

Global Peace Services USA

...an idea whose time has come

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PEACE POWER 2000: Training Peacemakers for the 21st Century Developing a Sound Curriculum

by Harry Yeide

Watch for your brochure to arrive in the mail soon detailing the offerings of Peace Power 2000.

Leading up to June, we'll bring you the ideas and intentions behind GPS' plans. This article begins the series by describing the evolution of our training curriculum.

We have learned in our society to think about "life-long-learning," certainly a social gain from many perspectives. But much less thought has been given to "life building" or "life saving" learning. GPS has been trying to think about those possibilities since its inception. Indeed, many conversations revolved around such themes prior to our incorporation. Thus, when we organized with our six working groups, one of them was the Educational Working Group. This working group has met several times over the years, trying to learn about new educational techniques and trends, and trying to address the question of what kinds of education

seem most suitable and central to equip persons to serve in the Global Peace Service which we hope to see in the future.

Our reflections have always been concerned both with substance and process: what such persons need to know and how it might most effectively be learned. Indeed, a final outcome ought to be that members of the future Global Peace Service possess as one of their professional capabilities the education of others. We have ever been conscious of the creative tension between training and education, between transferring key skills to new persons, and "drawing out" (from the Latin *e-ducere*) the more reflective depths of participants in our programs. We made long lists of both subjects and pedagogical techniques.

When it came time to develop a curriculum, we decided to use the international experience of Sr. Mary Evelyn Jegen. She had

helped develop a curriculum for use in Europe that had proven its usefulness. Rather than starting from scratch, our curriculum committee started with this experience and subjected it to a process of revision, first by the committee and then by the GPS Board. Suggested revisions were, of course, nourished by the broader discussion that had taken place previously.

I have no doubt that after the experience of Peace Power 2000, there will be further revisions on the basis of that experience. There is no false modesty in calling it a "pilot project." Something as important as preparing women and men for Global Peace Service deserves every possible refinement. Indeed, it seems likely that "life building learning" will be of the sort that undergoes continuous improvement as experience shows where things can be done better. But the curriculum for Peace Power 2000 can be regarded as a good distance along that learning curve.



Building Reconciliation Among Tutsis and Hutus

by Bette Hoover

Reflecting on her experience this summer in Burundi as part of the Africa Great Lakes Peace Team Initiative-sponsored by the Friends Peace Teams Project-Bette Hoover shares insights from her journey. Bette is the Director of the American Friends Service Committee's DC Office (DC Peace and Economic Justice Program).

I spent a month of my summer in the little known country of Burundi in East Africa. My mission was to help reconstruct a building near a Quaker church destroyed during the recent fighting and work on reconciliation and peace building. Our seven member Quaker peace team/work camp joined with seven Burundians to form a project aptly called "Reconstruction and Reconciliation." There are lots of raw wounds in the once beautiful and bountiful Burundi. During the "crisis" that started in 1993 tens of thousands of people were murdered. The ethnic conflict erupted after the newly elected Hutu president was killed. No one escaped the violence. For so many years the various "ethnics" had lived and worked side by side.

However, Tutsis had power and privilege not available to Hutus and Twa. The years of resentment of the injustice and unequal power and privilege bubbled to the surface. No one

escaped the terror and horror of what happened. Grief, betrayal, disbelief and fear comingle. There is disbelief that the mass killings happened, and fear that they might resume. Everyone was wounded and many of those wounds are still raw.

Reconciliation means to move beyond forgiveness to wishing and working for the well-being of the other. A big order for people who have lost loved ones in ruthless slaughters. To a group of committed and diverse people I met in the outlying city of Gitega, that is a challenge they are taking seriously. The "Knocking Horns" (named in reference to the cattle with wide horns which roam freely along the roads) trainers teach conflict transformation and reconciliation to diverse groups of people and set up peace teams to help implement the keeping of the peace. I was able to give the trainers some advanced training from the HIP (Help Increase the Peace) and AVP (Alternatives to Violence) models. Basic conflict resolution and communication skills were fine but not exactly what they were looking for. Listening - really actively listening - got everyone's attention. Learning to listen without a need to solve the other's problem, to listen as a gift you give another was a visual relief to the participants. This was a new concept and challenge for the peacemakers.

Loss and the grief that goes with it can be all-consuming and use up lots of energy. How can a peacemaker be effective and efficient while in grief themselves? In a county where we are told "Everyone here has suffered pain and loss" grief needs to be acknowledged. Thus, I taught the stages of grieving as discerned by Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. People began to understand that it is normal in times of loss and crisis to move from denial to anger to acceptance and depression with fleeting periods of peace. Healing and reconciliation are essential for building peace. The work in Burundi cries out for a response from the international community. Each of us who participated in the "Reconstruction and Reconciliation" project has a responsibility to tell of our experiences and of the brave work of people for peace in a country torn apart by years of conflict and violence.



Nonviolent Peace Service in the Balkans Expands

by Sr. Mary Evelyn Jegen

Networking with like-minded groups is one of the most important functions of Global Peace Services USA. From our beginning we have had close ties with the Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights in Osijek, Croatia (hereafter referred to as the Osijek Peace Center.)

Katarina Kruhonja, MD, a founder of the Osijek Peace Center now leads a program, "Building a Democratic Society Based on a Culture of Nonviolence — Post-War Peacebuilding in Eastern Croatia." In this program, 24 persons: Croats, Serbs, Bosnians and a small number of international members work in five peace teams in rural areas of the region. They have had a 10-week training program in active nonviolence, including conflict transformation, mediation, etc. These teams are a significant witness and model by their very composition. By building peace from below, the program is making a

significant contribution to the new security structure needed in the Balkan region.

A "listening project" is a major activity of the peace teams. This includes structured interviews about people's experiences, problems and needs. So far, there have been interviews with about 400 people. Interviews are followed up by discussions together with local people, and these meetings lead to implementation of peacebuilding projects.

Association with the Osijek Peace Center greatly benefits the peace teams. Their work is integrated with existing programs of the Center: peace education, promotion and protection of human rights and community development.

When I spent several weeks at the Osijek Peace Center in 1995, it was only four years old and already attracting international attention. Five years later the

work has experienced a remarkable development, all the more significant because it is located in a most sensitive area where Croatia and Serbia adjoin each other.

The Osijek Peace Center had five or six staff in 1995; this year it has 28, including six lawyers who work on human rights issues. Besides staff, some 160 people are actively involved in the work of the Center, which has had to move its offices twice to larger quarters.

In another issue of our newsletter we will share more details of this sign of hope in the Balkans. A bishop of Osijek has called the Center "an initiative that opens our eyes and ears so that we can see and listen differently than before, regardless of other influences and political conditions." Global Peace Services USA has much to learn from our friends in the Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights in Osijek, Croatia.

The Force for Peace Gathers Momentum

World Peacemakers, an organizational associate member of Global Peace Services USA, hosted a conversation with David Hartsough and Mel Duncan on September 11. Some 35 persons from the Washington DC area participated, including several GPS board members.

David and Mel are talking with people in the United States and Europe about their concept paper on the development of a "multinational peace force." Their paper projects a need for significant advance commitments including at least 200 people willing to commit to training and deployment for at least two years, 400 reserves and 500 supporting members. The paper also discusses the need for an efficient, accountable multinational decision-making body and significant media relationships.

The paper is available from Peaceworkers, 721 Shrader Street, San Francisco, CA 94117, (415) 751-0302.

*Your Support
Today Trains
the Peacemakers
of the Future!*

There are many ways to multiply GPS efforts, consider:

- Attending Peace Power*
- Distributing Peace Power brochures*
- Sponsoring someone to attend Peace Power*
- Sending us names and addresses of people who may be interested in attending Peace Power*
- Making a financial contribution to GPS-USA*
- Visiting our web site at www.globalpeaceservices.org*
- Contact us for more details!*

Global Peace Services USA invites anyone concerned with active peacemaking to participate in Peace Power: Training Peacemakers for the 21st Century, to be held at Centro Maria in Washington, DC, June 4-30, 2000. The week-long program themes will be:

- Week 1:** Introduction to the Basics of Peace Service
- Week 2:** Interpersonal Skills and Development and Team Building
- Week 3:** Understanding and Working with Conflict
- Week 4:** Societal Dimensions of Nonviolence and Social Reconstruction

Watch for your brochure with more details arriving in your mail soon!

The newsletter of Global Peace Services USA is published quarterly. GPS-USA is incorporated in the District of Columbia and is tax-exempt. Current Board members are: John Eriksson, Mary Evelyn Jegen, Bill Price, Mindy Reiser, Tricia Sullivan and Harry Yeide. We welcome contributions and comments. To contact us:

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