

It soon became evident to me that the two main events which made such an impression on me during the days of war were being completely reversed.

1. Our allies in the battle of good against evil, of light against darkness could not be joined with us in the post-war reconstruction.
2. The Japanese and Germans, who were proclaimed as the epitomy of all evil were now being built into the Western defence alliance. They were now considered worthy of our friendship—now Russia had suddenly been transformed into a power of darkness.

THE EVIL DAYS OF THE COLD WAR HAD BEGUN

These were the days that sought to divide the world into two. The issues were formulated.

The struggle of Christian civilization against Godless atheistic Communism,

The struggle of those who believe in God against those who do not.

To those who had taken part in the struggle against Fascism the formulation of the Cold War propaganda had a phoney ring about it. In fact we found it hard to distinguish it from the propaganda of Goebels and Hitler. A little more subtle and refined, perhaps, and therefore the more hypocritical. Perhaps Hitler did not start off with the gas ovens, but the doctrine of the Superior Race and the blaming of the evils of Germany on to the Communists and the Jews made certain that the gas ovens would follow the concentration camps as surely as day follows night.

Today the doctrine of the master weapon over against the teeming manpower of Asia is the doctrine of the superior race—our way of life. "We must preserve our way of life" is the slogan of those who consider themselves belonging to today's Master Race.

I am not surprised that a case is being made for the use of Napalm Bombs, Phosphorous Bombs, Germ Warfare, the use of the ultimate weapon is the equivalent of the gas oven in our times.

The struggle against the assumptions of the Cold War led me into the struggle for Democratic rights in Australia and into participation in a movement for peace.

In the early days of the Post-war Peace Movement, Professor Joseph Hromadka of the Comenius University in Prague became the symbol of a bridge between the East and the West, over which ideas and culture from both sides could flow.

Rev FJ Handley,
 My Pilgrimage for Peace
 Australia and NZ Congress for International Co-operation
 to Disarmament. N.O.

the World Council of Churches and he also associated himself with the people's peace movement. To me he became my star in the East. In 1951 I crossed the world to see him. It was my first penetration of the Mythical Iron Curtain. I will never forget the thrill of speaking to him over a telephone from a hotel in Prague after the difficulty and hardship of getting there. I went with him and his family to worship and thence to his home to dinner and a three hour interview in his study. He was indeed my star in the East.

VIENNA. From there I went to Vienna and made my first contact with the People's Movement for Peace on a world scale. Here I met for the first time Professor Joliot Curie. I knew something of the selfless lives of the whole Curie family—how that famous name had given radium to the world—I had read how the famous Joliot Curie had smuggled out of France the heavy water used in the experiments on the atom. He had risked his life and liberty to see that this knowledge did not fall into the hands of the Nazis. If this man could be our honoured friend and ally in the war surely he should be listened to now.

His speech at the Vienna Congress in November 1951 made a lasting impression upon me. He said that there were three principles of the Peace Movement which were woven like a silver thread through all our resolutions and actions.

Principles of the Peace Movement

1. We believe in the peaceful co-existence of different social systems.
2. We believe that negotiation must replace war as a means of settling International disputes.
3. We believe that the existence of foreign troops in any land is a threat to peace.

Now, after 16 years of activity in the Peace Movement, I still find these principles the touch-stone and guide to the policies of peace.

1. The first principle is obvious to all who believe in peace. A showdown between the two opposing systems by means of war, when both sides possess weapons of mass destruction, is intolerable to all who have the welfare of mankind at heart.
2. From the second principle has come the world-wide demand for negotiations in any struggle and the world wide campaign for disarmament. The United Nations has given complete allegiance to the concept of complete and controlled disarmament. The Commonwealth Prime Ministers, including Sir Robert Menzies, have signed for complete Universal and Controlled Disarmament.

FROM AN ORIGINAL IN THE
 UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT PERMISSION

Victoria Peace Council Collection

Our Declarations Are Good, but in Practice the Nations Are Involved in a Vicious Arms Race

Yet we all know that ultimately the nations will come back to the principles of disarmament and negotiated settlements of all conflicts.

3. The recognition of the third principle has led the peace movement to support the struggles for national independence against the existence of foreign armies on their shores.

This principle also was upheld by the United Nations when in 1962 it called for the ending of colonialism in all its forms and the establishment of equal rights for all peoples on this earth.

Ultimately none of us are free while others are in chains. All foreign armies will need to be withdrawn to their own shores from whence they came. Universal and controlled disarmament must take place through the United Nations or some such other international authority.

Within the peace Movement itself mistakes have been made and tension and division within the Peace Movement have broken out when support for Disarmament and National Independence are set in opposition to each other.

At an International Conference in Stockholm last year I myself coined the sentence "Disarmament and the National Liberation Movements are the twin hand-maidens of peace". To set one over against the other is to make each impossible.

Who can doubt that the application of these principles will need to be exercised in the present crisis in Vietnam and other trouble-spots throughout the world.

To fly in the face of these principles is to fly in the face of common sense and reason and to trifle with the death of millions.

We are entering a period of great testing in Australia. Those of us who believe that peace and disarmament are possible will need to be united and strong against those who would lead our nation to war with our Asian brothers.

In the war against Fascism, when Britain had her back to the wall Churchill became the voice of the British people. "I can offer you nothing but sweat and blood and tears" said Churchill, and the people honoured and loved him for it. They gladly gave their sweat and blood and tears.

Our task is much more difficult.

When the nation is at war the propoganda machine is used to call the people to unity and action. Discordant voices must not be heard in wartime.

Our best motives will be misinterpreted. Our self-sacrificial actions will be called sabotage. Sheer bravery and moral courage will be labelled cowardice.

Because our Government has decided to fight in an unjust cause they will be most sensitive to our declaration of justice.

Because they have taken the path of oppression they will seek to stifle the voice of freedom.

The press will be against us and the dissemination of our ideas will need to be by pamphlets and by word of mouth.

We will be up against the power of the mass media.

In spite of all these difficulties the voice of truth will prevail.

In 1951 when I first went to Czechoslovakia I had my photograph taken in front of a huge granite statue of Jan Huss. Underneath the words are written in Czech "The truth shall prevail".

Jan Huss was burnt at the stake in the year 1415. He stood against the then all-powerful church and State. His followers were a persecuted minority. They lived in fear of their lives. Their homes and properties were confiscated. Yet the truth of their ideas lived on. Now, 550 years later Jan Huss has come into his own. He is now honoured by church and State. The Jan Huss tradition is one of Prague's most precious possessions.

Since that time I have been privileged to attend six international conferences in various countries and despite all the difficulties encountered, we are still confident that the truth shall prevail.

In the 8th century B.C. the Prophet Isaiah wrote. One of the woes he declared against the rulers of his day was:

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; That put darkness for light, and light for darkness; That put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter". (Isaiah 5:20).

Those who are supporting the war in Vietnam are forced into the position of calling evil, good, and darkness, light and bitterness, sweetness.

Over against them stand the people who belong to the army of peace and freedom.

Those of us who join will know that we have chosen a difficult road. They know that it will require a rarer courage than the courage required for physical combat, and yet because it is the right road we will receive the inner strength to remain steadfast.

One of the modern heresies that is embraced by many workers is, that because there are faults on both sides therefore each side is equally blameable for the threat to peace.

None of us would claim perfection for ourselves and nobody would claim perfection for any nation, but in every situation there is the truth to be discovered and there is the truth to embrace and live by.

No scientist would make the slightest advance in his field of examining the what if he did not believe that there is a right way and a wrong way of arranging things to achieve the end he desires.

We would never have had the blessings of radium if Madame Curie and her husband had not persisted when defeat after defeat stared them in the face.

The Philosopher and the Theologian must still ask the scientist WHY? What is the purpose of your search for truth in physics?

The truth of the physicist can produce weapons of mass destruction and also machines and devices to feed the hungry people of the world.

Who can look his fellow-man in the eye and say that there is a greater truth in producing the ultimate weapon of destruction than in producing a machine to bring uplift to his fellows?

Any scientist who is hiding in his coward's castle saying he is only interested in the WHAT of things has yet to face Truth in its wider manifestation. Truth in a particular field of knowledge which remains isolated from truth in other fields can actually be a vicious error.

There is a morality in how we use our knowledge.

For many years now Theologians have spent their energy in the field of higher and lower criticism of texts and documents to discover the truth in translation and tradition.

This has brought Liberation from stereotyped dogma.
It has brought liberty and light to the mind.

Now some of this energy must be spent in the examination of international documents. Those who have wrecked the discussions on disarmament time and time again will be exposed by a ruthless examination of the texts of documents.

The careful study of the minutes and texts produced by the hundreds of meetings of the disarmament commission will reveal the Truth. There are nations who have consistently made positive suggestions for advance towards International Understanding and Disarmament. There are other nations who have consistently blocked such advance.

When threats of war occur we must strive to find the root causes of the dispute—strive to understand the aims and aspirations of the people concerned and where justice lies. Who for example in Vietnam is striving for national independence and who is blocking it?

The search for truth in international affairs is part of the struggle for Peace.

When the truth is discovered it has to be proclaimed to others. Thus there must be demonstrations. There must be placards.

We must proclaim the truth of the Vietnam crisis.

We must isolate those who are in error.

We must demand that fighting stops while examination and negotiation takes place.

We must go on doing this work in every sphere of international crisis.

We must stop wars in progress.

We must disengage troops in physical contact.

We must establish trust.

We must see that troops are withdrawn from foreign battlefields.

We must begin to disarm.

We must continue to disarm until complete and universal disarmament takes place.

We must redirect the resources of the armament drive to the tackling of the problem of man's poverty, hunger and ignorance.

Many of us will die before this complete goal is reached but others will take our place.

Those who die will die in the knowledge that they have not spent their lives in vain.

Those who continue the struggle will have the satisfaction of living and working for the benefit of all.

The sacrifice and dedication of those who have passed will inspire those who remain to pass on the lighted torch to those who are yet to come.

Friends, before Marion and I leave for our long service leave, and to attend the Peace Congress in Helsinki, my final message is:

TAKE UP THE TORCH OF TRUTH

TAKE UP THE TORCH OF PEACE

HOLD IT HIGH

THOUGH GREAT BE THE DARKNESS AROUND US

THE TORCH WILL NEVER BE PUT OUT.