

I. The Worldwide ‘Humanity for Peace’ Rallies

RALLY AND CONCERT

A New, United Peace Movement Is Born

by Stewart Battle

Aug. 11—Twenty years ago, in the run-up to and following the George W. Bush Administration’s launch of the war against Iraq, the peace movement swept across the United States and Europe. On the eve of that invasion, attendees numbered in the hundreds of thousands at the larger demonstrations, and even reached into the millions in some European cities. As the war dragged on, and new ones started—in Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Ukraine—fatigue set in and the former clarity of those demonstrators waned. This was accomplished in large part by Barack Obama and those who controlled him, who successfully shifted the perception of these regime-change wars to be seen instead as humanitarian interventions against “anti-democratic” leaders and states. As a result, it is no exaggeration to say that today, whatever was left of the peace movement in the U.S. and Europe is dead.

This became obvious when, following Russia’s incursion into Ukraine in February 2022 and the ensuing proxy war led by the U.S. to defeat Russia, no substantial showing of opposition emerged. Those few

pro-peace groups who were the relics of larger groupings of activism in previous years found themselves isolated, rigid, and ideologically unable to collaborate with anyone except their immediate circles. Add to this an all-out war against dissent, especially against anyone daring to speak out against the approved narrative: against anyone who said that history began before February 22, 2022 and that maybe there was more to the story than the “unprovoked Russian

aggression.” The level of thought-control over Western countries further stifled a real response.

This stranglehold was finally broken one year after the beginning of the Ukraine conflict when on February 19, 2023, a rally was held in Washington, D.C. under the banner, “Rage Against The War Machine.” Despite being labeled with every slander and derogatory statement under the sun, this coalition, representing organizations across the political spectrum, successfully



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The Humanity for Peace rally at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, near the UN in New York City, brought together otherwise opposed political organizations to sing from the same page in the cause of humanity, Aug. 6, 2023.

pulled off a major statement from the otherwise moribund peace movement: “Stopping nuclear war is more important than our political differences” was the unifying message. This event marked a major breakthrough, identifying the “war machine” which is intent on preventing peace, and establishing not simply an “anti-war” movement, but an “anti-imperialist” movement.

As this last 17 months has proceeded, another process has been underway—namely the revolt of the



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Not simply intent on stopping NATO's proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, Humanity for Peace asserts a universal principle of humanity, which must be acknowledged if the underlying cause of war is to be eliminated. Shown: talk show host Garland Nixon addresses the rally in New York City.

“Global South” from its former colonial masters. Not only have the vast majority of nations outside of North America and Europe refused to join in the sanctions against Russia, but there has been an increasingly strong anti-colonial sentiment being expressed from these nations in a revival of the earlier Non-Aligned Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. It was only natural to unite the newly blossoming peace movement with this new anti-colonial sentiment around the world.

Over the weekend of August 5–6, 2023, the seeds of a new, united peace movement bore fruit. Calling itself “Humanity for Peace,” this new coalition found resonance from nations around the world and set an even more profound process into motion. Not merely intent on stopping the war and those shadowy actors controlling foreign policy of the so-called “Western” countries, the coalition increasingly worked to assert a universal principle of humanity, the acknowledgement

of which can eliminate the underlying cause of war itself.

A New Peace Movement Is Born

At least 28 coinciding rallies were held around the world from Guatemala to India to California. The main event was in New York City at Dag Hammerskjöld Plaza, where many United Nations missions are located. Over a dozen speakers attended in person, including two presidential candidates, and many more video and written endorsements were received. A third presidential candidate, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., sent a video message which was played as part of the livestream of the event. The new Humanity for Peace released a list of four demands: End all weapons to Ukraine; convene immediate peace negotiations; dissolve NATO; and create a new security architecture to eliminate the geopolitical division of the world into blocs.



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A New York City rally participant's sign points up the difference between a war policy and one of peace.

Representation, both on the podium as well as in the endorsing organizations, included those from nearly every different affiliation. Musicians, film directors, candidates for public office both in the U.S. and abroad, communists, libertarians, religious leaders, authors, journalists, and members of the LaRouche movement.

The organization expressed its explicit intent that participants put aside their particular slant on the world and come together to express a higher purpose. Held on the anniversary of the dropping of the first atomic bomb by the U.S. over Hiroshima, Japan, the event took on a particularly somber tone. A summary of a handful of notable speeches gives a flavor of the New York event.

We must learn to recapture the spirit of disarmament that gripped Ronald Reagan—and there’s no one out there right now that’s more conservative than Ronald Reagan—that gripped him in his heart, to make him believe that having nuclear weapons was insanity, and the best course of action for the United States and world was nuclear disarmament.

Ritter ended his remarks by emphasizing:

We need to recapture that spirit, and I’m hoping that, today, we can begin a process that leads to a



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Humanity for Peace

Former UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter (left): “The American people must stand up and say: ‘The day of nuclear terrorism is done.’” LaRouche independent candidate for U.S. Senate from New York, Diane Sare (right): “If there is not a major change in the U.S., there is reason to believe that this day, Aug. 6, would be a good time for us to say our goodbyes to each other ... and everything ever created by man.”

Former Marine and UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter, who oversaw the implementation of the original Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty from within the Soviet Union, gave a passionate speech on the collapse of arms treaties over the recent years, and the need for a new million-person march, as in the 1980s in New York City, against an increasingly possible nuclear war today.

Don’t count on the uniformed men and women in the military to step in to stop this, Ritter said, as they are mere executioners and will do their job if ordered to do so. It is the American people who are needed now, to step up and assert their proper role. The American people should stop being walked all over by political know-nothings, and instead say: No! We got it here! It’s over! The day of nuclear terrorism is done! He continued,

moment next summer when we can put a million people back into Central Park and send a signal to those who wish to represent us in the White House, that nuclear disarmament is the only direction for the United States: That the day of the executioner is over!

Another powerful contribution came from independent candidate for U.S. Senate from New York and long-time LaRouche movement activist Diane Sare, who began on a stark note with the following warning:

If there is not a major change in the United States, there is reason to believe that this day, August 6, would be a good time for us to say our

goodbyes. Our goodbyes to each other, goodbye to the planet, and goodbye to the paintings of Rembrandt, the discoveries of Ibn Sina and Albert Einstein, the philosophy of Confucius and of Leibniz, the principles of the U.S. Constitution, the poetry of Shelley, and the music of Beethoven. We are steadfastly marching toward the thermonuclear annihilation of everything ever created by man.

With that wakeup call, Sare continued on the theme:

[No one] from inside the beltway, is going to stand up and stop this thing before we go over the cliff. Waiting for that would guarantee that we are finished. But that's why we're here today. I am not pessimistic. I am optimistic because I don't intend to allow the annihilation of the human race to occur while I have breath to fight.

This certainly was the spirit of those assembled.

Sare ended by calling upon those powers within each of us to demand a more just world, in contrast to the currently morally bankrupt political leadership.

What is needed, is a whole new order among nations based upon mutual respect for the sovereignty of their people and the dignity of man. Our enemies are totally morally and financially bankrupt, so we must seize the moment to finally establish a republic of the United States of America which doesn't meddle in other nations' internal affairs, but demonstrates by our own actions, within our own borders, that truth has standing, that justice will be served, and the people are protected so that through their talents they may contribute to the betterment of mankind.

Libertarian candidate for President Mike ter Maat further took up this theme, speaking about the need to rediscover our values as Americans, and "sleep not" in our pursuit of a more just and truthful nation. He continued:

Just as we must demand the best version of America, so too does the world long for the America of our ideals. We know the world yearns for the sound of idealism, because in its silence evil has grown. Evil grows in the hege-

monic projection of power; evil grows in the imperialistic control of foreign people; evil grows in the despotic arrogance of nation building. The world awaits a new leadership—a new leadership away from evil. Make no mistake, all leadership comes from values. It is not for American values to change but for American policy to change by aligning with what we already know true American values to be.

Musician and producer Malcolm Burn gave inspiring remarks on the beautiful nature of mankind, and the currently ruling disease of insanity which threatens it.

The complete madness that's overtaken almost all of our Western leaders' minds and souls, whose collective disconnect from reality replaced by hubris and greed, seems to open up a Pandora's box of evils.

Burn referenced the weakness inherent in society, where people often make decisions "not on rational thought but rather on emotional responses." This is what we must overcome, he said. This is the way propaganda is currently being used to push us into war. Instead, there must be a way out, as mankind is better than that. Then, quoting from William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*:

Oh wonder how many Godly creatures are there,
how beauteous mankind is! Oh Brave New
World, that has such people in it.

One presentation that had a wonderful summary of the spirit shared by all, was given by J.R. Heffelfinger, director and film producer. Heffelfinger has recently released the award-winning film *8:15 Hiroshima: From Father to Daughter*, which tells the true story of a family which independently survives the nuclear attack in Hiroshima in 1945. He began his remarks by playing "Auld Lang Syne" on trumpet, the inspiration for which he said came to him spontaneously while listening to the day's proceedings, because "it is often shared at the dawn of new beginnings."

And as we reflect upon the anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, let us remember that our world stands on the precipice. Though the hands of time moved closer to midnight, we are re-

minded that our shared Destiny is in our hands.

Heffelfinger went on to quote from former U.S. Representative and education reformer Horace Mann [1796–1859] who he said is his “north star.”

“Be ashamed to die until winning some victory for Humanity.” Now I’m sure this concept has been said in different ways and with different words, but this concept has echoed through the corridors of time. These words urge us to carry the torch of progress, to strive for a better world, where the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are not repeated, where Justice, compassion, and peace are cherished and celebrated, and are real.

One of the voices representing the movement among the Global South was Muhammad Salim Akhtar, the National Director of the American Muslim Alliance. Akhtar spoke of the principle of life across religions, saying:

Muslims all over the world—they stand in solidarity with you for the sole purpose of peace and justice. What we believe, as part of our faith, is that if you kill one human being, just one, it is like killing the whole of humanity. But if you can save just one life even, it is like saving the whole humanity. So there’s this belief that we are bound to stand in solidarity, not only the American Muslim, but Muslims across the world.

Elaborating on this new element coming from the nations of the Global South, Akhtar continued, making clear that this means taking on the forces of modern colonialism, and their strategy of keeping nations divided by economic underdevelopment:

We need to address the root causes of the war. We must address all the means, all the reasons, that can create a conflict between individuals,



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LaRouche activist and intervener José Vega: “No more bombs! No more war! Peace is our solution, and peace is the answer!”

between groups, and between the nations.... We must take every single measure to [stop] those scheming and planning to undermine the majority of 95 to 98 percent of the human race, [who want] to have a new colonialism, economic colonialism, and keep the underdeveloped countries [down]. Because it’s economy—economics is the reality that is a rift between the haves and have nots.

To end the rally, LaRouche activist and intervener José Vega took the stage to summarize the day’s accomplishments:

This does not end here. What we’ve done here is

we’ve set up an amazing foundation and beginning for a process—a continuous process.

Vega reminded everyone that August 6 is the 78th anniversary of the unnecessary bombing of Hiroshima, a terrible and murderous event, but that today the situation is much worse.

Despite this, I’m optimistic, because we are not alone here, but are joined by dozens of sister rallies around the world, all making the same declaration: “No more bombs! No more war! Peace is our solution and peace is the answer!” We have focused our efforts into one guided laser, to tell the world: peace not war, and not violence!

The response from both speakers and attendees in the crowd was enthusiastic. The in-person audience of 400 to 500 clearly showed an excitement at how so many different and diverging speakers could at the same time converge on a higher principle.

A Musical Intervention

Following the rally in New York City, Humanity for Peace held a special concert at a nearby church to further elaborate on the idea of peace begun earlier in the day. The concert began with a selection songs and



EIRNS/Sylvia Spaniolo

The Rev. Dr. T. Kenjitsu Nakagaki, President of the Buddhist Council of New York, a Hiroshima Peace Ambassador, Nagasaki Peace Correspondent, and New York City Police Department Clergy Liaison, brought a Hiroshima Peace Bell to the New York rally, which he tolled three times, to bring inner and social non-conflict and peace. At right: Anastasia Battle, one of the masters of ceremonies.

arias from around the world, including from Germany, Russia, Italy, and America, and finished with a full performance by a chorus of over 100 of Mozart's *Requiem*. The event can and should be viewed in its entirety. Its power cannot be conveyed in words. The concert video is available [here](#).

We nevertheless reference here some of the opening remarks of the concert, to give an idea of its significance in igniting this new peace movement.

Anastasia Battle, one of the masters of ceremony of the rally, opened the proceedings by speaking about the earlier event at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza as “an important, beautiful intervention into world history.” She continued, emphasizing why it is that the audience was now invited to participate in a classical music concert:

I think that at this point in time, the only way that we can express the ability to stop nuclear war is to well up within ourselves that sublime power that every single one of you has.

And we're looking at that now. What we're doing here today in this church, the volunteer chorus, people who are from all walks of life who are joining us today to express a beautiful demand that we cannot lose mankind to something so terrible and evil ...

Let's grow, let's make this voice heard more loudly, let's express more beauty more broadly.

Battle was followed by Dennis Speed, Schiller Institute member and one of the concert organizers, who further delved into the importance of music for any peace movement today. Speed called the earlier events of today a “mass intervention” from “a group of people who decided that there is a worthy experiment to be run.” The question he posed is: “Is it possible for humanity to speak with one voice?”

Speed continued by telling a story about a time he was working with Lyndon LaRouche, who said that a lot more people are needed to join the campaign. When Speed said he would get on the phone to drum up volunteers, LaRouche said “no,” and insisted he must instead “form choruses.” Speed, confused at the time, relayed LaRouche's response, quoting him:

The problem with people is that they are afraid of the sound of their own voice. You will never find or create a free people unless you can inspire people to sing. If you can do that, then you can do anything else.



EIRNS/Sylvia Spaniolo

The Schiller Institute's Michelle Erin leads the New York City rally demonstrators in singing Dona Nobis Pacem (Grant Us Peace), the anthem of the peace movement internationally.



EIRNS/Schiller Institute

“People are afraid of the sound of their own voice. You will never find or create a free people unless you can inspire people to sing. If you can do that, then you can do anything else.” —Lyndon LaRouche. Here, the Schiller Institute NYC Chorus and orchestra performing Mozart’s Requiem in D minor. Humanity for Peace concert, Unitarian Church of All Souls, New York City, Aug. 6, 2023.

“So therefore when looking around us at all the divisions in society and otherwise,” Speed said, “what you’ll recognize is that this division is also one that’s in our minds, it’s inside of us.”

The issue is: What is the voice with which we should be speaking? Well today at this rally and today as a whole, which is a commemorative day about a crime, in which tens of thousands of people died ... the issue is: Can we speak to that problem, not in a strident way, not in a so-called political way *per se*, but in a way that moves the people, and moves the people that even committed that crime, and moves the people that were killed by that crime—is there something we can do? Well if we were to try to speak as individuals, that wouldn’t work. But if we were to try to speak as humanity, offering our voice to humanity, perhaps, perhaps something can be changed.

Correction: In our Aug. 11 issue’s coverage of the Humanity for Peace Aug. 6 actions, the picture of demonstrators in Romania on page 9 showed the Miscarea Pentru Pace organization, rallying with supporters at Piata Unirii in Bucharest. We misidentified the picture as another rally that day, of the Schiller Institute and other groups at Piata Universitatii in Bucharest. Thanks to all who came out for peace!



The Miscarea Pentru Pace rallying with supporters at Piata Unirii in Bucharest, Romania.