



# AS A STEP FORWARD IN HUMAN EVOLUTION ENVISION THAT PEACE, NOT WAR IS INEVITABLE

BY ARTHUR HONEYMAN

By nature and disposition, I am anything but a pacifist. I am strongwilled, assertive and otherwise stubborn. It has been in recognition of my less than peaceful character that I have consistently expressed doubt about the viability of global peace even though I have long protested all national buildup, aggression (especially invasion) and strongarm tactics on the part of the United States and other powers in the industrialized world. It was this skepticism on my part that led me to writing articles in which I expressed a bleak view of globally oriented peace endeavors as being totally unrealistic. I suggested in those articles that war is inevitable and that the peace movement would do far better to advocate tribalism instead of global understanding. Let small tribes fight among themselves. They would be too small to destroy the planet. I know now that I was wrong.

As of late I have been undergoing a somewhat dramatic transformation in my attitude about the possibilities of attaining eventual peace on earth (*where else?*). Although I remain an atheist bowed in awe at the vast wonders of all existence, it occurs to me that this transformation is not unlike the alleged religious conversion of Saul which compelled him to take on the responsibility of doing some little thing for humanity. As if I am being sucked into a vacuum, I am willingly making an all-out commitment to the promotion of world peace. In short, I am suddenly a fanatic.

The Judeo/Christian culture in which the heritages of George Bush, Saddam Hussein (for Islam is as Judeo/Christian as Christianity and Judaism), myself and hundreds of millions — if not billions — of citizens the world over are mutually ingrained with the labyrinthine notion that war is inevitable because of the cultural emphasis placed on the individual's value as opposed to the value of the whole (which includes the environment and extends infinitely into realms beyond our fathoming). This has been a boon to humanity in countless ways, but it has also become a curse. While individuals have explored through human-made science avenues dimensions and technologies which have saved and enhanced lives immeasurably (not the least of which is mine), this same science has also destroyed much of our instinctive awareness of our life source and our relationship to it. The messiah and the laboratory mice have stolen into the night, taking with them our commonality with the universe.

I am not a theologian or a philosopher, only a dabbler in soul searching and thought exploration. But if I recall and under-

stand correctly from my academic probes into both philosophical and religious realms of cosmic (*causemic?*) exploration, the Hebrew concept "Yahweh" is/was actually an admittedly feeble attempt to express (rather than explain/explicate) an experience of awareness of not solely the unknown but our awesome relationship with all that exists as well. Unfortunately, the very expression of the thought effectively isolated the concept, put walls around it, and eventually transformed the hitherto unutterable *Yahweh* into *Jehovah* the discernible god of Israel. So much for the value of intrinsic good in the power of linguistic expression and/or the written word. More accurately, it is not the Judeo/Christian-Greco/Roman culture I am talking about; rather it is ironically the very hybridness of that culture that has erected walls of division between acquired/learned knowledge and experienced/instinctive awareness of what I consider the umbilical connection to the life source and all of existence.

In an era when knowledge of the cosmos is expanding with incredible rapidity, we appear to be no closer to unraveling the secrets of the universe than we were thousands of years ago. Likewise, in an era when technology makes it possible to communicate with each other from the opposite side of the globe merely by pushing the right buttons before transmitting or intermetting our words and voices anywhere on the planet virtually instantaneously, the same technology and all its power is revealed to us in chaos and obliteration — which metaphors apocalyptic visions of a self-proclaimed messiah "whose father art in heaven." This is the same heaven where Christians, Jews and Moslems expect to "dwell in the house of the Lord" after the annihilation which the 'Good Book' predicted three millennia ago. Perhaps it is such beliefs — the notion that the faithful and anointed are destined to eternal paradise after life — that induces people to be oblivious to their relationship with their "brethren" around the world; but I am inclined to believe that the opposite is the case — that the act of losing touch with the fundamental relationship with all existence induces these lonely individuals to seek solace in imaginary extra-celestial paradise.

But whichever is the case, the result seems that humanity is determined to annihilate everything that stands in the way of its supremacy even though it would mean self-destruction. Humanity virtually puts this goal into words every time someone espouses the belief war is inevitable.

But, lest it be suggested I have naively forgotten that wars have been on every continent since the dawn of human existence and that no civilization, culture, nation or religion is not guilty of engaging in and/or somehow promoting war at some point in history, this factor looms inescapably evident

in my anamnesis. The gods of Buddhists, Hindus, Pagans, Pantheists, Shintoists, Taoists, etc., have long accompanied fierce warriors into battle and on to conquest and often brutal oppression. History also shows us that more civilized nations are sometimes more cruelly repressive than primitive ones. But I believe I am not alone in my observation that even the unconscionable assault on Pearl Harbor was not nearly as devastating or inhumane as the atom bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Although it may seem so, my purpose here is not to accuse or condemn. Rather, I am attempting to make and substantiate the argument that sophisticated civilization and its technology along with its zealous monotheism has inadvertently divorced itself from the core of existence in an effort to achieve political, social and spiritual supremacy. It so happens that the West achieved modern technological superiority prior to the East (which at that time was at peace and committed to cultural isolation); scientific 18th century Westerners along with their *monogod* (which oddly was also a *trigod*) were restless and somewhat perplexed and resentful of the notion that the path to peace and nirvana is through accepting one's relationship with the forces of nature.

And so I conjecture that Judeo/Christian-Greco/Roman culture and its quest for the conquest of nature has resulted in near-total disregard for the phenomenon of existence and all its variations. For example, when Europeans arrived in North America in the colonial era of the 17th and early 18th centuries, they may have been initially enchanted with what they perceived as the Garden of Eden innocence of the natives and their harmonious relationship with their natural surroundings — their manifest acceptance of harsh conditions as well as deeply appreciative reverence for the bounty of the land, a reverence so profound and personal they sought to waste nothing and to immediately replace that which they borrowed from the earth.

Unlike the 10th and/or 11th century Viking colonists whose pagan beliefs may have been fierce and uncompromising but were also inescapably interrelated with the forces of nature in a personal and immediate sense, these Christian Europeans and byproducts of classical science had progressed so far from the *Book of Genesis* that they forgot its message about innocence and temptation. Armed with the ideals and powers of religious zeal and the knowledge and skills of classical analysis, these refugees from tyranny and persecution fervently blinded themselves to the accommodating lands on this continent, its warm native societies and their favorable relationship with their environment. Instead, what the European newcomers saw was



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681 Main Street, Waltham, MA 02451 • Tele: (781) 894-1179 • Fax: (781) 894-0279  
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