

# Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility,  
and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

English Edition of *Zeit-Fragen*

## The aim remains: swords to plow-shares

### An urgent about-turn\*

by Fredrik S. Heffermehl\*\*

The meeting hall at the *Nobel Peace Center* was packed with people, listening to *ForUM (Forum for Environment and Development)* launching a political report on moral dilemmas in Norwegian foreign policy, not least between arms exports and peacemaking. When one of the four panelists, in a senior military position, defended the burgeoning arms exports of Norway – the “Peace Nation” – I felt I had to confront him, saying that the military was selling an illusion of security at an exorbitant price, placing the continuation of life on earth in constant jeopardy. Given the unceasing research and development into new weaponry and continuous military planning, did he ever spend time thinking how to break the pattern? His stuttering reply was, “Er, that would presuppose a wholly different approach, such as strengthening the UN, developing international treaties, and a new international order with enforcement of laws [...] much like we have within each single nation.” I replied, “Exactly – and since we are gathered here at the *Nobel Peace Center*, I would like to remind you that that is precisely the idea behind the Peace Prize that *Nobel* established 115 years ago.” But it was clear that he had

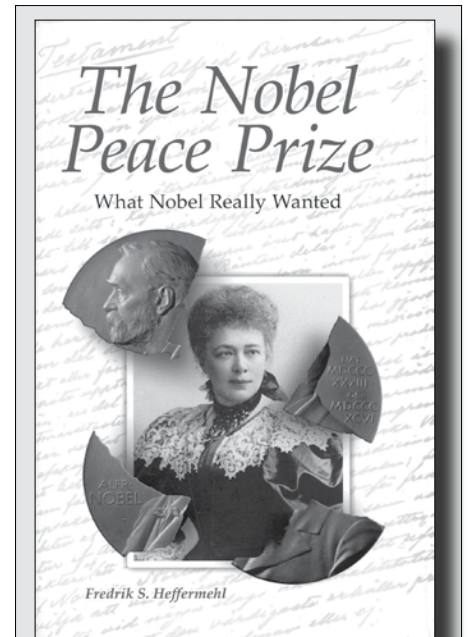
never spent much time brooding over how to make his job superfluous.

### The military, defending itself or the nation?

What has happened to Nobel’s prize is not unique. It seems to be a law of nature that anything and anyone who has the temerity to challenge the military is heading for defeat. Even institutions have survival instincts and vested interests will vigorously resist any attempt to free the world from the yoke of militarism. The decay of the Peace Prize seems to be just one of many examples.

*Daniel Ellsberg* is the man who helped to end the Vietnam War and the *Nixon* presidency by publishing secret Pentagon papers. His important contribution, for example, in the book “*Secrets*” (2003), is to show how defenseless American democracy is when a much too powerful military sector, shielded by secrecy, is not loyal to the interests of the American people.

Having been informed of my Nobel discoveries, Ellsberg mentioned that a parallel development might have happened to the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, established at the same time and having an original statement of purpose similar to that of the Nobel Peace Prize.<sup>1</sup> Much the same can be said of peace research, which in its infancy had ambitious plans to discover ways to undo militarism and create a better world. Now it is often trapped by the need for funding sponsors such as the ministries of defense and of foreign affairs, and chooses its topics ac-



ISBN 978-0-313-38744-9

The ground-breaking book by Fredrik S. Heffermehl is a standard work, which should be applied by citizens’ forums, and in particular by schools, in order to lay an ethic foundation in accordance with international law as to the question of war and peace. The original book in English has been translated into Chinese, Finnish, Swedish, with Russian and Spanish forthcoming. It is also crucial to find publishers for its translation into German, French and other important languages.

[www.nobelwill.org](http://www.nobelwill.org)

\* Final chapter of Fredrik S. Heffermehl “The Nobel Peace Prize. What Nobel Really Wanted.” Santa Barbara, California, 2010. P. 183–190. ISBN 978-0-313-38744-9. (e-book: ISBN 978-0-3313-38745-6)

\*\* Fredrik Stang Heffermehl is a Norwegian jurist. He holds multiple law degrees and is an editor of several books. He takes a stand for peace in different organisations. Among others, he became vice president of the “International Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms” and he was vice president of the “International Peace Bureau”.

continued on page 2

## The rebels and their supporters have lost the masks: terrorists instead of human rights activists

ga. On 18 July a bomb attack occurred at headquarters in Damascus hitting the Syrian military leadership with great logistical assistance. The Secretary of Defense, Assad’s brother in law and a general were killed, Assad’s brother was badly wounded. The rebels fighting in Syria pretending to be “human rights activists” claim to have carried out the attack by a

suicide bomber. The next claim was that the attack had been carried out by a deposited bomb, then by a missile. These contradictions show that the publishing “human rights activists” do not know at all how the crime was committed. Most likely they are not the performers. According to Fabrice Balanche, director of the Groupe de recherche et d’études

sur la Méditerranée et le Moyen-Orient (Gremmo), the required logistics hint at the fact that external parties have perpetrated the attack. The attack reminds one of that against Rafik Hariri, only then less explosive had been used.

continued on page 2

### "The rebels and their supporters ..."

continued from page 1

On the same day eight Israeli tourists were killed by a bomb attack in Bulgaria. It is the 18th anniversary of the attack on the Jewish center with 85 deaths in Buenos Aires. Immediately accusations against Iran were heard from Zionist circles. The Israeli, however, ought to know better that the Sunni Palestinians / Salafists have got open accounts with Israel. How long is the world going to be deceived? When will the assassins actually swarm?

#### A week ago

A shock to the population in northern Lebanon: grenades from Syria hit the road connections to nearby Homs, which is a center of the "human rights activists" fighting in Syria. First you hear: "The Syrians have always been violent", next: "transports of weapons for the rebels in Homs have been targeted. The Western media do not report anything about the weapons smuggling, but they modified their reporting: the perpetrators of the massacres could not be named. As a subordinate clause we learn: "Iranians and

Hezbollahs have been seen." This Freudian slip reveals the justification for the war!

Too late the Lebanese government begins considering to put the cross-border region north of Tripoli under the command of the Lebanese Army again. A strange coalition of Christian-Sunni/Salafist in the North is apparently responsible for the current incapacity to act. This coalition has neither a majority in parliament, nor in the Christian community in Lebanon.

Elections in the small region "Amioun" south of Tripoli confirm the local majorities. The Forces Libanaises (Christian) are ahead of the supporters of Syria.

Scientists have succeeded in organizing discussion groups, in which the confessions talk openly about peacekeeping projects

- Establishing a free trade zone Litani South.
- Water supply of Lebanese untapped sources from Palestine/Israel (water sale)
- Improvement of energy supply by natural forces (reducing dependence). •

### "The aim remains: ..."

continued from page 1

cordingly. The development of the *International Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO)* is a case in point. The PRIO which turned 50 in 2009 is quite far from making the difference that *Johan Galtung* and fellow founders once dreamed of. A PRIO insider, not wishing to be named, had this to say: "Everyone talks about funding possibilities, more than about what they wish to achieve with their research – and it is not just Norway, but much the same everywhere." An indication of PRIO's decline was that one of the many who publicly praised the *Obama* Nobel speech was the head of the politics and ethics program at PRIO, *Henrik Syse*. In a full-page newspaper article, "War is defensible," he discussed the Christian Just War tradition – completely ignoring two centuries of development of international law and the ban on war in Article 2.4 of the UN Charter.<sup>2</sup>

For 50 years Norway had a political party trying to get the country out of NATO and to find ways to create a more just, peaceful, and less armed world. Since 2005 this party in its present form, the *Socialist Left Party (SV)*, is part of a coalition cabinet dominated by the *Labor Party*. In February 2010, a party spokesperson defended Norway's record levels of arms exports. The party's road to power required dropping the original purpose.<sup>3</sup> Today, it has been broken in through bullying in the media every time it shows the slight-

est hesitation in allegiance to NATO and a strong military defense. In earlier times this party was probably the only one in Parliament that could have been counted on to stand up to defend Nobel and the intention of the Peace Prize. Now there was not one word of support from the former "peace party" or any other party in the *Storting* at any stage in my work to restore Nobel's prize for the champions of peace.

When finally there was a sign of visible interest in the Peace Prize from people in *Stortinget*, it was for not being invited to the 10 December 2009, banquet in celebration of Obama: "I note that this has become a dinner for sponsors where information directors in private corporations are preferred to the presidents of parliament," *Per-Kristian Foss*, one vice president of *Stortinget* said to Norway's main business journal, *Dagens Næringsliv*.<sup>4</sup>

I remember a friendship in the 1980s with *Jiri Dienstbier* and other Czechs in *Charter 77* [dissidents invoking *Helsinki accords* on political rights]. As the first post-Communism foreign minister, *Dienstbier* voiced big plans for reducing arms production ... and we know where those hopes ended. The same goes for *Nelson Mandela* – in the early days after he came to power in South Africa, I read a news story in which he declared that the country's military production must be cut and the social needs of his people met. Other interests soon proved too strong for even so forceful a politician as he.

I am sure many people will fear that if the committee embarks on a new pol-

**Syria Plan:  
Russia and Iran support Annan**

Foreign Minister *Sergey Lawrow* gave a press conference before his meeting with Annan, at which he stressed that "unbiased eyes and ears" were needed in Syria to make the world understand what was actually happening there. Russia's chief diplomat pointed to the recent massacre in the village Tremseh, where government troops and rebels accused each other again to be responsible for the massacre.

Moscow demands the greatest possible sincerity in all aspects of the crisis, and is doing its best to ensure that the situation is as transparent as possible and understandable for all.

On closer inspection of Lawrow's statement before Annan's talks in Moscow the conclusion can be drawn that the situation in Syria may obviously still be saved.

Annan's peace plan (pressure on both sides of the conflict, negotiations between government and opposition, withdrawal of the troops from cities including heavy military equipment, etc.) is certainly achievable. Other plans for the solution of the crisis are not available.

*Source: RIA Novosti, 07.18.2012*

icy, with less well-known peace laureates at the center of attention, Nobel's Peace Prize will lose some of its glamour. Yet, I believe the prize will gain in significance and content – and, after all, it was Nobel who chose to what and to whom he wished to give his prize. In addition, it should be cause for reflection if a prize challenging the military proves to be of less interest to the world's political elites and media.

The whole field of military "defense" is in deep conflict with democratic governance. Consider two Norwegian examples of a universal problem. In 1998, Defense Minister *Dag Jostein Fjasrevoll* addressed Parliament on Norway's future role in the March 1999 attack on Serbia. The minister said Norway would follow standard official policy not to take any part in any operation lacking UN authorization. In fact, the cabinet – in a secret resolution two months earlier – had committed Norwegian air forces to the attack, a decision that violated Norway's constitution.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, for lack of UN authorization, Norway did not take part in the attack on Iraq in March 2003 – officially. In a clandestine move, Defense Minister *Kristin Krohn Devold* supplied essential radar equipment (the "Arthur" missile tracer) to the British for the illegal attack.<sup>6</sup>

In "Peace Is Possible" (2000), I mentioned the response of the German Kaiser *Wilhelm II* when he was invited to the 1899 Hague Peace Conference: "Imagine a monarch, holding personal command of

### Swedish supervisory authority for foundations has taken up Heffermehl's criticism of Nobel Peace Prize award process

ef. After Fredrik S. Heffermehl had published the results of a thorough examination of the content of Alfred Nobel's testament in his 2010 book "The Nobel Peace Prize", the Country Administrative Board in Stockholm (this is the supervisory authority of all foundations of the country) requested the Swedish Nobel Foundation on 30 January 2012 to clarify the question, whether the will of the prize sponsor Alfred Nobel has been distorted by the Nobel Peace Prize award process. Furthermore, the foundation has been requested to reexamine the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize in the last 110 years and to establish more transparency in the selection process. Finally the present members of the Nobel Committee have been asked to give the parliament in Oslo "a free hand" in reelecting "a venerable committee". (cf. the book review of Dieter Deiseroth, *Current Concerns*, No 27, of 2 July 2012)

On 8 March 2012 the Nobel Foundation has given its view on that. The text of this statement is not available.

In its reaction and decision of 21 March 2012 the Country Administrative Board in Stockholm has indeed abstained from taking further steps against the Nobel Foundation. But in its declaration, which is publicly available,

the board reminds in detail of the process that must be kept with the awarding of the Nobel Prizes and also criticizes the present self-conception of the Nobel Committee that is responsible for the awarding process of the Nobel Peace Prize.

During a meeting of Fredrik S. Heffermehl with a representative of the Swedish supervisory authority for foundations on 22 March, one day after the decision of the state's administration, the former explained again verbally the decision of the supervisory authority.

On 26 March Fredrik S. Heffermehl wrote a letter to the director of the Nobel Foundation and thus published a summary of that oral explanation authorized by the supervisory authority for foundations. According to this the Country Administrative Board (CAB) had indeed rejected his, Heffermehl's, submission, but had combined this rejection with substantial criticism on the work of the Nobel Committee: "While no statements about mistakes whatsoever in the past have been expressed the administration signaled that a fundamental revision of the work routine within the Nobel Foundation would be necessary to ensure that future Nobel Prizes comply with Alfred Nobel's will."

Furthermore, the CAB rejected the Norwegian Nobel Committee's claim that it was "independent" in its decisions and did not have to accept any instructions from anybody: "Both Norwegian Nobel Bodies, the Parliament and the Nobel Committee, are under the superior supervision of the board of the Nobel Foundation."

The supervisory authority for foundations instructed the Nobel Committee to apply the selection criteria determined and intended by Nobel laid down in his will and not their own ideas of peace: "It seems to be reasonable that the board of the Nobel Foundation signals its will as early as possible that they want to fulfill the necessary requirements of the authority by clarifying that 'peace' and 'peace work' are not the relevant fundament to determine what Nobel intended. The key word is 'advocate for peace' (*fredsförfäktare*), an expression that can currently only be found in the declaration of intention, but not in the statutes."

Fredrik S. Heffermehl writes that the supervisory authority for foundations has thus taken up his research work and has contributed to a clarification of the scales for the future awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize.

#### "The aim remains: ..."

continued from page 2

his army, disbanding his regiments, sacred with a hundred years of history – and handing his towns over to anarchists and democrats!"<sup>7</sup>

The secret services operate as a "state within the state," violating laws at home and abroad – in striking contradiction to the elegance and respect on the surface of diplomatic relations. The military often controls parliaments, presidents, and prime ministers, instead of being controlled by them. Secrecy serves to obstruct legitimate debate and criticism, the quintessential core of democracy. That power unexposed to public scrutiny runs a high risk of being misused applies everywhere, whether it is military leaders or the Nobel committee. A question appears warranted: "The Kaiser is dead, long ago, but has democracy ever gained control of the military sector?"<sup>8</sup>

The nations and citizens of the world are kept in thrall to an irrational, asocial, dysfunctional tradition. Too many make their living from continuing the pattern and will strike back at any threat—as the U.S. military did when the prospect of a peace dividend appealed to many at the end of the Cold War. The enemy is within, and there are innumerable accounts of the military as an antisocial agent. The way

the military aborted the Gorbachev-Reagan deal on nuclear disarmament that almost resulted from their Reykjavik Summit in 1986 is probably the most searing example ever. Seymour Melman, in his book "Pentagon Capitalism" (1970), explains how efforts to end the Vietnam War by a negotiated settlement again and again were frustrated by the actions of a military wishing to show the value of military operations applied with skill. According to Melman, "It is difficult to discover the limits beyond which these men are not prepared to go."<sup>9</sup>

#### Countering the military as a threat to us all

If it is true that the military is unable to deliver anything but an extremely deceptive, costly and risky illusion of security, where are the media and the academic researchers that relentlessly, systematically, over time, lay bare the political role of the military as a menace to the real security of the nation and the well-being of its citizens? How many investigators are digging into the costs, the risks, and the deceptiveness of military activity – and pushing the need for a better-organized world? The problem goes beyond broadcast news depending on commercials; it is about deep attitudes. Are not the print media – ambitious to show "the world as it is" but rarely mentioning voices for change as part of

that reality – a solid obstacle to change? In his Nobel speech for Frank Kellogg, in 1929, Johan Ludwig Mowinkel formulated a most urgent moral and practical challenge:

"We must bring people to understand that it is not enough to proclaim war to be a crime, but that it is necessary for all to recognize with every sense and emotion that the murder of hundreds of thousands of human beings to settle an international dispute is no more justifiable, no more pardonable than the murder of a single individual to settle some personal quarrel."

Princeton professor Richard Falk has pointed out the absurd incongruity between our absolute moral and human rejection of the use of torture against individuals, on the one hand, and the wide acceptance of torture of whole nations in war, on the other.

Unfortunately, the Nobel committees have lacked the innovative and visionary mindset that Nobel must have hoped for. Where, for instance, are the Nobel Peace Prizes for William Hartung and his Arms Trade Resource Center, or other campaigns against the arms industry and trade such as the British or European campaigns against arms trade (CAAT and ENAAT)? Or, what about the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament? The Interna-

**"The aim remains: ..."**

continued from page 3

tional Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms? The Citizens Action for Nuclear Disarmament (ACDN)? Movement for the Abolition of War? The Women's League and their [www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org) Web site? The School of Nonkilling Studies? The Cluster Munitions Coalition? The International Peace Bureau (in 2010, 100 years have passed since its first Nobel)? The Middle Powers Initiative? The Coalition for the International Criminal Court? The Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies? The Peace Ministries campaigns? The Peace Alliance? The actions for disarmament? The 2020 Vision Campaign? Peace Education campaigners? Peace researchers (those who have not lost direction)? [www.betterworldlinks.org](http://www.betterworldlinks.org)? Transcend? The Transnational Foundation? The conflict resolution networks, and others in the vanguard of nonviolence and conflict resolution? All the women and women's organizations for peace? The grandmothers, in black and in white? CODEPINK? Abolition 2000? The Fourth Freedom Forum? World Without War? The World Order Models Project? The Global Marshall Plan? The military bases campaigns? The Peace Tax campaigns? PeaceJam? The British American Security Information Council? Scilla Elworthy and the Oxford Research Group? The small arms campaigns? The parliamentarians, the mayors, the physicians, the lawyers, the engineers and scientists, and the Hiroshima victims for nuclear disarmament? The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists? The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation? The Kuala Lumpur Initiative and Perdana

Global Peace? Bruce Gagnon and his Web site [space4peace.org](http://space4peace.org)?

And what about the people working for government intelligence, in cabinets and the diplomatic service, who try to throw sand in the war machine as it gears up for new adventures, such as Americans Scott Ritter, Dan Ellsberg, and John Brady Kiesling; in Denmark, Frank Grevil; in Britain, Clare Short and Katharine Gun; in the UN service, Frank Halliday and Hans von Sponeck; and in Israel, Mordechai Vanunu? Even if not all these whistleblowers are supporters of the disarmed world that Nobel had in mind, they would have been much more relevant than most of those who have won the Peace Prize in recent years.

The Austrian peace educator Werner Wintersteiner raised a timely question in an article on Bertha von Suttner and her emphasis on educating young people for peace: "How can high school students get to know about peaceful organization of the world, if teachers do not enlighten them on the topic? Not in a single subject is there mention of the idea of peace."<sup>10</sup> Maybe, in a world thoroughly bred in the militaristic mindset, some of the first new prizes true to Nobel's purpose should go to those people on all continents who have championed for decades the cause of peace education, including the Global Campaign for Peace Education, Educators for Peace, Peace Boat, Elise Boulding, Federico Mayor, Betty Reardon, Cora Weiss, Ghassan Abdullah, Adina Shapiro, Amada Benavides, Alicia Cabezudo, Catherine Hoppers, and Lalita Ramdas.

I could go on for days. It would take years to make a comprehensive list and describe all those forces for change whose cause has been wronged by the Nobel

committee."<sup>11</sup> In one way or another, they are all working in opposition to the military tradition, the power and violence approach to security. Not that all of them are qualified for the Peace Prize – several of those struggling to abolish particular weapons (nuclear, landmines, and cluster munitions) do not actively seek the general and complete disarmament that Nobel's prize presupposes. The fact remains, however, that this is the political landscape the committee members must move in to find Nobel's change-makers, the *champions of peace*, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Furthermore, the rule reserving the right to nominate only to groups of people well established in society has been unfortunate. This provision – which was not part of Nobel's directions – has limited the influx of nominations of the most relevant candidates. The people Nobel wished to support early stopped considering this prize as theirs.

The Nobel committee and secretary have met my criticism by simply repressing it, their response bearing resemblance more to the business world than to that of peace. First, my reminder of the clear wording of the will and the centrality of disarmament had no effect. Second, a whole book proving that the words Nobel used must fit his intention precisely had no impact. Third, when I told the committee that they had given the prize "for peace" instead of "for the *champions of peace*" mentioned in Nobel's will, they kept silent. Fourth, when shown numerous examples that for generations the committee has openly been formulating its own concept of peace, it made the claim to "al-

continued on page 5

## Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility, and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

### Subscribe to Current Concerns – The journal of an independent cooperative

The cooperative *Zeit-Fragen* is a politically and financially independent organisation. All of its members work on a voluntary and honorary basis. The journal does not accept commercial advertisements of any kind and receives no financial support from business organisations. The journal Current Concerns is financed exclusively by its subscribers.

We warmly recommend our model of free and independent press coverage to other journals.

Annual subscription rate of  
CHF 40,-; Euro 30,-; USD 40,-; GBP 25,-  
for the following countries:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hongkong, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA

Annual subscription rate of  
CHF 20,-; Euro 15,-; USD 20,-; GBP 12,50  
for all other countries.

Please choose one of the following ways of payment:

- send a cheque to *Current Concerns*, P.O. Box, CH-8044 Zurich, or
- send us your credit card details (only *Visa*), or
- pay into one of the following accounts:

CH:	Postscheck-Konto (CHF):	87-644472-4	IBAN CH91 0900 0000 8764 4472 4	BIC POFICHBEXXX
CH:	Postscheck-Konto (Euro):	91-738798-6	IBAN CH83 0900 0000 9173 8798 6	BIC POFICHBEXXX
D:	Volksbank Tübingen, Kto. 67 517 005, BLZ 64190110		IBAN DE12 6419 0110 0067 5170 05	BIC GENODES1TUE
A:	Raiffeisen Landesbank, Kto. 1-05.713.599, BLZ 37000		IBAN AT55 3700 0001 0571 3599	BIC RVVGAT2B



# The collapsing US economy and the end of global dominance

## Europe is on the ropes and has no money with which to subsidize Washington's wars of hegemony.

by Paul Craig Roberts

In a recent column, "Can The World Survive Washington's Hubris," I promised to examine whether the US economy will collapse before Washington in its pursuit of world hegemony brings us into military confrontation with Russia and China. This is likely to be an ongoing subject on this site, so this column will not be the final word.

Washington has been at war since October 2001, when president *George W. Bush* concocted an excuse to order the US invasion of Afghanistan. This war took a back seat when Bush concocted another excuse

"The aim remains: ..." continued from page 4

ways" have followed Nobel's will. Paradoxically, such undignified methods of discussion become possible only by the secrecy rules originally meant to preserve dignity and respect for the prize.

The committee pretends to be meeting 21<sup>st</sup>-century peace issues better than if it had shown respect to Nobel. If that is what it does, it should stop denying that it is formulating its own prize. Furthermore, this assertion reveals that the committee does not understand that the deep reform of international relations that Nobel wished to support is much more urgent, relevant, and vital today than in 1895.

It was only when I made my own check of the *Gunnar Jahn* diaries that I understood the level of disregard for Nobel and how long it had been that way. In our time it is hard to find anyone in the Norwegian Parliament who has the insight or sympathies required by law to sit on the Nobel committee. It makes me both sad and mad to think of all the valuable peace work that is offered to a world trapped in tradition and unable to listen – and how the Nobel committee fails to promote the deep change it was asked to nurture with Alfred Nobel's money.

The devastating problems ahead – overpopulation, pollution, exhaustion of natural resources, and the destruction of nature's own productive capacity – will confront us in the not too distant future with a crisis that can be met only through a common emergency response. Money spent on national military forces can only aggravate the damage, and the dangers, and does so without resolving any of the problems.

Even more than in 1895, we need a confraternization of nations, based on justice, law, and democracy.<sup>12</sup> The industrial world has prospered economically from its mili-

"Washington is becoming an isolated and despised element of the world community. Washington has purchased Europe, Canada, Australia, the former Soviet state of Georgia (and almost Ukraine), and Colombia, and continues its effort to purchase the entire world, but sentiment is turning against the rising Gestapo state that has shown itself to be lawless, ruthless, and indifferent, even hostile, to human life and human rights."

to order the invasion of Iraq in 2003, a war that went on without significant success for 8 years and has left Iraq in chaos with dozens more killed and wounded every day, a new strong man in place of the illegally executed former strongman, and the

likelihood of the ongoing violence becoming civil war.

Upon his election, President *Obama* foolishly sent more troops to Afghanistan

continued on page 6

tary and commercial bargaining power, at the same time attracting an influx of people from countries deprived of those same fundamentals for their own prosperity. When immigrants see their new countries hitting and maiming relatives in the villages they came from – an aunt, a parent, a nephew, a mullah – with air strikes, their loyalty to the new country is tested.

The intermingling in western capitals of people from around the world limits what nations can do; a bad foreign policy can backfire at home. For a host of good, mandatory, reasons a fair, nonviolent foreign policy has become indispensable. For more than half a century, however, the Nobel committee has favored the existing military-based international system instead of defending the directly opposite approach that Nobel wished to support. It is now high time the Nobel committee (as well as the secretary) stops cultivating a vague and diluted concept of "peace" and starts to support the *champions of peace*, respecting what Nobel meant using that precise expression. If the committee members cannot be true to Nobel's intentions with enthusiasm, they must leave their seats to the many others who can. •

<sup>1</sup> E-mail to the author, November 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Henrik Syse, *Aftenposten*, December 16, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Borgen, 2009, pp. 229 – 258, has an analysis of the transformation of the "peace party."

<sup>4</sup> Of course it was unacceptable to drop both parliamentary vice presidents and the chair of Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs from the guest list. The interesting point here is why these key people in Parliament were not invited. In «Dagens Næringsliv», December 9 and 10, 2009, *Geir Lundestad*, speaking for the committee, explained that more than 30 seats at the banquet tables were used to reward financial sponsors of the *Nobel Peace Center* and the Peace Concert. Some chief executive officers (CEOs) could even bring communication directors and invite business partners from abroad, all with spouses. IBM had the biggest delegation (eight people); then *Telenor* (three directors, bringing two partners from India); *Hydro* (four); and then CEOs with spouses from the *DnB Nor bank*, *Dagbladet*, *Statkraft*, *Orkia*; *Yara*, *KPMG*, and *Cisco*. Under

the bylaws, the Nobel Institute is supposed to be financially independent, but it tells a lot about a Peace Prize in the hands of commercial interests when the Parliament to whom Nobel entrusted the prize is pushed aside to give room for the corporate elite.

<sup>5</sup> Garbo, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Borgen, 2009, p. 134; Borgen, "A small piece of Norway," 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Heffermehl, 2000, p. 12.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Melman, 1970, pp. 151 – 152, refers to Kraslow & Loory, 1968.

<sup>10</sup> Friede-Fortschritt-Frauen, 2005, p. 117.

<sup>11</sup> Some information is found in *International Peace Bureau (IPB)* publications. See Archer, 2006; Heffermehl, 2000; and [www.peaceispossible.info](http://www.peaceispossible.info). Here are some more examples from the landscape where the committee may find qualified persons, working for the global system change Nobel had in mind: Acronym Institute, Alliance for the Global Wellness Fund Treaty, Atomic Mirror, Canadian Consortium on Human Security (CCHS), Canadian Peace Alliance, Center for Defense Information (CDI), Common Dreams, Economists for Peace and Security (EPS), Fundacio per la Pau, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Global Article 9 Campaign, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR), Global Security Institute (GSI), Green Cross International (GCI), Hague Appeal for Peace (HAP), Human Security Commission (HSQ), Human Security Network (HSN), Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, Institute for Disarmament Studies, Institute for Inclusive Security, International Campaign to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW), International Network of Engineers and Scientists Against Proliferation (INESAP), Mouvement de la Paix, National Priorities Project (Cost of War), Nuclear Free Philippines Coalition (NFPC), Pacific Campaign for Disarmament and Security (PCDS), Pax Christi International, Peace Action, Peace Depot, Peace Majority, PeaceQuest International, Project Ploughshares, Rwanda Women's Network, Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, Transnational Institute (TNI), United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Verification Research, Training, and Information Centre (VERTIC), Weeramanthy International Centre for Peace Education and Research, and World Federalist Movement (WFM).

<sup>12</sup> I first wrote about the need for a new, humane, and just foreign policy as a potentially unavoidable consequence of the mixing of ethnic minorities with the populations of the affluent countries in Vanunu (Heffermehl, 2005). Within two weeks my point was horrifyingly demonstrated by bombs on three London Underground trains and one bus on July 7, 2005. See also Beebe and Kaldor, 2010; in line with Alfred Nobel, they call for human security as the realistic alternative to military "security."

**"The collapsing US economy and ..."**

continued from page 5

and renewed the intensity of that war, now in its eleventh year, to no successful effect.

These two wars have been expensive. According to estimates by *Joseph Stiglitz* and *Linda Bilmes*, when all costs are counted the Iraq invasion cost US taxpayers \$3 trillion dollars. Ditto for the Afghan war. In other words, the two gratuitous wars doubled the US public debt. This is the reason there is no money for Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, the environment, and the social safety net.

Americans got nothing out of the wars, but as the war debt will never be paid off, US citizens and their descendants will have to pay interest on \$6,000 billion of war debt in perpetuity.

Not content with these wars, the Bush/Obama regime is conducting military operations in violation of international law in Pakistan, Yemen, and Africa, organized the overthrow by armed conflict of the government in Libya, is currently working to overthrow the Syrian government, and continues to marshal military forces against Iran.

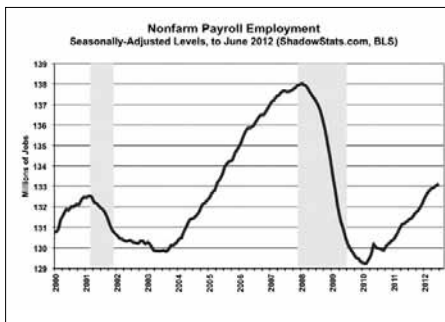
Finding the Muslim adversaries Washington created insufficient for its energies and budget, Washington has encircled Russia with military bases and has begun the encirclement of China. Washington has announced that the bulk of its naval forces will be shifted to the Pacific over the next few years, and Washington is working to re-establish its naval base in the Philippines, construct a new one on a South Korean island, acquire a naval base in Vietnam, and air and troop bases elsewhere in Asia.

In Thailand Washington is attempting to purchase with the usual bribes an air base used in the Vietnam war. There is opposition as the country does not wish to be drawn into Washington's orchestrated conflict with China. Downplaying the real reason for the airbase, Washington, according to Thai newspapers, told the Thai government that the base was needed for "humanitarian missions." This didn't fly, so Washington had NASA ask for the air base in order to conduct "weather experiments." Whether this ruse is sufficient cover remains to be seen.

US Marines have been sent to Australia and elsewhere in Asia.

To corral China and Russia (and Iran) is a massive undertaking for a country that is financially busted. With wars and banker bailouts, Bush and Obama have doubled the US national debt while failing to address the disintegration of the US economy and rising hardships of US citizens.

The charts below are courtesy of [www.shadowstats.com](http://www.shadowstats.com):



*Nonfarm payroll employment. Seasonally adjusted-levels, to June 2012.*

The annual US budget deficit is adding to the accumulated debt at about \$1.5 trillion per year with no prospect of declining. The financial system is broken and requires ongoing bailouts. The economy is busted and has been unable to create high-paying jobs, indeed any jobs. Despite years of population growth, payroll employment as of mid-2012 is the same as in 2005 and substantially below 2008. Yet, the government and financial prestitute media tell us that we have a recovery.

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment in 2011 was only 1 million more than in 2002. As it takes about 150,000 new jobs each month to stay even with population growth, that leaves a decade long job deficit of 15 million jobs.

The US unemployment and inflation rates are far higher than reported. In previous columns I have explained, based on statistician *John Williams'* work ([shadowstats.com](http://shadowstats.com)), the reasons that the government's headline numbers are serious understatements. The headline (U3) unemployment rate of 8.2% counts no discouraged workers who have given up on finding a job. The government has a second unemployment rate (U6), seldom reported, which includes short-term discouraged workers. That rate is 15%. When the long-term discouraged workers are added in, the current US unemployment rate is 22%, a number closer to the unemployment rate of the Great Depression than to the unemployment rates of postwar recessions.

Changes in the way inflation is measured have destroyed the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as a measure of the cost of living. The new methodology is substitution based. If the price of an item in the index rises, a lower priced alternative takes its place. In addition, some price rises are labeled quality improvements whether they are or not and thus do not show up in the CPI. People still have to pay the higher price, but it is not counted as inflation.

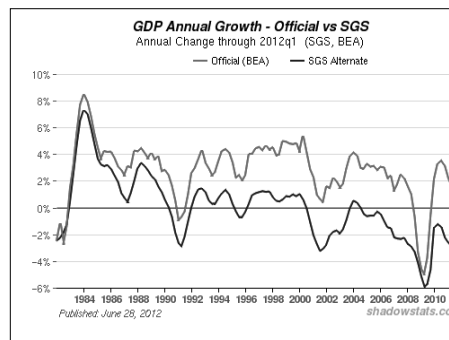
Currently, the substitution-based rate of inflation is about 2%. However, when inflation is measured as the actual cost of living, the rate of inflation is 5%.

The Misery Index is the sum of the inflation and unemployment rates. The level of the current Misery Index depends on

whether the new rigged measures are used, which understate the misery, or the former methodology that accurately measures it.

Prior to the November 1980 election, the Misery Index hit 22%, which was one reason for Reagan's victory over President Carter. Today if we use previous methodology, the Misery Index stands at 27%. But if we use the new rigged methodology, the Misery Index is 10%.

The understatement of inflation serves to boost Gross Domestic Product (GDP). GDP is calculated in current dollars. To be able to determine whether GDP rose because of price rises or because of increases in real output, GDP is deflated by the CPI. The higher the inflation rate, the less the growth in real output and vice versa. When the substitution based methodology is used to measure inflation, the US economy experienced real growth in the 21st century except for the sharp dip during 2008-2010. However, if the cost-of-living based methodology is used, except for a short period during 2004, the US economy has experienced no real growth since 2000.



*Annual growth of Gross National Product – official statistics (upper line) versus Shadow Government Statistics SGS (lower line)*

In the chart above, the lower measure (blue) of real GDP is deflated with the inflation methodology that measured cost-of-living. The higher GDP measure (red) deflates GDP with the new substitution based methodology.

The lack of employment and real GDP growth go together with the decline in real household median income. The growth in consumer debt substituted for the lack of income growth and kept the economy going until consumers exhausted their ability to take on more debt. With the consumer dead in the water, the outlook for economic recovery is poor.

Politicians and the Federal Reserve are making the outlook even worse. At a time of high unemployment and debt-stressed households, politicians at local, state, and federal levels are cutting back on government provision of health care, pensions, food stamps, housing subsidies

### "The collapsing US economy and ..."

continued from page 6

and every other element of the social safety net. These cutbacks, of course, further reduce aggregate demand and the ability of income-stressed Americans to survive.

The Federal Reserve has interest rates so low that retirees and others living on their savings can earn nothing on their money. The interest rates paid on bank CDs and government and corporate bonds are lower than the rate of inflation. To live on interest income, a person has to purchase Greek, Spanish, or Italian bonds and run the risk of capital loss. The Federal Reserve's policy of negative interest rates forces retirees to spend down their capital in order to live. In other words, the Fed's policy is destroying personal savings as people are forced to spend their capital in order to cover living expenses.

In June the Federal Reserve announced that it was going to continue its policy of driving nominal interest rates even lower, this time focusing on long-term Treasury bonds. The Fed said it would be purchasing \$400 billion of the Treasury's 30-year bonds.

Driving interest rates down means driving bond prices up. With 5-year Treasury bonds paying only seven-tenths of one percent and 10-year Treasuries paying only 1.6%, below even the official rate of inflation, Americans desperate for yield move into 30-year bonds currently paying 2.7%. However, the high bond prices mean that the risk of capital loss is very high.

The Fed's debt monetization, or a drop in the exchange value of the dollar as other countries move away from its use to settle their balance of payments, could set off inflation that would take interest rates out of the Fed's control. As interest rates rise, bond prices fall.

In other words, bonds are now the bubble that real estate, stocks, and derivatives were. When this bubble pops, Americans will take another big hit to their remaining wealth.

It makes no sense to invest in long-term bonds at negative interest rates when the federal government is piling up debt that the Federal Reserve is monetizing and when other countries are moving away from the flood of dollars. The potential for a rising rate of inflation is high from debt monetization and from a drop in the dollar's exchange value. Yet, bond fund portfolio managers have to follow the herd into longer term maturities or see their performance relative to their peers drop to the bottom of the rankings.

Some individual investors and foreign central banks, anticipating the dollar's loss of value, are accumulating gold and silver bullion. Realizing the danger to the dollar and its policy from the rapid rise in the

"The only prospect Washington has of prevailing in such an undertaking is first use of nuclear weapons, of catching its demonized opponents off guard by nuking them out of the blue. In other words, by the elimination of life on earth.

Is this Washington's program revealed by the neoconservative war-monger, Bill Kristol, who had no shame to ask publicly: 'What's the good of nuclear weapons if you can't use them?'"

price of bullion during 2011, the Federal Reserve has arranged offsetting action. When the demand for physical bullion drives up the price, short sales of bullion in the paper market are used to drive the price back down.

Similarly, when investors begin to flee Treasuries, thus causing interest rates to rise, J.P. Morgan and other dependencies of the Federal Reserve sell interest-rate swaps, thus offsetting the effect on interest rates of the bond sales. (Keep in mind that interest rates rise when bond prices fall and vice versa.)

The point of all this information is to establish that except for the 1 percent, the incomes and wealth of Americans are being cut back across the board. From 2002 through 2011 the economy lost 3.5 million manufacturing jobs. These jobs were replaced with lower-paying waitress and bartender jobs (1,189,000), ambulatory health care service jobs (1,512,000) and social assistance jobs (578,000).

These replacement jobs in domestic services mean that on a net basis US consumer income was moved out of the country. Potential aggregate demand in the US dropped by the differences in pay in the job categories. Clearly and unambiguously, jobs offshoring lowered US disposable income and US GDP and, thereby, employment.

Despite the lack of an economic base, Washington's hegemonic aspirations continue unabated. Other countries are amused at Washington's unawareness. Russia, China, India, Brazil, and South Africa are forming an agreement to abandon the US dollar as the currency for international settlement between themselves.

On 4 July the China Daily reported: "Japanese politicians and prominent academics from China and Japan urged Tokyo on Tuesday to abandon its outdated foreign policy of leaning on the West and accept China as a key partner as important as the United States. The Tokyo Consensus, a joint statement issued at the end of the Beijing-Tokyo Forum, also called on both countries to expand trade and promote a free-trade agreement for China, Japan and South Korea."

This means that Japan is in play.

The Chinese government, more intelligent than Washington, is responding to Washington's military threats by enticing away Washington's two key Asian allies.

As the Chinese economy is now as large as the US and on far firmer footing, and as Japan now has more trade with China than with the US, the enticement is appealing. Moreover, China is next door, and Washington is distant and drowning in its hubris.

Washington, which flicked its middle finger to international law and to its own law and Constitution with its arrogance and gratuitous and illegal wars and with its assertion of the right to murder its own citizens and those of its allies, such as Pakistan, has made the United States a pariah state.

Washington still controls its bought-and-paid-for NATO puppets, but these puppet states are overwhelmed with derivative debt problems brought to them by Wall Street and by sovereign debt problems, some of which were covered up by Wall Street's Goldman Sachs.

Europe is on the ropes and has no money with which to subsidize Washington's wars of hegemony.

Washington is becoming an isolated and despised element of the world community. Washington has purchased Europe, Canada, Australia, the former Soviet state of Georgia (and almost Ukraine), and Colombia, and continues its effort to purchase the entire world, but sentiment is turning against the rising Gestapo state that has shown itself to be lawless, ruthless, and indifferent, even hostile, to human life and human rights.

A government, whose military was unable with the help of the UK to occupy Iraq after eight years and was forced to end the conflict by putting the "insurgents" on the US military payroll and to pay them to stop killing American troops, and a government whose military has been unable to subdue a few thousand lightly armed Taliban after 11 years, is over the top when it organizes war against Iran, Russia, and China.

The only prospect Washington has of prevailing in such an undertaking is first use of nuclear weapons, of catching its demonized opponents off guard by nuking them out of the blue. In other words, by the elimination of life on earth.

Is this Washington's program revealed by the neoconservative warmonger, Bill Kristol, who had no shame to ask publicly: "What's the good of nuclear weapons if you can't use them?"

Source: [www.paulcraigroberts.org](http://www.paulcraigroberts.org), 08.07.2012

## Rebuilding Iceland – modestly, but solidly

“At first we allowed the banks to break down in 2008 via an emergency law”

by André Anwar, Stockholm

While the crisis of the euro is oppressing Europe, Iceland is pulling itself up again after its breakdown in 2008. The economy is growing thanks to saving measures and thanks to the clear devaluation of the Icelandic Krona. It is equally the breakdown of the banks that is supporting the recovery.

Once again Iceland is on the way up. The *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD) is predicting the country an economic growth of 2.7 p.c. in 2012. However, the basis is low. In 2008 the economy had taken a tumble losing 18.2 p.c., in 2009 it lost again 9.2 p.c.. In 2010 the economic performance shrank once more for about 2.2. p.c.

### Unemployment is decreasing

Before the crisis it was the other way round. In 2005 Iceland had reached growth rates at 8.3 p.c. that scarcely any other western country had. Even during the crisis Iceland managed to keep down unemployment to some degree. Before the crisis the unemployment amounted to barely 3 p.c.

In 2009 it rose to 7.2. p.c. and in 2010 to 7.5. p.c. One reason for this relatively small increase: They sent home a lot of immigrant workers, for example in the construction sector. A lot of enterprises cushioned the rest by in salary cuts. Moreover there is a pride which has cultural and historical roots, a pride that keeps people from living on state allocations. In the meantime the unemployment is going down again. In 2012 a drop to less than 7.0 p.c. has been predicted. The social security system also operates because the Icelanders have never really exploited it thanks to full employment until the great breakdown came.

### Jobs cancelled, salaries cut

“The reconstruction of Iceland rests on several pillars,” says *Pordur Snaer Juliusson*, writer for the economic newspaper “*Vidskiptabladinu*.” He is considered one of the few objective commentators in Iceland. “At first we had allowed the banks to break down by an emergency law.” The support loans granted by the *International Currency Fund* and by Scandinavian countries kept the country solvent, but they forced it to conduct enormous savings. “In all sectors we cut all salaries by about 10 p.c., salaries in the private sector were cut by up to 20 p.c. At the same time we noticed in our misery that we could save an extreme lot in the health sector and in other sectors by increasing the ef-

### Study: euro-exit attractive for Italy and Ireland – “Nezavisimaya”

Analysts at the *Bank of America Merrill Lynch* have found in a study that the euro-zone and the euro are less stable than you might think, the newspaper “*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*” wrote on Monday.

In the face of the new crisis, some euro-zone countries will try to get individual benefits by the voluntary withdrawal from the monetary union. Italy and Ireland could get significant benefits: they would be able to restore their competitiveness by devaluing their currency very fast.

The leading EU countries would pay any price to prevent a collapse of the euro-zone, many investors say.

In a study the experts at *BofA-Merrill Lynch* are questioning the stability of the euro-zone. Some countries’ attempts to keep all costs in the euro-

zone bring more disadvantages than advantages, the experts say. A voluntary withdrawal from the euro-zone could be more profitable for many countries, so experts from *BofA-Merrill Lynch*. These potential “traitors” in the euro-zone are Italy and Ireland, whose economy could recover quickly after the abandonment of the single European currency.

Germany and Austria are not interested in the euro-zone’s falling apart. That’s why Berlin pays any prices to keep Greece, Ireland and Portugal in the euro-zone. But Berlin is no longer able to pay Italy for his loyalty to the euro. According to *BofA-Merrill Lynch*, the financial support for both Rome and Berlin would prove to be disadvantageous.

Source: *RIA Novosti*, 16.07.2012

iciency,” declared Juliusson. Another pillar was the pension funds, from which the State borrowed money. A part of the debts of private homes were abated by the banks or the state.

### Value of the Islandic Krona nearly cut by half

The devaluation of the Icelandic crown after the breakdown was helpful. Its value in comparison to the euro has been cut by half. At the beginning of the crisis in 2008, one euro equaled about 85 Icelandic crowns, now it is 157. That is in favor of the classic exports. “Fishery has saved us. As in former times it comes up for 30 to 40 p.c. of our revenues, and those are paid in foreign currencies”, says Juliusson.

In the meantime Iceland was able to pay back rather early the rates of the support loans and supplementary credits coming from the Nordic neighbor countries amounting in total to 2.1 billion dollars (1.7 billion of euro, 2 billion CHF).

### Real estate bubble led to the decline

Iceland experienced a roller coaster ride as scarcely any other Western country did. At first there were the apparently unlimited possibilities of 2002 to 2007. At that time, private birthday parties often included *Elton John* being flown in. Jeeps with giant wheels were standard equipment of a lot of households. The weekly shopping flights of the middle classes rejoiced the retailing business in Great Britain and New York. The strong Icelandic crown inspired the young Icelanders to feel to be stinking rich abroad. They ex-

ploited that situation to gather experience all over the whole world. When the American housing bubble exploded, the end of that dream loomed ahead. At first nobody wanted to talk about it. In 2008, however, the three big banks broke down, and were put up for compulsory sale. They had done highly speculative business and had brought prosperity on tick to the country. Simultaneously with the big banks the economy broke down. The krona was losing its value at a rapid speed, the imports – that is to say nearly all merchandise – became more expensive. Protests in the streets forced the demission of the conservative government that had shaped the country since the Independence in Second World War.

### Former head of government sentenced

Former head of government *Geir Haarde* was judged by a court for “gross mistakes in the exercise of office” and for “personal responsibility” at the end of April. According to the sentence in Reykjavik the head of government was declared partially guilty for the financial and economic breakdown of Iceland in 2008. The judgment, however, did not result in a punishment. The anger about the old power (clique) around Haarde was decreasing at the same time as the unexpectedly rapid recovery happened. The Independence Party of Haarde, which is conservative and anti-European, is gaining voters again. •

Source: *CE Wirtschaft*, Island Aufschwung, 27.06.2012



## “The atrocities of war are the motivation for my commitment”

*Interview with Nguyen van Rinh,\* Lieutenant General ret. and former Deputy Defense Minister of Vietnam*

*thk. The latest investigations assume that during and after the Vietnam War 16 million people had been in contact with Agent Orange poison. This of course includes US soldiers and those of their allies Australia, Canada and South Vietnam who are now receiving compensation after a long fight – in contrast to the direct victims in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Again and again, NGOs have been trying to call attention to this deficiency and to the severe neglect of human rights connected with the use of this poison and to call the United States which were responsible to their duties. So it happened in the meetings during the June UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. On the sidelines of one of these events, “Zeit-Fragen” met Nguyen van Rinh, president of the “Vietnamese Association for the Victims of Agent Orange” (VAVA) and questioned him on the situation in Vietnam.*

*Zeit-Fragen: Mr. Nguyen van Rinh, you have seen the atrocities of the Vietnam*

*\* Nguyen van Rinh was battalion commander in the vietnamese Army and fought from 1966 until the end of the war on the side of the North-Vietnamese Army. When he retired he was a Senior Lieutenant General and a deputy minister of Vietnam’s Ministry of Defense. Today he supports the victims of war, mainly the victims of Agent Orange*

*War from close up. Is the war still present, after all these years?*

*Nguyen van Rinh: From 1966 until the end of the war, I fought on the battle fields of South Vietnam. In 1964 the US started bombing North Vietnam. This war was a terrible catastrophe. The bombings, the usage of poison gas left behind horrible damages which are still visible and tangible. It is hard to imagine. Even today people are dying from the aftermath of a war that was over almost 40 years ago. Even today, people die from the mines that are still lying about everywhere very year and it was estimated that it will take another hundred years before all mines will be found and defused. It is hard to describe what terrible experiences and impressions from these times I am still carrying with me. We saw all the cruelties, during the war and later on. This is why I am now supporting the cause of the war’s victims, mainly the victims of Agent Orange.*

*What were the effects of the use of the Agent Orange poison on people and the environment?*

*The US war against Vietnam with chemical weapons resulted in three million injured and hundreds of thousands of casualties, mainly through the use of Agent*

*continued on page 10*

Dear friend

Due to the damage to the endocrine system, the immune system and in the genome, caused by Agent Orange, the victims may suffer from several diseases, but the American government currently recognizes only a certain number of them, which are listed below:

- AL-amyloidosis
- Chronic lymphocytic leukemia of the B-cell type
- chloracne (or similar acne-like diseases)
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus
- Hodgkin’s disease
- Ischemic heart disease
- Multiple Myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma
- Parkinson’s Disease
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Late cutaneous porphyria
- Prostate Cancer
- Tumors of the respiratory tract (including lung cancer)
- Soft tissue sarcomas (other than the osteosarcoma)

The children with congenital malformations: The Government of the United States assumes that certain congenital

anomalies occur in children of Vietnam and Korea veterans and other former members of the military services.

The victims of Agent Orange really do need everything: Psychological, they need encouragement and the compassion of other people. Materially, they need money to cover their daily needs for medicine and food, they need houses and accessories that help facilitate their movement, for example wheelchairs and rehabilitation measures such as scholarships for the education and vocational training of the children.

Remember that they are very poor not only because they cannot work to safeguard their own existence, but also because they have to spend a lot for medicine.

If someone or an organization wishes to help them, please contact us and we will give you further information.

*Nguyen Minh Y  
The Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange / Dioxin (VAVA)*

*www.vava.org.vn*

*E-mail: vava (at) vava.org.vn*

*(Translation Current Concerns)*

### Commentary

*thk. Almost 40 years have passed, and my generation can still well remember the US war in Vietnam. The False Flag Operation in the Gulf of Tonkin – even confirmed as such by the then-Defense Secretary Robert McNamara decades later - provided the pretext for the American president-in-office Lyndon B. Johnson to intervene militarily in Vietnam, a war which was waged with extreme brutality by the United States in particular. The attack of the infamous B-52 bombers on North and South Vietnam, which in continuous bombardment dropped more than three times the bomb load of the entire Second World War on the small country, were utter horror for the mostly defenseless people. Furthermore, no one will ever forget the deployment of the death squads by William E. Colby, U.S. ambassador in Saigon; they massacred primarily intellectuals, suspecting Communist collaborators among them.*

*What determined the disaster of Vietnam in the first place was the unscrupulous deployment of illegal weapons like napalm (white phosphor) and Agent Orange. This defoliation chemical, in actual fact dioxin, which is highly toxic for man and nature, has been sprayed by the US hectolitres upon hectolitres – an estimated 80 million litres – it is a prohibited weapon of mass destruction, with disastrous consequences even 40 years after the end of the war: Every year thousands of people die as a result of the poisoning. One can only guess what has been and is still being deployed on the battle fields in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya.*

*Various international organisations demand that these people are to be recognized as war victims, who deserve reparations. Former Lieutenant General Nguyen van Rinh is fighting for the re-cognition of the injured as victims of war, who ought to be compensated by the US and the chemical companies Dow Chemical and Monsanto.*

*In the last three years the United States have begun to decontaminate one of many hot spots in Vietnam – where the US Army had stored barrels with the poison –, but reportedly without making any major effort. Thus the whole action looks rather like tokenism than like a genuine humanitarian commitment for the affected people. Recently the United States have demonstrated intensified activities in the Pacific region, striving for new military bases, including Vietnam. Hillary Clinton’s “charm offensive” in Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia must be seen in this context. Thus the United States continue marching on the totalitarian path of war.*

# Immanuel Kant and international relations of modern times

by Professor Dr habil. Vyacheslav Dashichev, Colonel General staff ret.,  
Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS), Center for International Economic and Political Studies, Institute of Economics

The theoretical heritage of Kant, especially his treatise on "Perpetual Peace" can and must serve today as the essential norm of behavior for states, especially the major powers, within the world arena.

Unfortunately, European leaders did not adopt his teachings. Instead of perpetual peace, wars continuously occurred in Europe and on other continents. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century the European peoples experienced the horrors of two "hot" wars and one "cold" world war. The 'perpetuum mobile' of wars and conflicts is constantly turning, even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In his philosophical treatise "On Perpetual Peace" Kant formulated the most important "prohibition laws", by which the statesmen should be guided in their policies at international level in any case, in order not to endanger peace and to prevent the outbreak of war. What are these laws?

**"No state shall by force interfere with the internal affairs of another state."**

Kant thus laid the fundamental principle of international law – the sovereignty of each state, whose violation or destruction is the beginning of all evil for the international community and will also lead to the unleashing of international conflicts. According to Kant, the arbitrary interference with the internal affairs of a state can conjure up, "nothing but anarchy" in international relations. He was convinced that war between states for the purpose of punishment (*bellum punitivum*) was inadmissible. It would be fatal to divide the states according to the principle of "suzerain (feudal lord) – vassal".

In contrast to Kant, the politicians in Washington consider "punitive wars" – (Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Iraq) – as usual and necessary practice. They do not shrink back from misleading their own

people and the world public by means of false pretences and primitive arguments in order to unleash and justify these wars.

The problem of the sovereignty of a state in an era of rapidly advancing globalization does of course look different today than in the past. Under the conditions of regional or continental integration, as is the case in the EU, individual states voluntarily delegate some of their sovereignty to the common international organization, if it corresponds with their security, economic and financial interests. This is not in contradiction with the principle of non-interference formulated by Kant. He considered the forcible interference with the internal affairs of a state inadmissible. This does, however, not exclude the influence of the international community on the leadership of a state if, for example, that leadership's

continued on page 11

## "The atrocities of war ..."

continued from page 9

Orange. Hundreds of thousands are still living with most severe sicknesses. Most of those that have been exposed to the poison some 40 years ago, are now between 50 and 70 and they suffer from the severest disorders. They are the poorest of the poor and often live under the worst conditions.

*The US chemical warfare was a violation of humanitarian international law and hence against the Geneva Convention, in other words: a war crime. Has there ever been any kind of compensation for this terrible injustice? The world's public was aware of the effects of the chemical weapons.*

The Vietnamese government has repeatedly requested the US government to pay in compensation and to cover the cost for the injured persons. But so far they have done nothing to help the affected persons live in better conditions with an improved medical care.

*There are state programs in Vietnam to help the affected population. But this entails high cost and is a large burden for your economy, the health care system and the social system. It is admirable to see how your country is coping with all this.*

The Vietnamese government has developed various programs and ideas to activate the whole society towards helping those in need. It is very important that the victims receive support and effective aid from society. For the poorest of the vic-

tims alone, the government is spending a hundred million dollar each year.

*Are there any regions particularly strongly affected or has the poison spread equally in the whole country in the course of years?*

The poison was spread over regions containing 30,000 small villages with four to five million inhabitants. They were directly exposed to the poison. Then there were some one to two million fighters who were strongly exposed to the poison so that we can say today that the victims live all over the country, both in the north and in the south. But the larger part is living in South Vietnam since this is where the US used most of the poison. But most of the soldiers affected were North Vietnamese fighting in the south.

*Why did the US use this terrible and prohibited weapon?*

The US used the poison along the Ho Chi Minh Trail to defoliate the trees in order to be able to easier detect and kill people. They have mainly used it along the border between Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. At the same time it was the goal to destroy the harvest to stop provisions for the Liberation Army.

*How strong is the contamination of the areas affected by the war today?*

The region I mentioned is still contaminated. There are also some hotspots – at the former sites of American air bases. This is where the poison was stored. These regions are strongly contaminated. The

## Ruling against the US and its chemical industry

*thk.* In Paris from 15 to 16 May 2009 an international tribunal of conscience was held with the aim of supporting the Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange. The tribunal has been organised by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) in cooperation with various NGOs, among them also the Vietnamese Association for the victims of Agent Orange (VAVA).

The tribunal pronounced both the USA and the chemical industry guilty of the production and deployment of Agent Orange. It has therefore demanded a complete compensation for the victims and their families, as well as the restoration of the environment and the decontamination of the contaminated water and the poisoned soil.

For more information see:  
[www.iadllaw.org](http://www.iadllaw.org)

whole region is contaminated and part of the poison has deeply infiltrated the soil and the ground water. Had it stayed on the surface, all traces would have been gone after 20 years, but it went deeply into the soil. And they say that it will take at least another 100 years until the poison will be degraded. This means that many people will fall ill and have to suffer.

*This is so terrible; I have great respect for your commitment. Mr. Nguyen van Vinh, thank you very much for having taken the time.*

(Translation Current Concerns)

**"Immanuel Kant and ..."**

continued from page 10

actions put peace and stability at risk in a region or on the global level.

The problem of sovereignty must be considered in a new light, particularly in relation to the tensions and contradictions in a multiethnic state, caused by a people's aspiration to self-determination and independence within this community of peoples. Everything must be done to solve this problem peacefully and by agreement of the conflicting parties. A good example is the peaceful "divorce" between the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Kant pointed out that interference from outside may not be permitted even in the event of civil strife or fight between various political factions in a state. Such interference may have serious consequences for the international community. The civil war-like events in Syria may serve as an example here, in which foreign forces intervene and endanger the peace in the Middle East and adjacent regions.

**"No independent state,  
large or small, shall come  
under the dominion of another state."**

Kant explained this principle as follows: the state is a community of citizens whose fate is determined by the very state and by no one else. Its incorporation into another state would mean its liquidation as a moral subject and its transformation into a mere object. In other words, Kant imposed the prohibition of wars of conquest, i.e. the rule of one nation over another.

For our present time this means the inadmissibility of hegemonic politics, in whatever form they may reveal themselves – in an imperialistic, messianic-ideological, nationalistic, financially oligarchic, religious nature, or whatever. The gross violation of the Kantian "prohibition law" resulted in two world wars. They were both based on imperial policy. If it is not stopped, it can again lead to a major disaster for humanity.

In past eras the conquest of states particularly by major powers, could only be achieved by the use of military force and the occupation of the victims' territory. In the nuclear age this procedure has changed. After 1945, in the nuclear age, when the war between nuclear powers meant mutual destruction and ceased to serve as a rational means of achieving political goals, the establishment of a foreign sovereignty over European countries was carried out mainly by "silent conquest", a "strategy of the indirect approach" (Liddell Hart). The subversive propagandistic, psychological, economic, financial means and the influencing of human resources policy (the creation of a branched lobby – executors of the pro-American policy) moved into the foreground. The favorable conditions for

the use of these means were created by the Cold War by the antagonism of the two hegemonic powers – the United States and the Soviet Union. But even after its formal end in 1990, the importance of these measure in US policy used to strengthen and extend their rule, especially as far as the influence on Russia was concerned, has increased even more. The American ruling elite uses them effectively to keep NATO and the EU countries under their control. Germany has so far remained a state whose mental state and politics are greatly influenced by the United States. Former Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt wrote in this context, "For most continental European nations there is neither a strategic nor a moral reason to become subject to a feasible American imperialism in the foreseeable future [...]. We must not degenerate into servile yes-men. Thus, even if in the coming decades the US will be much more effective than the European Union, even if the hegemony of America will last for a longer time in the future, the European nations must still maintain their dignity. The dignity is based on the adherence to our responsibility before our own conscience."<sup>1</sup>

The application of the strategy of the indirect approach proved particularly successful on the part of the US against Russia. Washington succeeded in establishing the American lobby in Russia's governing bodies. It directed Russia's development in the wrong direction, which resulted in an unprecedented weakening and degradation of its economy, its security, the impoverishment of the country and the people, the moral decay of the ruling class and the whole society.

**"No state shall, during war,  
permit such acts of hostility  
which would make mutual confidence  
in the subsequent peace impossible."**

As Kant rightly foresaw, a "war of extermination" could lead to "perpetual peace only in the vast burial ground of the human race". This applies in particular to the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The warning signal of these two cities has been hovering above the human race ever since. We could also mention the relentless destruction of industry, infrastructure, refineries, television and radio stations in Yugoslavia by the US Air Force and NATO as well as the great losses among the civilian population caused by the attacks. They will keep awake the Serbs' hostile feelings towards Americans for many years. Iraq as well bears witness to this phenomenon.

**"Governments need to reduce military  
spending and armament. Standing armies  
shall in time be totally abolished."**

Kant went down in history as the father of the disarmament policy with this quote.

In these days his warning could be sent directly to the White House. The US military spending currently amounts to more than 600 billion dollars a year, equivalent to about 50% of world military expenditure, which is far higher than at the peak of the Cold War. Rearming is the basis of power politics. By comparison, the Russian military spending amounted to the equivalent of \$ 9.35 billion (in 2002) 11.6 billion (in 2003) and 14.93 billion US dollars (in 2004). The ruling elites of the United States thus act as the driving forces for the military build-up in the world after the end of the Cold War.

**"No treaty of peace shall be regarded  
as valid, if made with the secret reservation  
of material for a future war."**

Another Kantian wisdom. We know what disastrous role the Versailles peace treaty played in the history of Europe. It paved the way to World War II. The "peace treaty" of Potsdam in 1945 proved to be no better. It split Europe into two hostile camps and led to the Cold War. Only the Paris Charter, signed by all European countries, USA and Canada in November 1990 and putting an end to the Cold War, could have created a peaceful order in Europe without dividing lines, without block structures, without foreign domination. It had a legally binding character and contained excellent principles (overcoming the division of Europe, equal security for all European states, disarmament, the promotion of democracy in Europe, no country was to neglect international law, no war may emanate from Europe, etc.). But these principles, filled with Kantian spirit, were completely incompatible with the government policy of the United States. That is why they were not applicable and went into oblivion soon after the signing of the Charter.

The significance of these Kantian principles for contemporary international relations is obvious. In the center of Kant's political philosophy is the most significant thesis: Law should dominate international relations, not violence. Compliance with the Kantian Maxims requires high intellectual and moral qualities among statesmen. The ambition for power and greed – Kant explains – lead to wars.

According to Kant, peace can be maintained only if politics and morality are inseparable. The "naked pragmatism, rooted in selfishness" was incompatible with peace. Kant places morality and law on the same level. They are equivalents. Only those political acts are moral, ethical and foster peace that are based on the law. The rejection of morality for selfish interests, the separation of politics from morality, are disastrous for the international community.

continued on page 12

### "Immanuel Kant and ..."

continued from page 11

International relations cannot develop beneficially if they are made conditional upon the state of human rights and freedoms in the one or the other state. Otherwise a false and dangerous way of development of the international community would result.

War results from politics of hegemony. This is as well consequence of the Kantian doctrine. After the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union only one superpower remained, the United States of America. They aimed at establishing their supremacy in the world (uni-polar world order). The associated plans were very clearly outlined in the "Project for the New American Century"<sup>2</sup>. It was worked out in mid-1997 by *Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz* and other US proponents of Social Darwinism in international relations. The guidelines of this project and its underlying "new global morality" of the United States formed the basis of the Bush administration's policies. In summary they are as follows:

- International relations are relations of power; law plays an only subordinate role.
- Power is the determining element, and law legitimizes the prevailing condition.
- The United States is the dominating power in the world order, which has to be acknowledged by everyone.
- You are either with us or with the enemy.
- The US is currently in a position to impose their views, interests and values on mankind.
- The United States must strengthen their hegemony in the world.
- Human rights outrank the principle of sovereignty of states and peoples.

Instead of the democratic principle of "unity in diversity" that must serve as the basis for a peaceful and stable world order, instead of the respect for the sovereignty and the peculiarities of each people's national development, its culture and identity, the US administration made the principle of uniformity of peoples, the priority and the universality of American values the political foundation of their policy for the entire world. We have already experienced something similar when *Stalin* and his successors tried to impose the communist values of the Soviet view upon the world. The methods of enforcement of these "global" values were very similar on both sides. They focused on violence, and on a policy of power.

From the beginning, the principles of the "Project for the New American Century" were in stark contrast to the teachings of Kant and to his demands for de-

mocratization of international relations. It is amazing how the ruling American elite, passing off the US as a stronghold of democracy, behaves like an authoritarian dictator in the world. At all times, the supporters of hegemonic politics have been the worst disturbers of peace and the most destructive force in international relations.

The USA's "new global morality" has been instrumentalized to legitimize the right of the United States to wage "preventive humanitarian (!) wars", wherever and whenever it is convenient. *Brezhnev's* doctrine of the "limited sovereignty" has been replaced by the US doctrine of "the unlimited interference in the internal affairs" of sovereign states. This means, the United States severely violate international law, which has been replaced by the law of the jungle. The motives presented for this "renovation" of international law are primitive. One is supposed to violently fight the "rogue states", in which individual freedoms and human rights are being infringed, and must enforce these standards from outside.

The "new global morality" of the United States stands in stark contrast to the legacy of Immanuel Kant. The adepts of American policies of hegemony argue that Kant's concept regarding questions of "war and peace" is outdated and has lost its significance with regard to current issues. Nothing could be more dangerous than adhering to this false theory in foreign policy.

It is interesting to consider the impact of the principles of the treatise "On Perpetual Peace" on the transformation of Soviet foreign policy during the socialist reformation – the Perestroika. Since Stalin's time, foreign policy has been steeped in the spirit of ideological messianism. This provided the basis for the expansion of the Soviet Union, which aimed at forcefully imposing the communist system as it had been realised in the Soviet model on other countries, and hence the dominance of the Soviet Union as the provider of this order. This had often taken deformed shapes. Take the *Brezhnev* leadership's effort in late 1979 to conquer Afghanistan and convert the Afghan people to the communist doctrine. In a memorandum to the Kremlin on 8 January 1980, I tried to explain – however in vain – that the invasion of Soviet troops in Afghanistan was a hopeless adventure which would end with a political and military fiasco. That was a voice in the wilderness<sup>3</sup>. The Americans did not learn any lesson from that and 22 years later tried again to conquer Afghanistan. They repeated Moscow's foolishness, which again ended with a fiasco.

Until the beginning of *Gorbachev's* reforms, the Soviet leadership could not understand that the practice of dominion (re-

gardless if it is assumed by a socialist or a capitalist country) contradicts the eternal quest of man, a nation or a political force for freedom and independence and inevitably provokes negative reactions and resistance. Such practice always leads to international tensions, conflicts and wars within the system of international relations. It impedes the development of harmonious and beneficial relations between the nations. Kremlin leaders from *Stalin* to *Chernenko* were convinced that the model "master-loyal subject" was best suited for the relations between the Soviet Union and socialist countries, as well as for the consolidation of the Communist-oriented forces in the "class struggle against capitalism". In this sense, the Soviet-Messiah ideology was consistent with the Kremlin's demands for leadership of the world socialist movement and the Soviet imperial ambitions.

Apart from the fact that such policies resulted in the East-West confrontation and the "Cold War", it sowed discord between the countries of the socialist camp. And there was another drawback. Monopolization and centralization of power always strangle development and diversity by impeding recognition and enhancement of innovation and the development of viable social forms. The efforts to maintain socialism within the Soviet model blocked modernization. Take the "Prague Spring" as an example – the suppression of the reform movement in Czechoslovakia with military power, that was going to have tragic consequences for socialism and the Soviet Union.

Thus, Soviet foreign policy committed four major sins:

- a) it provoked the East-West conflict, which was often on the brink of nuclear war;
- b) it gave rise to conflicts within the socialist camp;
- c) it blocked the reform of socialist society in terms of its democratization and improvement of their economic and social efficiency;
- d) it imposed an unbearable burden on the Soviet economy, which later was one of the reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The harmful nature of these "four sins" of Soviet foreign policy did not become obvious to the Kremlin leadership until the beginning of Perestroika, unfortunately far too late. At that time, it became the priority to withdraw the Soviet Union from any unnecessary and dangerous confrontation with the West. This confrontation absorbed the best forces in the country and made it impossible to find solutions for far more important tasks of internal development, especially the radical improvement of the living standards of Soviet citizens.

### "Immanuel Kant and ..."

continued from page 12

Furthermore, this confrontation enhanced the notion of the Soviet Union as a dangerous imperialist power in Western society. In fact, it was necessary to find reasonable ways to end the Cold War. This historic task could only be resolved by a radical regulation of the ideological principles of the former Soviet foreign policy, above all, by turning away from the "class struggle" in the international arena, from the Messianic role of the Soviet Union as the "leading force" of the "Communist and People's Liberation Movement" and from the goal of "victory of communism throughout the world".<sup>4</sup>

This was the only way to create conditions to balance political interests with the West in order to defuse the East-West confrontation, or to stop it altogether, and to create the conditions for a real process of disarmament and the elimination of the threat of a nuclear war.

Soviet foreign policy had not taken into account the existence of the "principle of negative backlash" in the system of international relations: If a great power seeks to establish or expand its hegemonic sphere of influence under various pretexts, weak states surrender voluntarily or involuntarily to their rule. Then this power becomes even stronger and begins to subjugate stronger states in an effort to create a particular world order under its hegemony. The expansion of their rule begins to threaten the interests of other states, particularly of major powers. Now it comes to negative backlashes. States unite against this rule in an "anti-coalition", which develops enormous strength over time to such an extent that the hegemonic power can no longer prevail in the military and economic conflict. Any hegemonic and expansionist behaviour, regardless under which ideological mask, carries the seeds of its own demise. This is the lesson of the experience of two "hot" world wars and a "cold" one.

Moreover, Soviet leaders grossly offended fundamental principles of foreign policy as formulated already by Clausewitz: Foreign policy goals must exactly match available material resources to achieve them. Was the Soviet Union able to endure the confrontation with all the great western powers? That was a dangerous illusion. The Cold War proved to be extremely useful for ruling circles of the United States. Unintentionally, the Soviet leadership enabled them to gain big political and economic benefits from the confrontation and to strengthen their rule in the countries of Western Europe. The well-known Italian journalist, politician and Russia expert *Giulietto Chiesa*, wrote: "The Soviet Union lost the arms race in combat with the United States for military supremacy. The

rhythm of this race was determined by the United States long before the appearance of *Ronald Reagan*. The Russians committed a fatal mistake when they entered in this race. They realized too late that they had lost it. At a certain point, the system collapsed." In fact, the confrontation with the West with its increasing intensity deprived the Soviet Union of all strength.

It was imperative to find a way out of this dangerous situation. Mikhail Gorbachev as the new Soviet leader took up exactly this task in 1985. In the years of Perestroika, Soviet foreign policy developed principles of a new way of thinking and new principles of foreign policy. The arduous process of transformation of Soviet foreign policy is the subject of my book "Moskaus Griff nach der Weltmacht. Die bitteren Früchte hegemonialer Politik" (Moscow's bid for world power. The bitter fruits of hegemonic policies), with a foreword by Mikhail Gorbachev, and a prologue by *Hans-Dietrich Genscher* published in 2002 in German translation. The book includes many of my analytic memoranda, submitted to Brezhnev, Gromyko, Andropov, Gorbachev, Shevardnadze and other Soviet decision-makers through the Institute of Socialist Countries in the Academy of Sciences. Generally speaking, these memoranda established the need to overcome the Cold War and the arms build-up to employ all material and intellectual forces for a peaceful solution of tasks within the country and for the democratic reform of the socialist system.

As a result of hard work, hot discussions, negotiation of different points of view and acceptance of the best of them on various political and scientific levels we succeeded in developing and enforcing a fundamentally new foreign policy doctrine of Soviet foreign policy. It was consistent with the peaceful teachings of Kant. Here is some of its essence:

- Rejection of the Messianic form of rule and its condemnation;
- Stopping the East-West confrontation and the arms race;
- Adhering to the principle: "Not power, but law must prevail in international relations";
- Recognition of the right and freedom of every nation to choose its own path of development;
- Deep democratization and humanization of international relations;
- Establishing an inseparable relationship between politics and morality;
- Creation of a pan-European political, economic, legal and cultural space (the idea of the "Common European house").

Implementation of these principles in Soviet foreign policy in the years 1986 – 1990 made it possible to create the conditions for putting an end to the Cold War and to find a pan-European consensus, embodied

in the Charter of Paris, signed by all European countries, the USA and Canada in November 1990. This historic document was in line with the principles of Kant's treatise "Perpetual Peace". It seemed as though a new era of peace and cooperation in Europe had begun. However, after one year the confrontational spirit returned to Europe. The ruling circles of the United States could not resist the temptation to continue their domination policies under much more favourable circumstances brought about by the collapse of the Soviet Union, and to destroy the European consensus on peace. Thus, Europe remains divided, militarized, and ruled by an outside domineering power. The danger of another world war was not averted. Today, the priority is on making the principles of Kant's peace doctrine common sense in European and international life. •

- <sup>1</sup> Helmut Schmidt, "Die Mächte der Zukunft. Gewinner und Verlierer in der Welt von morgen", München 2004, p. 238
- <sup>2</sup> "Project for the New American Century. Statement of Principles", Washington D.C. 3 June 1997
- <sup>3</sup> This memorandum was published during the perestroika. See: "Afghanistan: a reflection from 1980", "Moskowskije nowosti", 23 July 1989
- <sup>4</sup> I justified the need of a genuine change of Soviet foreign policy in a memorandum for the general secretary of the CPSU, *Juri Andropov*, on 10 January 1983. It was published under the title "Non sustainable mission of Soviet foreign policy" in "Jahrbuch für Historische Kommunismusforschung", 1997, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 1997.

## Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility, and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

Publisher: Zeit-Fragen Cooperative

Editor: Erika Vögeli

Address: Current Concerns,

P.O. Box, CH-8044 Zurich

Phone: +41 (0)44 350 65 50

Fax: +41 (0)44 350 65 51

E-Mail: CurrentConcerns@zeit-fragen.ch

Subscription details:

published regularly electronically as PDF file

Annual subscription rate of

SFr. 40,-, € 30,-, £ 25,-, \$ 40,-

for the following countries:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hongkong, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA

Annual subscription rate of

SFr. 20,-, € 15,-, £ 12,50, \$ 20,-

for all other countries.

Account: Postscheck-Konto: PC 87-644472-4

The editors reserve the right to shorten letters to the editor. Letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of *Current Concerns*.

© 2011. All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.



**“... fighting needn’t take place. That it ‘must’ take place is the most dangerous dogma of the belligerent misbelief.”**

**The commitment of Nobel Peace Prize winner Bertha von Suttner against the First World War – as if she was speaking today**

**February 1914:**

**“... arms policy charged with pauperisation of the people”**

“Ten thousand unemployed have demonstrated in the streets of Vienna and accused the arms’ policy to cause the pauperisation of the people. The demonstration was peaceful. Those concerned were even quieter. There is something curious about the deafness and blindness of the world towards things it doesn’t want to see and hear. In order to perceive the facts one would have to watch and listen more closely. In spite of all this I want to tell you the secret how to perceive so many marvellous things even in our sad and gruesome days. We are not to turn a blind eye to the vast field we are faced with, but to look out unwaveringly for the things still to develop.”

p. 544



**March 1914**

**“The international murder industry may look forward to nice profits.”**

Vienna, 7 March 1914

“They don’t let us take a breath. They keep us in a constant state of alert. Now it is the Russian<sup>1</sup> trial mobilization announced by the Petersburg correspondent of the ‘Kölnische Zeitung’ that creates rumblings in the press and of course frightens the citizens and makes them tremble. The ‘inevitable’ war is here again. Russia is preparing to invade Germany and Austria. The conflagration is in sight. We owe this appealing certainly to the prudent measures of the si vis pacem people. The names of factories like Putilov, Krupp, Skoda,

Vickers, Armstrong and Schneider-Creuzot resonate in all the uproar about mobilization, war bonds, war games and so on. The international murder industry may look forward to nice profits. And in the exciting poker game that the powers are playing for prestige and influence, they dare using bluff ever more extensively.”

<sup>1</sup> The “Kölnische Zeitung” 3 March 1914 published an alarming article on the preparations for war at Russia’s western border. The article was subsequently denied.

p. 553

**March 1914**

**“Nothing but mutual suspicions, accusations and instigation.”**

“The international politics and journalism are currently dominated by sinister and undignified dealings. Nothing but mutual suspicions and accusations and instigation. Well, these are the right vocals to the orchestrated music while bringing into position the big guns, to the airships’ practice of bomb-throwing, and especially to the ministry of war’s claims for more financial means. The hateful arias and spiteful choruses match this hellish accompaniment. After the world has been shocked by alarming messages, the denials are now following. On 5 March the organ of the Russian Finance Ministry wrote: ‘On the 3rd of this month the ‘Kölnische Zeitung’ published a message about alleged war

preparations on the western border of Russia. That same evening this news caused quite vehement disturbances at the Paris stock exchange, which were reflected in the market rates of the Russian values at the Paris Stock Exchange. These disturbances were communicated today to the St. Petersburg Stock Exchange, that displayed extraordinary dismay under the influence of the aforementioned message, which was even increased by maneuvers of speculators for the fall. We are in the position to formally declare that the message of the ‘Kölnische Zeitung’ is unsubstantiated and pure invention.’ And once again the inevitable war has not materialized.”

p. 553f

**April 1914:**

**“The main interest is not the nations’ way of life and how they are prospering and developing, but how they are grouping”**

Vienna, 4 April 1914

There is no end in sight to the on-going suggestions of “the” (not “an”) imminent world war. At present there is less talk of the Russian danger – thanks to the unofficial peace declarations made by Russian politicians; instead Rumania has now been set up as the rising spectre. It has occurred that the local League for Culture in Bukarest held an assembly in which national-chauvinistic circles, mostly students, demonstrated in favour of Russia and against Austria, and that an army general spoke of the possibility of crossing the Carpathian Mountains. That is the present subject of countless editorials – once more there is a welcome rekindling of the belligerent European fuse of war. Of course it is not about the question if little Rumania wants to wage a war against big Austria-Hungary, but whether Rumania is going to ally with Russia or with our monarchy, or, in other words, with the Triple Alliance. That is what the entire diplomatic, po-

litical and journalistic clamour is all about. The main interest is not the nations’ way of life and how they are prospering and developing, but how they are grouping. Is Rumania going to join Russia, is Sweden going to join Germany? Where are the Balkan states or Turkey going to gravitate? Will there even be a shift within the two big adverse Triple Alliances? All these anxious worries make it clearer from day to day that both these centres of attraction finally ought to cease pledging their hostile opposition. They must stop accusing each other of war mongering, while at the same time asserting their will to keep peace. Both tendencies do indeed exist, but it is not that one of them exists in one country, and the other in the other, but rather that we find both tendencies in all countries. It all depends which of them will prevail in the end. Predominance will decide, and this is also the new way in which the participants will regroup themselves across borders.

p. 560 f

**April 1914**

**“... this is the way how bellicose people are stirring up a preventive war”**

“The well-known writer of science-fiction novels, General F. Bernhardt, published an alarming article in the Berlin ‘Post’, wherein he demands ‘to establish absolute preparedness for war along our borders.’ The shaping of the political situation is such ‘that we are able to offensively initiate a necessary war under most favourable conditions.’ Those bellicose people are stirring up a preventive war because to them matters develop too slowly since the generally proclaimed standpoint

holds that the armament serves only the peace-securing defence. They set up the principle: since fighting is in evitably going to come, it is much better not to wait until the enemy has geared up to finish up with us. This reasoning is not bad, however, it contains a false prerequisite: Fighting needn’t take place. That it ‘must’ take place is the most dangerous dogma of the belligerent misbelief.”

p. 561

**May 1914:**

**“The interests of the Rockefeller oiltrust”**

“Another sad event has taken place in America: the slaughtering of the workmen on strike in Colorado, an incident which many explain by ‘the interests of the Rockefeller oiltrust.’ Also the turmoil in Mexico is suspected to have been caused by underhand dealings of Amer-

ican business people. Who can look behind the scene? All the acts of violence build on two basic errors: the belief that a country must be possessed politically in order to make use of its resources and riches, and that anything good may at all be achieved by manslaughter and destruction.”

p. 569