

Can
LOVE
really
overcome
Violence
and Hate?

Reflections on
Friends Peace Testimony

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Section of the Americas

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Introduction

Dear Friends, when you first invited me to speak on the peace testimony last summer, I was working at Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) starting up a new program on the peaceful prevention of armed conflict. I had been doing talks on the spiritual basis of our testimony and on the opportunities presented by the emerging field of conflict prevention. I enjoyed telling the stories of heroic peacemaking being done by many people, including Friends in regions of conflict, and of the possibilities for a new vision of the peaceable kingdom. I planned a speech on those lines, and I will do some of that tonight.

After September 11th, I agreed to come to Philadelphia, on loan from FCNL to work as the Coordinator of the No More Victims Campaign, the American Friends Service Committee's (AFSC) response to September 11th and the emerging war. In the months since then, I found that many Friends in the U.S. have struggled with the peace testimony because they were not sure what we should do instead of going to war. So I had decided to respond to that need and to talk also about the need to end the bombing of Afghanistan. That was when I picked my title, and I will do some of that tonight.

As I was writing up the talk for tonight, I was having so much trouble with the speech that I realized I must be working on the wrong message. So in prayer I asked God what I was supposed to say. The response was pretty swift and clear. It is a hard message to give, and probably a hard one to hear. But we live in hard times.

I need also to apologize to Friends coming from outside the United States, because much of my message is directed to those of us who are U.S. citizens and must face the consequences of what our government is now doing. I hope what I say will also be of value to you, and I hope that you dear Friends from other countries will help us, through your prayers and your insights, to be faithful to our witness.

A New Global War

Friends, as events unfold in the world around us, I very much fear that we are on the eve of a new and terrible global war. Even now it could be stopped, but there is not the will to stop it. There is rather the will to threaten and to fight, either by design or lack of thought, blundering forward in a manner reminiscent of the events that led up to World War I. The consequence of the war now beginning will be immense suffering for many peoples. We as Friends need to do what we can to stop the wars that are already spreading or intensifying. But we also need to be prepared to be Quakers in wartime—never an easy experience.

What leads me to this dire prediction? First, of course, are the statements of the U.S. President Bush and other U.S. government officials that the United States is in a war that will reach into many countries and last perhaps through our lifetime. It is the decision of this government to respond to the present crisis by promising this generation of young adults decades of warfare as their inheritance. There are Friends in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America who know first hand what decades of war can mean.

Second are the actions that have accompanied the statements. As the war in Afghanistan apparently begins to wind down, both sides in this war of terror are taking the battle to many other countries. U.S. forces are already in the Philippines in what some believe is a violation of the Filipinos' constitution. U.S. troops are also present or en route to Yemen and probably Somalia. U.S. military aid is increasing to Colombia—intensifying that war which until recently was a war on drugs, and is now a war on terror. U.S. troops are reported heading to the former Soviet republic of Georgia. An invasion of Iraq is almost certain, possibly with tactical nuclear weapons. This expansion of the war to a longer and longer list of countries has little or no support from our allies in Europe (except perhaps Tony Blair) or from the Middle East or Asia. But it is very likely that the U.S. will nonetheless, as Secretary of State Colin Powell told the Congress, “go it alone.”

Recently the U.S. announced a change in nuclear weapons policy—changes that will make it more likely that nuclear weapons might, for the first time in almost 60 years, actually be used in war. Against the backdrop of insider debates about whether to use mini-nukes in Iraq, the change of nuclear policy is ominous indeed. Listening to all of this, the Board of Directors of

the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* moved the “Doomsday Clock” 2 minutes closer to midnight. Having served on that Board myself for several years in the past, I can tell you that the hands of the clock are not moved lightly.

Of course, the U.S. was attacked on our own soil in a despicable act that left more than 3,000 dead in New York and Washington. These terrible attacks affected the children of my own home meeting, Adelphi, which is near Washington DC. It was not widely reported that there were a number of school children on the plane that went into the Pentagon. Some of those children were playmates of the children in our meeting, and the adults at Adelphi had the task of trying to help our children understand what happened to some of their friends. Like me, you may have watched the CBS documentary about the firemen in the World Trade Center. It gave us a small sense of the horror of the day close up.

The attacks had to be answered—but how? What might we have done instead of going to war?

The Road Not Taken

On September 12th, the U.S. immediately began to prepare for war. There was another road that might have been taken—the road of international law, working together with other nations to find and arrest the members of the criminal conspiracy. In fact, many individuals were identified and arrested, and await trial in a number of countries, using just such methods.

There is an International Criminal Court that will soon come into force when 60 nations ratify it. Already more than 50 have done so. The current U.S. Administration rejects this treaty and refuses to support or cooperate with it. As a nation, the U.S. has declared itself above the law of other nations. The U.S. might on September 12th have supported a special tribunal like that now operating in The Hague and trying Slobodan Milosevic. The U.S. might have developed a special court or arrangement, like the Scottish court that operated in The Hague to try the perpetrators of the bombing of Pan AM 103 (on which one of my closest friends lost his youngest daughter).

The U.S. could take non-military action to make future terrorist activity less likely. We could ratify international agreements on stopping the financing of terrorist groups, but we have not yet done so. We might support efforts for better information sharing between nations to identify such criminals, but we have not yet done so. We might have tried to limit the trade in weapons to unstable regions, but instead the U.S. almost single-handedly thwarted a special United Nations (UN) conference convened for that purpose. We might have sought to strengthen the verification procedures on biological and chemical weapons, but instead the U.S. scuttled that conference also, enraging our British and Australian allies who had worked six years to bring nations together on this treaty. We might have sought to limit the spread of nuclear weapons technology to “rogue” nations and others, but instead we are dismantling the international agreements that have limited proliferation, and the U.S. appears to be standing ready to resume testing of nuclear weapons. I could go on for some time.

There has been a conscious choice to use U.S. military force rather than international law against al Qaeda. There is a conscious decision to expand the war to countries with whom we want to settle old scores (North Korea, Iran, Iraq), or where we can gain access to oil (the former Soviet republic of Georgia), or where we

hope to regain military bases (the Philippines)—whether or not the nations involved have any connection to September 11th.

This is a decision to use the tools of warfare rather than the tools of policing and international law. It is also a decision to weaken or prevent the development of international structures that might provide an alternative to military force. As long as decisions are made by military force, the U.S., which spends over \$400 billion a year on the military, has a decided advantage. This \$400 billion is more than the military budgets of the next 25 nations combined. Russia, the nation with the next largest military budget, spends about \$60 billion on its military each year. (source: Center for Defense Information and FCNL). For over a year, it has been the stated policy of the Bush Administration to seek “full spectrum dominance”—to be able to do whatever the U.S. wants anywhere in the world without fear of retaliation by its opponents. That is one reason the attacks of 9-11, using commercial aircraft as missiles against civilian targets, were such a shock to the government.

There are, of course, consequences to such military buildup. Other nations feel they have to respond in kind. The European Union, America's friends and allies, confronted by a unilateralist U.S., has decided they must develop a European military capacity capable of acting without U.S. involvement, in situations where the U.S. has no interest. Japan and Germany are, for the first time since World War II, sending troops outside their borders, in what some citizens of those countries regard as an unconstitutional policy. China, believing itself to be a potential target of the U.S., is increasing military spending by 17%.

Conflicts in those parts of the world where the U.S. has an interest in oil or military bases are intensifying. And military dictators and despots are now using the catch phrase of “terrorism” to expand military operations, crush dissent, limit human rights, and carry out atrocities—all in the name of fighting terror. Open our eyes! Look and see!

India and Pakistan still stand poised for conflict and each side now has nuclear weapons. Indonesia's military, which only a few months ago was a pariah in the world because of the atrocities in East Timor, has now been given a green light to crush “terrorism.” This has grievous consequences for the dissident movement in Aceh. This summer I met a young man from Aceh at the Peace

Brigades International conference, and I worry about him and his family. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has worsened in recent months and at times descends into war. It is hard to tell if the recent UN resolution on Palestine has come soon enough or will be implemented. Certainly many on both sides have died. Naming North Korea and Iran as part of an “axis of evil” set back, perhaps for decades, the diplomatic work and the work by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including AFSC, that have tried to bring those nations back into the international community. In the Americas, the war in Colombia is escalating dangerously, with peace talks broken off and a new offensive underway. It is already spreading into neighboring countries. I worry about the Peace Brigades team and the Mennonite community in Colombia. I pray for the safety of the Peace Team delegation that Val Liveoak is preparing to take into Colombia.

War Does Not Work

This is, of course, the way of war. Once started, wars are almost impossible to control. They tend to spread. There are always unintended consequences. We cannot know where the path we are now on will lead. What we do know is that hatred and greed always breed violence, and that violence always begets violence.

Pacifism has been called naïve and unpatriotic. But I ask you, which is the greater naïveté—to believe that the frustrating but productive path of using and strengthening international law is the path of safety, or to believe that a never-ending worldwide war against loosely defined terrorism, fought with weapons of mass destruction, will make us safe and secure in our gated communities?

The path of war is always, as history proves, the more naïve. War almost never works. Even when it seems to, for a short time, or after a long struggle, it is with a horrific cost of life, and property, and treasure, and the fouling of the earth, and the killing of its creatures. Almost always, similar ends could have been achieved through negotiation or international law and peacekeeping, with far less cost.

8 In the end, even when war seems to work, as in World War II for the Allies, it is because of the quality of the peace that followed. In WWI, the soldiers were just as brave, but the peace was an excuse for revenge, and it led in a generation to Hitler and another greater war.

For some months as I have been preparing my talk, I have been drawn to the prophet Habakkuk. It is a very small book—only three chapters. In the first chapter Habakkuk complains to God, as only Hebrew prophets can, that injustice and violence are everywhere. How long, the prophet asks God, before you will act? I thought I was supposed to use that chapter as my text tonight, and I couldn't understand why it wasn't working. But I discovered I was supposed to use Chapter 2, God's response to the prophet's complaint. I want to read part of it to you.

*I will stand at my watchpost, and station myself on the rampart;
I will keep watch to see what he will say to me,
and what he will answer concerning my complaint.
Then the Lord answered me and said:
Write the vision; make it plain on tablets,
so that a runner may read it.
For there is still a vision for the appointed time;
it speaks of the end, and does not lie.*

*If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come,
it will not delay.*

Look at the proud!

*Their spirit is not right in them,
but the righteous live by their faith.*

Moreover, wealth is treacherous; the arrogant do not endure.

*They open their throats wide as Sheol;
like Death they never have enough.*

*They gather all nations for themselves,
and collect all peoples as their own.*

*Shall not everyone taunt such people and,
with mocking riddles, say about them,
"Alas for you who heap up what is not your own!"*

*How long will you load yourselves with goods
taken in pledge?*

*Will not your own creditors suddenly rise,
and those who make you tremble wake up?*

Then you will be booty for them.

*Because you have plundered many nations, all that survive
of the peoples shall plunder you—because of human
bloodshed, and violence to the earth,
to cities and all who live in them.*

Habakkuk 2: 1-8 (NRSV)

I think the message is very clear. Those who live by greed and violence, and that characterizes us more than we want to admit, will find our own violence turned against us. The path of war will be disastrous for the U.S. as well as for the many peoples who live in lands labeled "terrorist."

I have a close friend who has served in the White House and National Security Council in two previous Administrations. She told me she was frightened of the whirlwind this country is sowing. If you travel in Europe, or the Middle East, or Asia, or Africa, or almost anywhere outside the U.S., you will find many experienced statesmen frightened about the forces this war is unleashing. It is a frightening time—and I have said nothing about the damage already done at home—not just in New York and Washington, but also to our psyches, to our democracy with the shocking attack on civil liberties and democracy, to the immigrants and refugees among us, to our economy as we transfer more tens of billions to the Pentagon and the wealthy.

Faith in Violence

What propels us toward war? Why do we rush toward battle in the belief that combat and killing will make us safe? We could talk about the economic and military and cultural roots of the conflict—and that is important to understand. But tonight I want to talk about belief. Again Habakkuk, this time in chapter one, gives us insight.

Speaking of the Chaldean armies of his time, Habakkuk complains:

Dread and fearsome are they; their justice and dignity proceed from themselves (Habk 1: 7)

In verse 1: 11 ...*Their own might is their god.*

And verses 1: 15-16, ...*He (the Chaldeans) brings all of them (the people) up with a hook; he drags them out with his net. He gathers them in his seine. Therefore he sacrifices to his net and makes offerings to his seine, for by them his portion is lavish and his food is rich.*

10

Habakkuk complains that the Chaldeans have come to worship themselves, their own power, and their weapons of war, allegorically described as hook, seine, and net.

I believe this is what we face. We also live in a time when the nations and those in positions of privilege have come to worship their own power and the military forces which they use to "...claim dwellings not their own."

Walter Wink, a theologian and author, wrote a remarkable book, *Engaging the Powers*, which gives insight on the world around us and the role of active nonviolence. Wink points out that we all live in a culture which for many centuries is founded in the belief in combat as the way that goodness overcomes evil. This belief, dating back at least to ancient Babylon, is the undercurrent of our myths. The ritual story is always the same. The hero is attacked by evil and almost overcome. But, in the end, good prevails through strength and skill in combat and slays the evil enemy.

This myth pervades our own culture in the West. Whether Gary Cooper in the western movie High Noon, or Superman, or with a darker veneer of the outlaw-heroes of current times, this myth of what Wink terms the belief in "redemption through

violence" becomes the underlying structure of our culture and actions.

Make no mistake. This is a system of religious faith—often blind faith—in the effectiveness of military force or the threat of force (which is sometimes mistaken for a peaceful alternative). So pervasive is this myth that we speak of military force as "the last resort" as if it would, though costly, be guaranteed to work. In reality, while one military force may defeat another, the war rarely achieves any other aims. Once a war starts, defeating the enemy becomes the only war aim, and the original goals are forgotten.

Faith in militarism also shows up in the questions not asked. We do not inquire—why didn't almost \$400 billion for the U.S. military (about 7 times that spent by any other nation) make us safe? We do not ask this. We only assume we need to spend more—sacrificing our cities, our environment, the education and training of our children and youth, the health of our people—to do so. Like the Chaldeans of ancient times, the nations and institutions of our time have come to worship themselves and to make sacrifice to our weapons and our military structures as though they were gods.

Faith in God

The Gospels of Luke and Matthew tell the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert when he was preparing for his ministry. According to these Gospels, there were three temptations. In one of them, Jesus was shown all the nations of the world. The tempter, Satan, offered Jesus dominion and power over all these nations. Satan urged Jesus to think of the good he could do with such power, if only Jesus would worship Satan. The Gospel tells us that Jesus rejected this temptation, saying, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him."

This is really, in my mind, what the peace testimony is about. What do we worship and trust? What do we understand to be the real base of power and change in the world? How does God want us to treat one another?

In turning away from "realpolitik," Jesus pointed to power, God's power, that is real and lasting, and rejected the illusion of power that lay in the nations of that time. After all, where now are the Chaldeans of Habakkuk's time? Unless we are professors of history, we do not even know who they were. So too have many empires come and gone—the Greeks of Alexander's time, the Romans, the Mayan and Aztec Empires, the Spanish Conquistadors, and the British Empire on which it was said the sun never set. All have come and gone. Most of us carry in our blood the inheritance of both the conquerors and the people who were conquered. Perhaps in our DNA we carry the racial memories of many conquerors and many of the once vanquished. The stories are dimly remembered, if at all.

12 Jesus left the desert and began a ministry of preaching and living the power of God's love for the sick, and the poor, and the people who had made mistakes in their life but wanted to make amends. He seemed to pay little attention to those in power at the time. The message of that ministry is perhaps best summarized in the Sermon on the Mount, one of the most remarkable and radical prescriptions for living. In it we are told to love our enemies, to do good to those who hurt us, and to love one another.

As early Christians, and later early Friends, studied these teachings and the life that Jesus lived, they came to believe that God had clearly shown us that we were not to kill one another. The Gospel is full of teachings about forgiveness and the power of love. The Gospels and the Epistles that follow do not teach hate or

violence or human vengeance. We should remember that all of the world's principal religions teach these same principles. Universalist Friends tend to emphasize the Light within, rather than the Sermon on the Mount, but the teaching about how to live is the same. God has spoken to us in many faiths and many cultures with the same message of love and compassion to one another and of love, obedience, and faithfulness to God.

The Gospels and other sacred writings give a different view of what power is—a different view of what human beings are capable of if we dare to trust in the power of God to transform us and the situations of our lives. It calls us to worship not the institutions of this world, but to worship God, and to live in faith and harmony with one another.

Early Quakers, reading the Gospel, found in it a vision of a different kind of power than the armies then contending in England's civil war. One of the earliest statements was from George Fox, who had been asked to accept a commission in the militia. In those days, many people believed that if the good people could gain control of government, England could be a holy commonwealth. All that was needed was military success over the corrupt government of the time. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? In our time, we see many opposing forces, each strong in the belief that God's kingdom can be achieved through military power—whether a crusade or a jihad.

Fox turned down the commission, explaining that he "...lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars..." that he "...was come into the covenant of peace which was before wars and strife were." The power that takes away the occasion of war, the peace that existed before wars and strife were, is the power and peace of the Spirit of the love of God. That is the love that has the power to overcome hate and violence. That is the power of love that can transform even the situation in which we find ourselves today. That is the power of love that sustains the witness for peace through many centuries, and despite persecution. That is the power of love and witness that outlasts all the empires, and all the armies.

What We As Quakers Can Do

How shall we as Quakers sustain ourselves as a people of peace in the midst of worldwide war? By living in that covenant of peace which was before wars and strife were....by living in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all war. It is not our Quakerism, or our pacifism, or our knowledge, or skill, or emotion that overcomes hate and violence. We shall surely fail if we become proud of our virtue and traditions and become vain in our witness. We shall fail if we think the power that may move through us is our own. The power is not ours, it is God's.

This is the foundation of what we must do in our testimony of peace in this time of war. The foundation is faith in the power of God's love to transform us and our society and to bring justice to the poor and the oppressed. Our task is to act, as best we understand what we are led to do, in obedience to that power. Our Meetings and Friends Churches, if they have grown lazy in their faith, need to "get ready." The time is now.

I cannot claim wisdom as to how God will have us act. I have some suggestions of things we can usefully do now.

First, we can make sure that our young adults are counseled about conscientious objection. We are already in a time of persecution of conscientious objectors (COs) and war tax resisters. Young men who do not register for Selective Service in the U.S., and there is no way to indicate conscientious objection on the form itself, lose student loans, federal employment opportunities, and in some states, drivers' licenses. Young men must think about their registration for Selective Service, and be sure to be on record with the Meeting or Friend's Church as COs in the event of the draft's reinstatement. Meetings and churches also need to counsel the young men and women who are not Quakers, but who need our help thinking through the realities of military service. We should be helping young people who are poor to find alternatives to military service as a path of advancement and education. There are a number of Friends organizations with good information on youth, militarism, and conscientious objection. Counseling young people on this topic also lends reality to the Meeting's discussion of the war because the youth at risk are our own children.

Second, we can begin the work of nonviolent resistance. Militarism and injustice may seem very strong, and they are, but nonviolence is "a force more powerful." One of the dangers of the

myth of the power of violence is that it robs us of the memories of effective nonviolent resistance. How can we say that bullies and unscrupulous people cannot be defeated when we have the successful examples of Mahatma Gandhi, of the Solidarity movement in Poland against Soviet domination, of the Danish resistance to Hitler's Germany that saved thousands of Jews, of the end of legal racial segregation in the United States with Dr. Martin Luther King's inspired leadership, of the astonishing peaceful transfer of power in apartheid South Africa and the equally amazing truth and reconciliation commission that followed, of the "people power" movement in the Philippines which toppled Marcos's corrupt and brutal regime, and of the nonviolent people power movements in Eastern Europe that brought down the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall, of the popular demonstrations in Chile that ended Pinochet's rule, and many, many more stories of active, disciplined, nonviolent change.

Third, we in the U.S. can ask the prayers, help and support of Friends throughout the world. We are not used to asking for such help, but we need it. Some of you Friends in other countries are living through or have lived through violent struggles or wars in your own countries and have much to share with us about what it means to be faithful in difficult times. You can also help U.S. Quakers to "see ourselves as others see us." Most people in the U.S. do not know what our country is doing in your lands. We need to learn, and we need to have the strength to try to change it. You can help us. Friends should also remember that we have much to learn from those who are poor and from people of color in our own country. Here too we can benefit from the prayers and insights of those whose experience of life in this country may be different than our own.

Fourth, Friends and Mennonites and Brethren, as the "historic peace churches," have an opportunity to begin to articulate a new vision of a peaceful world that does not rely on military force to solve problems. This is partly the story of the road not taken on September 12th. It is also sharing the vision of how nations and NGOs and people of faith can work together to build the institutions that can prevent most armed conflict. There is much to be learned from experience and the literature. It is at least a whole other speech. It is in fact the one I intended to give, but instead the

Spirit needed us to remember that war is a terrible thing, and that our peace testimony is realistic, not naïve.

Finally, let us put on the whole armor of God. The forces of culture and wealth and nationalism and fear against which we contend are very powerful. Our protection is the power of the love of God to sustain us through what may be the dark days ahead.

FCNL Program on The Peaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict: An Alternative to the War on Terror

The war on terror promises to be the most enduring legacy of the Bush presidency, and the Bush Administration is pushing ahead rapidly to expand its scope and duration and to make the war economy and security state permanent.

The President says it will be a long and costly war. He does not know when or how it will end. He does not know, or is not saying, where it will go next. He believes this is a conflict of good versus evil, plain and simple. The country should trust him and his advisors to know the difference and to do whatever it takes to stop the evil.

The war is expanding on many fronts. U.S. troops are on the ground in Afghanistan fighting the Taliban and al Qaeda forces. The Pentagon is sending hundreds of U.S. military advisors to the Philippines, Georgia, Yemen, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, and elsewhere to help eliminate alleged "terrorists" cells. In his State of the Union message, he declared Iraq, Iran, and North Korea to be an "axis of evil," threatening unspecified consequences if they do not stop sponsoring international terrorism and developing weapons of mass destruction. The Administration is now preparing the American public and foreign governments for possible U.S. military action to topple Iraq's Saddam Hussein. In this hemisphere, the Administration is now considering lifting restrictions on U.S. military aid to Colombia so the Colombian military can use it to fight against leftist insurgents.

On the home front, the Bush Administration is asking the American people to send their sons and daughters to war and to pay over \$2.7 trillion over the next five years to pay for it, as well as, it seems, for anything else the Pentagon wants. Meanwhile, cities across the nation are being kept on a high state of alert, over \$37 billion will be spent on homeland defense in FY2003, and the FBI and Justice

Department have been granted broad, new, intrusive powers to investigate and detain persons within the U.S. suspected of association with terrorist groups.

How Should FCNL Respond In This Time of War?

Few are asking the questions that need to be asked. When will this war end? Who is the enemy? Where will it stop? How much will it cost in lives, material, liberties, or international good will and understanding? How much national treasure will it drain away from efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts nonviolently or to advance the many other critical facets of human security at home and abroad? What will be the condition of humanity when it is all finished? What are the root causes of terrorism and war? Are there alternatives to war? How can terrorism and war be prevented nonviolently?

These are the questions FCNL is asking of members of Congress, the Administration, and the American public. These are the questions our country must ask as it stands at the threshold of a permanent state of war. This is FCNL's challenge for the Second Session of the 107th Congress.

The Peaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict: A Practical Alternative to the War on Terrorism

Under this rubric, FCNL is giving priority to the following issues:

Peaceful prevention of deadly conflict:

Arms control and disarmament

- Promote nuclear disarmament, de-alerting, and non-proliferation
- Promote dismantlement and international control of weapons of mass destruction
- Promote reducing/controlling international sale and transfer of light weapons

Peaceful prevention of deadly conflict:

International law and institutions

- Identify, articulate, and publicize non-military alternatives to war on terror
- Oppose expanding war to Iraq or elsewhere
- Promote just and nonviolent resolution of conflict between Israel and Palestine
- Promote just and nonviolent resolution of conflict in Colombia
- Develop model legislation that would contribute to the peaceful prevention of deadly conflict (e.g. global school lunch program or a "Marshall plan" for Afghanistan/Pakistan, etc.).
- Promote full U.S. engagement with and participation in the UN and other international institutions for the pacific settlement of disputes

Peaceful prevention of deadly conflict:

Federal budget priorities

- Shift military spending to increase funding for: humanitarian and development assistance; the Nunn-Lugar nuclear, chemical, biological weapons threat reduction initiative in Russia; cooperative international institutions

dedicated to the advancement of human rights and the rule of law; international efforts to reduce the sale and transfer of weapons around the world and to control and eliminate weapons of mass destruction; assuring that the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable people in our society are met.

Peaceful prevention of deadly conflict:
Respecting human rights at home and abroad

- Preserve and advance human rights at home for all without regard for race, creed, religion, ethnicity, or citizenship, opposing arbitrary detentions, suspension of civil liberties, military tribunals, use of death penalty, etc.
- Promote the advancement of human rights around the world through bilateral and multilateral institutions and treaties, including U.S. ratification of Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

Peaceful prevention of deadly conflict:
Environment and natural resources

- Energy policy—reduce role of oil as a source of violent international conflict by reducing U.S. dependency on imported oil through various methods to reduce consumption, energy efficiency improvements, and the development of renewable alternative energy resources

This last area of work (energy policy) would be contingent upon raising additional funding and recruiting additional personnel. It is listed here because we see it as an opportunity for FCNL to begin to expand into environmental advocacy within the context of a comprehensive legislative program plan.



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We seek
*a world free of war
and the threat of war*

We seek
*a society with equity
and justice for all*

We seek
*a community where
every person's
potential may
be fulfilled*

We seek
an earth restored