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Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents a growing number of area residents of diverse backgrounds brought together over the Iraqi crisis. We support multilateral action for non-violent conflict resolution, human rights, ecological integrity for the planet and international law, through education and dialogue locally and globally. We encourage everyone's participation as we strive for peace and justice to build a better world for future generations.

BPI web site: www.boundarypeace.20m.com

Boundary Peace Initiative meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursday @ 7 pm in the Slavonic Seniors Center on 72nd Ave. & 7th Street.

Mothers Day Peace Walk 2014

By Laura Savinkoff

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I bring you warm greetings and well wishes for a successful, inspiring day from the Boundary Peace Initiative, the B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition, and all the member groups of the Canadian Peace Alliance. (Read the Mothers Day poem and its brief background from the BPI May newsletter.)

It is great that, at least once a year, children take time to say "'I love you Mom" and "Thank you for all that you do for us". But, too often, we forget to give our help or sometime even offer help in concrete ways to our Mothers and Grandmothers, our aunts, our sisters, our friends. We put off saying "I love you" and showing our deep regard for all they have done for us, and continue to do for us, on a daily basis.

What does it mean to 'honour our Mothers'? Could it be that we are called to value nurturing love, the feminine aspect of our 'spirit'? Is this 'feminine spirit' only manifested in women, in physical Mothers? Is it not, also, manifested in the physical man, in 'fathers'? Sadly, for some reason, our societies continue to equate the nurturing of the feminine with women and proceed to belittle men whose 'feminine spirit' is visibly displayed. What is it we so fear, in acknowledging that we all, male and female, are capable of living in balance with the masculine and the feminine. Why do we make it so hard to all be Mothers and Fathers in the truest sense of the words, to be the parents that teach and guide, support and nurture, that love and value, honour and respect, not only our biological children, but all children of The Creator. So, I ask those gathered here today, to think about not only acknowledging the masculine and feminine, inherent in each of us, but to start living in the harmony of a fully-human spirit, balanced and truly alive in all respects.

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(From last column) **Mothers Day**

Once we allow our spirit to guide our ego and our mind, we can expect to find that balance and harmony. Once we truly value, honour, respect and love the spirit in All Creation, it will be impossible for us to harm, cause pain or suffering or even difficulty to any being, especially people. We would see how our actions can cause other beings harm, in one way or another.

Causing that harm would come at such a high price to the well-being of our spirit that we would choose not to pay that price, but instead, would live each day in accordance with the principles of love and nurture, honour and respect, protecting and empowering all. Acting violently and abusively, destroying and dominating, would no longer be possible. Seeing or hearing of someone in need of help, physical, material, emotional, or spiritual, our own spirit would drive us to extend our hand, to offer help and support, and provide it in the way indentified by the one in need. We would become much more aware of the needs of others and without being oppressive, controlling or domineering, we would offer, without waiting to be asked, so to address needs before they become desperate. Of course, here I am... talking of meeting the physical, material, financial and emotional needs of our global family. But, unless we identify and truly resolve the underlying issues of greed, self-righteousness, and economic or military supremacy, then the risk is high of returning to that age-old drive for power 'over'... to control of people through violence or threats of violence, to all the negative acts of destruction that now continue to rage around, and among us.

We must learn to love all humanity, all Creation, as most Mothers love their children. We nurture, we support, we forgive, we understand, we honour.

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To Do

CIMA benefit at Castle Theatre in Castlegar June 13 6:30 pm benefit to help schools of the street kids in **Peru** Presentation and Film **"Touching the Void"** with admission by donation. Info at: www.hogarcima.org

Commemorate the 1895 Destruction of Weapons on June 22nd with 10 am prayer meeting at Verigin's tomb followed by potluck lunch and program at the **Doukhorob Discovery Center** in Castlegar, B.C.

(From page 1) Mothers Day Peace Walk 2014

We respect them even through disappointment in some of their choices and, hopefully, let them know when we disagree, and why. We may be deeply disappointed, even hurt, but our love remains, steady and strong. Until our dying day, we give of ourselves... to our children and grandchildren.

We, all humans, long for a life of peaceful harmony and joyful living beyond mere physical existence. Is this maybe why Mothers Day has become so important? It is the nurturing part of our 'spirit' that we honour, not just our biological Mothers. I do hope this is so, for then all the frenzied buying of Mothers Day gifts might make sense, and the 'Love Yous' would mean so much more... at least to me they would. Therefore, my sisters and my brothers, I ask us to think about what the true meaning of Motherhood is and then how we, each one of us, can be the living example in the present and in the future. Once we make the conscious choice to 'live peace' every single day and comfortably share our joy that we live peace with all whom we encounter, the message will change our own lives and hopefully influence that which surrounds to live without resorting to violence and abuse of which military war is the ultimate manifestation. We have the opportunity to make that choice for ourselves, to seek the wisdom of past masters of spiritual living and we also have the responsibility to offer and share our knowledge, our insight and our love with all who seek it but that's not all, we have the responsibility to encourage and empower all to seek it by being that living example. We can change our present day reality of war upon war, of violence built on violence, of power and control over others, etc if we truly value the feminine, the mother in each of us.

Thanks, my dear friends, my brothers and my sisters, for being here today. Thank you, to all who come every year, to walk, speak, sing and plead for Peace. It is you, the constants, who have made today possible. And now it is us, the next generations, which have the task of continuing your legacy of love and nurture, of sharing and caring for all Creation. Now, on a personal note, I wish to thank all of you who offered your loving well-wishes as I work to heal a broken ankle. Your warm thoughts and kind words have helped to bolster my spirit. And then, of course, there are many who have stepped forward with physical help. I know that without you this trying time would be even more trying.

I also wish to take a moment to invite each of you to the B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition spring-conference, to be held May 31st, starting at 9:30 am, in Kelowna. For the details, please contact myself, Mark Haley, or someone else of the Kelowna Peace Group. I hope to see at least a few of you there. Bless you all as we continue to walk... and talk... and pray... and live, peace for all the world.

In Universal Kinship and Loving Peace,
Laura Savinkoff

Statement from the Freedom Flotilla Coalition on the terrorist attack on Gaza's Ark

London, May 12, 2014

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition met in London over the last two days to discuss future plans in the wake of the terrorist attack on Gaza's Ark in the port of Gaza, as well as future plans to struggle against the blockade of Gaza.

The attack, which occurred on April 29th, caused substantial damage to the hull of the boat. These hull damages and others caused by the explosion need a minimum of 2 months work to repair at a cost of approximately US \$30,000. In response to this attack we will increase our efforts to challenge the blockade through non-violent direct action. We now plan to sail Gaza's Ark early in the fall of 2014.

The authorities have not yet concluded their investigations of the incident, so it is premature to blame anyone, but it is well known who enforces the blockade on Gaza and who doesn't want it challenged. Preliminary results of the investigation and inspection by our partners indicate that the materials which were used in the attack are not readily found in Gaza.

Freedom Flotilla boats have been sabotaged before in the ports of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey, over the last 5 years, as they were preparing to sail to Gaza to challenge the blockade.

Boats that sailed to Gaza have been attacked by the Israeli Navy in international water, in one case lethally, and in others with force which caused a boat to sink. Boats that were not sabotaged (over half a dozen) were hijacked and towed to Ashdod.

This attack on Gaza's Ark took place as Israel is under increased legal pressure for its deadly attack on the first Freedom Flotilla in 2010 at the International Criminal Court (ICC) and in Turkish courts. It also happens as Israel is increasing pressure against all Palestinians in retaliation against <an efforts at national reconciliation between the West Bank and Gaza.

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition commits to continue its work against the blockade of Gaza in all ways and by all non-violent means possible, including supporting the May 31st International Freedom Day for Gaza.

For further information:

Ehab Lotayef +44 (753) 877 0353 or +1 (514) 941 9792

Ann Ighe +46 (70) 974 0739

Zaher Birawi +44 (785) 089 6057

Web site: <http://www.gazaark.org/>

Nonviolence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed.

Mahatma Gandhi

Refusing to be Enemies by Maxine Kaufmen-Lacusta

Published by Ithaca Press 2011

Forward by Ursula Franklin

This is an important book. Its significance goes well beyond the task of documenting a greatly underestimated facet of the present tragic struggle in Israel/Palestine.

Embedded in the chronicle of remarkable people and events, readers will discover the emerging characteristics of nonviolent responses to strife and injustice in a technological world. Each activity documented in this book is not only an account of a specific event or situation, but also an illustration of an often novel and significant development within global patterns of nonviolent strategies.

To help readers to appreciate both the general and the specific attributes of nonviolent activities is not an easy task, particularly in the binary mindset of the current political discourse with its 'yes or no', 'in or out', ally or adversary' modes.

To begin with, there is genius as well as problematique in the very term nonviolence. Resisting force and changing power structures by ways and means that are defined by what they are NOT seems to be vague and indecisive at best. However, nonviolent approaches provide, and have provided, some of the most creative, helpful and lasting social changes, often because the approaches have been situational, site specific, and grown out of practice and have mixed ordinary life skills with extraordinary unconventionality.

It has been pointed out frequently that, throughout human history, nonviolent conduct is the normal and expected pattern of social interactions; cooperation and recognition of the needs of others are the given and for this very reason, it is the violent response, the abnormal, that is recorded, analyzed and taught (see also Kuttab later in the book).

What, then, do we mean when we speak of nonviolence? At this point, attention to definitions may be helpful.

In terms of the issues addressed in *Refusing to be Enemies*, 'violence' is most usefully defined as 'resourcelessness,' surprising as it may sound. Yet reliance on one single resource; i.e., the ability to destroy, to inflict harm, is in the final analysis the most telling attribute of violence.

Organized violence—armed force—is frequently the preferred tool of the powerful. It seems so straightforward; nothing more than the translation into daily reality of a threat, "Do as I say, or else...." When "or else..." means inflicting destruction, harm and hurt.

While the powerful can command many resources other than force and sophisticated systems of inflicting harm, the oppressed, the powerless, cannot. They may have exhausted the resources within their reach and may therefore fall back on violence from a genuine feeling of being deprived of other resources to address their needs.

Once we recognize violence as resourcelessness—by choice or by perceived necessity—the nature of 'nonviolence as resourcefulness' comes into focus. The belief in and the respect for a common human creativity and worth become the resource base from which nonviolent actions can arise. The understanding of nonviolence as resourcefulness thus provides a guide for the mobilization of human and social resources but not a template.

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(From last column) **Refusing to be Enemies**

It is my hope that the forgoing thoughts and definitions will illuminate the universal components that link the nonviolent actions documented in this 'case book' to past and future nonviolent responses.

Ours is a complex global society, in which unforeseen and unforeseeable instruments of power, control and interaction are emerging at rapid rates. These new power structures are frequently superimposed on traditional arrangements and habits of political and social conduct. Such new developments, often related to modernization and globalization, are altering individual and collective behaviors and a society's sense of belonging and responsibility.

These new features of our interdependent global world are shaping the nature and the conduct of conflicts. On the one hand, the range, force and sophistication of violent actions have increased beyond imagination; on the other hand, the same modern technologies have increased the flow of information, of goods and people, obliterating many physical, legal and emotional boundaries, often the very boundaries that have previously confined the range or organized violence.

New reasons for conflicts be they military or civilian, commercial or ideological have arisen as a consequence of the ascendance of technological societies. These conflicts, in turn, are often characterized by very different patterns of conflict resolution and altered notions of territory and boundaries. Yet the ancient notion of "The Enemy" has remained part of the modern world's social and political paraphernalia.

As a category, 'the enemy' is significantly different from seemingly related social classifications such as 'foreigner,' 'stranger' or persons 'from away.' Assigning the designation 'enemy' to some people goes well beyond emphasizing a distinction between 'them' and 'us.' The enemy label becomes a coordinate that places and defines the holder within the realm of an existing or implied conflict.

As a class, enemies are deemed to be intrinsically hostile to one party in the conflict, regardless of personal conduct or conviction, merely by virtue of their belonging to a particular group. Kenneth Boulding, in *Conflict and Defense*, defines parties in conflict as "Behavioral Units." Members of such units—nations-states or clans, organizations or churches—are assumed to exhibit the same behavior with respect to a conflict that impacts them.

Boulding's definition is applicable to principled as well as more casual situations. Thus pacifists expect conflict when they refuse military service; vegetarians may risk social discord when declining to eat meat at a party. Both pacifists and vegetarians choose their respective behavioral units, often in full knowledge of possible conflicts. The designation of 'enemy,' however, is not self-selected. It is a label bestowed by the opponent.

Moving one's adversaries into the enemy class can be politically helpful. To quote Boulding again, "A strong enemy is a great unifying force; in the face of a common threat and the overriding common purpose of victory

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(From page 3) **Refusing to be Enemies**

or survival, the diverse ends and conflicting interest of the population fall into the background and are swallowed up into the single, measurable, overriding end of winning the conflict.”

Not only can the presence of “enemies” serve as social glue, their presumed evil intent and unbending hostility can become the justification for otherwise unacceptable actions against them. Once one appreciates the deep social roots of the concept of “The Enemy,” it becomes clear that, for individual citizens, refusing to be enemies is a profoundly political act. This act denies the ruling apparatus of all groups involved in a particular conflict the right to label and assign individuals to a particular behavioral unit.

I cannot overemphasize the importance of this act. It entails the crucial paradigm shift that can break the stranglehold of violence and open the option of nonviolent action. Nonviolence, after all, is not a bag of tricks to be pulled out if or when violent responses are not possible. Nonviolence is a set of collective insights that, by calling on the human potential of victim and perpetrator alike, opens ways to oppose violence and oppression that are different in kind from the blind tit-for-tat of organized violence.

The events recounted and ideas articulated in this book make it clear that nonviolent strategies are not soft or mushy. Their hard political edge is clear and visible. The goal of the interventions is to decrease suffering and to achieve justice, BUT the changed situations can only be lasting and functional if they assure justice for all. This means that the transformations that specific nonviolent interventions try to achieve must, in the end, yield systemic changes. Those on the ground who constitute the nonviolent movements know this, as they develop their visions of human betterment—to use Boulding’s term.

Bertolt Brecht was part of the struggle against the rise of fascism and the rising tide of violence in his time. He wrote in 1935, well before the birth of most of those whose voices this book has captured, on community responses and on the distinction between help and systemic change.

What End Goodness (Bertolt Brecht, translated by Scott Horton)

To what end goodness
If the good are immediately struck down, or those
To whom they are good
Are struck down?

To what end freedom
If the free are forced to live among the unfree?

To what end reason
If only stupidity puts the bread on the table
That each of us needs?

(Continued next column)

(From last column) **Refusing to be Enemies**

Instead of just being good, make an effort
To create the conditions that make goodness
possible,
And better still
That make it superfluous!

Instead of just being free, make an effort
To create the conditions that liberate us all,
And that make the love of freedom
Superfluous!

Instead of just being sensible, make an effort
To create the conditions that make the stupidity of
the individual
Into a bad deal!

Were he with us today, Brecht would convey his friendship and respect to those whose actions and thoughts this book records. He would be grateful for their courage and creativity as they explore the resource base of nonviolence. He would see, as I do, the bridge across space and time built by all those who, in refusing to be enemies, try to build for all a livable world.

As I said at the onset of this foreword, this is an important book. May it be well read.

Force is all conquering, but its victories are short-lived.

Abraham Lincoln

World peace through nonviolent means is neither absurd nor unattainable. All other methods have failed. Thus we must begin anew. Nonviolence is a good starting point. Those of us who believe in this method can be voices of reason, sanity, and understanding amid the voices of violence, hatred, and emotion. We can very well set a mood of peace out of which a system of peace can be built.

Martin Luther King, Jr., December 1964

The Boundary Peace Initiative (BPI) welcomes articles. All articles are the responsibility of the author and may not be common consensus. To submit an article, contact **Laura** at **250-442-0434** or **L4peace@telus.net**. The BPI is a member of: Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Alliance, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and works with various local and global groups.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Go to the Government of Canada website for emails of all MPs, Ministers at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>