



Nous sommes tous américains.

I dag er vi alle Norske.

In how many languages will we be compelled to assert our oneness before the madness ends?

It has been a long summer, and the end is not in sight. The Eastern United States has experienced prolonged heat. Where I live, infrequent rains do not replenish the earth or cause the temperature to drop. If that weren't enough to make us feel as if our brains were frying, national media outlets inform of us of what they're going to report. When the hyped reports actually arrive, they are anti-climatic and tell us nothing new. Congress still lacks basic communication skills, and enough members are unwilling to govern collegially that the country spirals deeper into recession, its citizens into depression. There are no jobs programs, no end to wars, no funding for education. This is a generational deficit of tremendous magnitude.

Posturing and politicking push international news to the margins, but we gather Libya is still in turmoil and Syria is suppressing dissent. Much of Africa is either engaged in conflict or suffering drought, or both. Millions are streaming into refugee camps. In Norway, a citizen murders other citizens, ostensibly in the name of the Prince of Peace, because he fears their tolerance of those not exactly like them.

Where is the peace in this? Where is good news on which we can build peace? Voltaire's Dr. Pangloss said it to Candide: "Il faut cultiver notre jardin." Our own garden is the one place we can control events, nurture what we value, and improve on what we're given. Diligence provides bounty to share.

The Peacebuilding Institute of East Tennessee's ([PIET](#)) inaugural Conference on Violence in Knoxville is an excellent example of cultivating our

own garden. Participants learned how things are here, and brainstormed ways of responding.

Nationally, The United States Air Force discontinued use of a curriculum teaching Christian "Just War Theory" for teaching ethics to nuclear missile officers.

Internationally, an increasing number of countries are planning to move away from nuclear generation of electric power to sustainable sources. Perhaps there are still pockets of sanity in our world.

In this issue, Bob Rundle continues his analysis of economics and justice.

Finally, a reminder that we have a Twitter feed. And another reminder that if you link to Powell's Books through our [web site](#), they send us a few cents from each sale. This applies to all titles, not just the ones we mention or review.

We'd love to hear your news, especially good news! Send us your letters; email us; follow our Twitter feed, @peacememo. Join with us in building peaceful neighborhoods that embody visions of a peaceful world.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

The tax which will be paid for the purpose of education is not more than the thousandth part of what will be paid to kings, priests, and nobles who will rise up among us if we leave the people in ignorance. -- Thomas Jefferson, third US president, architect and author (1743-1826)



Highlights from the First Annual Conference on Violence in Knoxville



Jack Guillebeax, Keynote speaker, addressed the dynamics of violence. When we think of violence, we think of unlawful acts, the court system, and corrections. Violence is more than just that which “the system” addresses. Yet the situation seems beyond the system’s control. The United States leads the world in modeling and creating domination systems; its prisons hold more people than any other country in the world.

If you look at violence from a spiritual or root level, any act in society that violates the human spirit is an act of violence. Examples include racism, sexism, any behavior or thought pattern that assumes some are *inherently* superior and the rest are *inherently* inferior. When a human being is not seen or is discounted by another, it weighs heavily on his or her ability to grow.



Over time, human beings internalize oppression. Community development becomes difficult because people turn the energy needed for progress inward. The antidote is for all of us to develop

our capacity to see one another as human beings, *regardless*. Each of us needs to see in each person the handiwork of God, a being created by the same hand that created us and ours.

Ed Francisco spoke on the origins of violence in biology, based on his experience as an educator. Violence comes from bullying. Bullying requires a target, a “bad guy,” someone different. And all humans possess the ability to bully those perceived as weaker or different. The group then explored ways to change a culture of bullying by changing the language and metaphors we use, and by changing our expectations, starting with young children.

Ed recommended we read [Cotton Mather’s account of Martha Carrier](#), one of the women hanged as a witch in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692; and George Lakoff’s book, [Metaphors We Live By](#).

Mike Henry and Jill Powell spoke about violence in the streets. The root causes of violence in the streets are religiosity, ignorance, and discrimination. Seeing



local crime statistics was shocking, since most of us live in neighborhoods that seem safe. However, there are over 1,500 homeless people using shelters in the city. (That number only counts people who use shelters; there are more.)

Homelessness itself is a cause of street violence. Many of the homeless simply need jobs, but may be illiterate or otherwise disabled. Our broken physical and mental health systems discharge people to shelters, effectively putting them out on the street, where they cannot get ongoing care or medicines they need. Prisons also discharge inmates to the

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ISSN 2160-3928

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street, with no follow-up. All of Tennessee's twenty-two prisons are effectively privatized. While the crime rate has dropped by 50%, the rate of incarceration has increased five times. So people are, in effect, being imprisoned for poverty.

Most of the programs for the homeless are funded by non-profits. The federal government allocates only 4% of its budget to all housing and health programs, while 58% goes to "defense".



Jack Guillebeaux and **Jim Foster** addressed religiously motivated violence. There is a disturbing inverse correlation between the percentage of the population claiming certain belief in God and a state's ranking on selected criminal issues. For example, Kentucky, which ranks first in belief in God, has the highest murder rate in the country. New Hampshire, which ranks 48th in belief has the lowest murder rate.

The conference closed with a short introduction to the Nonviolent Living program, and new study groups formed.

The Peace Memo, ISSN2160-3928, is published monthly by the Peacebuilding Institutes: <http://www.peacebuildinginstitute.org/>. Available through online subscription. All material ©, however distribution – with attribution – is encouraged. Email questions and comments to thepeacememo@gmail.com

Publisher: Peacebuilding Institute, Editor: Victoria Medaglia, Founder: Jim Foster

SAGE* THOUGHTS

Trickle down economics is still alive and well. You know, that old economic theory that calls for the greatest tax breaks to go to the richest so that more jobs and other benefits to trickle down to the rest of us. And this is still true in the United States where the top 1% currently has as much wealth as the bottom 90%. This distortion in wealth has been increasing for many years and now stands at the highest it has been since 1929. The international economic development organization, OECD, studied income inequality and poverty in 2008 among the 34 developed nations who are its members. They reported only Mexico and Turkey have higher rates of inequality than the United States.

Trickle down usually shows up during Congressional debates as strong warnings against raising taxes in bad times. Many members of Congress seem to forget that a budget consists of both income and spending. They only talk about cutting spending. Yet our tax system is so distorted that some responsible billionaires like Warren Buffet have even asked the government to raise their own taxes. I agree with Warren that it makes no sense for his secretary to pay taxes at a higher rate than he does.

Economics is supposed to be largely beyond the grasp of the common man. But let's try a little common sense. If you have one million bucks in a tax break that can go to a few folks like Warren Buffat versus thousands of middle and lower income earners, who is most likely to use it to make purchases that can boost the economy? Wealthy people invest much of their extra income in stocks, bonds and other financial instruments. This money goes largely to those people and institutions that are selling the investments not to businesses for increased output. Instead of aiding the economy, this money helped support the economic bubbles



that burst in 2008 and created economic misery for so many non-rich.

Trickle down is an inefficient and morally bankrupt economic policy with nine lives. After all these decades there is still little evidence that it helps our economy.

The next time you complain about the American government's poor performance in areas that affect you (like food inspections, road repairs or work place safety) or worry about cuts in medical services and Social Security, keep the trickle in mind. And you might even want to ask those representing you in Congress to consider tax reform as an essential part of dealing with our economic and debt troubles.

Bob Rundle
6-18-11

**SAGE is the Institute for Spirituality and Global Economics, one of the institutes of the Peacebuilding Institute. You can find us on the web at http://www.peacebuildinginstitute.org/global_economics/spiritualityglobaleconomics.htm*

International Activists Join Afghan Youth in Solidarity Delegation

CHICAGO, IL- From July 20th to August 15th, a group of seven U.S. peace activists will visit Afghanistan for the purpose of better understanding the consequences of U.S. warfare as experienced by Afghan civilians. In Kabul, they will meet with the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers, a group of young people who have steadily campaigned on behalf of rebuilding Afghanistan and ending the war.

Delegation participants will continue building relationships in Afghanistan that were initiated through four previous Voices delegations, dating back to May of 2010. They are particularly interested in meeting with people who have been

displaced, injured or bereaved over the past decades of war. The delegation's itinerary will include visits with health care professionals, teachers, students, human rights workers, lawyers, and representatives of various NGOs working in Kabul.

Aware that 65% of Afghanistan's population is under 25 years of age, the delegation wants to learn from young people about their experiences and expectations. They will also participate in a Skype phone call, on July 21, 2011, with young people from other parts of the world.

To learn more about Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers, visit www.ourjourneytosmile.com; Facebook: YouthPeaceVolunteers; Twitter: Livewithoutwars

An excerpt from Archbishop Desmond Tutu's most recent book -- "[God Is Not A Christian](#)" -- posted on [the Huffington Post](#).

All Are God's Children: On Including Gays and Lesbians in the Church and Society

by Archbishop Desmond Tutu

A student once asked me, If I could have one wish granted to reverse an injustice, what would it be? I had to ask for two. One is for world leaders to forgive the debts of developing nations which hold them in such thrall. The other is for the world to end the persecution of people because of their sexual orientation, which is every bit as unjust as that crime against humanity, apartheid.

This is a matter of ordinary justice. We struggled against apartheid in South Africa, supported by people the world over, because black people were being blamed and made to suffer for something we could do nothing about -- our very skin. It is the same with sexual orientation. It is a given. I could

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ISSN 2160-3928

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not have fought against the discrimination of apartheid and not also fight against the discrimination that homosexuals endure, even in our churches and faith groups.

I am proud that in South Africa, when we won the chance to build our own new constitution, the human rights of all have been explicitly enshrined in our laws. My hope is that one day this will be the case all over the world, and that all will have equal rights. For me this struggle is a seamless robe. Opposing apartheid was a matter of justice. Opposing discrimination against women is a matter of justice. Opposing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is a matter of justice.

It is also a matter of love. Every human being is precious. We are all -- all of us -- part of God's family. We all must be allowed to love each other with honor. Yet all over the world, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are persecuted. We treat them as pariahs and push them outside our communities. We make them doubt that they too are children of God. This must be nearly the ultimate blasphemy. We blame them for what they are.

Churches say that the expression of love in a heterosexual monogamous relationship includes the physical -- the touching, embracing, kissing, the genital act; the totality of our love makes each of us grow to become increasingly godlike and compassionate. If this is so for the heterosexual, what earthly reasons have we to say that it is not the case with the homosexual?

The Jesus I worship is not likely to collaborate with those who vilify and persecute an already oppressed minority. I myself could not have opposed the injustice of penalizing people for something about which they could do nothing -- their race -- and then have kept quiet as women were being penalized for something they could do nothing about -- their gender; hence my support for the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate.

Equally, I cannot keep quiet while people are being penalized for something about which they can do nothing -- their sexuality. To discriminate against our sisters and brothers who are lesbian or gay on grounds of their sexual orientation for me is as totally unacceptable and unjust as apartheid ever was.

As we make God's love tangible through our work and witness this Pride Month, let's give thanks for the powerful, prophetic voice of +Desmond Tutu as he speaks truth to power in the Anglican Communion and gives hope to LGBT people on the margins throughout the world.

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Posted By Blogger to [Walking With Integrity](#) at 6/11/2011 01:38:00 PM

Some notes on Climate Change and Peace

[Amy Goodman](#) cites Bill McKibben in a [Truthdig report](#). McKibben is founder of the grass-roots climate-action organization [350.org](#). He's been speaking, writing and organizing globally to stop climate change for more than two decades. She asked him about the extreme weather/climate change connection, and he replied, "We're making the Earth a more dynamic and violent place. ... We're trapping more of the sun's energy in this narrow envelope of atmosphere, and that's now expressing itself in many ways. We don't know for sure that any particular tornado comes from climate change. There have always been tornadoes. We do know that we're seeing epic levels of thunderstorm activity, of flooding, of drought, of all the things that climatologists have been warning us about."

Christian Parenti presents an excellent analysis of the relationship between climate and violence in his book, [Tropic of Chaos](#). Parenti, an investigative

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ISSN 2160-3928

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journalist, outlines ways extreme weather is breeding banditry, humanitarian crisis, and state failure. He also reveals the unsettling presence of Western military forces and explains how they see opportunities in the crisis for open-ended global counterinsurgency.

Letters from Readers

From Joseph Lalropuia Fanai, a 1008 SPI Participant:

It is good that I can express my experience while visiting Knoxville in the Peace Memo 2008 June. It was really new things for whatever we've done. Having fellowship in different churches, sharing how we initiate peace and justice in our locality, in our country. That really helps my ministry at home.

Immediately after I left Knoxville I started peace consultation, peace seminar among the youth in Northeast India, all the youth gathered (representing) each tribe, each denomination, each community at Churachandpur, Manipur. I was a resource person there. From there on peace building gathering happens 6 monthly so to say.

Recent report I can give you is a remarkable one. It happened in India-Burma border along with Muslim communities, Budd communities, and Hindu communities, where ethnic violence in small town happening. But each community invited us to saturate their village. But it is difficult for me. OK, let us look forward on peace within the religious group too... have a good day. With love & peace.

Puia
India

“God invented war so that Americans would learn geography.” -- Mark Twain

Dears;

I would like to greet and present our request to you. We need collaboration with you, for more please you may pass through our website and see what we are doing in the area, we need support from you and partnership, if you may allow we may send the brochures and pictures with some magazines about what we are doing here in Eastern of D.R.Congo Thanks and God bless you.

Pastor Samuel Muderhwa, Coordinator
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Coming to PBS in October

This fall, on five consecutive Tuesdays beginning October 11, PBS will air nationwide *Women, War & Peace (WWP)*, a five-part investigation of the effects of war on women and the power of women to broker peace in areas in conflict. The series, produced by Abigail E. Disney, Pamela Hogan, and Gini Reticker, comprises five films about the experience of women in the war-torn countries of Afghanistan, Bosnia, Colombia, and Liberia, as well as an overview contextualizing the series as a whole. The award-winning film *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, focusing on the extraordinary story of women activists in Liberia who brought an end to that nation's bloody civil war and the despotic presidency of Charles Taylor, will receive its U.S. broadcast premiere as the episode of *Women, War & Peace* devoted to Liberia. More information about this groundbreaking and important set of documentary films can be found on

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the WWP website (www.pbs.org/wnet/women-war-and-peace/).

AWE, Anglican Women's Empowerment, is working with Fork Films to produce a companion discussion guide which can be used by churches. We hope to encourage church groups to watch the series and to host a 5 week study on issues related to faith, war and peace, and the role women play in peace building. Ideally the groups would watch the series on Tuesday night and meet on Wednesday or Thursday to debrief the film and use the study guide questions. We believe this would make a wonderful adult education piece for any church.

For more information, contact [Kim Robey](#), and tell her you read about it *The Peace Memo*.

THE SPARROW SINGS

July, 2011

I read in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel of July 1, 2011, that Lockheed Martin Corp. plans to cut 1,500 jobs because there is a possible cut in military spending. People complaining about government spending fail to look at the military corporations who exist primarily on the generosity of the taxpayers. Some 70% of Lockheed Martin's business is military contracts. It receives 1 out of every 14 dollars given to the military by taxpayers. From 1993 to 2010, Lockheed Martin spent \$17,837,780 lobbying Congress for more military contracts. In other words, it spent that amount of taxpayer money in order to get more taxpayer money. Last year, Lockheed Martin's profits were estimated to be around \$47 billion (Reuters), but it feels it cannot afford to keep 1,500 workers.

People forget that the bulk of tax money goes to the military and its partner corporations (War Resisters League). If you include spending for the invasions of Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Libya,

Somalia, etc. in 2011 military spending accounted for more than 58% of all federal discretionary spending and even more if the interest on the federal debt that is related to military spending were added. In the last ten years, the government has spent more than \$7.6 TRILLION on military and homeland security. (National Priorities Project) In 2009, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found cost overruns of almost \$300 billion in nearly 70% of the Pentagon's 96 major weapons. The Pentagon does not really know the full extent of the waste of tax money since there has not been a complete audit of the Pentagon in more than fifteen years.

According to the research project, "Costs of War," by Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies, the final bill for the recent U.S. wars will cost taxpayers at least \$3.7 TRILLION and could reach as high as \$4.4 TRILLION. The U.S. military cannot account for as much as \$2.3 TRILLION received in the past (Donald Rumsfeld). Now we find that over \$6 billion sent by plane into Afghanistan is now missing, \$2.6 billion was given to the Taliban for transportation and \$34 billion was wasted on service contracts to 200,000 private companies in Afghanistan. Recently, the House easily passed a \$649 billion defense ("offense") bill, boosting the Pentagon budget by \$17 billion. If Congress is serious about balancing the budget it might look at wasteful and destructive government funding of the military industrial complex rather than depriving those in the greatest need of the basics of life.

--Don Timmerman

The oil spills continue in the U.S. as well as other countries. A huge oil spill off the Chinese coast has now contaminated an area around 6 times the size of Singapore. ConocoPhillips Co. of the U.S.A. operates the Chinese oil giant CNOOC. Some 1,650 square miles are covered with oil.

--AgenceFrance-Presse, 7/16/11

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Corporate welfare continues as usual. Hundreds of billions of dollars each year are doled out to corporations. Twelve major corporations, like Honeywell, Verizon, and General Electric made \$167 billion in profit, paid zero tax, and got \$2.5 billion back from the Treasury.

--The Citizens for Tax Justice

NOTES FROM 21ST STREET: It is a warm July morning. The cicadas are buzzing the news of a hot afternoon to come. We have had rain, glorious rain, for the last few days. The earth has turned a richer green. I feel blessed by the gift of rain. There is a wonderful earthy, moistness in the air. I also feel a sense of guilt because Texas, Oklahoma and other states are suffering a severe drought. Somalia has suffered such a long drought that there is a terrible famine in the country. Thousands of people are dying, mostly children.

I ponder what can be done. I can live more simply. I can eat food that is gentle on the earth and does not

deprive others. I can ask our government to use our military planes to deliver food to those in need instead of bombs to Afghanistan and other countries. Since we live below the poverty line, we do not have money, but I can ask those that do have resources to send money to Oxfam or other organizations that help people in need. I know these few things are not enough to alleviate all the suffering. I will pray also, and ask our Creator to do what we are not able to do. I will try to take time each day to appreciate the beauty and blessings that surround me. The rich green of the trees, grass, the vegetables and the flowers are not to be taken for granted. May we all do what we can so that all people of the world will be able to experience the richness of our mother earth.

Peace, Roberta
don2roberta@yahoo.com

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

When	Who	What	Where	Details
August 14 2:00 PM	PIET	Regular meeting	Church of the Savior 934 Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville, TN	Are you interested in working for peace in Greater Knoxville? Join us! Meetings usually last only one hour.
PUT	YOUR	MEETING	ANNOUNCEMENT	HERE!