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The answer when someone asks,
“What’s the alternative?”

Peace Culture vs. War Culture

I interrupt my normally scheduled broadcast to bring you a special announcement. Many people around the world are clearly harboring the delusion that the war in Ukraine is some sort of epic, good-guy-versus-bad-guy action film. For some, Putin is the bad guy. For others, it’s the US and NATO. Still others blame the Ukrainian neo-Nazis. If you take any of these sides, you have fallen right into the trap.

The exciting bloodletting among testosterone-driven, hyper-competitive warriors in Ukraine, Europe, The World is a trick, an illusion. The global war culture is using this war to make a ton of money, but more importantly, they are using it to ensure the perpetual dominance of violent competition over civilized cooperation. They are even using it to solidify the ridiculous notion that nuclear weapons are useful, must-have weapons. I would be appalled but not surprised to see some tiny nuclear weapons used to underline this last point.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is much more popular than the number of national ratifications would indicate. No one, not even war culture enthusiasts, wants an all-out nuclear war, so humanity has been inching steadily toward the realization that nuclear weapons are an obscenely dangerous, expensive, unnecessary and stupid threat to human survival. The war culture must suppress this realization at all cost. Nuclear weapons are a vital source of the existential fear that facilitates the animosity that drives continual increases in military budgets. Ukraine is all about the war culture reminding humanity that annihilation is always just a shot away, and our only protection is the glorious military.

The war in Ukraine was carefully arranged because Russians and Europeans were getting far too friendly. Europeans were growing dependent on Russia for their fossil fuels. The next thing you know, Europeans might have forgotten that Russians are the enemy. They might insist on letting the Russians into NATO. If that were to happen, who would NATO be an alliance against? China? China is the world’s factory, full of essential workers. What if Americans and Europeans also forgot that the Chinese are enemies? How would the militaries in the US, China, Russia, Europe, Japan, and both Koreas justify their bloated budgets? Nothing frightens the war culture – all military industrial complexes in all countries – more than an outbreak of world peace. Peace is anathema to the war culture. Without war, the US has no economy at all. Ukraine has been sacrificed on the altar of continued war culture dominance.

That sacrifice is working well. Scenes of war fill our cybersphere. Whole cities rubble-ized. Bloody bodies lying in the streets. Daily reports of terrible atrocities. Authoritarian censorship ensures that we all see what our respective Masters of War want us to see. Sweden and Finland are joining NATO for fear of Russian invasion. Fear and hatred (of both Russia and the US) are on extravagant, open display. Fear and hatred, of course, are the lifeblood of all militaries. Whatever happens to Ukraine, Russia, Europe or the US, the war culture is winning. The law of the jungle. Survival of the fittest. Might makes right. Peace based on

doomsday machines. These have been safely returned to their rightful positions as guiding principles.

The problem is, our war-culture warriors are leading us over the cliff. At a time when we need unprecedented cooperation to manage carbon dioxide, toxic waste, inequality, disease, dwindling resources and exponential population growth, the war culture is successfully ensuring that no such cooperation takes place. The war culture will keep profiting and sending out warriors to keep fighting until the last human takes his or her last breath because that is what the war culture does. Winning and profiting are what give the war culture meaning. Without an enemy to kill, warriors see no reason to live. As General Thomas Power said during the Cuban Missile Crisis, "The whole idea is to kill the bastards. At the end of the war if there are two Americans and one Russian left alive, we win!"

So the fight that matters is not the warmongers of US/Europe versus the warmongers of Russia/China. That fight is for show. Warmongers and fossil fuel salesmen everywhere are winning, right now, regardless. They're laughing all the way to the bank. It makes no difference whatsoever who wins what in Ukraine. The outcome of that competition will be great wealth and satisfaction for a few, widespread poverty, misery, and a massive human die off for the rest, then, quite possibly, the extinction of our species.

The war culture must be stopped. All war must be stopped. The only conflict that matters to anyone who would like their children to grow old is peace versus war. If, by some miracle, we graduate from this atavistic war culture to a genuine peace culture, we might find a way to keep our planet habitable. If we manage to achieve the collective realization that humanity is one and the Earth is our home so we all have to work together with all our might to keep our home livable, we could make this fabulous planet a paradise. The prospect of humanity working as one toward universal health and wellbeing terrifies the war culture, and Ukraine shows how determined they are to resist it.

It's important to perceive and accept that, right now, war is winning big. Peace is losing. There are genuine peace-loving people in the US, Russia, Europe, China, everywhere. The majority of people everywhere would prefer to live in peace. That's why so many Ukrainians left Ukraine as fast as they could. So you need to decide, right now. Which side are you on? Are you for war? Or are you for peace? If you are on the side of peace, you need to do much, much more than you're doing now or peace is finished.

If you're over sixteen and going to school, drop out. School is for the future. If peace loses, you have no future. If you care about long-term survival, stop going to school. School is where they teach you to be a warrior or a systems manager. Get into the streets. Join Extinction Rebellion. Indigenous actions. Black Lives Matter. Code Pink. Any peace or justice group you can find. Lie down in the highway. Bring a halt to business as usual using any nonviolent means necessary. And in your spare time, learn to grow food.

If you are working at any level in government, the fossil fuel industry, the weapons industry, the meat industry, the auto industry, the military industry, banking or anything to do with finance or Wall Street, anything to do with plastic or pesticides, quit. Quit right now! And don't just quit. Blow the whistle. Steal documents and tell us everything you know about what the war culture is doing to wreck our world. If you don't quit, you are complicit. You are on the Dark Side. You are hastening our extinction.

If you are involved in essential activities (promoting health and wellbeing), keep working, but make sure you're promoting the greatest good for the greatest number. Keep in mind that you're not working for profit. You're not working to improve your resume so you can make more money in the corporate, industrial future. You're working to alleviate suffering, restore our environment, and enhance the chance of human survival. Anything else is a waste of time.

The game is on. War versus peace. War is up by seven runs in the 9th inning with two outs. The war culture is bringing in a fresh pitcher with a seriously deceptive knuckleball. He has been advised to use and rehabilitate nuclear weapons. If he succeeds, it's game over.

The peace culture is watching TV, keeping a low profile, staying out of the line of fire, working two or three jobs to pay the rent, struggling to work while caring for children, and generally going along to get along. And that "going along" is why the war culture is winning. Peace has the numbers. Peace-lovers could bring the whole system to its knees if they tried. The war culture is winning because the vast majority of people who prefer peace are not in the game.

We need to let our leaders know we hate war. We despise and will not vote for warmongering politicians. We will no longer tolerate wasting vast sums of money on murder. We will not tolerate one more day of war. No war. No kind of war. It's peace or bust. Yes, that will mean considerable chaos and destruction, but peaceful destruction to end war is nothing compared to what will happen if we let the war culture continue to loot our world. It's time to turn off the TV and stand up for peace, sustainable living and survival. Whatever you can do, do it right now, or it's all over but the dying.