

# JOTTINGS

## *Before we teach, we must learn*

"Peace," leaders assure the people of every nation on earth, "is our goal."

"Peace on earth among men of good will," preached the Messiah.

The Dove of Peace, olive branch in bill, flies symbolically over the heads of the human race...and some fool raises a shotgun and shoots her down.

Simply because mankind has never yet achieved world peace, does it mean mankind never will? Never can?

Other wonders have been achieved by mankind, things once believed to be in the realm of the impossible because they had never been achieved before, had only been dreamed: voices of man now reach remote parts of the globe in mere seconds. Man flies. Not only does he fly, he flies from continent to continent in a few hours. Man walks on the moon. Man explores space, splits the atom, and has built, in a mere forty years, enough explosive power to destroy all life on this planet.

Within recent history other achievements have evolved. Although human sacrifice was once common, it is no longer practiced. Orientals no longer bind the feet of new-born females. Slavery is outlawed worldwide. Women, in many nations, have voting rights.

These changes, although accepted now as natural behavior, were once viewed as preposterous and intolerable. Humans can and do change just as humans can and do make marvelous technological advancements. In the past, technology has often led to realization of astounding feats of progress in social development.

People are not cast in concrete. Our brains are not constructed to follow pre-set paths, undeviatingly limited to reach defined conclusions. Is the notion of peace so visionary, so fantastic, so Utopian, that people are incapable of imagin-

ing a warless world? If that were true, leaders would not talk of peace.

A world without war has been promoted as an ideal from time immemorial. That such a world has never been seen does not mean it cannot be achieved. Anything that people can imagine being done, can be done. Walking on the moon and splitting the atom were science-fiction stuff only fifty years ago, as were energy-beams capable of disintegrating anything that crossed their paths.

Promoters of the manufacture and deployment of more and more and, year by year, of more powerful instruments of war give but lip-service to peace. Providers of sophisticated arms to people in countries where small battles are conducted with primitive armament do nothing to promote peace. Enhancing fire-power has but one effect: escalation of war.

Banning production of weapons, world-wide, is not an enormous task; that is only a step in the direction of peace. Changing emotional patterns mankind breeds into children is more difficult, but not impossible.

During the American Revolution, English were enemies of Americans. The Civil War bred bitter feeling between northerners and southerners. World Wars I and II roused anti-German and anti-Japanese feelings in Americans. Arab and Israelis are sworn enemies. Nicaraguans are pitted against Hondurans and El Salvadorans.

Hatreds, bitternesses, fears: all are learned emotions. No one is born despising people of other nationalities, races or cultures. Small children are taught feelings as they are taught language.

Nothing less than changes in what we teach our children to feel toward other people can bring peace on earth. Before we can teach, we must learn.

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