

An Intention for Peace

By Summer Ghaith

"War is Peace."

A paradox plastered on the walls of Oceania, the fictitious world George Orwell creates in his cautionary novel 1984. A world where people were forced to accept contradictory ideas simultaneously; what they called "double think." A world where rational thinking was unacceptable. A world where people only believed and never questioned. A world much like our own.

However, we do not live in Oceania and are not characters in a literary novel. We should not be expected to "double think", to accept and believe paradoxes; yet even without these expectations, we do; but why? In 2002, George W. Bush made preemption part of United States policy. His use of preemption was similar to preventive wars. How are we to believe that we must wage war to prevent war? When did war become synonymous to peace? Yet, we do not question preemption. Historically, governments have used preemptive strikes to try and maintain peace; Pearl Harbor in 1941, the Six Day War of 1967, the war in Iraq in 2003. The Japanese attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor because they saw them as a threat. In the Six Day War, Israel used military force against Egypt in an effort to prevent Egypt from attacking them. The United States waged war in Iraq because they believed, incorrectly, that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. In efforts to create peace, we created war.

Is the purpose of war truly to create peace? The United States sends Israel an average of three billion dollars each year in military aid. Yet, peace between Israel and Palestine seems to remain unachievable. Global spending on military exceeded 1.7 trillion dollars last year, yet the world is far from peaceful. Many active wars are occurring in countries right now; Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Israel/Palestine, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Libya, Ukraine, Iraq, Nigeria.

Movements in history prove nonviolent ways as an authentic means for gaining peace. Gandhi's peaceful protests lead to freedom for India from Britain. The Montgomery Bus Boycott led to the ruling that racial segregation was unlawful. The Singing Revolution of 1986-1991 gained Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania freedom from the Soviet Union.

People are over-armed with weapons and ignorance; both equally dangerous. Ignorance kills the idea of peace and leads to indifference and neutrality. A lack of education in international affairs causes "double think." If we truly want peace, we need to disarm in weaponry, ignorance, and indifference, and be educated in the

consequences of investing in, producing, and distributing technologically advanced weapons. The belief that spending more on military and engaging in war will provide us with "peace" is proven, by history, to be notoriously incorrect. We should be spending more on education, in order to teach younger generations that violence and wars are not synonymous to peace.

The intention of peace needs to be present. Wars today are fought for "Gold, God, and Glory," not peace. The world needs to disarm from these intentions and fund Peace.

"War is [not] Peace."