



MY WAR CRY

War is not glorious. You need only view the horrible online photographs I guide you to in another commentary in this site [see: “The Hidden Iraq War”] to understand this. It damages the human spirit to present war and battle as glorious or filled with honor.

I believe to lead a nation into war under the banners of honor and glory is to mislead that nation. War may be necessary, it may be inevitable, it may be expedient, it may be unavoidable, but honorable, glorious? Not in my book.

I have served as a U.S. Army officer. I did it with a sense that it was necessary, a small sacrifice I was required make to help insure American security. I found nothing honorable or glorious about it. It was a tedious, hard, job. I eventually viewed it as the acceptance of a responsibility, but I never felt it was anything to be proud of. It was a task one undertook because the leaders of the world are too limited in intellect and emotional maturity to prevent it.

It is honorable to avoid a war; it is glorious to father a child; it is both to learn how to control one’s temper and patiently persuade a combatant that fighting is the lesser answer to differences. It is manly to hold off armed conflict until the latest moment, even after one’s own blood has been shed, with reason and logic and emotional appeal. Cowardice, to my way of thinking, shines in many a warrior’s eyes as he charges, because he was afraid to wage war first with his brain.

I do not believe America is doing anywhere near what it could do to avoid armed conflict today. I believe we are on the wrong tack. I believe our ship is off course. Since the end of World War II, sixty years, we have been building a larger military might. General Eisenhower warned us against the “military/industrial complex.” We did not heed him.

Now we have accepted a philosophy of war built upon the Star Wars mythology of Hollywood. We have acquired a sense of being that denies intelligent alternatives to war as a way of life. The Pentagon is embracing the Star Wars mythology by designing a multibillion dollar new computer-linked Internet that is supposed to allow America forces to view the entire world at a glance, from its ships, its planes, its missile bases, its submarines, and thwart any enemy.

This posture insures we will fight wars for the next thousand years. Our military philosophy is designing the wars we will now inevitably have to fight. We are making the down payment on wars that will further drain us economically and emotionally.

What might be an alternative? How about some candid talks with the nations of the world? What if we openly invited all world nations to sit down to a new round of talks about the obvious benefits all nations would obtain by diverting their military spending to the needs of human beings? Is that an embarrassing idea?

Have we marched so far down this war path that we are ashamed to try publicly to turn around the groupthink moral timidity of world leaders who continue to squander their nations' resources and wealth on something as ignobly conceived as war?

The money to be spent on a War Internet could be spent on a Peace Internet to identify, track, and feed the 15 million starving children of the emerging nations, and manage our world's never ending natural disasters. It could plot on gigantic video screens in every major city of the world the locations of all starving, of all disasters. It could provide a countering vision to the world's people of the inglorious, dishonorable wars now envisioned.

Are we not exhausted from our centuries of war? Are we not, the world over, weary of the futility of sending our youth out to die? Does not every person of common sense on the face of the earth wish that we could stop using the best minds of our nations to figure out how better to slaughter one another?

Common people have all spoken with one another our entire lives, wondering why we cannot stop warring with one another. How often do we hear our leaders speaking of this? When did Mr. Bush last publicly suggest that the nations of the world gather to discuss disarmament and the redirection of our world's wealth toward peace?

When, Mr. Putin? Mr. Blair? When the Chinese? The Koreans? Anyone?

What? You say it is foolish to talk like that? Really? It is foolish to discuss openly, as the largest, most powerful nation of the world, the concept of Peace in practical terms of rediscovering the idea of disarmament?

That is the best our minds can accomplish?

I believe not. Our minds and our nation are capable of anything.

But first, we must redefine what honor is, and glory.



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