

THE CLUB OF ROME

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TO ALL CoR MEMBERS

The Way to Peace

Dear Colleague,

On 29 October, in the wake of the '82 Tokyo CoR Conference, a one-day restricted working meeting was held, the 'CoR Tokyo Convocation on the Issue of Peace'. The meeting was small (some 20 people) so as to permit an active and hopefully constructive dialogue to be carried out, and was organized in response to the grave preoccupations expressed about this issue by some members who had met the previous February near Vienna to discuss other matters.

The purpose of the Convocation was to examine whether it is possible for CoR, as an independent, global- and future-oriented body, to express, among so many other voices on this subject, a meaningful opinion on the extremely dangerous situation created by the world arms race, and the possibility of progressively building instead conditions leading to peace. As a preliminary contribution to the discussion I prepared a note dated August 1982 on 'The Way to Peace' (copy herewith). The Agenda of the meeting concerned essentially (1) the state of the arms build-up and the negotiations for disarmament, and (2) the possibility of devising other, better ways leading to peace in the world.

The interchange of viewpoints, ideas and suggestions was notable indeed and stressed the profound concern of the participants, certainly shared by the great majority of the other CoR members, for the danger of large and irreparable destruction to which the world is exposed if present trends continue. Although it is difficult for me to convey to you the depth and breadth of the observations made during the debate, I list herebelow, according to my understanding, some of the points which were developed:

- Whether or not the CoR or its members have the capacity of measuring themselves with so complex a theme as that of the possibility of establishing a peace-loving and peaceful human society in the future, and how; and, in the affirmative, whether their voice would be heard and what impact it might have;
- Whether the present unacceptable state of the world affairs is not due to some basic anachronism of our institutions, traditions and ways of thinking dating from proto-technological epochs but still guiding us; whether an example of such anachronisms are the organization of the world polity in 'sovereign' states (they are almost 160 large and small, powerful and weak nowadays) and the interpretation which is still being given to the principle of sovereignty itself; and whether and how such drawbacks can be eliminated;
- Whether, or how much, and in which ways, the developed/developing countries' divide has to do with the danger of war, either nuclear or conventional-leading-to-nuclear; or whether the principal direct or

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indirect causes of a possible new great war are rather the rivalries among powerful and super-powerful nations (taking into consideration that the 150 wars of the last 30 years were waged essentially in the less developed countries, and that on the other hand World Wars I and II occurred mainly among industrial nations);

- The formidable obstacle represented by the military-scientific-industrial-labour and political interests which oppose any reduction in either the arms production or their trade; and the niche that the ruling classes have carved for themselves in some countries precisely thanks to the protection given overtly or covertly to such interests;
- The difficulty of determining and describing what may be considered the fundamental features or requirements of a state of world peace, as well as of devising an appropriate methodology permitting CoR to make an effective contribution towards it;
- The imperative of viewing peace not passively, or simply, for instance, as the mere absence of war, or a condition which after all satisfies our own interests, but as a set of overarching goals and obligations which themselves require justice and human development throughout the world, and to which individuals and communities should be irrevocably committed with moral, social and intellectual tension and creativity;
- The importance as well of viewing peace on the one hand as a state of cultural and spiritual harmony of the human being in himself and in his relations with his environment, and on the other hand as the condition permitting world society to convert its pluralism and diversity from a cause of division and confrontation into a factor of strength, synergies and mutual enrichment;
- The fact that the mounting yearning for peace now perceivable in many parts of the world responds not only to a legitimate want of security in a society which is violent both in the military sense and in its civil life; but also to a more general aspiration for a better and more humane quality of life;
- The fact that the number of today's peace movements is very great, and that some of them may be considered actually 'legitimate' while others are too controversial, or partisan, or utopistic, or adopt demagogic postures, or must remain clandestine (mention was made in this regard, without expressing any judgment on them, of certain movements for unilateral disarmament, or refusal of war by mutual civil disobedience, or violent attitudes against military violence);
- The need for CoR in approaching the peace issue, as it does for all other key questions, of never losing sight of globality while promoting also, as far as possible, pragmatic developments in the regional framework, such as the creation of nuclear-free zones, or the adoption of a neutral status by individual states or groups of states (this being considered a commendable step forward, in a way similar to that concerning the establishment of regional economic unions or communities and regional treaties of cooperation in the environmental or cultural domains);
- The essentiality of greater transparency and public information in matters related to armaments, both existing and in preparation;
- The necessity for CoR, while fostering the peace climate, to avoid specific prescriptions both because of the heterogeneity of situations and possibilities in the planet and because policy making is outside the CoR scope or competence;

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- The need moreover of avoiding to be dragged into the controversy about nuclear power for civil use, because the military and the peaceful uses of nuclear power belong to two different spheres of human activity, and atoms for peace have nothing to do with the atoms for war;
- The need also to stress that the arms race leads to a progressive militarization of the world and its institutions and culture;
- The need, on the other hand, to make clear that a state of peace would entail or strengthen the democratization of global society (what 'democratization' would mean in different parts of the world was not itself made clear), and foster the citizens' participation in its governance, from the local to higher-up levels;
- The open question whether the new technologies which apparently are going to transform society, will make it easier or more difficult for this to become inherently peaceful, namely, in which way they are likely to modify its current propensity to conflictuality, and in which measure and under which conditions the use of these technologies can be steered in the right direction;
- The need for CoR to consult with or involve in its search of and research on the ways to peace also some of the best thinkers outside the CoR, including religious and social leaders, and not to neglect the views of the young to which the future will belong, and the inspiration of the artists who are often the forerunners of new values or the anticipators of new events;
- Finally, the root question of whether, after all, it is not an illusion to hope that humankind, whose venture has evolved amidst one war after the other, now that it has acquired nuclear power, will be able or not to avoid nuclear war.

You may agree or not on the opinions and suggestions as reported hereabove. I am therefore writing you, all the CoR members, asking you to meditate on the purpose we have in mind, namely, to ascertain what contribution CoR can and/or must make to the exploration of new, or more secure, ways to global peace. I would appreciate it very much if each one of you (or at least those who think they have something to say) could participate in the formulation of a concerted CoR posture or action.

Allow me, now, to express some personal considerations of mine. More than once in the past it was agreed that--apart from some general pronouncements--there would be no purpose for CoR to take a stand on the disarmament or peace issues if we were to reflect, with some more or less interesting variations, what has already been said, sometimes with great authority. These topics have been intensively, if not exhaustively, debated during the interminable disarmament negotiations, or at UN Conferences, or the Pugwash Workshops, or by the (Palme) Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the many other bodies which have dealt with the complex of topics concerning security, disarmament, the consequences of war, and so on. CoR should intervene only if it could make a 'plus' contribution to the knowledge and understanding of these key issues and the approaches which are most appropriate to lead to some positive solution or just a betterment of the situation.

I think that the possibility of such constructive intervention, however, exists, provided that CoR remains true to its humanistic, moral, spiritual, and yet practical inspiration. Since more than ten years CoR has

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warned that to examine with realism the major dilemmas confronting our generations, and be thus in a position to face them with greater probability of success, we must consider them not in isolation but in the context of the whole world problematique. Now, in view of the extraordinarily growing complexity of the peace-or-war question in our days, this line of thinking is ever more necessary if disaster is to be avoided. Following this reasoning, one can understand why the attempts so far made to eliminate or at least diminish substantially the overhanging menace of total war, have not given the expected results. The only alternative to war and the risk of a nuclear tragedy is indeed the establishment of the essential conditions which can underpin effectively a stable state of peace. No other ways or shortcuts exist.

Disarmament and all that which goes with it can be extremely useful, nay, indispensable, as a technical means, or as preparatory steps and a complement and consequence of the foundation of a state of peace, but cannot carry the day by itself. Moreover, the range of measures which are currently proposed, besides being utterly inadequate actually to turn around the situation, represent an unattainable goal under the present circumstances--unless there is a fundamental change of hearts and minds among the world decision makers. Proof is that, after more than three decades of disarmament discussion, the war machine is indeed thousands of times bigger than before. No real progress can either be expected in the future if we just continue to try to superimpose to a disgruntled, riotous and, in some cases, desperate world some abstruse, yet paper-thin, agreements on how to engineer controls aiming at preventing arms build-ups or ascertaining the 'throw-weight' of missiles and the 'kiloton yield' of the nuclear warhead produced in hush-hush factories.

CoR should not join the others in these inevitably desultory exercises. It should instead affirm vigorously that a serious (I would say, in view of the danger point reached, a supreme) effort must be made to determine, at least tentatively, which other, surer ways can lead to peace, and on what conditions these ways would become practicable. You may agree or disagree also with this. But the important thing is that you let your opinion be known.

To make a step further, a small Exploratory Group was formed, consisting of Jozsef Bogner (*), Helio Jaguaribe, Mohamed Kassas (*), Alex King, Eleonora Masini (*), Saburo Okita, Aurelio Peccei, Soedjatmoko, plus Michio Nagai (former Education Minister and currently Chairman of the Japanese Research Association for the Promotion of Peace, who is proposed by the Japan Committee for CoR as a CoR member). This group is eager to receive your comments (possibly limited to 2-3 pages). You are kindly asked to mail them in duplicate (one copy to Alex King and one to me) at latest in the first few days of January 1983 --which would give you a good opportunity of using your Xmas/New Year vacations in a new creative manner. The group will in the meantime interview also many other people.

Faisal Al-Khaled generously offered to host a second, two- or three-day restricted, working meeting on this subject in Kuwait. The tentative date is the second week in May 1983, and the participants will be those of us who are more interested in, and in a position to contribute more to, the formulation of a CoR function on The Way to Peace.

Looking forward to your reactions, I am,

Most cordially yours,

Aurelio
Aurelio Peccei

(*) appointed in their absence.

Enclosure

(only for the members who were not in Tokyo)