WAGING PEACE SERIES

As far as is known, the term "Waging Peace" originated with Warren Wells, late husband of Ethel Wells of Santa Barbara, in a letter to President Eisenhower. It was a long-standing practice of Mr. Wells to keep in close touch with key national figures and give them his views on peace issues as well as other vital matters. This series is dedicated both as a memorial to him and in gratitude to Mrs. Wells for her continued efforts in this cause.

Just as peace is more than the absence of war, waging peace is more than supporting arms reductions. In addition, it embraces positive steps toward genuine harmony. In this series the Foundation publishes and distributes short booklets stressing ideas for attaining peace. Concepts expressed will include views of many authorities, and will not necessarily be those of the Foundation.

Suggestions for topics and your reactions to this issue are welcome. Booklets in this series are available from the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

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A NONVIOLENT POLITICAL AGENDA FOR A MORE HUMANE WORLD

by

Mairead Corrigan Maguire

Mairead Corrigan Maguire receiving the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's 1992 Distinguished Peace Leadership Award, June 6, 1992, Santa Barbara, California. Photo © James King.

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WAGING PEACE SERIES

Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

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INTRODUCTION*

by David Krieger

It is not difficult to be for peace in the abstract. Most people are. Even the U.S. Air Force proclaims, with Orwellian overtones, that "peace is our profession," and calls its MX missiles "peacekeepers." But for most people, being for peace has its limits, and often those limits are shaped and molded by government policy. I have often wondered at the surprising coincidence that when two countries or factions engage in a war (which is the term we use for organized mass murder), nearly everyone from side A believes that their cause is just while nearly everyone from side B believes the same about their cause.

There are very few among us who are steadfast and unbending in their commitment to peace and nonviolence, and thank goodness for them. They set the standard for humankind. They are the prophets of what can be, of what must be if we are to survive in the Nuclear Age. I believe that we honor such a person tonight, a leader who shows us by her life example that peace is possible. Her life resonates with the words of A.J. Muste who admonished, "There is no way to peace; peace is the way."

I believe that the fundamental traits for achieving peace — in addition to justice — are compassion, commitment and community. Compassion implies the ability to identify with others, even those labeled "enemies." Compassion is rooted in love and manifested in loving deeds. Commitment implies that one's dedication to achieving a goal is not transitory, and that one is willing to work to attain a desired end. There is no higher calling than a commitment to peace, which is a commitment to ending the senseless killing and maiming of fellow human beings. Community is ideally a fellowship working in common purpose. To be part of a community that shares values and purpose is to enrich one's life and expand one's outreach.

Our honoree's very being reflects her compassion and love for her family, her community and her fellow human beings. She advises her young son Luke in a moving open letter, "Don't be afraid to risk loving and remember that, as the little rosebud needed the water to live, so much more you and I, and all the people of the world need to love and be loved. Know that 'love'

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* *Remarks upon presentation of the Foundation's 1992 Distinguished Peace Leadership Award to Mairead Corrigan Maguire*

is the greatest gift you personally can give to another fellow traveller along the 'thorny' path of life."

Mairead's commitment grew from a tragic incident in Belfast in which three of her sister's children were senselessly killed when they were struck by an IRA gunman's getaway car after the driver was shot by British troops. This tragedy occurred on August 10, 1976. Since then Mairead has been an articulate and eloquent voice for peace in Northern Ireland and throughout the world.

Mairead is a co-founder of the Community of the Peace People in Northern Ireland. This is a community that works for peace. They have established an action program to promote nonviolent solutions to community problems and to encourage dialogue and cooperative action. The Community of the Peace People have hands-on programs to build peace in the midst of the sectarian violence which has claimed 3000 lives since 1968.

The concept of a Peace Community is an important one. We need community to realize our goals — to be successful in attaining and maintaining peace. We must work to enlarge this community of Peace People so that we do not feel isolated or alone in our efforts for peace and in order that we not become alienated or angered to the point of ineffectiveness.

In recognition of her work for peace in Northern Ireland, Mairead was awarded an honorary doctorate from Yale and a Norwegian People's Prize in 1976. The following year she received a Nobel Peace Prize. She was a special honoree of the United Nations Women of Achievement Program in 1978. She has travelled widely and received numerous other awards.

I believe that Mairead has looked deeply into the human heart, her own and others. As a woman, as a mother, as a decent, loving and compassionate human being, she offers this advice to her son Luke:

> In your life, Luke, pray to be a 'just' man. Your life is precious and sacred, Luke, and your first right as a human being is your right to life. So as you would ask natural justice of your fellow travellers in respecting your right to life, then you too must give 'justice' and respect every person's right to life. This means, my little son, that you must never kill another human being.
>
> It will not be easy for you to refuse to kill. Sadly, we live in a world where those who refuse to kill and choose to live nonviolent lives are looked upon as naive or as cowards. Yes, it will take all of your courage to walk unarmed and to refuse to hate and kill, in a world which insists that you must have enemies and be prepared to kill them before they kill you.
>
> Stand tall and strong, armed only with love, dear Luke, and refuse to hate. Only love can bring down the barriers of hate and enmity between people and nations. Hate and weapons only fuel the fear and bring closer the day of war.
>
> Let no one plant in your heart the false seed of pride in any country's flag, a seed that produces the flower of nationalism which grows so wildly, trampling and killing all life around it. Remember always, Luke, people are more important than countries.

If every mother could instill this message in her children, wars would be no more. It would not be possible for the old men that sit safely in government offices to sacrifice young men on the altar of war. The young men and women would understand what was happening and would refuse to kill.

Mairead is an Ambassador of Peace, a Plenipotentiary of Humanity. We welcome you to our city, to our community. It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's 1992 Distinguished Peace Leadership Award.

Declaration of the Peace People

We have a simple message for the world from this Movement for Peace.

We want to live and love and build a just and peaceful society.

We want for our children, as we want for ourselves, our lives at home, at work and at play, to be lives of joy and peace.

We recognize that to build such a life demands of all of us dedication, hard work and courage.

We recognize that there are many problems in our society which are a source of conflict and violence.

We recognize that every bullet fired and every exploding bomb makes that work more difficult.

We reject the use of the bomb and the bullet and all the techniques of violence.

We dedicate ourselves to working with our neighbors, near and far, day in and day out, to building that peaceful society in which the tragedies we have known are a bad memory and a continuing warning.

A NONVIOLENT POLITICAL AGENDA FOR A MORE HUMANE WORLD

by Mairead Corrigan Maguire

Sometime ago I was speaking to a professor of psychiatry about world peace. He told me he believed that scientists in the world community know the problems that humanity is faced with, such as the environment, poverty, etc., and that in many cases, solutions to these problems already exist. He believed much of the intellectual analysis has been done on these problems, and what is needed now is to be able to touch people's hearts and create the confidence and collective will of the people of the world to change things.

I am convinced there is much in what he says. There is a growing world recognition and consensus that war and militarism, environmental problems, poverty, social injustice, human rights violations, and lack of real democracy are urgent problems facing us all. However, these problems can be solved if the "political will" can be created. They can be solved, but it will take much money and the application of our finest minds and talents committed to the challenge. No one country can do the job alone. We need international cooperation. The money can be made available if the will exists both in the people of the world and their governments. I believe that the will of ordinary people to do something to deal with these problems already exists, but it is not yet being reflected in the policies of their governments. Many of the world's governments have actually cut military budgets. Yet, we all know that if money was made available from each country's military budget and diverted into appropriate United Nations' institutions, millions of lives could be saved immediately, and the money could go a long way toward solving other problems.

There is nothing I have said so far that each of us does not know in our hearts to be true. So I have to ask myself, "Am I only wasting paper in saying all this?" If so, then there goes another tree to provide me with my paper, a tree for which I am responsible. I know I must take responsibility for every act I do, which in turn affects others and the planet.

Taking responsibility for our own actions may be the greatest contribution we can all make toward solving these problems, and is surely part of the process of beginning to create what Martin Luther King, Jr. called "the beloved community." Can you imagine how different things could have been in Hitler's Germany had people taken *personal* responsibility for their actions?

This thought came back to me very strongly a few years ago when I made a pilgrimage to Auschwitz Concentration Camp, in Poland. It was the most horrible place I have ever entered. I walked around weeping and all the while silently asking myself, "How could human beings do this to fellow human beings?"

In one of the gas chambers, a rabbi and a priest led our small group in prayer. During the prayer, local church bells rang out. I asked a companion about the bells. He explained that they were the bells of the local Catholic church for Sunday Mass. He went on to say that this torture camp could not have operated without the help of the local Catholics, who presumably serviced and worked in the camps, and went to church on Sunday.

I left Auschwitz with the utter conviction that we must uphold human life and rights and each work passionately for justice. We must learn from the horrors of the past — we must not repeat them.

Several years later during a visit to Jerusalem, I was deeply saddened to witness the bitter conflict between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. I am convinced that the only way forward for the Palestinian and Israeli peoples is one based on a dialogue of trust and respect for each other's human rights and the right of each to their own homeland. To help this process each of us needs to take personal responsibility for its success and to live out the spirit of nonviolence.

When I speak to people about my belief that we need to live out and teach active nonviolence at every level of society, people often ask, "Ah! But what about Hitler?" They are right to ask this question, but it is important to bear in mind that the death of Hitler did not mean the death of fascism. We must remember, too, that Hitler was only one man. It was thousands of people taking on the "spirit" of Hitler — hate, cruelty, etc.— that made Auschwitz possible. Had each person taken responsibility for his or her own actions, and not merely said, "It was for my country, I was only following orders, etc.," things would have been very different. Of course, some were afraid for themselves and their families, but we must strive to overcome fear with courage and to do what our hearts tell us to be right.

The personal need to inform our conscience, and to do what our conscience tells us to be right, is important for our spiritual and physical wholeness, and for the wholeness of others and of our planet. The making of weapons of destruction, even if one is only very slightly involved in the process, is participating in the death of fellow human beings and the

destruction of the environment. These weapons are killing people without ever having been fired since the money involved to build them could be feeding the hungry.

The nuclear Trident submarines are polluting the seas and destroying the oceans which we need for our very lives, and putting the safety of all of us daily at risk. Everyone remembers Chernobyl, but it is not generally known that there have been many accidents involving nuclear material over America (i.e., airplane crashes or accidental dropping of bombs). Independent critics say there have been 125 fires and explosions at nuclear production sites.[1] Between 1945 and 1980 there were 691 nuclear weapons tests in the United States. In 1963 nuclear tests went underground. However, underground tests still send fallout by releasing radioactive clouds. Colonel Raymond Brim (formerly in charge for 10 years of monitoring leaks) said, "Americans were exposed to dangerous levels of radiation from safe underground tests all through the 1960's and 1970's and remain in danger today. Just as the risk of fallout continues, so do the conscious government efforts to cover up the situation."[2]

For forty years there existed the illusion that nuclear weapons were a mutual deterrent and provided stability between the United States and the Soviet Union. With the ending of the Cold War, many people are lulled into thinking the nuclear danger is over. However, we are now faced with possibly even greater danger, due to lack of control in new republics of the former U.S.S.R., and the potential spread of nuclear weapons to smaller nations eager for nuclear technology. (There are four former Soviet republics with nuclear weapons and eleven republics with tactical short-range weapons.)

Smaller nations will sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995 only if the big nuclear powers are willing to commit themselves to stop nuclear testing and begin nuclear disarmament. If the U.S. does not give a clear lead on this, the Non-Proliferation Treaty will not be renewed, and the nuclear arms race will escalate beyond control.

Some people will try to fool themselves that these nuclear weapons will not be used; but remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Remember also that it was not necessary to drop these nuclear bombs in order to end the war. The use of nuclear weapons was also threatened during the Vietnam war.

The late Father George Zabelka, who was a Catholic priest on Tinian Island in 1945, and blessed the crew going out to bomb the cities of Hiroshima

and Nagasaki, spent his later life working for world peace. He took personal responsibility for his part in the terrible crime against the Japanese people, and returned to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to ask forgiveness of the *hibakusha* (survivors). Several years ago, during a visit to Japan, I asked the forgiveness of the Japanese for the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I believe it is only by saying we are sorry for the wrong we have done that we can move forward in genuine reconciliation and healing.

Many of us were deeply inspired by the life of Father Zabelka as he walked around the world for peace, with the words "Hiroshima" and "Nagasaki" on each shoe. His message to all was "stop making war respectable." Father Zabelka followed in the footsteps of two other great prophets of nonviolence America has given the world — Martin Luther King, Jr. and Dorothy Day. Their lives inspired millions, as I believe Father Zabelka's life will continue to do even after his death on April 11, 1992. Up until the last days of his life he continued to hand out peace buttons, saying, "Do something for peace." In his early life, his army friends nicknamed him "General George," but he will live on in our hearts as our friend who was to us a gentle prophet of nonviolence.

With his words, he reminded us that we must put people above our flags and nationalism, and stop glorifying war and violence. We honor those who, in the past, believing it was the only way to resist evil, went to war. But now the human family has a new way — the way of nonviolence. So, in the future, when a dictator or a country's government takes a country to war, it will be considered a sign of weakness, impatience, and an inability to solve human conflict with imagination and vision. We people of the world need to have international laws that protect us from murderous and barbaric wars often carried out in our names, but *without our consent.* International laws could be established so the political leaders are held accountable for their war crimes.

It would be nice to speculate that perhaps by the time such legislation comes into place at the United Nations, it will already be obsolete, since war itself will have become obsolete. But who could have believed that, following the end of the Cold War and so much progress brought about by the nonviolence of the peoples of the former Eastern Bloc countries, that our leaders could have again taken us backwards to the war in the Persian Gulf. That war has left behind such suffering and tragedy. Words do not come to me to describe the barbarism of it all.

No one can be in any doubt today how the weapons of war have developed, from tanks to the use of thermonuclear, chemical, and bacterio-

logical arms. In an article in the Vatican newspaper, in July, 1992, tracing the development of warfare from early Christian times (when Christians did not kill and refused to be soldiers, following Christ's commandment to love their enemies) up to present-day weapons of mass destruction, the writer ends by saying, **"It is necessary to conclude that modern war is always immoral."**[3] This is a vitally important statement.

Down through history, many Christians have struggled in conscience with a choice between Jesus' nonviolent love of enemies and an allegedly "just war" theory. Father William Johnston, speaking about the "just war" theory in his book, **Letters to Contemplatives**, says, "It seems to me that we cannot have peace until we throw the old just war theology out of the window and search for something new based on the gospel." [4]

It seems to me also time for military workers and those who participate in the trafficking of death machines around the world to search their consciences regarding working on death machines. In August, 1981 Bishop Matthiesen said in Amarillo, "We urge individuals involved in the production and stockpiling of nuclear bombs to consider what they are doing, to resign from such activities, and to seek employment in peaceful pursuits."

Hitler's Germany could have been very different had individuals taken responsibility for their actions. In his book, **Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander**, Thomas Merton quotes the following excerpt from a letter written by I.A. Topf and Sons, manufacturer of heating equipment, to the Commandant of Auschwitz, concerning a new heating system:

> We acknowledge the receipt of your order for five triple furnaces, including two electric elevators for raising the corpses and one emergency elevator. For putting the bodies into the furnace, we suggest simply a metal fork moving on cylinders. For transporting the corpses, we suggest using light carts on wheels. We are submitting plans for our perfected cremation ovens, which operate with coal, and have hitherto given you full satisfaction. We guarantee their effectiveness as well as their durability. [5]

It must be remembered that Hitler was one man who required thousands of other people to help him in the genocide of six million Jews. Merton also quotes Heinrich Himmler as saying at Nuremburg, "Most of you know what it means when a hundred corpses are lying side by side, or 500, or 1,000, but

to have stuck it out, and at the same time, apart from understandable human weakness, to have remained decent fellows — this is what made us great." Merton's comment? "Decent, indeed, but damned."

I think it is also worth remembering what Thomas Merton wrote in **Faith and Violence** about death and genocide as big business:

> The theology of violence must not lose sight of the real problem of violence, which is not the individual with the revolver, but death and genocide as big business. This big business of death is all the more innocent because it involves a long chain of individuals, each of whom feels himself absolved from responsibility. We know, for instance, that Adolf Eichmann and others like him felt no guilt for their share in the extermination of the Jews. This feeling of justification was due partly to their absolute obedience to higher authority, and partly to the care and efficiency which they put into the details of their work. Since they dealt with numbers and not with people, since their job was one of bureaucratic organization, they apparently could easily forget the reality of what they were cooperating in. The real problems of modern war do not occur in the rare instances of hand-to-hand combat. The real problems of modern war occur in the remote planning centers of organized technological destruction. Modern technological mass murder is abstract, corporate, business-like, cool, free of guilt feelings, and therefore a thousand times more deadly and effective than the eruption of individual violence. It is this polite, massively organized, white-collar murder machine that threatens the world with destruction, and not the violence of a few desperate teenagers in the slums. But our antiquated Christian theology myopically focuses on individual violence and does not see this. Our antiquated moral theology shudders at the phantasm of a mugging or a killing on our doorstep. But it blesses and canonizes the antiseptic violence of corporately-organized murder, because corporate murder is respectable, efficient, clean, and above all, because corporate murder is profitable. [6]

In 1987, Nobel Laureate George Wald wrote,

> All kinds of reasons are put forward — military and political, internal and external, involving adversaries and allies. But I wish to speak of one that is rarely discussed directly: "Defense" is an enormous, lucrative and highly favored business in the U.S. It employs over three million workers, about a sixth of our entire industrial workforce.

> In 1985, procurement by the Department of Defense involved contracts totalling $150.7 billion. That includes all nuclear warhead research, development and production which is charged to the Department of Energy. In 1985, the McDonald Douglas Corporation, our No. 1 defense contractor, was awarded contracts of $8.9 billion; No. 2, General Dynamics, $7.4 billion; No. 3, Rockwell International, $6.3 billion; No. 4, General Electric, $5.9 billion; and No. 5, Boeing, $5.5 billion.
>
> Their profits on Pentagon contracts run to hundreds of millions of dollars annually, yet I, a retired university professor living on a pension, pay more income tax than they do; for by a special dispensation of the law, they pay none. I believe that a major reason why our government refuses to stop testing nuclear weapons is that it would spoil that business. [7]

According to Professor Wald, "an astonishing unanimity on what would need to be done to cool and shortly stop the arms race and prevent nuclear war" already exists among the American people. Why then is the democratic will of the people being ignored and their government continuing on a disastrous course of nuclear weapons testing and development?

Who are these weapons to be used upon, now that the Cold War has ended? People are crying out for health care, housing, education, jobs. America is at a crossroads, and the choice between military spending or dealing with its social and political crises was never more obvious and urgent. If it is allowed to rumble on, then it might well be sooner rather than later that people's hopelessness and frustration breaks out in violence.

The United Kingdom faces similar problems in its inner cities. In the face of rising unemployment and poverty, the people are promised a fourth Trident nuclear submarine, bringing the estimated cost of the British Trident System to forty-five billion dollars (twenty-three billion pounds), including operating costs. [8]

In a recent statement to business executives by one of America's best known educators, Father Theodore Hesburgh, former University of Notre Dame president, observed that by the year 2000 one-third of the U.S. minority population will be unemployable because of lack of education. "Give me the two-billion-dollar budget for one Trident submarine," Hesburgh said, "and I can turn around the education of minorities in this country." [9]

I have so far been quoting only men, so I would now like to mention a

woman! Many years ago a journalist visiting a home asked the "woman of the house" how she and her husband shared decisions. "Well, he makes all the big decisions, about the real important things, such as politics, world relationships, the Cold War, you know the BIG things. I make the unimportant decisions, like what the children wear, eat, education, health, you know all the LITTLE things."

Today, the outlook of many women has changed. They know that these little things are the truly important things. Many women are now playing an equal role in business and political life, and they are setting an urgent nonviolent political agenda to obtain a decent quality of life, based on respect for human beings. They have a wider world vision too, and see the world's children as their own, for whom they are taking responsibility. They know it is bread, not bombs, that people need; it is Third World debt cancellation, not deals, that is needed.

These women want neither to dominate the Third World with Trident missiles, nor to dehumanize and humiliate them with charity and handouts. Women are working not only for equality for themselves, but for equality for each human person. They expect demilitarization in order to release money for the **important** things in life.

It may seem to many who have worked so hard for disarmament that it is an impossible task, and we are up against too strong odds to succeed. But I believe if we unite all together as the human family with a common vision of building a politics based on respect for each human person and respect for our environment, that we will see changes unimaginable. I believe we are on the edge of a quantum leap into a whole new way of organizing and living as the human family. What we are witnessing today is indeed the hard birthing of a new humanity — a whole new way of people relating to each other and a recognition that we humans are not the center of the universe, but rather a part of it, with rights and responsibilities to build a secure future for ourselves and for our children.

We must have no human enemies in this task. Each person is needed for the work. Our allies are those in the military industries. They, too, are men and women who in their hearts know that life and the Earth are gifts to be celebrated and rejoiced in, not destroyed.

In the past we used the weapons of war and violence because they were all we knew. Now we have the methods of active nonviolence — surely a more civilized and creative way of solving our problems. We must encourage all people of good will to join in the work of abolishing war and weapons —

not out of fear of dying, but out of the joy of living. And it is joyous to be alive!

Nonviolence is not just for an elite few, it is for everyone. It is a way of life based on respect for each human person, and for the environment. It is also a means of bringing about social and political change, and resisting evil without entering into evil. It is a whole new way of thinking. Remember, a gun or a nuclear weapon is of no use if the will to kill does not exist in the human mind.

It is the very idea in the human mind that we have a right to take another's life that we must begin to change. The choice is "to kill or not to kill," that is, to live an unarmed life, fully alive, rejoicing and celebrating this gift we have all been given freely. The choice is up to us.

In trying to choose what to do, when faced with such enormous problems, sometimes we can feel powerless and imagine that we *personally* cannot do anything that will really make a difference. However, I passionately believe that nonviolence is a powerful force that each of us can cultivate in our daily lives and that through the power of love and truth we can each make a difference.

America's own prophet of nonviolence, Martin Luther King, Jr., said of this power: "I've decided that I'm going to do battle for my philosophy. You ought to believe something in life, believe that thing so fervently that you will stand up with it till the end of your days. I can't make myself believe that God wants me to hate. I'm tired of violence. And I'm not going to let my oppressor dictate to me what method I must use. We have a power — power that can't be found in Molotov cocktails, but we do have a power. Power that cannot be found in bullets and guns, but we have a power. It is a power as old as the insights of Jesus of Nazareth and as modern as the techniques of Mahatma Gandhi."[10]

Let us all use this power together, and as Dr. King urged, "join with the Earth and each other, to bring new life to the land, to restore the waters, to refresh the air, to renew the forests, to care for the plants, to protect the creatures, to celebrate the seas, to rejoice in the sunlight, to sing the song of the stars, to recall our destiny, to renew our spirits, to reinvigorate our bodies, to recreate the human community, to promote justice and peace, to love our children and one another, to join together as many and diverse expressions of one loving mystery, for the healing of the Earth and the renewal of all life."[11]

I wish you peace and joy in your life, and pray, above all, that you take time to be happy.

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