

Memo from John McConnell
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PEACE BLITZ

A DARING STRATEGY FOR WORLD PEACE

We should be as realistic about what is necessary to achieve world peace as we are about the necessities for success in a great military campaign. In the latter, an effort is made to clearly define the goals, to assess the resources that can be used and then to develop a strategy for success. Something of this kind can and should be done if we are going to bring about the great changes needed to achieve a world of freedom and order without the threat of war.

An understanding of a total strategy that offers a chance of success could enable the individual to see the importance of the minute but specific contribution he can make. An experiment showing it would work could inspire him to act.

At Pearl Harbor, the war was made real. This was followed by unity, purpose and fervor in our efforts to defeat our enemies. Millions of men were recruited; the giant strength of our industrial complex was quickly converted to meet the needs of war. Shortly there were thousands of trucks, tanks, planes, ships manned by quickly trained men, moving toward battle fronts that would bring the greatest destruction the world has ever known.

An equally dramatic impact for peace is needed that will catch the attention of people throughout our country and give a sense of unity, purpose and fervor in waging peace. If we are going to seriously meet the challenge of our time and do away with the threat of war, we must activate our industrial might, our technical know-how and our best humanitarian concerns in a mighty effort to build schools, plants, roads, dams, modernize agriculture -- in short, work together with our neighbors around the world, for global goals in research, education, health and welfare. What we can do for war, we can do even better for Peace.

Instead of thousands of machines to destroy, we must provide and use

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thousands of machines to build a better world. Of course, we must use the techniques of cooperation that meet real desire and need. We should now mobilize for a massive Peace Blitz! (Term used by Norman Corwin in his radio-play "Could Be".)

There is no reason why we cannot wage peace with a vigor that will demonstrate a moral equivalent to war. A forceful example is needed to overcome the negative feeling "It can't be done." IT HAS NEVER BEEN TRIED!

PEACE BLITZ CAMPAIGNS

Purpose:

To change the climate and activities in one or more towns in a way that will provide an appropriate definition of waging peace -- one which could be expanded throughout the country and perhaps throughout the world. This could be an instrument for bringing about a profound change in national policies on disarmament and peace.

The Peace Blitz Declaration defines waging peace in general terms which need to be made specific through democratic planning and action in the local community. It calls for an attack against the causes of war, such as fear, hunger, illiteracy, poverty, barriers. The local community would choose five or more projects for this purpose.

In order to effectively defeat the apathy and complacency which is at the heart of the problem, help should be obtained from the best possible source. A brief outline of the local plan can be sent to organizations such as CARE, American Friends Service Committee, UNESCO, Peace Corps, etc. requesting suggestions for the project section of the campaign.

Program:

Objective of the campaign is to rally all the fraternal resources of the community in a two-fold program. The first part of this would be a great discourse on the problems of peace.

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Discussion:

Discussion and study would cover the whole spectrum from the inner peace taught by religion and psychology to such problems as disarmament and world law. Able speakers would be invited to speak in local service clubs, churches, schools and in house meetings conducted throughout the town. Every possible aspect of peace and disarmament would be discussed and publicized, but the leaders of the campaign would not give formal support to any political solutions for peace. However, the results of the discourse would be shown in an opinion survey conducted at the close of the campaign.

Projects:

The second part of the campaign would be devoted to projects for peace. The purpose of these projects would not be political action (although such action might be discussed in a "World Affairs Forum" project.) but participation in activities that would further understanding, good will and cooperation for world-wide goals that can sincerely be aided. (The activities of Communists would have been openly discussed along with other issues, and where they conflicted with the concept of democracy -- firmly resisted, but in areas of agreement -- science, space, medicine, student exchange etc., communication and cooperation would be encouraged.)

These projects would be designed to attract people at different levels of concern. They could include a student exchange program, Peace Corps project, Volunteers for U.N. projects, Food for Peace, Books for Peace, Equipment for Peace, etc. Using the concept of the Peace Blitz in publicity and promotion would re-direct feelings of hostility into positive peace action.

To give the feeling -- and the reality of strength to the program, it would be important to obtain large scale participation by the industries and business of the

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town. These are the organizations with which the average man is mostly involved American industry was a major factor in winning our wars, their contribution can be a tremendous advantage in winning a lasting peace. In this bold experiment they would be asked to provide help from the best of their personnel along with funds and encouragement of their employees to aid the campaign projects. Their participation should be obtained in the initial planning of the campaign. This should also apply to all the important organization leaders in the community --- Service Clubs, Churches, Schools, etc.

Peace Blitz Headquarters:

This headquarters would be managed by an executive director and secretary with an office and minimum budget. Its function would be to develop a suitable program structure, and support for the campaign. It would also function as a public relations organization to prepare the way of operations however they may develop.

Coordinating Group:

Envisioned to be comprised of responsible leaders in the community representing the best insights of sociology, psychology, economics, political science, religion, etc. This body would serve as an experimental, detached group who would watch carefully the total development, make suggestions as to the ongoing of the local program and be alert to the broad outreach of possibilities related to the nation and the world.

This would be strictly an idea and consulting group and not responsible for the conduct of the program, but it would at the same time see that ideas of merit were picked up on and carried out. They would also watch for breakdowns in any part of the program and seek to remedy this.

A working committee of this group could consult with other similar groups to

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develop appropriate steps toward the formation of an international council (patterned, in part, after their own function). This International Council could create a council of World Cities and with the help of an International Public Relations committee provide a structure for encouraging world friendship and cooperation. (Proposals for these organizations are available.)

Miscellaneous:

With the backing of an ongoing program and the means of taking advantage of opportunities that arise, imaginative projects could aid the total effort. One project which would help all the others would be the collection of signatures for the "Star of Hope" satellite. Those who signed a pledge to work for peace could also indicate which project they would help.

Publicity:

The success of the campaign will depend in a large measure on the effective use of the communications media. Making the local newspaper, TV and radio an example of what can be done would serve this end directly and at the same time it would create a greater sense of purpose and responsibility in the communications media.

Conclusion:

During World War II, America and the world were amazed at the spiritual and material resources brought into action when people worked together for a great goal. The strength, sacrifice and fervor of war must be given to building a peaceful world. There already exist areas of international agreement and cooperation for world wide goals. (In the United Nations, UNESCO, International Council of Scientific Unions, etc.) These must be vigorously strengthened and extended. There must be understanding and support for this from the grass roots. We can fight fear and subversion with faith, when we work together for common goals in

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which we all sincerely believe. Fortunately, there exists a hard core of human values -- freedom, love, wonder, dignity -- which is at least dimly understood by all men everywhere. While on the one hand we must guard against the things that threaten these values -- most important is the work of extending, around the world, the foundations that support them.

A carefully conducted pilot campaign can achieve a breakthrough in tapping untold spiritual and material resources, not by fear of war and a feverish preparation for war, but by Faith and a joyous preparation for a peaceful world.