

Peace Education

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In this discussion-paper I look at certain general kinds of peace which certain general kinds of “education” are calculated to bring about, if they succeed; in order first to see which if any of them is ultimately worth having. I find at least one, and at present only one general kind of peace to be worth having; and then examine two broad “realistic” ways – the only “realistic” ways I yet see – in which we might think to achieve that peace. I find neither of those ways to be ultimately capable of delivering that peace, and nearly all the more sensible forms of “peace education” which I have yet heard canvassed, to be tacitly or expressly geared to one or other of those ways. (The present paper came in response to a review of literature on peace education which I was called upon to make, some time ago.) I then consider an “unrealistic” possible way to achieving the same sort of supposedly worthwhile peace, finding that the chances of ever achieving it by that way are slender in the extreme, and that the forms of “education” which I see to be needed in order to achieve it by that general route are themselves so dangerous that the “unrealistic” route too may well find no sensible takers.

After a discursive opening I present an argument with “small holes” in it. By that I mean that assumptions would have to be supplied, at various stages, to make the argument even formally valid; and that many of the steps I do express would have to be rewritten for a similar purpose. I call the holes small because I think the the rewriting required really is no more than rewriting, and that the assumptions which need to be supplied are either true or could be argued for elsewhere. I think that there are no “big holes” in the argument; that none of the rewriting, when done, would reveal more profound inadequacies, and that none of the assumptions needed, whether expressed or to be supplied, are false. In view of my rather bleak conclusions, however, I rather hope I am wrong about that.

By ‘peace’ we (conscious speakers of English) may wish to refer to any of the conditions of politically-ordered humans to be listed presently. Uses of ‘peace’ for conditions of other entities I shall leave aside, or suppose to be capable of being treated as extensions or adaptations of these.

1) Absence of war and of active hostilities generally, especially when the hostilities are being expressed physically against

human individuals. The sense of 'peace' I intend here I take to be purely descriptive, or at least not necessarily to be evaluative in any strongly evaluative way. So I might, by the same evaluating-criteria, be able to judge peace of this sort to be highly desirable for a short time, as in a truce or cease-fire, yet highly undesirable if prolonged. It is obvious enough that this kind of peace can be used, on some occasions at least, by one who seeks a breathing space and a cooling of passion to permit a more lasting peace to be established; and equally by one who seeks only to regroup his forces in order to wage war with all the greater success, or to consolidate his gains.

2) The second sense of 'peace' has the same descriptive content as the first, but in addition involves a stipulation that everyone in the population of politically-ordered humans thinks that either a sense 1) descriptive peace in general, or at any rate this instance of it which, let us suppose, is under consideration, is desirable overall. I find this to be a not uncommon view among decent people.

Superficial objection to bothering with education towards this kind of peace: It is a "peace" which could well be had, and could well be universally approved, in a society run perfectly on master-and-slave lines, so long as master-population and slave-population alike were to be suitably "educated" to it. Conditioning, drugs or surgery might do the trick; and a more subtle form of education in support of a "peace" of this sort can be seen in the *Republic*.

Superficial objection 2: this kind of peace, universally approved, is as easy to get as a Final Solution. I only need to kill everyone who disagrees with me, and approval is universal.

Deeper objection: Even such a Final Solution would not guarantee that some of those spared, or yet unborn, might not come to think otherwise, or that I myself might not come to think I had been mistaken. The force of this objection is that it may be within the capacities of humans, within my own capacity even, to overthrow my utopia, and hence my absence of hostilities (in all probability). The force of the objection is weakened somewhat because as I acknowledge, it is only a practically-possible and reasonably-proximate overthrow, or change of heart, that need be feared (or hoped for) in human affairs. The mere logical possibility of overthrow, if that were all that had to concern us, would not itself be good grounds for mistrusting a peace of the sort envisaged here (sense 2 "peace"), though recognition of the possibility might incline us to heed warnings against reposing too much trust in the hope that such a peace could hold generally and over a fair time. Thousand-year Reichs are easier to promise than to maintain. And such a peace, even while it lasted, would not necessarily be

able to bring humans any great part of their desires: not the *audaimonia* desired by the ancients, nor even the more modest “contentment” perhaps, of some of the moderns. Yet even a reasonable probability of constraints or too great a discontent for the proximate future – for some, even if not for all, of “our time” – might still be more desirable than the likeliest alternatives.

3) The third sense of ‘peace’ has some positive requirements (as against the mere absence of hostilities) built into its descriptive content, and for that reason I shall call it ‘positive’ peace. Once more there could be two forms of peace, one for which we attended solely to the descriptive conditions, and another with the additional stipulation that the population of politically-ordered humans generally thinks that either positive peace in general, or the instance of it which, let us again suppose, is under consideration, is desirable overall. In what follows I shall for brevity be concerned only with the second, value-laden sense of ‘positive peace’. Peace of this kind has to provide a condition in which there is reasonable freedom from discontent for people who do not actively work against the smooth running of the society in that condition, and in which most active adults actively co-operate to some extent in the smooth running of the society. These active contributors must include all those of greatest political influence. From most of the rest there must be non-hindrance.

Deepish difficulty: Given pretty well any large population of humans, a minority (including doubtless Erich Fromm’s sado-masochists) take naturally to the active running of things while the majority tolerate more than a reasonable discontent rather than take to running things themselves. Response to the difficulty: This is doubtless so as a factual generalisation about pretty well any human society known to me, but it is no law of the Medes and Persians that all human populations at all times and places must behave in that manner. Under fear of The Bomb, might not people behave differently? Riposte to the response: Under fear of hellfire and damnation large populations have allowed a not altogether benign clerisy to rule their affairs. Why should fear of The Bomb be any more effective? Reply to this riposte: I cannot think of one.

Back to the argument. The condition of positive peace need not actually be thought desirable by all who live in the society. Nostalgic mercenaries, for example, might even be allowed to get away with the odd coup, so long as it was local, and so long as a “just order” was restored or could be restored before too many in the society as a whole were menaced. Positive peace could well tolerate some active hostilities between politically ordered groups. It is not a secularized heaven. On the other hand it must be settled

overall, not precarious, neither positively and effectively menaced.

Difficulty. How settled is settled? Can I have positive peace only by controlling the universe and all its possible developments? I think not. I do not even have to demand – I hope – that the universe is on the side of justice. I only have to be able to control enough of my environment (spatially, and with good expectations for the proximate future) to have reasonable assurance that the condition of positive peace obtaining will not proximately be overthrown.

Difficulty. How settled is that? If, as thinkers as diverse as Hume and Aristotle thought, there are certain characteristics of humans (in Hume's case, certain "natural beliefs" or tendencies to act), regardless of culture or "education", then the minimal requirement for a settled enough condition of positive peace is that it must involve no necessary elements incompatible with any of the "humanly basic" characteristics. If there are any such elements, we can practically guarantee that, sooner or later, our peace will be disrupted.

Fortunately, the question whether there is a "humanly basic" level, neutral as towards individual cultures, need not be settled one way or the other, for present purposes. What is important is that even if no human is not also culturally circumscribed, there has to be no cultural circumscription such that it is not radically open, if not to just any other cultural circumscription, then at least to some cultural circumscription incompatible with the present one. I understand that Sartre denies this as a practical possibility. I understand also that Christians are committed to affirming it by their commitment to a doctrine of *metanoia*, of radical conversion/repentance. I am not at all clear whether marxists are committed to it also. They are if there is ever meant to *be* a classless society for humans, and if it is not merely an ideal which actual societies are meant to approach asymptotically.

Now suppose, however, that there is a condition in which positive peace could be realised, but which was incompatible with some or indeed any culture-tied condition in which I might be living now. If I can move from my present culture-tied condition into one in which positive peace is a practical possibility, and that is the enormous question, then it would not be a fatal objection to some recipe for peace, that it was incompatible with my actual state and situation, or that of any human now living.

On the other hand it would be a fatal objection, on the face of it, to the foreseeable acceptance or practical acceptability of the recipe. And that in turn might be thought grounds enough for rejection of the recipe itself: what good is a pudding of all the delights which nobody we (existing humans) know can be envisaged as enjoying? Curiously, there just could be a way of making

such a condition to come to be practically acceptable. That is by commending the recipe (while not denying how difficult it is to envisage its being carried out), and by acting out its acceptance or the consequences of its being carried out, in some dramatic form, the form of a dance perhaps. By such anticipatory acting-out a community just might be led – e-duc-ated – towards the condition in which alone that community or its children could actually accept the recipe. An approach of this sort is liable to be dismissed as soon as it is entertained: as so much folly, unrealism and unreason on stilts. But an examination of the more “realistic” options, which will be undertaken presently, may suggest less dismissive haste. Also, I am not at all sure that the acting-out approach is not at least a part of what some people who profess to seek a positive peace – eventually and God knows how – already do. A Jewish Seder, a Christian Eucharist, seem calculated (in theory) to anticipate peace in just that sort of way.

Suppose, however, that a more “realistic” approach is to be adopted, and some existing (or proximately available) culture is to be preferred from those around, and is to be taken as the ruling culture. Two broad lines of approach are then possible.

I In the first, one and one only cultural system is chosen. Within it we have freedom to prefer in turn only one political system, or a plurality. Either political format is prima facie possible within the approach now under consideration. Education – though what? – comes in here to inform those who will choose, it comes in again to get those whose culture is preferred to rejoice in the fact and maintain the culture chosen in all its splendour, and to get those whose ingrained culture is in conflict with the one chosen, to accept it.

We can dismiss the superficial objections that it might be difficult even to choose one culture, and difficult to educate any “old” bearers of the culture chosen so that they do not unduly resent having to accommodate themselves to the inevitably different accents in which many of the new bearers are going to express “their” old culture.

Deeper objection: Cultural characteristics run too deep in humans generally for an ingrained culture to be “educated out” without great conflict and deep resistance. Reply: Science is wonderful, and we already know how “educating out” can be achieved, in many more cases than not. Riposte to the reply: This is likely to be profoundly and in the strictest sense demoralising, to the resettled and the resettlers alike, and hence is more likely to work against the establishment of positive peace than for it.

Reply to the riposte: Then the resisters (or those thought likely to resist) will simply be killed, no-one knowing why, save the

people responsible, who like Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor will keep their dark secret. New riposte: If everybody unlike Us disappears overnight, won't some of Us get suspicious and uneasy, even if some token Us are killed too, to keep people generally off the scent? New reply: Then stage-manage a super-power confrontation, or something of that nature, which results in so much slaughter that no-one outside the Grand Technological Inquisitor's secret is likely to be surprised at either the scale of the killing or the distribution of the survivors. Where to hide a corpse but in a battle?

My comment on all this: Thrust and parry of that sort can go on indefinitely, depending on the ingenuity and time available. (And how much time have we?) You can make a "science" of it, and talk of megadeaths per bonit. A game. But it is a silly game. Why should I repose any hope for positive peace in men or women so profoundly warped in unpeaceable ways as to be able to advance any distance along that road?

It has been put to me that I have gone too quickly to consideration of armed and violent means for resolving conflicts, ignoring models for non-violent resolution of conflict which are available and have indeed been used to effect in many parts of the world. In particular, it has further been put, I have ignored the model provided by the civil (as against the criminal) law.¹ There is truth in both contentions. What precarious peace we do have – those of us lucky enough to live in parts of the world which have even that – is due in part to many non-violent means of conflict-resolution: discussions, diplomatic horse-trading, and such overtly "legal" means as those provided by the Hague Court. I have no wish to be ungrateful to any of those means, or to suggest that they cannot continue to be available at least sometimes in the foreseeable future. In particular I have long admired the work of the Hague Court, and wish it well.

At the same time I would reply with some clarification of what I have been trying to do, which I unrepentantly defend. First, on the model of suing in the courts for civil wrongs. The procedures involved in that are indeed, in the first instance, non-violent ones. We would badly misunderstand the source of what effectiveness they have, however, if we were to ignore that behind the civil courts lie certain powers of the criminal law for enforcing some of the decisions, and that behind those lies the sovereignty of the state and the armed force of the state: *de Maistre's* executioner. In practice therefore it is effective and non-violent in its exercise only when the parties involved agree that it will be. The Hague Court itself shows exactly how difficulties arise in practice, when the parties to dispute are unwilling to be agreeable. Even cricketers whine about the umpire these days. (I recall complaints

made by the English cricket team on a day when few of their batsmen had loitered by the wicket long enough to notice much of what the umpires had been doing. And no, not all of them had gone for LBW.) For anyone with a serious concern for peace in the real world, the interesting cases are those in which, for whatever reason, the parties in dispute are not prepared to come to agreement. It is conflict in cases of that sort that will have to be overcome – not necessarily obviated – if a non-bogus peace is to be obtained in the real world. But of course I have no wish to discourage people from using non-violent procedures for resolving the conflicts, if they are prepared to do so; or to discourage anyone from looking harder for ways in which that can be done, so that in as many cases as possible the more worrying forms of conflict-resolution need not be resorted to.

The objection considered, however, serves to bring out a further point: which some may find contentious, and which I may not yet have put plainly enough. In many well-intentioned discussions of peace and of peace education, people speak of “peaceful resolution of conflicts” as being desirable quite generally and without qualification. It is, I think, a dangerous way of speaking, and one liable to smuggle a dangerous confusion into the discussions. What I am concerned with is the obtaining, ultimately and God knows how, of a positive peace of some sort. I cannot at the moment specify what properties such a peace will have to have: my actual state and situation is so unpeaceable that even my imagination is perhaps far too limited even to sketch a positive specification which might – still unknown to me – coincide with the appropriate specification which may some day be able to be made.² But I can at the moment make some negative points about the sorts of things that must not hold of such a condition if it is to be called ‘peace’ in the manner required. And one of them might well be that it is a condition in which violent oppression of the sort which now makes for so much misery, would have to be excluded. Now if by speaking of the “peaceful resolution of conflicts” someone were trying to make a negative point of that sort about the hoped-for condition of peace, I should not need to have any quarrel with him: though I might well ask for some reformulation.

If on the other hand the speaker should be arguing that peaceable means of resolving conflicts are desirable quite generally and without qualification, by his point about “peaceful resolution of conflicts”, then I would have more to say. Even if I could specify anything positively of the (supposed or hoped-for) condition of positive peace, I would have no business to make the mistake of supposing that what *ex hypothesi* would have to be true of that,

should have to be true also of all the means we might have to take in order to obtain peace. And even as things are – I think, and shall return to this point presently – and I restrict myself to merely negative points about what has to be excluded from a “peace” in the sense required, I may well have to take certain means, bloody and violent means at times, in order to get to a state from which such bloody and violent doings must be excluded. The means which may have to be taken, if we are to get to a peaceable state, need not themselves be peaceable, and might at times have to be very far from peaceable. To think that because of the unpeaceableness which may have to be excluded (the ‘have to be’ here is the quasi-definitional one which children use in ‘... and you’ve to be dead, because this is a lethal ray-gun ...’) from the desired final state, we have to exclude all unpeaceableness of the same sort from just any of the means required (and the principal sense of ‘have to’ here is that of practical inevitability), is not only to reason fallaciously: it is to invite into our peace movements the fate of the Weimar Republic. Practitioners of any kind of peace education – please note.

II In the second of the “realistic” approaches possible, a limited number of humanly acceptable cultural options (actually adopted or proximately adoptable by different groups of people) are allowed. These options may well be incompatible with each other, but all must be compatible with at least one “humanly possible” condition in which a settled positive peace is feasible.

Difficulty: Unless severe limits are set on the kinds of cultural option to be permitted (and in that case the rather bloody consequences envisaged under approach I are going to become a distinct possibility, when the limits are being enforced), then the only basic condition with which they can all be compatible is likely to be so vacuous as to leave no worthwhile difference between a “peace” of that sort and no peace at all. By choosing approach II therefore we would be choosing an approach to positive peace which would in fact be systematically incapable of getting there. Riposte: We might nevertheless wish to take it for the sake of short-term advantages (in the parameters, if any, where there seem to be enough of these to outweigh the corresponding disadvantages) in the hope of losing our way later, and switching to another approach which would have some genuinely possible future in it, but which is beyond our ability even to envisage at the present day. This, I think, is a point of some importance. Peace might well be the sort of thing which can be sketched, even in outline, only by those already on the verge of experiencing the reality of it. To them it would then be something as obvious as fog or sunshine is to us; while to us who live in a world in which peace is not proxi-

mately available (if that is the world in which we live) the actual outlines of positive peace might remain uncaught, even in our wildest pipe-dreams. This consideration, however, applies to any approach to be tested; and has rather dictated the emphasis on negative rather than affirmative claims made about positive peace. The “negative theology” of the more cautious medieval divines had to work within somewhat similar restraints for a parallel reason.

Back to approach II. It is to be noted that it is incompatible *cultural* options which are being allowed to run here, but not in approach I. In both approaches conflicts of interest are allowed, and even conflicts of any broader political aims which yet fall short of an exclusive cultural commitment, are reasonably local in scope (like the gang warfare or the coups of nostalgic mercenaries envisaged above), and can reasonably be seen by most politically-influential people as being local in scope. Objection: There are great practical difficulties in this. How local is local? A robber band occupying the Saar need not worry us? Then what if it goes for the Sudetenland, for Czechoslovakia, for Poland. . . .? Reply: Arbitrary stipulation must settle this, taking account of current military possibilities. And if we have to err, let it be on the side of excessive circumscription. The Saar is too much, and armaments firms which make treaties with governments are too much, in my own view. This said, I nevertheless maintain that positive peace overall is not necessarily incompatible with local “wars” waged out of interest.

I do not see, however, any way in which it can be compatible with “wars” of similar scale, but waged for cultural reasons. This is because cultural aims are less easily satisfied than those of interest. If I make war on the fat in favour of the thin, and win, and oppress the vanquished through starvation, then my interests are sooner or later going to become those of the relatively fat. If I make war on the “wrong” in favour of the “right”, my appetite for more of the same stands to grow, the more it is fed. A desire to see cultural aims realised is just as likely to find new aims to be satisfied, the more successful it is in seeing old ones satisfied. It is an unrealistic underestimation of the depth and strength of culture-led aims, to imagine that conflicts between cultures are of no essentially greater seriousness than conflicts between interest-groups. It is of the nature of an interest that, if it can be satisfied, there is a price at which it can be satisfied. This rather simple point does not escape the mad mullahs or the Thomas Mores of this world, and is commonly appreciated by quite ordinary men and women from divers places and of divers manners. Yet it never seems anything but puzzling to some liberal theorists and politi-

cians. People led by culture-inspired desires cannot necessarily be bought off, simply by a repeated raising of the price offered.

They can of course be killed, but once a certain currency is attained for the leading-ideals of at least some cultures, other people tend to take to the same ideals. Good Queen Bess judiciously killed rather more of her cultural enemies than did Bloody Mary (she took rather longer though), but neither succeeded terribly well in extirpating the enemy culture. Even Stalin did not quite manage to extirpate socialism from the Soviet Union. There are thus objections to simply killing the culturally awkward. Superficial objection 1: There are a lot of them about (marxists, Reformed and Catholic christians, moslems . . .). Who is going to kill them all without getting a taste for the activity: kamikaze squads of Quaker ladies? Superficial objection 2: How do I know that I have not spared millions of the crypto-awkward in my massacre, and have killed only the more naive? Less superficial objection: Even if I do succeed in killing all the awkward and expunging all references to their ideals from available records, I cannot stop other humans – myself even – from coming independently to similar ideals. The very fact that they have been current shows that not only entertaining them but accepting them enthusiastically is quite possible for humans. And a complication is that if I do not succeed in killing all the awkward, including the crypto-awkward, the survivors (or enough of them) are likely to come out of their experience all the more appreciative of their ideals, all the clearer about what is crucial in them, and all the more determined to follow them through with all cunning. We do not have to be committed to any unique scheme of historical dialectic to see considerable force in that possibility:

Na he, that ay hass levyt fre
May nocht know weill the propyrte,
The angyr, na the wrechyt dome
That is cowplyt to foule thyrlidome.
Bot gyff he had assayit it,
Than all perquer he suld it wyt;
And suld think fredome mar to pryss
Than all the gold in warld that is.
(Barbour, *Bruce*, Skeat's STS edn, repr. 1966,
Book I Lines 233 – 240).

Furthermore no slight part of the awkwardness of some of the culture-led groups lies in the fact that they consider their cultural system to be of its nature practical, not merely speculative: for changing the world rather than explaining it (marxists, christians, moslems in a great many cases). When the virulent strains reappearing

after the massacre are also practical in their bearing, as these are, what hope is there going to be for a positive peace imagined to be obtainable merely by killing the present carriers of the awkward cultures?

Peace education, of course, in a variety of forms (instruction, persuasion, conditioning, genetic engineering, military coercion ...) has a place of importance in either of the two "realistic" approaches. A lot of this is already being done, and more is being canvassed. Some would like to see a great industry of that sort. Unfortunately, if the argument sketched above is even broadly right, then since neither approach is capable even in principle of achieving a positive peace, even a great and earnest industry of peace education working within either approach is ultimately of no essentially greater usefulness for attaining peace than is the armaments industry. It may make people feel better to preach peace than to design warheads, but that is hardly important: tranquillizers or brandy would do just as well. The trouble is not with any failings in the energy or in the quality of what is being done. It is rather that so much of what is being done – so far as this is reflected in the very considerable literature – appears built on some tacit commitment to one or other of the "realistic" approaches, and without capacity for adaptation beyond these. And beyond these – what is there, anyway?

I see only some "unrealistic" approach: positive peace for humans transformed by living in a classless society or a communion of saints or whatever. Peace education serving such an approach will have to examine the basic arguments that it is impossible from the outset; an examination which is no part of my present project, and which is obviously no light task, for any of the *prima facie* possibilities which occur to mind. And even if one such approach is possible, just possible, why should those with any relative comfort now risk it or lose it for such an outside hope? Peace education for that will have to produce some powerful persuasion. Guns, perhaps. Coercion, almost certainly. Then for those persuaded – not just coerced into non-interference with the projects of those who are persuaded – but incapable in the actual state and situation of man to envisage positive peace, peace education must provide the anticipatory dramatizations. But I do not wish to be misunderstood here. What I see as called-for is not the earnest didacticism of the good and the well-intentioned, from the Abbess Hroswitha in the tenth century to her modern boiler-suited counterparts. Janacek's *Jenufa* and Verdi's *Nabucco* seem to me to be a lot nearer what is required than is *Red dawn over the Huang Fu tractor factory after the successful resolution of some technical difficulties*. We don't have to leave the clever, stance-less word-

players with all the best tunes.

The great difficulty here is that those who work in peace education serving an “unrealistic” approach are unlikely to get any short-term gratification from what they are doing. So it will be harder to undertake, or get others to undertake, than most kinds of peace education serving “realistic” approaches. And it will be harder for those who have already undertaken it, to keep going. The end is so distant, so much an outside possibility. Can we be sure that in leaving established opinions, we are following peace? This makes us dependent in practice on fanatics of some sort, on the less critical at any rate, for peace education. The problem then arises of informing the fanatical (the other fanatics) and directing fanaticism away from futile or even harmful ways in the meantime. I do not really know how to address that problem. Perhaps the universe had better be benign rather than not, after all, if we are to have the remotest possibility of peace.

- 1 This objection follows one made by Mr Timothy Curtis, of Preston, while an ancestor of the present paper was benefitting from an airing at the Human Sciences Seminar, directed by Dr Wolfe Mays at Manchester Polytechnic. Some considerations put afterwards by Mr David Melling of the Polytechnic, I hope to take up in another place.
- 2 This has debts to points made by Mrs Ulrike Hill, of Manchester, and Miss Pat Collins, of Plymouth, which I hope to take further elsewhere.

Cf. Eliot's:

Or the purpose is beyond the end you figured,
And is altered in fulfilment. (*Little Gidding*.)

Barry Barnes, The Sociology of Relevance, and the Relevance of Sociology

Adrian Edwards CSSp

I thought of putting something in the title about theology. Better not. Juxtaposing theology and any single social science might recall the sermon in *The Way of All Flesh* in which geology was shown first to be totally without significance for theology and then to be positive evidence for the literal truth of Genesis. If theology is to be explained away by sociology, that shows insufferable presumption. If theology could be helped by sociology, which would mean that theologians could or should learn something of it, then this