

Peace by Peaceful Means

Building Peace Through Harmonious Diversity THE SECURITY APPROACH AND THE PEACE APPROACH

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WHAT COULD PEACE BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND AL QAEDA/IRAQ LOOK LIKE?

Some Points for Presidential Candidates to Consider

Two Articles by Johan Galtung, Director TRANSCEND - A Network for Peace and Development
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Building Peace Through Harmonious Diversity

THE SECURITY APPROACH AND THE PEACE APPROACH

Some Cultural Factors Conditioning the Choice

World Culture Open, UN Meeting Room 1, NYC, 9/10 2004

Panel: Global Governance, Peacemaking and Social Harmony

By Johan Galtung, Dr hc mult, Professor of Peace Studies

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends of Peace,

"Building Peace Through Harmonious Diversity" is a marvelous title, combining three words of honor; peace, harmony, diversity. "Peace", in my view, is another word for equality, equity, equal rights/dignity, symmetry, reciprocity, diversity/symbiosis etc; "harmony" is creative cooperation, beyond absence of violence; "diversity" celebrates our manifold, within peace and harmony. The Millennium Question is how to obtain all three when all over there is the opposite: direct, structural and cultural violence.

Two discourses about coping with violence compete for our attention: the security discourse and the peace discourse. They address the same concern but are almost diametrically opposed.

The Security Approach is based on four components:

- [1] *An Evil Party, with strong capability and evil intention;*
- [2] *A Clear and Present Danger of Violence, real or potential;*
- [3] *Strength, to defeat or deter the evil party, in turn producing*
- [4] *Security, which is also the best approach to "peace".*

The approach works when evil/strong parties are weakened through defeat or deterrence, and/or converted to become good.

The Peace Approach is also based on four components:

- [1] *A Conflict, which has not been resolved/transformed;*
- [2] *A Danger of Violence to "settle the conflict";*
- [3] *Conflict Transformation, empathic-creative-nonviolent, producing*
- [4] *Peace, which is the best approach to "security".*

The approach works through acceptable/sustainable outcomes.

The security approach presupposes superior strength (of whatever kind, Sun Tzu or Clausewitz), which implies inequality.

The peace approach presupposes a conflict outcome acceptable to all parties and sustainable, which implies equality.

What would favor a preference for the security approach?

[1] A culture of dualism/manicheism/Armageddon, in other words a hard, absolutist, reading of the abrahamic religions. The security approach is a secular version of Good/God/Christ vs Evil/Satan/Anti-Christ, with an Armageddon type battle as the final arbiter.

[2] Construction of the Other as evil, with no legitimate goal, driven by lust, greed or envy, somebody with whom one would never negotiate since there is no grievance and no basis for any solution; only for extermination/crushing, containment or at best conversion.

[3] The absence of "diversity with equality" as category, the Columbus fallacy (Todorov). There is an underlying social code of verticality, not horizontality, to be implemented, based on ascribed categories like gender, generation, race, class/caste, nation, state.

[4] A preference for a structure of inequality, in other words a hard, Hobbesian, reading of the "social order". The expression "the dangerous classes (genders/generations/races/nations/states)" is an updating of evil/Satan with "witch"-burning as a prelude to the massive genocide of other races and nations during modernity.

[5] Monopoly on the "ultima ratio regis/regnum", in other words the concentration of the means of coercion in the hands of the state (or community of states) defined through that monopoly (Weber), giving legitimacy to upholding "law and order" by force. States and communities of states (like the EU) will work out lists of threats.

[6] "To He Who Has a Hammer the World Looks Like a Nail", in other words the self-propelling force of a security apparatus, with secret services to assess capability (how strong) and motivation (how evil), and cloak-and-dagger operations to "nip it in the bud" through extra-judicial execution, etc., police operations to round up the suspects, overwhelming force to defeat and thereby deter.

And what would favor a preference for the peace approach?

[1] A culture of unity of human beings, in other words a soft reading of abrahamic and African (ubuntu) religions, mainstream readings of hinduism/buddhism and daoism, of women with a focus on compassion, of the secularism of liberte, egalite, fraternite. There is no Armageddon as final arbiter, but the ever-lasting effort of human beings to improve, individually and collectively.

[2] "There is that of God in everybody", meaning a legitimate goal in every party, however violent and repulsive. The way of identifying valid goals is by mutual inquiry, asking; in other words dialogue, and then using that as a basis for togetherness.

[3] Diversity as a source of mutual enrichment presupposes curiosity, respect, dialogue, for mutual exploration and learning. Reciprocity and symmetry have to be extended to any other party within the limits of reasonable legitimacy as defined by legality, human rights and basic human needs. Diversity with inequality is mutual impoverishment, and so is equality with uniformity.

[4] A preference for a structure of equality. Thus, "security" is located to the right politically and "peace" to the left. Peace is a revolutionary ("equality") proposition. Democracy and human rights are already great equalizers. Reciprocity is the norm. If you want peace, then give to others whatever they want that you also want.

[5] A culture and practice of nonviolent countervailing power, based on a strong identity, high level of self-reliance and much courage, to counter brainwashing, bribery and threats.

[6] A culture and practice of conflict transformation, not only for specialists, more like hygiene and healthy life styles for everybody, including ability to identify valid goals in all parties, bridge creatively the contradictions between valid goals, and build peace.

We are dealing with two approaches in conflict. The peace approach is better, but the security approach is sometimes needed.

The peace argument against the security approach is strong: it serves like a bandage over a festering wound that will reproduce the fever and other symptoms. An untransformed conflict will reproduce violence, sooner or later. Not going to the roots, solving the issues leads to a spiral of violence and counter-violence. Thus, only in an equitable Middle East Community, like the European Community, not in an unequal Two States formula, will Israel find security.

The security argument against the peace approach is also strong: not all parties are driven by legitimate grievances, some are driven by illegitimate greed. The latter have to be stopped before they destroy us all. The day after a peaceful conflict "transformation" the greedy will get at everybody's throat. Thus, only within secure borders/walls will Israel find peace.

To which the peace approach people counter, that is why we emphasize legitimacy. There is much illegitimacy between people and states. But there are also legitimate grievances, and the task is to bridge them. For peace to prevail focus only on legitimate goals.

The first list of factors determining the choice of approach is incompatible and the second compatible with peace, harmony and diversity as it adds up to a peace culture. But illegitimate goals like slavery exist, so do illegitimate means like intervention to bolster unequal social and world orders. Hence the need to transcend, to get a both-and, with soft strength, a peaceful security approach that does not produce even more violence. One such formula would be: peacekeeping by very large numbers, with defensive weapons, but equally trained in police methods, nonviolence and mediation, with at least 50% women, and the adequate cultural underpinning.

Only the UN combines world authority and world culture. Go ahead, UN!

WHAT COULD PEACE BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND AL QAEDA/IRAQ LOOK LIKE?

Some Points for Presidential Candidates to Consider

Peace University, NYC, 9/11 2004

By Johan Galtung, Dr hc mult, Professor of Peace Studies

Friends,

let us start by sharing a moment of silence, sorrow and reflection on the avoidable loss of lives three years ago, and a few hundred meters away here in New York City, and in Washington DC, in Afghanistan and every day in Iraq. Thank you.

The Final report of the national commission on terrorist attacks upon the United States, The 9/11 Commission Report, 567 pages, suffers from two intellectual flaws so serious that the life expectancy of the Report will be very limited; and not only because of the numerous questions left unanswered. To wit:

[1] The Commission focuses only on acts of omission, not on US acts of commission. The act of commission was the attack, which could have been avoided were it not for what the USA had omitted to do (p. 347). This victim perspective generates a flow of recommendations (pp. 361-428) about what has to be done. Nothing is said about US acts of commission, like about 70 interventions around the world since 1945 with 12-16 millions killed, to be followed by recommendations about what not to do.

[2] The Commission, works, writes and thinks only inside a security discourse of danger from an evil/strong party-violence- superior strength-security and never inside a peace discourse of untransformed conflict-violence-conflict transformation-peace. By constructing Other as merely evil there is no room for dialogue. Hence the singleminded, fatal, focus on US strength.

Strength has two meanings: victory and invulnerability. But victory may be elusive because violence and war produce counter-violence and war. And invulnerability may produce fascism.

For a peace approach for Washington-Iraq, here is a draft proposal for a whole page ad in a leading US newspaper from "concerned Norwegian citizens and organizations":

Dear Candidates for the US Presidency, Mr Bush, Mr Kerry -

You make decisions affecting the whole world, but having no right to vote in US elections we have to address you this way.

Four out of five Norwegians oppose the USA-led war in Iraq. But many more of us love the USA for its strength, creativity and generosity. We ask for your strength to change a flawed and failed policy in Iraq and initiate a process of Truth and Reconciliation. We ask for your creativity to apologize for an illegal war and for having misled your allies. We ask for your generosity to compensate for the killing and damage done, including the looting and the trauma inflicted by torture. We hope for a Conference for Security in Cooperation in the Middle East, modeled on the Helsinki conference 1973-75, with Iraq, Kurdistan and Israel-Palestine on the agenda.

Mr Bush, Mr Kerry: Do this, and the USA will be a light shining upon the nations. Your democracy will be imitated.

Terrorism will start melting. The hands of the terrorists will be stayed. Continue your present policy, and the USA will be more resisted than ever. And terrorism will blossom.

Dear Mr Bush, dear Mr Kerry: The choice is yours.

A policy like that would of course be accompanied by the reduction of the US Iraq Embassy to reasonable proportions, the withdrawal of John Negroponte to early retirement and a massive people-to-people reconciliation and reconstruction, perhaps with more US people than ever in Iraq, but with no Pentagon-CIA ties.

Many would say that the likelihood of this is low. But so did people say before the end of the Cold War in 1989 and of apartheid in South Africa in 1994. Miracles happen, born in our hearts and minds, springing forth in our words and deeds.

Let us try the same for Washington-Al Qaeda, with 9/11 three years ago to the day, and less than a mile away. In my interpretation it was a theological-judicial execution of two buildings, in public space, for the sins of those buildings against Alla'h. Totally unjustifiable. But not inexplicable.

Dear Mr Bush, dear Mr Kerry -

Regardless of who wins the coming election, let one thing be crystal clear: you have no right whatsoever to keep the world hostage to your inability to handle the conflict with Al Qaeda.

As President Bush said in an unguarded moment: the war on terrorism cannot be won. True. If you launch a war don't be surprised if Other fights back. The choice of arms, arenas and targets will be theirs, not yours. They have not exhausted their arsenals; like labor strikes by Muslim immigrants, worldwide boycott of US consumer, capital and financial products, worldwide conversion to Islam. The USA, barring nuclear strikes, may be close to exhaustion while also taking on ever more fascist traits.

You are up against potentially 1,3 billion Muslims, more cohesive than the same number of Christians who divided Muslims into 56 countries. No Muslim can rival President Bush in unifying Islam from Casablanca to Mindanao; like no bigot can rival Prime Minister Sharon in producing anti-zionism.

Colin Powell's program shortly after 9/11 for Al Qaeda: "we shall identify them and crush them", has led to the exact opposite. They identify more than ever with their cause and they multiply briskly. And like the Arabs they have two hidden arms: [1] they win more by accumulating honor than by military victory [2] their time perspective is centuries, the US at most years.

The USA being pragmatic it is important to show that the security approach of identifying and crushing will not work. On the other

hand, there is the analysis by "Anonymous" (Michael Scheuer, Imperial Hubris) seeing Al Qaeda as focussed and clear: against the US support of Israel, repressive Muslim regimes, Russian, Chinese and Indian repression of Muslims, for withdrawal of US troops from the Arab Peninsula, Afghanistan, Iraq and Arab countries, return of Muslim energy sources to their peoples.

So, here is a ten point low cost alternative to eternal war:

[1] Recognize and acknowledge Cause No. 1 of 9/11: US word wide economic penetration and military intervention, stimulating chains of retaliation, "blow-back" in CIA jargon (Chalmers Johnson).

[2] Recognize and acknowledge Cause No. 2 of 9/11: the lack of respect for Islam in general and wahhabism, the Saudi state religion, in particular, with a different view of economic life.

[3] Following from [1]: scale down military and economic presence in Muslim countries, mindful of Article 1 of the UN Convention of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

[4] Following from [2]: increase the level of knowledge of religions by having key media run programs on Islam every Friday, Judaism and other religions every Saturday and on Christianity every Sunday, with respectful, searching dialogue.

[5] Use the instrument of TV and a media(tor) genius like Larry King for dialogues on creative co-existence.

[6] Try to identify the major goals of the parties, like free trade and elections for Washington, and respect for Islam and political autonomy for Al Qaeda. Dialogues on Islam and human rights, and on US market and democracy and basic human needs.

[7] Stimulate Islam-Christianity dialogue groups all over, high and low, with a view to bridging the gaps for sustainable peace.

[8] Drop the term "terrorist"; what happens is atrocious post- modern warfare targeting civilians, by states and non-states, making peace-making/building/keeping more necessary than ever.

[9] Have lower level secret negotiations about stopping violence in return for withdrawal, and about reconciliation.

[10] Open for the possibility of combining Western and Islamic ideas of the economy, and norms of conduct in general.