

Letter to World Citizens©

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A lead story in the Burlington (VT) Free Press this morning is headlined “Message of peace attacked by critics.” The accompanying picture reveals local “peace activists” lined up in front of the Unitarian Universalist Church in a vigil “against war and violence.” The signs they carried read “Only Justice Will Bring Peace,” “Bombing is no way to fight terrorism,” “Join us!” and “Martial Law Is Next!” Passersby flashed the peace sign while others shouted angry epithets: “traitors,” “nuke them all” and “war, war, war.”

How should we World Citizens react to the horrendous events of September 11th in New York and Washington, DC? There are many levels to consider: global, national, personal, emotional, moral, political all in a kaleidoscope of unanswered questions. Arthur Kanegis, the film producer, and I went down to the World Trade Center wreckage last week to tape my reactions as a world citizen. Bystanders near us looked on with shocked eyes and open mouths. Huge spotlights wierdly illuminated the site. Nobdy spoke. Only the trucks carrying twisted girders and other wreckage rumbling by broke the silence. Looking at it with wisps of smoke still coming out and the smell of death in our nostrils, I couldn’t help but think of my own WWII days flying my B-17 bombing German and Belgium cities, Brandenburg, Hannover, Dusseldorf, St. Lo. Then thoughts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the firebombing of Tokyo and downtown Beirut where every third building is burned out cascaded like obscene memories across my mind. The world community was replete with the wreckage of buildings and the death of humans wrought by war. What’s the big deal when war itself is still legal? Isn’t that what we must expect of our very own nations?

And condone?

Given the condition of lawlessness permeating the entire world community, my overriding thought was the inevitability of the NY and Pentagon strikes. Fifty seven years ago Einstein foresaw that, since August 5, 1945, “everything had changed except our way of thinking.” What did the “father” of the Nuclear Age mean by that? The “weapon” he had predicted was not a war weapon but one of total destruction of society itself. You simply couldn’t give that to competitive nation-states, he claimed. *“Those whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad.”* He was warning us more than half a century ago that the nation-state regime was obsolete in terms of war, that the anarchy which dominated the political world had to be transcended and that only a world government *outlawing war* could now save humanity and humans. Haven’t we learned that lesson yet? Indeed, maybe we should thank the “terrorists” — a synonym for lawlessness — for reminding us that most of us have not!

Those good, well-intentioned people on the Burlington “peace vigil” — and throughout the United States, no doubt — *have not yet identified themselves as legitimate World Citizens* in the 21st century but accepted docilely if painfully their exclusive 18th century allegiance as “Americans.”

Each of you, however, in claiming *the legitimate status* of world citizenship — your inalienable right to choose your own political allegiance — have by so doing effectively and personally *eliminated* the lawless condition between you and your fellow citizens whether they have

followed suit or not. In so doing, *you have personally made "world" peace*. How can this be? Simply by acknowledging your own legitimate world citizenship, you have made a binding "contract" with humanity itself. You have realized that if humanity is in danger, then you and every individual is in danger. **THAT IS THE MOST SHOCKING YET DYNAMIC FACT OF ALL HUMAN HISTORY.**

Therefore, in claiming our primal allegiance to world law and its evolving institutions, we **BECAME THE SOLUTION** to so-called "international terrorism" as indeed to war itself, the institutional form of terrorism.

This is what it requires today to be a true "American," "Arab," "Palestinian," "Israeli," "Pakistan," "Afghan," "Chinese." or any other relative identity: a patriotic human being.

Divorced from all emotionalism, and thinking globally, consider that George W. Bush and Osama bin Laden are both in total agreement that :*"justice," as a principle,* must be served. Secondly, both invoke "God's" blessing and sanction to their separate actions. Third, both agree that God and "justice" permit the killing of each other and "supporters" of each other. Fourth, while admitting that God is the Creator and Sovereign in law, both agree that no higher or global law shall be instituted to interfere with their individual concept of "justice." In short, they cast their separate missions in absolute terms: "If you're not for us, you're against us" contrary to their similar appeal to "God" and "Justice." In other words, their concept of global "justice" bears no relation to global law as its essential component for neither have ever mentioned world government, world law or world citizenship in their condemnation of each other's policies and actions. In a NYT's article, they have been referred to as partaking in a "global crossfire."

To us, the "solution" both to "terrorism" and the nation-state's response to it is clear and self-evident. It has been since 1945, indeed, for aware Americans, since 1789! There is no other option today other than a world government of, by, and for the people of the world, the ultimate sovereigns, for its opposite is the ultimate demise of the human species.

When I first claimed world citizenship in 1948 at the same time legally renouncing "American nationality,"¹ in my original statement, I claimed that I was placing what sovereignty I possessed, as a single human being, into the "vacuum" of world government. Others more prominent had been advocating world government for years, even aeons.² That "vacuum" began to be filled when we founded the symbolic International Registry of World Citizens in Paris in January, 1949. 750,000 registered in a little over 12 months! Perhaps some of you my age or thereabouts remember those exciting, momentous days. Einstein, Camus, Breton, Mounier, Bourdet, Schweitzer, Reves, Richard Wright, Carlo Levi, Lord Boyd-Orr, Helion, Sarrazac, Meyer Levin, all gave their unqualified support to the concept as well as my personal action. But we were "world citizens" without a functioning government. It wasn't until September 4, 1953 that finally our government was declared. You have, I trust, read the Ellsworth Declaration.³ Then you recall

² There is no such identification in US law!

² See *World Citizenship and Government* by Derek Heater, St. Jame's Press, 1997

³ See www.worldservice.org/documents

we invoked three "world laws" as its sanction: One God, One World and One Humanity.⁴ (Incidentally, George Bush was three-years-old at the time and Osama bin Laden was not born yet. So we World Citizens were first in line in seeking God's sanction!)

At the outset of the 21st century, with a new so-called war suppurating, as declared World Citizens —and documents to “prove“ it—with a functioning government to advertise, promote and expand, NOW is the historic moment to boldly stand forth in public to BE the example for our fellow humans to follow. Do not hide your world citizenship under a bushel basket . Reveal it proudly with kindness and understanding. Study and apply the formidable tools already available, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the various human rights conventions. Quote from national constitutions articles relevant to world law and citizenship. Understand history and relate it to today’s problems. Knowledge is power. Speak Truth to falsehood. Teach the youth how to relate to the world *politically* as they are already related technologically. Advise your national representatives of your global allegiance. Haven’t they pledged themselves to *represent* you? Then demand that they do so in your worldly status. Declare publicly your willingness to serve as candidates for world public office.⁵

In short, be an *active World Citizen*.

Humans have died, are dying and will die today and tomorrow because of ignorance, deception and invidious greed. Our very lives from henceforth are being held in hostage to humanity’s future. The only question remains: Are we wise and courageous enough to respond positively to that formidable challenge ?

Yours in One World,

Garry Davis

⁴ The actual wording: “1. There is but One Deity or Ideal, Goal, Vision, Absolute, Origin, Source, Mind, Spirit, Reality, Understanding, Wisdom, Truth, and so on, unitively conceived and intuitively, that is, by conscience, perceived, of which I am a living and integral part, as is all mankind, and 2. There is but one world, which is ideologically or intellectually understood, as my and mankind’s natural home despite social groupings such as tribal, communal, regional, geographical, cultural, historical, ancestral, lingual, or professional and which constitutes my total social environment or community, and 3. There is but one

⁵ Ref., Article 21(3) and 28, Universal Declaration of Human Rights.