DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 052 084 SO 001 302

TITLE	War/Peace Report. What Should Kids Be Taught About Peace and War? Volume 11, Number 1.
INSTITUTION	New York Friends Group, Inc., New York. Center for War/Peace Studies.
PUB DATE	71
NOTE	10p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Center for War Peace Studies, 218 East 18th Street, New York, New York 10003 ($5.00; United States Student Rate, $3.50; Single Copies, $.60)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Affective Objectives, *Conflict, Conflict Resolution, *Curriculum Development, Educational Trends, *Foreign Relations, Government Role, Humanism, International Education, Nationalism, *Newsletters, Social Studies, Social Values, Student Attitudes, Values, Violence, *World Affairs
IDENTIFIERS	Disarmament, Future History, *Peace, Values Education, War

ABSTRACT

This article is reprinted from a monthly publication of fact and opinion on progress toward a world of peace with justice. The feature article presents a dialogue among educators who have been designing strategies for war/peace studies. Speaking on the topic in the title were: James Becker, director of Foreign Policy Association's School Service Program; Robert Freeman, director of Diablo Valley Education Project in California; William Nesbitt, director of Studies in International Conflict project; Betty Reardon, director of World Law Fund's School Program; and president of Bank Street College of Education, John Niemeyer, as moderator. Discussion gives some sharp insights into: 1) student attitudes on wars: inevitable and necessary; 2) problems in developing curriculum on war/peace; 3) world order and alternatives to the tradition of nation-state organization; 4) role of the school as an agent of change; 5) school community relationship; 6) values; 7) conflict resolution; 8) individual psychology; and 9) future history. The newsletter is available by subscription. (Author/JSB)

WAR/PEACE REPORT

January, 1971—Sixty Cents

What Should Kids Be Taught About Peace & War?

THIS MONTH

Understanding Peace and War

Recently *IWPR* invited several educators who have been developing new approaches to war/peace studies to a symposium to discuss What Should Kids Be Taught About Peace and War? Their dialogue, which begins opposite, gives some sharp insights into why students acquire the notion that wars are inevitable and even necessary. One approach that they suggest for improving the study of war and peace is for teachers to use the classroom as a miniature society. By capitalizing on a conflict situation within the classroom, the teacher can help students to project their thinking to an understanding of how nations interact on the international level, even though interpersonal and international conflicts are not altogether analogous. The educators also agreed that schools should encourage students to think of alternatives to the traditional nation-state for organizing world society.

In **U.N. Takes Action to Protect the Sea, "The Last Frontier"** (p. 10), **Clark Eichelberger** retraces the steps taken by the 25th U.N. General Assembly leading toward the establishment of an international order for the sea. He discusses the work of the Seabed Committee and also probable items on the agenda of the forthcoming conference on the law of the sea.

Our guest editorial, **SALT Must Stop the Technological Race Toward Disaster** (p. 12), is by **Bernard T. Feld.** He looks at the frantic pace of the nuclear arms race between the U.S. and the Soviet Union and observes, sadly, that "we're running this race mainly against ourselves." Feld concludes that hope for ending "this vicious circle of technological ploy and counterploy" lies in the SALT negotiations.

Stanley de Smith examines the predicament of America's remote Pacific trust territory in **Micronesia's Dilemma: U.S. Strategy vs. Self-Determination** (p. 14). While many Micronesians would prefer independence, which is not practical from an economic standpoint, they would agree to a form of free association with the U.S. as a second choice. Free association would allow them to control their own affairs and, above all, their land. But the U.S. government is reluctant to give up ultimate control over Micronesia, especially in view of the impending evacuation of Okinawa. De Smith served as a constitutional adviser to the British government during the decolonization of Mauritius and Fiji.

In his review of *Lin Piao: The Life and Writings of China's New Ruler*, by Martin Ebon, **O. Edmund Clubb** challenges the underlying assumption of the book by asking, **Will Lin Piao Succeed Mao Tse-tung?** (p. 17). Ebon claims that Lin "will be" Mao's heir, but Clubb points out several reasons why Lin's future role in China cannot be predicted with certainty.

Vietnamese Tell Their Own Stories (p. 19) in *Between Two Fires: The Unheard Voices of Vietnam*, which is reviewed by **Don Luce.** The book is a collection of personal essays written by South Vietnamese citizens who describe vividly and poignantly how the war has affected their lives. Recently, Dispatch News Service International reported that officials of the Saigon government took away Luce's press credentials. "The action was apparently related to Luce's role in exposing the Con Son tiger cages last July," the news service said.

Our cover art is by **Remi (10)** and **Jamie (8) Appelbaum.**

WAR/PEACE REPORT

FACT & OPINION ON PROGRESS TOWARD A WORLD OF PEACE WITH JUSTICE
PUBLISHED BY THE CENTER FOR WAR/PEACE STUDIES

ELEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

January, 1971 **Vol. 11, No. 1**

War/Peace Report is published monthly, except for June/July and August/September when it is bimonthly, by The Center for War/Peace Studies of The New York Friends Group, Inc.; John Hughes Hall, chairman; Dikran P. Donchian, treasurer.

All correspondence should be addressed to *War/Peace Report*, 218 East 18th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003. Telephone: 212-228-2470. Cable address: WARPEACE, New York. *War/Peace Report* is printed by Indiantown Printing, Inc., Indiantown, Fla. Subscription price is $5 per year for all countries of the world. Single copies, 60 cents each. U.S. student rate, $3.50. Please allow six weeks for change of address and start of new subscriptions. Change of address should be accompanied by old address as well as new, including zip code. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. *War/Peace Report* is indexed in the Public Affairs Information Service.

WHAT SHOULD KIDS BE TAUGHT ABOUT PEACE AND WAR?

In this *WPR* symposium, a group of progressive educators who have been designing strategies for war/peace studies examine how the schools can develop a 'radical' attitude in the minds of students: that wars are not inevitable and necessary.

THE PARTICIPANTS

James Becker is director of the Foreign Policy Association's School Services program, which has completed a report for the United States Office of Education on "Objectives, Needs and Priorities in International Education." He has also developed the educational game, "Dangerous Parallels," and has produced a series of readings for teachers, entitled New Dimensions.

Robert Freeman is director of the Diablo Valley Education Project in California. The project, which is affiliated with the Center for War/Peace Studies, is an attempt to improve teaching about war, peace and conflict in a large California school district and incorporates curriculum reform, in-service teacher-training programs and community participation.

William Nesbitt is director of the Studies in International Conflict project, which is administered by the New York State Education Department's Center for International Programs and Comparative Studies. He also teaches a course in modern European history at the Wooster School in Danbury, Conn. His book, Teaching About War and War Prevention, *was published recently by Thomas Y. Crowell Co.*

Betty Reardon is director of the World Law Fund's School Program, which since 1963 has been conducting a curriculum development and teacher-training program on problems of world order. She has also taught social studies on the secondary school level.

John Niemeyer, the moderator, is president of the Bank Street College of Education in New York City.

THE DISCUSSION:

NIEMEYER: I read with interest Ruth Jacobs' article, "The Why of War" (October, 1970, *WPR*). [While teaching a course in the sociology of war at Boston University last summer, Mrs. Jacobs learned that many well-educated young people believe that wars are inevitable. The students failed to realize, she said, "that war is not something intrinsic, but rather a cultural invention of man."] The article leaves me a bit incredulous, though. Are young people as completely ignorant as she found them to be? I had a hard time believing that she was accurate.

REARDON: I didn't, although I don't think the situation is quite as bad as she pictures it. The inference of the article is that nothing is being taught in our schools about war and peace.

BECKER: Many schools offer small ingredients of a curriculum for war/peace studies—such as a seminar on aggression or a unit on conflict—but there are no comprehensive programs in this area. I think that the article is right in the sense that the general impression of war and peace that kids acquire while they're going through the school system tends to reinforce certain kinds of prejudices, preconceptions and biases. For example, the teaching of national history—with its emphasis on loyalty, patriotism and its concern for heroes and military victory—tends to persuade kids that war is something that is inevitable and necessary. Yet, when teachers and students are asked to resist and challenge the notion of war as something inevitable and necessary, they usually respond with incredulous looks on their faces. Most teachers are not sufficiently prepared to deal seriously with this topic.

NIEMEYER: I can understand how students come out of the school system with a reluctant acceptance of the fact that war is necessary. But I don't think that they accept war itself. And I don't believe, as Mrs. Jacobs states in her article, that students are so naive as to think that wars come about because individuals hate individuals. In the schools, don't students seriously analyze the actual origins of the First World War?

BECKER: Yes, but they analyze the subject within a biased context that takes for granted the fact that man organizes society on the basis of nation-states. Such an analysis automatically assumes the desirability of having everybody claim loyalty to nation-states. Consequently, it does not raise any fundamental questions about how man might organize himself differently so that he could live more peacefully, or how he might find new ways of dealing with conflict or violence.

REARDON: This kind of analysis isn't limited to students and teachers. It tends to be largely the attitude of curriculum writers as well. Students are not often given the opportunity to look at data for themselves and draw their own conclusions. Usually they are required to learn from other people's conclusions.

BECKER: Most historical conclusions indicate, nevertheless, that war is an institution, and Mrs. Jacobs says in her article that her students

had no concept of war as an institution.

REARDON: War isn't taught as an institution; it's taught as an event. Students, by and large, tend to accept historical events as having been inevitable. Such thinking is very dangerous because some students transfer this spirit of acceptance to the future, which they also perceive as inevitable. Thinking about alternatives is not a habit of thought that is encouraged in our schools.

NESBITT: One of the sets of materials I am working on for the N.Y. State Education Department is a case study on the outbreak of World War I. The decision to use this historical crisis was based, in part, upon the assumption that most schools teach that there were certain underlying causes—such as nationalism and entangling alliances—and that there were immediate causes. I think that from their study of this war, as well as from the study of others, students derive the message that the wars were, in effect, inevitable. Only in the last 15 years or so have some political scientists arrived at the viewpoint that World War I was not inevitable, but that it emerged out of the dynamics of the crisis in July, 1914. There was certainly no inevitable development of war during the time between the shooting of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and the ultimate declarations of war. It seems to me that if the decision-makers had been able to avoid the misperceptions in which they engaged, the war could have been avoided.

NIEMEYER: Except, we also know that there were units in various governments that were planning war and wanted war. There was a powerful element in Russia that was doing everything it could to start a war in order to take the Dardanelles.

BECKER: One factor that is usually neglected in the teaching of war and peace is the fact that conflict and violence might be built into certain kinds of institutional arrangements within each nation. This is true of any institution that has been around for a while because certain groups acquire a vested interest in maintaining the institution at any price. Yet, nobody is willing to question the basis for these arrangements, or to urge students to think about other kinds of arrangements that society might have. The assumption is that present institutional frameworks are givens. Supposedly, once we accept them as givens, then we can toy around on the periphery of them to try to make the world work better. But I don't think that the world is going to work better at all until we begin to delve into some of the basic arrangements of society.

FREEMAN: That's exactly the problem that no one has successfully tackled. We can all recognize the cyclical process that we're caught in, but how do we break out of the cycle? We can discuss the problem with almost any individual and gradually persuade him that there's a need to develop alternatives to violence and to study alternative ways of organizing the world. But the cold reality is that we are faced with a firmly entrenched school system that has only begun to acknowledge the need for change. The schools are just beginning to admit that they have a responsibility to prepare students to live in an environment very different from the one the adult generation now lives in. Most schools are still concerned with transmitting the traditional wisdom of society, and that traditional wisdom is part of the cyclical process that excludes the consideration of alternatives.

I'd like to mention one of the goals that the Diablo Valley Project is focusing on, in addition to our principal effort in developing curriculum materials that could be of general use across the country. We are trying to find out what can be done in one school system to make it possible for a wider and wider group of teachers to enter collectively into the process of seeking alternatives and teaching about them in the classroom. I find that most schools are quite permissive in what they allow individual teachers to do, and I don't accept the notion that a monolithic force is squashing the creativity of teachers. But it's an entirely different matter to induce an entire school system to say that it is going to adopt a rather broad change in the curriculum. Actual implementation is an even greater commitment the schools are hesitant to accept.

Some of the concepts that we have been talking about can be woven into traditional history and civics courses. Changes are taking place already in social studies courses, and the innovations are a major concern to many traditionalists. Of course, no amount of new curricula will make a difference until we solve the problem of how to attract community support for change.

NIEMEYER: There was an important statement made in the U.S. Office of Education-Foreign Policy Association study about the relationship between curriculum materials and what goes on in the classroom. The statement makes the point that most persons familiar with the social studies offerings in our schools would probably agree with the premise that the curriculum is largely determined by the quality and variety of printed materials placed in the hands of students. Stated more dramatically, for all practical purposes, the printed materials that the students use *are* the curriculum. But, in a sense, it is a question of which comes first: the chicken or the egg? The curriculum materials or the teacher's readiness to use certain kinds of approaches? Of course, both have to be worked on simultaneously, but I think that curriculum materials can often lead teachers into learning new approaches and concepts they never tried before.

REARDON: What has been said here so far has emphasized the use of the traditional curriculum and the traditional methodology of curriculum reform, with the exception of the example of community participation in Diablo Valley. I feel very strongly that this is not going to solve our problems. I think that curriculum reform is certainly one area that requires attention. But the situation now, both in the schools and in the international system, shows that traditional approaches are inadequate. Unless we start doing some things that break drastically with tradition —and I think that perhaps this might prove less painful than we think it's going to be for teachers and institutions—in a few years we might find ourselves slowly coming up with a few encouraging-looking trends when, instead, we should be arriving at some real hard solutions.

I don't think we have time any more for the traditional study of history. I was very much taken by Harold Taylor's suggestion [see April, 1968, *WPR*] for a new approach to the teaching of history: you start with a current issue and then delve back into history to understand the problem. Taylor says that you should use history as a device, or a vehicle, rather than study history for itself.

I'd also like to see the development

of a curriculum that is concerned with the future as a subject. Kids will be spending their lives in the future, not in the past. We should be planning a curriculum that can produce institution-builders, or future-makers, because war is an institution that must be abolished or replaced. I don't think there's enough concerted effort in that direction.

NESBITT: I couldn't agree more, especially on the importance of considering the future that these kids are going to live in. The problem with studying history by starting with a contemporary or relatively recent event, though, is that the event is often emotion-laden. Vietnam is an excellent example. It would turn off too many teachers and too many school systems to this concept. But you can use World War I this way. Then, when the class gets to more recent events, they could be analyzed much more dispassionately, and a future situation could be considered.

BECKER: In a sense, dealing with issues that are less emotional is avoiding the issues that we have to face. Past events have less emotional impact, so we choose to deal with them because they're safe. But that's not the way society is operating these days. Confrontation is normal operating procedure for all kinds of organizations. I don't see how you can avoid it, and I'm not even sure that you should. If basically what we are seeking is institutional changes—or even more basic than that, changes in behavior—I don't know of any way of achieving that without making people uncomfortable, without getting people involved in something intimate enough and controversial enough so that it forces them to rethink what they're doing. If the issue is safe and removed, people are not going to change their behavior.

FREEMAN: There is a serious gap, it seems to me, between what is taught in some international relations courses and what the students can actually relate to. We have to build some kind of emotional connection between the student's understanding of a conflict that he has to deal with personally and the kinds of conflicts that lead to wars. The most successful approach that I've seen is the one in which a teacher points out an immediate conflict situation in the classroom and somehow draws an analogy to the world system—to Vietnam or the draft or whatever it is that requires a student to project his thinking from his personal sphere to the world at large. If you try to teach about conflict by studying World War I, it is easy to bore the students unless the exercise is related to some real-life experience of immediate importance to the student.

REARDON: That technique is both productive and perhaps dangerous at the same time. I think the kind of thinking reflected in the article, "The Why of War," in which Mrs. Jacobs reports the naiveté of the students' personal view of war, can be reinforced by the inference that interpersonal conflict is similar to institutional conflict.

BECKER: It seems to me that if the classroom were looked upon as a miniature society in which human beings interact, students could learn much about human behavior from it. So far, we haven't capitalized on this resource. I realize, of course, the dangers involved in saying that the way two kids interact in the classroom or on a playground is the way that nations interact in the international system. Even so, we could learn from this kind of behavior. Classroom or playground situations can be used as stepping stones to help students understand important issues in society at large.

REARDON: If you're going to expect students to draw social conclusions from personal experience, then there had better be a little more community in the classroom. Learning has to become a more communal experience, and students need to contribute to and participate in the learning community. They need to learn, also, to apply their learning to social situations, and not just store it up in compartmentalized memory boxes.

NESBITT: I agree that the concept of the classroom as microcosm of society can be used, indeed, to illustrate certain aspects of conflict and cooperation. I would suggest, for example, trying to get kids, through an inquiry into their own experiences on the playing field and in unstructured activities that have no rules, to examine the differences between conflicts of values or ideas and conflicts that are largely subjective; the differences between conflicts that are real and conflicts that aren't real. Personal experience can be very useful in this. I think, too, that this approach can be extended to the realm of international conflict because the basic concepts of conflict aren't so different.

BECKER: It's very important that this approach encompass a wide range of examples because I think that what locks kids into narrow thinking, quite often, is a limited range of experience that makes them attach too much significance to relatively unimportant kinds of differences. For instance, in Vermont I observed kids who see a great deal of difference between themselves and the kids in the next community. Now, if their range of examples included Africans and Asians, for instance, these local differences might seem quite insignificant to them. But because their whole life experience has been limited to their own little community in Vermont and a small neighboring community, they attach a great deal of significance to what an outsider sees as almost non-existent differences.

But, then, how do we relate examples on the international plane to the emotions as well as the intellects of these students?

REARDON: I don't feel that it is a matter of emotions *as well as* intellects. I think the two things are very closely intertwined. And even though students don't appear to be affected emotionally by some of the things

they are studying in school now, they show that somehow they are emotionally affected, in the way they are turning off.

NIEMEYER: I still wonder about Ruth Jacobs' article because she is talking about young people who have gone through elementary and secondary school and college, and the whole experience has been without meaning for them, it seems.

BECKER: Perhaps Mrs. Jacobs' own perspective makes it difficult for her to see, in effect, where those students are at. I think we all do this. The teacher tries to teach kids to trust in whatever he himself happens to believe in. We all have our own context in which we try to put things. It could be that Mrs. Jacobs is using a context that makes it difficult for her to give her students credit for knowing anything about war because they don't know very much about the institutional formalities of the subject. It is possible that she is overlooking some things that they may know or feel about war that she would agree with. But she won't find this out unless she looks at the students' attitudes from a different perspective.

FREEMAN: A teacher's own perspective is very important because some well-meaning people who are trying to change what's being taught about war and peace are, without realizing it, sometimes counterproductive. Let me cite some examples. In Diablo Valley, an English teacher showed me a unit that he developed which was intended to deal with the subject of war in an English literature course. One section of it was a series of quotes on the subject by some famous authors ranging from Hemingway to Mussolini.

REARDON: I don't think that's much of a range!

FREEMAN: There were a number of others. The point that the teacher was trying to make through this approach was that there are a variety of views about war. All of the views quoted, however, were polar in nature; either they universally praised war as a grand and glorious thing, or they condemned it as stupid. There was no one quoted like Camus or Einstein or Freud, men who believed that neither extreme is useful and that alternatives to war must be found.

Another example of counterproductivity is the case of some teachers in the district who requested our help in setting up an interdisciplinary course on war and peace. They had not developed an overall coordinating theme for the course. All they wanted to do was give the students a hodgepodge of programs ranging from antiwar films like "Fail-Safe" and "Dr. Strangelove" to speakers such as draft counselors and draft board representatives. We persuaded the sponsors that the course needed a sharp focus in order to be effective, and eventually they decided to build the course around the theme of conflict at different levels of society.

So, I think that one of the most important jobs that we must do is to give teachers some fairly simple constructs for a general curriculum for teaching about war and peace. Otherwise, they deal with what amounts to headlines, and that is of very limited utility.

REARDON: I'd like to suggest that the world order perspective developed by the World Law Fund offers one useful kind of construct. It stresses the maximization, on a global level, of five values: war prevention, economic welfare, social justice, participation in public decision-making, and ecological balance. We try to take a hard-headed, analytic approach to peace education, a field formerly regarded as soft-headed and sentimental. Essentially, it was regarded that way because it simplistically taught, "hate war, it's a bad thing," without a disciplined analysis of the problem. In our approach, we are trying to have students look at international societal values and relate those values to their personal values.

NIEMEYER: Does everyone agree that personal experience combined with multiple ways of solving conflicts is one of the bases of good education?

REARDON: I would think so if it's done in two ways. First, the person guiding the students through the experience of viewing these things should understand quite clearly the conceptual differences and types of conflict, and second, the students should not be given the idea that conflict per se is bad. Conflict has to be studied in its constructive as well as its dangerous aspects.

FREEMAN: I would agree with the basic question posed. It is important to do this throughout the grades.

BECKER: Students can be shown many examples of different kinds of conflict and still not learn very much, depending, again, on the context in which the examples are presented. For example, you can say that society needs law and order—stability. On the international level, stability means peace. Yet, some very conservative groups that support peace education are not talking about anything except stability for the sake of stability. A study of conflict in that context would not accomplish what any of us would like to see. Conflict could also be studied at the opposite extreme, I suppose, on the theory that the only way to achieve peace is to destroy everything that currently exists, and then start over. Or, one can study conflict from a middle-of-the-road position that says we have to try to keep the world from blowing up while we try to find ways to improve it and deal with the multitude of injustices.

Now, that's a difficult tightrope to walk because those who choose to do it get condemned by both sides. But it seems to me it's the essential one if we're going to address ourselves to the problems that society faces and the problem of man's survival.

NESBITT: It gets tough in a classroom when you're studying the causes of conflict and you find that the differential of power resources between the rich and the poor is, in fact, a very important source of conflict. Avoiding conflict isn't simply a matter of finding institutions to prevent violence. It also involves change which may, in fact, require some radical alterations in the distribution of resources, and that gets down to the gut level, indeed.

FREEMAN: The problem of how to teach kids about conflict gets back to the question: What values do we want these kids to grow up with? Too often, educators avoid the issue by saying, "That's not really our job."

The code of moral values on which a school system operates is a delicate subject, indeed. Our job, as change-agents, is to be aware of and responsive to a community's deeply-rooted values, whatever they may be, while at the same time to expand the horizon

of the school administration, the students, teachers, and parents. We have to do this on some kind of continuum. In teaching about war and peace, we must start out in the framework of the traditional democratic values of peace, order, personal freedom, and concern for the general welfare of man. From there we must somehow move people to a concern for alternatives to war for conflict resolution and the study of alternate world systems which could better insure these democratic values for all men.

BECKER: We make the mistake of assuming that the schools are or can be agencies of change. I don't mean by this that schools don't play a role in the process of change, but the debate about whether or not the schools can be instrumental in building a new social order has gone on for a long time. The debate is still unresolved. But it does raise some interesting points about what organizations outside the school system can do to push the schools toward reform or lend support to those people within the system who are trying to make changes. I don't believe that schools reform themselves any more than I believe that any institution or organization reforms itself. It usually requires some kind of outside pressure.

FREEMAN: The manner in which you try to create change is crucial. For instance, a tightly-knit group in the community that objects to something about the schools can build a significant pressure for radical change. But because they have frequently ignored some of the legitimate fears on the part of the rest of the community, a reaction sets in, and the good elements of the radical group's program get clobbered. The secret that I'm looking for, in order to implement our program, is how to mobilize the reservoir of good will toward the schools among some parts of the community and prevent the tremendous suspicion among others from damaging the effort. So far, the only guideline that I found helpful has been a very strong commitment to the traditional democratic values while making it clear that those values must be extended to the international system. I find that people are willing to accept that leap as long as they are assured that we are not trying to tear down everything that has traditionally sustained the community.

NESBITT: You don't start by hammering away at the concept of the nation-state. Rather, you approach the broader question: What are the problems we're facing? How can we best solve these problems? What institutions exist to solve these problems, and where don't they exist?

BECKER: In a sense, it's obvious that many of the arrangements that exist today can't continue if man is going to survive—whether it's the atomic bomb, race relations or poverty. If you accept the fact that we've got to make changes, you can examine institutions in quite a different framework than you could if you were steadfastly loyal to them and assumed them to be perfect.

REARDON: What we are discussing isn't only a question of getting students to look at the possibilities for alternatives in society; it's also a question of involving parents, teachers and the community in this issue, and it goes right back to the question: Dare the schools try to build a new social order?

If we are going to question the institutions of our society, we must realize that we're opening up the entire school system to severe questioning. What really lies at the heart of our problem, I think, is the whole issue of participation—who participates in deciding what the schools are going to do for whom and for what purpose. One of the finest aspects of the Diablo Valley Project is that all levels of the community are working, to some degree, on this problem.

NESBITT: One of the principal forces behind rapid change is the students themselves. They're pounding at the door—maybe they're pounding

Biased Reactions to 'Enemy' Murders

The following report was excerpted from the article, "Experimenting with History", by Richard Kagan and Roberta Johnson in the Oct. 15, 1970, issue of *WIN*. While teaching a world history course last year at Boston State College, the authors conducted an experiment in order to learn students' reactions to a magazine photograph of a dead child killed by an "enemy" bullet. They reported these results:

We each instructed three sections of about 20 freshmen, and we were interested in confronting the students with their biases. In our experiment, we showed our students a picture of a dead child. We described the picture to one section as a missionary child killed by a Congolese soldier; to another we said it was an Indian child killed by a Chinese soldier; and we told a third section that it was a Vietnamese child killed by an American soldier.

The students reacted to the killings committed by the Chinese and the African as acts reflective of the murderers' cultures. In the students' minds, the Indian child was not shot by an enemy soldier, *but by a* Chinese. *They expressed this perception with remarks such as, "Why did the Chinese shoot the child?" To some, the photograph showed that the Chinese are "maniacs" and "desperate."*

Likewise, the murder of the missionary child by a Congolese reflected the "nature of the Congolese." Students labeled the Congolese as "inhuman" and "savages." Thus, regardless of whether or not the murders were justified, in the cases of both the Chinese and Congolese no distinction was made between the murderers and the societies that they represented.

The reactions to the third picture were different, for in no way did the students view the murder of a Vietnamese child as a reflection of American society. Since the students saw the war in a purely military context, they could not believe that American soldiers would intentionally kill children: The child was too young to be a military enemy; his death was an accident. ... typical reaction was, "We can fight, but not kill innocent children." In other words, the students found ways to argue that the child should not have been killed without arguing that the war should not be fought. Some actually doubted that the child was killed by an American bullet; they blamed the Viet Cong.

Thus, we found that students' perceptions of the dead child, as well as the murderer, depended on the political or cultural context within which the act took place, not on the neutrality of facts.

from the inside trying to get out. But wherever I've seen really radical curriculum change, it has been caused largely by students who simply won't buy the old ways of doing things.

I don't know if everyone here has read the remarkable new book by Charles Reich, *The Greening of America*. Reich talks about the "third consciousness," as he calls it, that's emerging—a sharp change in the values and attitudes of young people. It's certainly more obvious in colleges than it is in secondary and primary schools, but it's rapidly filtering down to them. The life-styles of these kids are changing rapidly, and we're going to have to meet this change. That book was one of the most hopeful things I've read, even though it frightens some people. Young people are not buying the war system, and their life-style reflects that attitude. They're really living differently, as well as thinking differently. Maybe educators should think of this third consciousness as the wave of the future. Schools are going to be changing radically, and we ought to anticipate these changes, rather than have them forced on us.

NIEMEYER: Reich says that one of the great weaknesses in the development of the "third consciousness" is that young people who have achieved this consciousness still don't have a positive program.

FREEMAN: While I agree with part of what Reich is saying, I don't agree that students aren't buying the war system. I see very little evidence of young people consciously countering the war system. Even though a lot of people are consciously countering American foreign policy in Vietnam, it seems to me that in their own approach to social change, they show very little enlightenment of the kind we're talking about.

NESBITT: Young people are not so much directionless as they are without a clear program of just how to implement these new values and attitudes.

BECKER: In a sense, the young people represent a condition which so many existing institutions are unable to cope with or capitalize on.

Along similar lines, some people are arguing about the inability of nation-states to capitalize on opportunities for peace, and in some respects there are better opportunities now than there have been for a long time. But the whole institutional framework within which nation-states operate makes it impossible to capitalize on new opportunities. It hamstrings them, making them do things in a prescribed way. Obviously, new institutions are needed. But although a lot of people are concerned about the problem, very few models are being developed.

REARDON: People operate on the premise that their purpose is to keep their marble bag full, whether they are dealing with the schools or the international system. Nation-states are unable to cope with these problems because those who hold most of the marbles don't want to give up any of them.

BECKER: In the sixties, when educators were arguing that curriculum reform was necessary, I think that all we succeeded in doing was convincing the public that schools ought to be changed. We didn't resolve any curriculum problems. I think the situation is different now because the public really wants the schools changed. They may not want them changed in the directions we're thinking of, but I do think that the public is unhappy and dissatisfied with the schools and wants changes. Now, how can we utilize that sentiment?

NIEMEYER: We have said previously that a new force for change is the revolt of youth. Vietnam is part of that. I agree that the concept of war as an institution has not been thought about very much. War, as it immediately affects the lives of the kids themselves, is certainly one dimension of their revolt. But this is tied up in their minds with all sorts of other problems of society. So, I'd like to ask the question: Can there be a curriculum specifically on war and peace, or does there have to be a curriculum in which the study of war and peace is just one of the dimensions?

And this leads me to another question: Can you study the future? I don't think you *can* study the future, but I think you can ask the question: What kind of life do we want to live in the future and in what kind of society? We have race problems, we have conflict, we have a warped distribution of wealth, we have illness, we have the repression of women, and so on. It seems to me that all the young people who are in revolt—and they have tremendous potential for being a positive force—possess this sense of being fed up with the total institutionalized life as represented by the schools. So, I wonder if we can implement strategies that might have an impact right now, within the next year or two years, on the millions of high school kids who at this moment are dissatisfied and are expressing their dissatisfaction, sometimes in peculiar ways. The use of drugs, I think, is just one of the ways.

NESBITT: Their dissatisfaction isn't going to end, obviously, with a change in curriculum, but with a change in various systems, including political systems. Teaching a course on war and peace isn't the answer. The curriculum, all the way from kindergarten through the twelfth grade, must deal with these concepts we've been talking about.

I'd like to mention something that might be called the youth imperative. We have seen in the last 20 years in Europe a radical change in attitudes among young people, to the point where polls indicate that roughly 85 per cent of young people believe there should be some kind of federation of Europe. I think there's a vast gap between this attitude and the attitudes of European leaders. The situation may erupt one day. Still, I think there's a little more hope in Europe than we've seen in some time. And I think that in the United States, as the percentage of the population that is young increases, this youth imperative or "third consciousness" is going to become more influential, especially among the middle class, and is going to force change, peacefully, I hope.

REARDON: I think the question is whether or not the youth revolt can be a revolution in the sense of causing a really profound change in the

existing order. One approach to helping the revolt become a desired revolution is the study of the future. I say this because the future is the concern of the students, and there is enough literature on futurism now so that it can be considered as content for curriculum. One of the most hopeful articles I've seen on this is one that appeared in the *Phi Delta Kappan* last March, called "Relevance and the Curriculum," by Maurice Hunt and Lawrence Metcalf. The article discussed the use of alternatives in the form of relevant utopias, a technique whereby you ask students three basic questions about issues or problems: 1) Where are we now? 2) Where does it look like we're going to be 10 or 20 years from now? and 3) Do you want to be there, and if not, how do you get to where you want to be? This approach requires rather sophisticated intellectual effort.

NIEMEYER: My only objection to this idea is that students have to know something about academic subjects. Reich recognizes this problem. He says that once some young people develop a "third consciousness," they respond by sitting under a tree and playing a guitar. He says that many people who arrive at this consciousness take a know-nothing, romantic attitude toward life: "I'm going to love you, and that will end the problems of the world."

If you're really going to do some thinking about the control of large corporations or organizations in society, for example, you ought to know something about economics. I think there is a tremendous need for much more content in education today—content, of course, that has been given some relevance.

FREEMAN: You asked if we can do anything in the next two years to effect change. My answer is a flat no, if you mean affecting at least 20 per cent of the school districts of this country. In such a short time, organizations like the World Law Fund, the Foreign Policy Association and the Center for War/Peace Studies cannot even develop the curriculum content that is needed let alone the kind of transmission belt that can reach into the classrooms of this country. I think that in the next two years we can do some interesting pilot experiments that will begin to tell us what needs to be done. But I don't see any panaceas.

NIEMEYER: Well, I'll settle for that.

REARDON: Well, I won't, because if you do, we're lost. You don't achieve radical change by settling for the incremental approach. The incremental approach should complement a long-range, carefully planned program. I think we should work on the assumption that we've got about two years to do this job. After all, U.N. Secretary General U Thant gave the planet only 10!

In terms of content and futurism, there's no question that students need data with which to make predictions. The most important kind of question that we ask when we pose this question of alternative futures is, how do you achieve the one you want? You don't get reasonable answers from students unless they know some economics, some political science and some facts about resources in the world system. If they're concerned enough about finding answers, they will seek out information; they'll get the content they need. I don't think we have to worry about the specifics of content. I think our primary concern should be trying to pose the right questions that concern young people.

FREEMAN: I'm not disagreeing with you about what needs to be done. What I'm disagreeing with is the belief that there's any kind of institutional mechanism in this country for accomplishing it in the next two years. It is utter nonsense to presume there is. F.P.A. School Services is going out of business, and they were certainly making contributions in this direction. People don't want to pay for this program. They don't want to pay for our project in Diablo Valley. They say, you can come into our community and work with our teachers, but don't cost us any money because we're spending it on gymnasiums, and teacher salaries.

REARDON: Are you saying that the mechanism does not exist and that we couldn't possibly create such a mechanism?

FREEMAN: I'm not saying that this country lacks the resources to do things far differently from the way we're doing them. I am saying that the process of change is going to be slow and painful, whether you like it or not.

The solid things that we're trying to do require incremental steps. The very little things that are being done by the New York State Office of Education, the World Law Fund and the Center for War/Peace Studies have got to be done in this way to achieve the larger change that we're all talking about.

NESBITT: Do you realize that the few of us who are sitting around this table represent practically all the groups that are working in the area of war/peace studies? We could almost fit in a phone booth!

No one expects that schools are going to force a drastic change in the political system or in any other system of society. I think that what we're going to do is affect some students, who will become more and more involved in the political process. I would hope that by 1972 or 1976 we'll see some major changes in at least one of the political parties.

NIEMEYER: I think there is a basic ferment in high schools today—a new awareness of problems and a refusal to accept the old shibboleths of society—that didn't exist even three or four years ago. Even at the junior high school level and in the older elementary grades today, teachers are beginning to say that the way they have been teaching just isn't relevant anymore.

NESBITT: Some recent psychological studies have documented the fact that a child's attitudes toward the world change as he approaches adolescence. They confirm that the younger American child does not have hostile attitudes toward other peoples and that somewhere during the teens his attitudes begin to change. Most youths seem to become very pessimistic about man's inner nature and the possibility of a relatively peaceful world in the future. It's in the elementary grades that the need is greatest for developing material on the teaching about war and peace.

FREEMAN: One interesting study shows that kids develop a concept of war much earlier than they do of peace, and that their concept of war is much deeper than their concept of peace. In their minds, peace tends to be nothing.

NIEMEYER: The absence of war.

REARDON: Indeed, that's the gist of our problem—how to conceptualize the meaning of peace as a process and a way of life.

This Article Has Been Reprinted From

WAR/PEACE REPORT
218 East Eighteenth Street
New York, N.Y. 10003

Subscription: $5.00 per year

By the World Law Fund
11 West 42nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10036