binding agreements. And there are things that citizens free of government can do that governments cannot, such as changing human relationships. Explains Elias Botto, a Palestinian member of the original living room group: “If we were to see each other’s pain, there would be a lot of understanding. If we could make it a common kind of denominator, we could build a positive future on it.”

The Importance of Citizen Dialogue

One expert who feels that citizens have a key role to play in resolving conflicts is Dr. Harold Saunders, former Assistant Secretary of State, facilitator at the Camp David Accords, and author of *A Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts*.

Saunders believes that the conflicts that will dominate the stage in the 21st century will increasingly have deep human roots. “They will be fed,” he says, “by ethnic and racial tensions and by feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness—lack of meaningful work, a political voice, and human dignity. While governments will continue to be critical to solutions in many cases, citizens outside government may hold the key to peace, economic progress, and the solution to the world’s most intractable problems. I have called this ‘The Citizens’ Century’—for better or for worse.” Sustained dialogue, he emphasizes, is a key ingredient in citizen involvement.

Another who believes in people-to-people efforts is Dennis Ross, formerly director for policy planning in the State Department under President George H. W. Bush and special Middle East coordinator under President Clinton. In the *Washington Post* (21 Feb 2002), Ross wrote an article, “One Last Chance.” After reviewing some political recommendations for the Israeli and Palestinian governments, Ross concluded: “Finally, it is time for unconventional approaches. With so many Israelis and Palestinians doubting there is a solution, it is time for unofficial, people-to-people efforts. Forums to have Israelis and Palestinians speak of their respective grievances might sensitize each to the pain and suffering of the other. Moreover, if, as they are telling me, there are Israelis and Palestinians who believe they could outline a fair solution, let them do so. Let Israelis see that there are Palestinians willing to work with them and make difficult concessions that

respond to Israeli needs. Let Palestinians see that there are Israelis who are prepared to end Israeli control of their lives. Let them demonstrate that peaceful coexistence is not an illusion. Let them show there is another way. Let them prove there is a reason to step back from the abyss.”

Courage to Refuse: Combatants' Letter

As this issue of *Timeline* went to press, 427 members of the Israeli military had signed the following letter. Their names and rank, along with a number of their personal stories, appear on the website www.seruv.org.

- We, reserve combat officers and soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces, who were raised upon the principles of Zionism, sacrifice and giving to the people of Israel and to the State of Israel, who have always served in the front lines, and who were the first to carry out any mission, light or heavy, in order to protect the State of Israel and strengthen it.
- We, combat officers and soldiers who have served the State of Israel for long weeks every year, in spite of the dear cost to our personal lives, have been on reserve duty all over the Occupied Territories, and were issued commands and directives that had nothing to do with the security of our country, and that had the sole purpose of perpetuating our control over the Palestinian people. We, whose eyes have seen the bloody toll this Occupation exacts from both sides.
- We, who sensed how the commands issued to us in the Territories destroy all the values we had absorbed while growing up in this country.
- We, who understand now that the price of Occupation is the loss of IDF's human character and the corruption of the entire Israeli society.
- We, who know that the Territories are not Israel, and that all settlements are bound to be evacuated in the end.
- We hereby declare that we shall not continue to fight this War of the Settlements.
- We shall not continue to fight beyond the 1967 borders in order to dominate, expel, starve, and humiliate an entire people.
- We hereby declare that we shall continue serving in the Israel Defense Forces in any mission that serves Israel's defense.
- The missions of occupation and oppression do not serve this purpose—and we shall take no part in them.

Pashtun Pacifists

A Perspective by Ron Sider

“There is nothing surprising in a Muslim or a Pathan [Pashtun] like me subscribing to the creed of nonviolence. It is not a new creed. It was followed fourteen hundred years ago by the Prophet all the time he was in Mecca, and it has since been followed by all those who wanted to throw off an oppressor’s yoke. But we had so far forgotten it that when Ghandiji placed it before us, we thought he was sponsoring a novel creed.” *Badshah Khan*

Some people are so violent that nothing works with them but sheer brute force. Right?

The Pashtuns—the majority tribal group of Southern Afghanistan and neighboring parts of Pakistan who provided the core of Taliban support—are among the most frequently nominated candidates for this category of irredeemably violent. Occupants for centuries of Southern Afghanistan and the famous Khyber Pass, the strategic gateway from India to Russia, these vicious tribesmen defeated every invader. The 19th-century British considered the Pashtuns the most savage warriors they had ever met. India’s first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, observed that the male Pashtun “loved his gun better than his child or brother.”

An astonishing, often overlooked episode of Pashtun history, however, hints at less violent possibilities. Inspired by Gandhi’s nonviolent campaign for freedom from British colonialism, the Pashtuns created the first highly trained professional nonviolent army—80,000 nonviolent Pashtun peacemakers who refused to kill even under extreme provocation. Badshah Khan, a Pashtun Muslim leader, persuaded tens of thousands of his fellow tribesmen to embrace Gandhi’s vision of nonviolent struggle. Khan’s nonviolent army, called the “Servants of God,” marched, drilled, wore a special red uniform, and developed a careful organizational structure complete with officers and a bagpipe corps!

In April 1930, when Gandhi launched a widespread campaign of civil disobedience across India, the British responded brutally. Soldiers beat unarmed protesters with steel-tipped staffs. One hundred thousand Indians landed in jail. Nowhere was the repression as bad as in Badshah Khan’s Pashtun homeland in the strategic northwest frontier. When he called his Pashtun people to nonviolent resistance, Khan was quickly arrested. Nonviolent civil disobedience promptly broke out every-where among the Pashtuns. Bayonets and bullets were the British response. On one bloody afternoon, they killed over 200 unarmed protesters and wounded many more.

British brutality inspired massive support for Khan's nonviolent army, which quickly swelled to 80,000 volunteers. Fearing this Pashtun nonviolence even more than their former savagery, the British did everything to destroy the "Red Shirts" and provoke them to violence. They ordered them to strip naked in public and beat them into unconsciousness when they refused. After public humiliation, many were thrown into pools of human excrement. Everywhere, the British hunted Badshah Khan's nonviolent army like animals. But the proud Pashtuns remained firmly nonviolent.

For the next decade and a half, Badshah Khan and his nonviolent Red Shirts played a key role in the battle for independence. They worked consistently for peace and reconciliation. In 1946, when thousands died in Hindu-Muslim violence, 10,000 of Khan's Servants of God protected Hindu and Sikh minorities in the northwest frontier and eventually restored order in the large city of Peshawar. Finally, in 1947, Gandhi's campaign of nonviolent intervention wrested Indian independence from the British Empire. Badshah Khan's peaceful army of Pashtun Red Shirts deserved a good deal of the credit. "That such men," Gandhi exclaimed, "who would have killed a human being with no more thought than they would kill a sheep or a hen, should at the bidding of one man have laid down their arms and accepted nonviolence as the superior weapon sounds almost like a fairy tale."

The fact that they did—if only for a couple of decades—should caution us against despairing of the struggle to create non-violent alternatives even in the toughest circumstances. "Just War" theorists argue that war must be a last resort after all practical nonviolent alternatives have been tried. Pacifists claim to have an alternative to war.

Surely an obvious next step is for both to work together to train tens of thousands of nonviolent troops like Khan's Muslim Servants of God and the Mennonite-initiated Christian Peacemaker Teams that today move between warring groups in places as difficult as Hebron, Chiapas, and Colombia. Perhaps Jesus' summons to "love your enemies" is not as naive as many suppose. One need not believe that nonviolence can quickly resolve every violent conflict to accept the fact that stunning examples of nonviolence exist—even among the Afghan Pashtuns.

Perhaps a billion or two dollars spent on training thousands (both Just War and pacifist folks) for disciplined peacemaker teams ready to intervene nonviolently in the most intractable conflicts might be a wise investment. What exists is possible.

Reference: *A Man to Match His Mountains: Badshah Khan, Nonviolent Soldier of Islam*, by Eknath Easwaran, Milgiri Press, 1984.

Dr. Ron Sider is president and founder of Evangelicals for Social Action, an organization dedicated to "a biblical response to social justice."

Rethinking the Unthinkable

A Commentary by Douglas Roche

The following commentary by Senator Douglas Roche, O.C., was published in Canada's Globe and Mail newspaper. Roche is chairman of the Middle Powers Initiative, which recently became a central program of the Global Security Institute. He is an independent senator from Alberta and former chairman of the UN Disarmament Committee.

Nuclear weapons are back on the front pages, with news of a Bush administration policy document, the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, which projects the role of nuclear weapons into the future—not as deterrents, but for the purpose of waging wars. The document even names potential targets. This document and the thinking behind it are reckless. They not only jeopardize international law but also the support of America's closest allies. Canada must state its opposition immediately.

The document also breaks a commitment. In 2000, the United States joined the other nuclear-weapons states in making an “unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination” of their nuclear arsenals. The United States made this commitment at a review conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which, with 187 nations involved, is the world's largest arms-control and disarmament treaty.

There are still 31,000 nuclear weapons in the world, most of them American or Russian, with lesser amounts held by the United Kingdom, France and China, India, Pakistan and Israel. At least 5,000 of the U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons are maintained on hair-trigger alert, meaning they could be fired on 15 minutes notice.

The Bush administration has offered cuts in the nuclear weapons the United States deploys, but is reinforcing its maintenance of core stocks and planning the development of new ones. By rejecting the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, it is holding open the door to resumed nuclear testing. This has greatly worried many non-nuclear weapons countries and has already led to charges that the United States is acting in bad faith. The Non-Proliferation Treaty insists that negotiations for elimination should be held in “good faith.”

Periodically, the United States reviews its policies on nuclear weapons; it did so last year, the results of which are seen in this week's alarming headlines. “Behind the administration's rhetorical mask of post-Cold War restraint,” comments the U.S. Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a prestigious nonprofit organization of scientists, lawyers, and environmental specialists, “lie expansive plans to revitalize U.S. nuclear forces, and all the elements that support them, within a so-called ‘New Triad’ of

capabilities that combine nuclear and conventional offensive strikes with missile defenses and nuclear-weapons infrastructure.”

According to the NRDC’s analysis, the Bush team assumes that nuclear weapons will be part of U.S. military forces at least for the next 50 years; it plans an extensive and expensive series of programs to modernize the existing force, including a new ICBM to be operational in 2020 and a new heavy bomber in 2040.

The administration’s Nuclear Posture Review says that there are four reasons to possess nuclear weapons: to “assure allies and friends,” “dissuade competitors,” “deter aggressors,” and “defeat enemies.” Over the next 10 years, the White House’s plans call for the United States to retain a total stock-pile of intact nuclear weapons and weapons components roughly seven to nine times larger than the publicly stated goal of 1,700 to 2,200 “operationally deployed weapons.”

Moreover, the U.S. administration has ordered the Pentagon to draft contingency plans for the use of nuclear weapons against at least seven countries, naming not only the “axis of evil” (Iraq, Iran and North Korea) but also Russia, China, Libya, and Syria.

This position has prompted the editors of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists to move the minute hand of their “Doomsday Clock” forward two minutes—to seven minutes to midnight, the same position as when the clock made its debut in 1947. “Despite a campaign promise to rethink nuclear policy, the Bush administration has taken no significant steps to alter nuclear targeting policies or reduce the alert status of U.S. nuclear forces,” said George A. Lopez, chairman of the Bulletin’s board of directors. The shift in U.S. policy has immense implications for Canada and the other members of NATO. NATO has traditionally presented its nuclear doctrine as one of deterrence, not war. Canada is now caught in the middle, between its international legal obligations to support negotiations for the elimination of nuclear weapons, or to support the United States in its determination to keep them.

All this will come to a head at an important Non-Proliferation Treaty meeting at the United Nations. Canada has higher obligations to international law, as it is being developed in the United Nations system, than it does to its friendship with the United States, which is violating the very law that Canada stands for. Good friends don’t let their friends drive drunk. It’s time for Canada to blow the whistle on its U.S. friends in Washington, who are veering out of control in their pursuit of nuclear weapons. Because of its military strength and commanding position as the world’s lone superpower, the United States occupies the central position when it comes to making progress on nuclear disarmament. NATO’s stance—that nuclear weapons remain “essential”—would fold in an instant if the United States took action in entering comprehensive negotiations for their elimination. Russia and China, struggling to move their economies into strong positions, do not want to engage in a new nuclear arms race, which is precisely what they

fear will happen if and when the United States actually deploys a National Missile Defense system.

Most people do not realize that the United States spends \$100million (U.S.) a day maintaining its nuclear weapons. Because Washington is pouring huge new sums into its military budget—it will soon be spending, at \$400-billion annually, more than the next 15 countries combined—the international community has become rightfully alarmed about U.S. intentions. Nor is the rest of the world reassured when we see the Pentagon’s website proclaiming the U.S. intention to weaponize space and thus ensure “full-spectrum dominance” on land, sea, air, and space.

The Clock Moves Ahead



In February of this year, the Board of Directors of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved the minute hand on its “Doomsday Clock,” the symbol of nuclear danger, forward from nine to just seven minutes before midnight.

George Lopez, chairman of the Bulletin’s board stated, “We are deeply concerned that the international community appears to have ignored the wake-up call of September 11.” This is the third time that the hand has been moved forward since the end of the Cold War in 1991.

The reasons given for the movement closer to midnight are “too little progress on global nuclear disarmament; growing concerns about the security of nuclear weapons materials worldwide; the continuing U.S. preference for unilateral action rather than cooperative international diplomacy; U.S. abandonment of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty; the crisis between India and Pakistan; [and] terrorist efforts to acquire nuclear and biological weapons.”

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists was founded in 1945 by a group of World War II-era Manhattan Project scientists. The Doomsday Clock was first used in 1947 as a graphic means of portraying nuclear danger.

To learn more about this group or subscribe to their publication, check their website at www.thebulletin.org

Great Ideas

“Great ideas, it has been said, come into the world as gently as doves. Perhaps then, if we listen attentively, we shall hear amid the uproar of empires and nations, a faint flutter of wings, a gentle stirring of life and hope. Some will say that this hope lies in a nation; others in a person. I believe rather that it is awakened, revived, nourished by millions of solitary individuals whose deeds and works every day negate frontiers and the crudest implications of history. As a result, there shines forth fleetingly the ever-threatened truth that each and every person, on the foundation of his or her own sufferings and joys, builds for all.”

by Albert Camus, *The Artist and His Time*

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Palo Alto, California

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