

d'unité et de justice ne seront pas considérées. La Maison Universelle de Justice a identifié plusieurs obstacles à l'établissement de la paix universelle, tels le racisme, la disparité démesurée entre riches et pauvres, les conflits religieux, l'inégalité des sexes, le nationalisme et le manque de possibilités d'éducation pour tous les peuples du monde. Étant donné la perspective bahá'íe sur la paix, l'auteur suggère que la psychologie a beaucoup à offrir puisqu'elle s'intéresse depuis longtemps à la façon dont ces problèmes touchent les individus et la société. Plusieurs domaines de la psychologie sont passés en revue pour illustrer comment la psychologie, en tant que science, peut aider à surmonter ces obstacles et à établir l'esprit d'unité si essentiel au développement d'un monde en paix.

Resumen

La relevancia de la psicología en el establecimiento de la paz es examinada en el contexto del mensaje de paz Bahá'í. El mensaje de paz refleja el punto de vista Bahá'í que la paz significa considerablemente más que una ausencia de guerra y que no habrá paz hasta que no se haya enfrentado las cuestiones fundamentales de unidad y justicia. La Casa Universal de Justicia identificó muchas barreras que impiden la paz mundial, incluyendo el racismo, la discrepancia inmensa entre rico y pobre, la contienda religiosa, la desigualdad de los sexos, el nacionalismo, la falta de oportunidades educacionales para todas las personas del mundo. Dada la perspectiva Bahá'í sobre la paz, el autor sugiere que la psicología, tiene mucho que ofrecer puesto que ha estado interesada desde hace mucho tiempo en cómo estos problemas afectan a los individuos y las sociedades. Varias áreas de la psicología son examinadas para ilustrar como la ciencia de la psicología puede ayudar a superar estas barreras y establecer el espíritu de unidad tan importante para el desarrollo de un mundo pacífico.

The Universal House of Justice of the Bahá'í Faith has stated that establishing peace is the most urgent need facing our planet today. It has issued an important and remarkable document on peace, entitled The Promise of World Peace: A Bahá'í Statement on Peace and addressed to the peoples of the world. For Bahá'ís, it is significant that this message is addressed to all people, not just to Bahá'ís. This reminds us that the responsibility for peace is everyone's and that Bahá'ís like everyone else are required to work with other groups

and individuals toward this end. We cannot afford to be isolated and unaware of other efforts in our society. It is important for us to be informed about what others are doing so that we can identify other constructive forces working for peace.

For example, we need to be aware of what science has to offer so that we can extend, reinforce, and apply our ideas about a new world order. Scientific underpinnings to our religious principles also help us keep our spirits strong, as hope and belief are buttressed with knowledge and fact.

Recall these words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

There are certain pillars which have been established as the unshakeable supports of the Faith of God.

The mightiest of these is learning and the use of the mind, the expansion of consciousness, and insight into

the realities of the universe and the hidden mysteries of Almighty God.

To promote knowledge is thus an inescapable duty imposed on every one of the friends of God.

(Selections 126)

In our times it is often difficult to discern the constructive and creative forces; we are bombarded with the destructive, with conflict, chaos, and tragedy that are so much a part of our daily experiences. Yet, Shoghi

Effendi clearly states that both destructive and constructive forces are at work in this difficult age. We are, he said, in the dark heart of the age of transition so we must focus our efforts on positive and creative changes that will contribute to building the future world of unity and peace.

I have not been a Bahá'í for long, only a few years. But have learned a great deal about the power of faith in that short time and of the energy available to people with shared values who are working together toward a common goal. It was not until the peace statement was issued, however, that I began to think about how my professional life could be integrated with my spiritual life. Harmony between science and religion is, of course, an important principle of the Bahá'í Faith. I was excited when I first read the peace statement because it stimulated me to look at my own field of science—psychology—to see what it had to offer to the construction of a peaceful, healthy, and cooperative society. In this paper, I want to provide a few examples to illustrate the potential for applying psychology to the study of peace. Before doing so, I want to highlight a few aspects of the peace statement since I will be reviewing the literature in psychology as it relates to several issues raised in the

peace message.

The Bahá'í Statement on Peace

The peace statement is a positive document, which makes clear that despite the troubling times in which we live, “world peace is not only possible but inevitable.” It presents a broad focus and comprehensive plan for the achievement of a peaceful world. Peace will not be established simply by an agreement to reduce nuclear arms, because the banning of weapons does not remove the causes of war. The Universal House of Justice identifies many barriers that stand in the way of universal peace. These barriers include racism, the inordinate disparity between rich and poor, religious strife, inequality of the sexes, nationalism, lack of educational opportunities for all people, and a fundamental lack of communication between peoples of the world. It is here that psychology has much to offer since it, too, has long been concerned with how these problems have affected individuals and society.

The cardinal principle that makes change in these areas possible is the belief in unity. In the foreword to the peace statement, Ervin Laszlo of the Club of Rome notes, “Bahá'ís proclaim that the most important condition that can bring about peace is unity—the unity of families, of nations, and of... science and religion” (xvii). The Universal House of Justice makes clear that world order can only be established if belief in the oneness of mankind is accepted. Acceptance of this truth is fundamental to the eradication of prejudice, and it is the basis for the profound commitment needed to create a world order that would guarantee justice for all citizens everywhere.

The Bahá'í view of oneness and unity does not mean that everyone should think or act alike. Rather, the underlying principle is “unity through diversity.” Diversity of cultures, like diversity of individual temperaments, does lead to differences, conflicts, and friction. Bahá'ís do not envision a world free of problems, but we do believe that conflicts can and must be resolved in peaceful ways.

The Relevance of Psychology to the Study of Peace

I can only give you a very brief overview of psychology and its relevance to the search for peace; indeed, I still have much to learn about what psychology can contribute. But I hope from this presentation you may gain some appreciation of the important applications science can bring to the concerns we all have about the state of the

world. Psychology is a good example because it provides knowledge about attitudes, human nature, and interpersonal and group interactions that vitally affect the challenges we face.

Most of you probably think of psychology as being concerned with the understanding and treatment of people who are considered to be mentally ill. There are some psychologists who do specialize in this area, but psychology is much broader than this. It includes specialists in group dynamics and decision making, attitude change, animal research, and child development, among others. My own specialty area is called community psychology. In brief, community psychology focuses on the prevention of problems before they occur as well as on strategies for intervening in problems at the earliest possible time before a problem becomes more serious (Rappaport, Values). Unlike clinical psychology, which focuses on changes in the individual, community psychology is more concerned with change in society—changes in the systems and policies affecting individuals. Community psychologists might not conduct therapy with an individual but would be concerned with societal and community practices or policies that may have contributed to or even caused the problems faced by the individual. A community psychologist would attempt to create change in these areas with the expectation that these changes would bring about changes in an individual's situation.

This is not to say that community psychologists would not involve the affected individuals in attempts to confront a problem. Indeed, these people can be the central catalyst for change. An important theoretical principle of community psychology is referred to as empowerment. This principle holds that people should be allowed not only the responsibility for change in their conditions but also the resources and opportunities for effecting those changes. Community psychologists, then, study ways of empowering, of facilitating people's efforts toward advancement. As one of the leading theorists in community psychology has defined it, the goal is to "foster social policies and programs that make it more rather than less likely that others not now handling their own problems in living or shut out from current solutions, gain control over their lives" (Rappaport, American Journal).

Change based on these principles often focuses on the need for a redistribution of power and access to

resources. Social policies that implicitly or explicitly discriminate against certain groups would obviously be inconsistent with such a conceptual framework. Further, this approach rests on the assumption that people have strengths and competencies, but that the expression of these capabilities may be hindered by social policies and practices.

Let me give you some examples of how community psychology might be applicable to several of the

barriers to peace outlined in the peace statement, namely racism, prejudice, and the lack of education. The

change strategies from a community psychology perspective are based in part on the idea that individuals are

sometimes misidentified as both the cause of an identified problem as well as the appropriate target of

intervention. A book by William Ryan entitled, *Blaming the Victim*, provides an excellent example of this

situation. In his book, Ryan makes the case that the way in which a problem is defined has dramatic effects on

what we do to try to solve that problem. An example will perhaps best illustrate what he means. Consider this:

An eight-year-old black child is having difficulty in school learning how to read. From a clinical perspective, the

focus is likely to be on what is wrong with the boy that causes him to fail in school. A clinical psychologist

might administer an intelligence test, and a low score on the test would be used to explain why the child doesn't

learn how to read. It might also be suggested that background or race is the reason for the child's problems. The

shorthand phrase would be something like "cultural deprivation." Attempts to change the situation would likely

focus on the child to attempt to change that child in some way.

Now consider an alternative definition of the problem: that the problem is caused not so much by

factors residing within the individual but by the failure of the school system to meet the needs of this particular

child. The effect of routinely looking to the individual as a problem is that it narrows our focus and distracts us

from looking at other contributing factors. Suppose that the problem is created at least in part because of school-

related variables, such as low teacher expectations, overcrowded classrooms, or rigid curriculum, Community

psychologists would be interested in how such factors affect not only this child but also other children having

difficulty learning to read.

The first way of defining the problem lays the blame for failure on the child and ignores other possible

contributing factors. As one educator put it, “We do not have inferior schools, we have been getting an inferior type of student.” In contrast, alternative definitions may lead to solutions that focus on changes in the way the school operates. This kind of change is difficult but not impossible to achieve. It requires substantial alterations in the way in which we think about the cause of a given problem. Such an approach attempts to facilitate solutions which do not “blame the victim” but rather which address social conditions retarding individual growth and achievement.

How does this relate to issues raised in the peace statement? Racism and prejudice are frequently at the heart of discriminatory practices that deprive people of individual rights, access to resources and hence, advancement. As the Universal House of Justice puts it, “Racism retards the unfoldment of the boundless potentialities of its victims, corrupts its perpetrators, and blights human progress” (12). Because victims of discrimination typically have little power, the causes of their poverty remain unchanged. To overcome their problems, they must be empowered with the resources to change their situations. It is useful to consider two forms of racism and prejudice: Individual racism refers to individual attitudes and feelings about a race or group. Institutional racism refers to the practices of institutions of society that may perpetuate racial inequality. I will use the latter form of racism to illustrate how the principle of empowerment can be applied.

It is possible for institutions to discriminate against minority groups or women without an intent to discriminate (Senn & Sawyer, American 671–74). Admission to graduate programs, for example, depends heavily on grades and scores on standard admission examinations. These graduate programs, including professional programs such as law and medicine, typically admit a small number of students from a large pool of applicants. If grades and exam scores were the sole criteria, it is known that minority students would not fare well because their scores tend to be lower. The causes of this may be debated, but it is likely that economic conditions contribute substantially. Blacks in the United States, for instance, are more likely to come from economically deprived families and consequently have to be employed while attending university. This situation undoubtedly affects grades and performance on standard exams. Admission procedures may not be intentionally

discriminatory but in practice have the effect of perpetuating racial inequality.

What can be done about this? It is possible to change institutional practices so that a greater percentage of minority students will be admitted to graduate and professional programs. I am familiar with the practice at the University of Illinois, Department of Psychology. A separate admission committee for minority students was established to evaluate minority students independently from other applicants. This committee could select approximately one-third to one-half of the incoming class, thus ensuring that a substantial number of minority students would be trained as psychologists. The admission policy was based on the assumption that blacks who were denied admission often had the ability to succeed but were denied the opportunity because of policies that effectively blocked their admission. The changes in admission policies in some schools empowered these students in the sense that they were now able to gain some control over their lives. The fact that these students have done as well as their white peers attests to the validity of the concept of empowerment in this context. This practice existed in many universities but was challenged by a white applicant to a medical school who was denied admission even though his grades and examination scores were higher than some minority students who were admitted.

This case, known as the Bakke case (see Karst & Horowitz, for a review), exemplifies the problems inherent in redressing longstanding racial inequality. To correct the imbalance, it may be necessary to practice what might be referred to as "reverse discrimination." Many universities have strong affirmative action programs to recruit minority and female faculty (the latter being a minority of university faculty). It is true that some majority individuals will be affected if university or employment practices more actively recruit minorities. When there are limited positions or student spaces, some qualified majority applicants might be denied admission or employment who might otherwise have been admitted or hired. The question for society has to do with whether such steps are necessary in order to correct past inequity and to break the perpetuation of economic and educational deprivation among certain groups. The dilemma for those in power is that social change often (if not always) calls for a redistribution of power. Consequently, social change is frequently

resisted by those in power. This resistance is rationalized in a variety of ways, including adherence to the belief that social differences are natural if not desirable, that people deserve what happens to them (the "Just World" belief), and other "blaming the victim" strategies (Albee, American; Lerner & Lerner, Justice; Ryan, Blaming).

Changes such as those dealing with admission policies may have the same impact in reducing the disparity between rich and poor on a national level. Internationally, there is even greater disparity between the wealthy and poor countries. Thousands die of hunger in Africa despite surpluses of wheat in other countries. Can the same principle of empowerment be applied at the international level? I believe that it can. It would require a worldwide policy to ensure that all countries have sufficient resources to provide a reasonable standard of living for its citizens. If the resources do not exist within a country, they should be provided by other countries with an abundance of a needed resource. This includes technological and educational resources as well as food and other supplies.

What is required is a fundamental change in the thinking and policies of most countries. Each country must view itself as being part of a unified world and therefore as having a responsibility to help the citizens of other countries in need to solve their problems. It requires, as the Bahá'í peace statement suggests, that nationalism be replaced by a concern for the well-being of all citizens of the world. This has been referred to as a "shared humanity" perspective (Brockett, 1986), which implies a need for a redistribution of resources and benefits to countries in need with the goal of empowering them to confront the problems they face.

The stumbling block is, of course, that most affluent countries are unwilling to take such steps, just as some individuals resented the admission of minorities to professional schools. It is quite possible erroneously to blame an entire Country for its problems just as we sometimes incorrectly blame individuals. Nevertheless, I believe there is cause for optimism. There are many examples of countries providing aid to other countries in need.

Agricultural programs, for instance, have long been established through international development programs, and there have been positive responses to famines in certain countries (Horton, World; Vestal, Africa). However, while such efforts should not be minimized, they have not had the impact many thought they would have. I think

that this is partly due to the fact that the principle of empowerment has not been central to these programs. Too often, a possible solution is imposed on a group or country without involving them in the planning. An aid program that simply provides food to a country in the middle of a famine will do little to prevent a famine from occurring again. The country must be empowered with the resources to enable it to prevent recurrence of the problem. The changes must take into account cultural differences in the country as a whole, as well as regional differences within the country. That this is possible is perhaps best illustrated by the example of India, which once suffered famine on a regular basis. India no longer experiences famine because it was able to implement changes that were integrated into the culture. So far, I have provided a few examples of how one specialty of psychology may have knowledge that can be applied to our study of ways to achieve peace. Now, I will give some other examples of psychology's relevance to peace.

Aggression and Human Nature

Psychology has had considerable involvement in the debate over whether humans are inherently aggressive. As the peace statement comments, "...so much have aggression and conflict come to characterize our social, economic and religious systems, that many have succumbed to the view that such behaviour is intrinsic to human nature and therefore ineradicable" (3). The Universal House of Justice suggests that this is not the case and that it is possible to establish a social order which would encourage harmony and cooperation.

In an interesting book entitled, *The Hare and the Tortoise: Culture, Biology, and Human Nature*,

psychologist David Barash examines the research on the issue of whether aggression is genetic or learned.

Barash reviews studies from ethologists and comparative psychologists, as well as learning theorists. There are

two distinct sides, one sure that we are genetically mandated to be aggressive and the other arguing that

aggression is learned in our environments. Barash argues that we don't have enough information to answer the

debate but that he believes the truth lies somewhere in between. He concludes that, "All human violence results

from particular environmental factors such as poor rearing conditions, frustration, social disorganization,

personal neuroses or psychoses, etc the capacity for such behavior must ultimately derive from our genetic

makeup, the results of biological evolution” (159).

The message from the psychological and other scientific literature, then, is that even if we have a capacity

or propensity for violence, it is necessary that certain environmental conditions be present for that violence to

emerge. However, it is just as possible to create an environment that facilitates non-violent solutions to conflict.

Johan Galtung, a professor of world politics of peace and war, wrote in his appreciation of the Bahá'í peace statement:

That there is a selfish, competitive strain in individuals and nations alike, and that this may express itself in the direct violence released through offensive weaponry...all this we know. Under certain conditions that is what comes out. But under other conditions the opposite comes out, altruism rather than egotism, cooperation rather than conflict and competition. Our task is to understand those conditions.... (85)

There is considerable positive evidence that people can learn to use cooperative strategies instead of competitive ones. One example is the work of Morton Deutsch, a social psychologist who has conducted a number of interesting and creative studies on the effectiveness of different strategies for inducing cooperative behavior. He has examined several methods including (1) The turn-the-other-cheek strategy in which one side or individual seeks to elicit cooperation by being cooperative no matter what the other side does; (2) The punitive-deterrent strategy, which rewards cooperation but punishes noncooperation; and (3) The nonpunitive strategy, which places an emphasis on rewarding cooperation by providing positive incentives and avoids the use of punishment.

The nonpunitive strategy was consistently found to be the most effective in eliciting cooperative behavior.

Subjects in the "turn-the-other-cheek" condition were strongly exploited as the incentives for competition increased, while the punitive strategy elicited more aggressive and less cooperative responses.

In applying his research to foreign policy, Deutsch concludes:

It is sometimes assumed that the best way to deter the Soviet Union from initiating aggressive actions and to encourage them to engage in cooperative actions is to threaten them with severe punitive retaliation if they behave aggressively or non-cooperatively. Our experiments suggest that

this may be a dangerous strategy; it may discourage rather than encourage cooperative behavior and provoke rather than deter aggressive action. In contrast, a nonpunitive strategy that emphasizes protecting oneself rather than punitive retaliation in response to aggression is much less likely to provoke aggression and much more apt to elicit cooperation. The clear implication is that the United States and the Soviet Union...should be engaged in a buildup of self-protective defensive weapons while they should drastically reduce the weapons that could be used for attacks. (169–79)

The emphasis on cooperation rather than aggression or more typically, the threat of aggression, has been referred to as a Peace Through Cooperation (PTC) model (Kimmel, American). This approach acknowledges that individuals and nations can indeed be competitive and ethnocentric, but they can also learn to be cooperative and empathetic. In fact, organizations and societies function largely because most members voluntarily cooperate with each other. PTC theorists believe that conflicts arise because of misperceptions and misunderstandings, especially among groups with different cultural and social backgrounds. Attempts to address these problems should focus on improving communication, promoting trust, and resolving conflicts through correcting perceptions, according to Kimmel. Peace is a positive concept in which communication and cooperation among nations is the priority. PTC theorists believe that nuclear weapons are counterproductive and undermine rather than promote national security.

Communication

Psychologists have created many programs designed to reduce tension and increase understanding between antagonistic societies or groups. Let me give you two examples. The first is based on the work of Muzafer Sherif, a social psychologist. Sherif's research is known as the "Robber's Cave" study, named after the campsite where the study was conducted. The campers were boys aged eleven or twelve. At first, the boys were assigned to one of two groups, each of which lived in separate cabins and as a group engaged in a variety of cooperative activities such as camping out, swimming, transporting canoes, and so on. Each group developed the characteristics of a cohesive group. In the second stage of the study, competition was introduced between the

two groups, such as tournaments in which only one group could win a desired prize. This resulted in conflicts between the groups in which the groups engaged in name calling, raids on the other's cabin, and physical attacks. The most fascinating aspect of this research is the ways in which Sherif and his colleagues attempted to reduce intergroup conflict. They first looked at ways of bringing the groups together in pleasant activities such as going to the movies and eating together. This had little effect in reducing the tension between groups. Sherif believed that this was because the activities did not involve the groups in interdependent tasks. He introduced tasks that required the groups to work together to achieve a goal neither could achieve independently. These tasks had the effect over time of reducing the conflicts and increasing friendly and cooperative behavior. The implications for reducing conflict between countries should be obvious. Mutual projects and exchanges should be encouraged in which two or more countries work toward a common goal. Scientific and technological projects would be most important in establishing a cooperative rather than competitive relationship between countries.

A second example comes from the work of Gerald Caplan, a community psychiatrist. In his book, *Arab and Jew in Jerusalem*, Caplan describes his consultation efforts in establishing a vocational educational program for Arabs in Jerusalem and his attempts to reduce Arab-Jew friction in government offices. His book is an excellent example of the manner in which an independent party can help two opposing groups understand each other's customs, beliefs, and values. Caplan spent the first several years of his consultation in a study of the Arab community to understand problems in communication between Jerusalem Arabs and Jews. He did this to ensure that any programs created would take into consideration the values and traditions of both groups.

For example, he observed that considerable conflict and resentment was related to the interactions of the two groups in the marketplace, the location of a substantial portion of the confrontations between the two cultures. Caplan noted the distinct differences between bargaining styles. The Jews, influenced more by Western market practices, viewed the marketplace as a battlefield in which insults of both the item and the seller would be used to bring down the price. Arabs viewed it more as a game with as many social as economic aspects. For

Arabs, the purchase was almost incidental to the social interaction. It was never acceptable to an Arab to have a customer be abusive of either the goods or the merchant. The differences in style reinforced stereotypes of both groups and, as Caplan suggests, "the fact that neither side was apparently aware of the incompatibility of their bargaining practices was itself a major factor in perpetuating a situation of mutual affront" (Explorations 93). Caplan's work documents the need to understand all groups and issues before attempting to create any program designed to reduce conflict. Otherwise, the intervention may not take into account cultural differences and will be doomed to fail.

Psychology as an Organization

It is useful to make a distinction between two types of contributions that psychology can make to the goal of achieving peace. The first refers to the scientific contributions made as a result of psychological research and theory as applied to peace issues. The second type has to do with the impact that psychology as an organization, representing thousands of psychologists, can have. Some of the scientific contributions of psychology have been reviewed throughout this paper. Before concluding, I want to comment on some steps that professional organizations can take in promoting peace. The professional organizations of psychology have made public statements about the role and relevance of psychology with respect to the prevention of war and the achievement of peace. For example, the American Psychological Association (APA) has called for a freeze on the testing and production of nuclear arms and a diversion of funds to other purposes so that jobs and the economy would be protected. The Canadian Psychological Association has called upon its members to bring their expertise to understanding the psychological dynamics of war and peace. These public statements are important in establishing the concern of the profession of psychology. Many psychologists belong to organizations like Psychologists for Social Responsibility and are active in peace studies. However, the involvement of psychologists has been sporadic. While a majority of psychologists report that they read about and discuss the nuclear war issue, most have not been actively engaged (Polyson, Stein, & Sholley, American). Indeed, there is a lack of agreement within the profession about whether psychology should

make official public statements at all. Some psychologists, for example, believe that there are insufficient data to warrant public presentations about nuclear arms issues. Others argue that the purpose of psychology is to promote human welfare, and consequently we should as a profession be actively involved in influencing public opinion and social policy.¹ My view is that it is appropriate for psychology to take a position such as the APA council stated and for psychologists to attempt to apply their research to peace issues. Psychologists as always will need to be cautious about the generalizability of their findings, but the fact that there are insufficient data in some areas should not exclude our involvement. As I have made clear in this presentation, there are a considerable number of areas in which psychological research and theory may be of use in understanding some of the barriers to peace and in laying the groundwork for potential solutions.

Conclusion

I have tried to present a brief introduction of what one scientific discipline, psychology, has to offer all of us in our pursuit of a peaceful society. It is my hope that this presentation also points to the importance of viewing the issue of peace from a very broad perspective. Such a perspective makes clear that peace must be defined as more than the absence of conflict. In brief, it means the establishment of a just world in which the barriers to peace identified in the peace statement have been eliminated. A peaceful world would adopt the principle of unity as the overriding value that influences all decisions. As Bahá'u'lláh wrote more than a century ago, "The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established" (Gleanings 286).

Mr. Willy Brandt, the former Chancellor of West Germany and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971, makes the need for this broad perspective most evident. In his book, *World Armament and World Hunger*, Brandt argues that money spent on the arms race should be diverted to other concerns. Although one-fifth of the world population suffers from hunger and malnutrition, Brandt makes the point that the arms race diverts needed resources from these social problems. He comments that, "Where mass hunger reigns, we cannot speak of peaceMorally, it makes no difference whether human beings are killed in war or condemned to death by starvation"

(17–18). Brandt calls for the need to promote international justice based on a new spirit of solidarity, the recognition and acceptance of the interdependence of all countries. He comments that, “In the long run no nation or group of nations will save itself by dominating others or by isolating itself” (32). I believe that the Bahá’í statement on peace is a significant step toward the creation of a unified world, and we will move more quickly to this inevitable end if we continue to learn about and apply what our scientific disciplines have to offer.

I want to make one final point for I fear that the focus of this presentation has been too directed at conflict and war. It is important for us to be free of these concerns, but it is not our ultimate goal. In the words of the Universal House of Justice:

The source of optimism we feel is a vision transcending the cessation of war and the creation of agencies of international co-operation. Permanent peace among nations is an essential stage, but not, Bahá’u’lláh asserts, the ultimate goal of the social development of humanity. Beyond the initial armistice forced upon the world by the fear of nuclear holocaust, beyond the political peace reluctantly entered into by suspicious rival nations, beyond pragmatic arrangements for security and coexistence, beyond even the many experiments in co-operation which these steps will make possible lies the crowning goal: the unification of all the peoples of the world in one universal family. (To the Peoples 22)

1. See McConnell et al. for a review.

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