

Forcing Change



GLOBAL EVENTS 2013: A Calendar of Events on World Change

By Carl Teichrib (www.forcingchange.org)

The purpose of this calendar is to help readers better grasp the scope and extent of world change. This calendar lists dates and places, and it provides contextual information that will help you understand the movements and agendas put into play.

Upfront, it must be noted that this calendar provides only a brief glimpse into what's being planned. Each year, hundreds of other meetings and events crop up throughout the international landscape – in the United Nations system, the global security community, regional entities like the European Union, the world economic and banking architecture, and in the fields of technology, education, and religion: 2013 will be no different. For example, the G20, which will take place in September, has more than 40 pre-Summit meetings taking place in 2013 within the Russian presidency program alone.

Overall, this calendar will help you understand the agendas on the immediate horizon. It's a "heads-up" for 2013.

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Carl Teichrib, Editor.



2013: UN International Year of Water Cooperation.**Where:** Global.

The United Nations has declared 2013 the International Year of Water Cooperation. Therefore, an emphasis on global water governance will be attached to relevant UN meetings and forums on the environment, and global educators will be directed to stress the importance of water as an international concern. As part of this thematic push, March 22 has been declared World Water Day. Then, later in the summer, a week-long conference will take place in Stockholm, Sweden regarding international water cooperation.

**January 7-11/May 5-9: Global Governance 2022.****Where:** Beijing, China/Washington DC.

These two events – one held in Beijing and the other in Washington DC – are part of a larger project known as Global Governance 2022, which seeks to identify players, factors, and scenarios regarding international management in three core areas: global energy governance, global cyber security governance, and global development governance. The purpose: To discover the trends that will shape the creation of a new global order approximately 10 years into the future.

Working to these events, and afterwards as the project continues, twenty-four participants – eight from Germany, China, and the US – were selected by a steering committee of high-level academics, think tank officers, and governmental personalities. These 24 “GG2022 Fellows” also come from the ranks of academia, influential think tanks, and governmental agencies.

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January 8-10: International Annual UN-Water Conference.**Where:** Zaragoza, Spain.

This United Nations conference is part of the International Year of Water Cooperation, and is meant to set the thematic tone. One important aspect of this event is the stated correlation between global water governance and the 1992 UN Earth Summit core document, *Agenda 21*.

January 10: Crux of Asia Conference.**Where:** Washington, DC.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is hosting a one-day conference on the rise of Asia as it relates to “the changing global order.” As the Endowment explains it; “The rise of China and India as major world powers promises to test the established global order in the coming decades. If history is any indication, Beijing, New Delhi, and Washington may all have different visions for this new international system.” Panel discussions will take place with this broader theme in mind, along with panels on Regional Security, Space Security, and The Search for Energy Security.

January 9-11: Have the United Nations Agencies Adapted to the 21st Century?**Where:** Vienna, Austria.

Sponsored by the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS), this conference will review a spectrum of United Nations concerns – including nuclear challenges, the rise of the Global South, international knowledge management, and bringing youth into the UN fold.

ACUNS is an academic support and research organization dedicated to enhancing global governance through the family of United Nations agencies, offices, and programs.

January 14-15: Barcelona Workshop on Global Governance.**Where:** Barcelona, Spain.

Participants in this two-day workshop will study how international governance “can be at their most effective in solving global problems.” Questions to be explored are: “What is the performance of global institutions?... How are the leaders of global governance institutions chosen?... How are these organizations structured?”

Confirmed speakers include Javier Solana (former NATO Secretary General and EU High Representative) and Narcis Serra (former Spanish Minister of Defense).

January 23-27: World Economic Forum Annual Meeting.**Where:** Davos-Klosters, Switzerland.

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), it is “the foremost global community of business, political, intellectual and other leaders of society who are committed to improving the state of the world.”

For years, the WEF has been a premier international event, drawing together top government officials with CEOs from globally significant corporations, banking and financial leaders,

and social visionaries. Hence, what happens at the World Economic Forum reverberates throughout economic and political circles for months (and sometimes years) down the road.

The list of the 2013 strategic corporate partners for the World Economic Forum is extensive, including Visa, Bank of America, Siemens, Barclays, Goldman Sachs, Credit Suisse, JP Morgan, Deutsche Bank, Google, Microsoft, Prudential, and Morgan Stanley.

Regional WEF events are planned for different parts of the world throughout 2013.

- April 23-25: WEF Latin America (Lima, Peru).
- May 8-10: WEF Africa (Cape Town, South Africa).
- May 24-26: WEF Middle East/North Africa (Dead Sea, Jordan).
- June 5-7: WEF East Asia (Nay Pyi Daw, Myanmar).
- November 6-8: WEF India (Gurgaon, India).

January 28-31: Earth System Governance.

Where: Tokyo, Japan.

To be held at the United Nations University Headquarters in Tokyo, this meeting is part of an ongoing project on developing the political, scientific, and technological structures needed to create and maintain “Earth System Governance.” To this end, six focal areas will be addressed:

- 1) Earth System Governance Architecture in the 21st Century: This includes global political systems such as the “creation of a world environment organization,” regional governance, and national-regional-global networks.
- 2) Climate and Energy Governance Architectures: How energy and climate issues can be combined in “the next generation of climate governance architectures,” including carbon technology transfers and global climate/energy security programs. Global carbon taxation schemes will likely be included in this section.
- 3) The Nexus Between Architecture and the Other “A’s” in Earth System Governance: Five “A’s” will be examined – Allocation and Access, Agency, Accountability, and Adaptiveness. Here, the broader system of social norms and institutions, private partnerships, and social-ecological models will be looked at in relationship to Earth Systems Governance and its larger implementation.
- 4) Political Dynamics: Participants will explore “emerging agents in earth system governance,” including the role of regional political blocs and how scientific groups can influence the political landscape.
- 5) Methodological Challenges: Three groups will be investigated – the social sciences community, natural scientists, and engineers – with a focus on how technologies for global modeling can be used to enable these three professions in developing a collaborative approach to global management.
- 6) Nuclear Safety and Post-disaster Governance.

Started in 2009, the Earth System Governance Project is a joint effort between the International Social Sciences Council, the International Council for Science, and the United Nations University. In putting this Project together, four areas of activities have been identified for international management: 1) Global Water System, 2) Global Food System, 3) Global Climate System, 4) Global Economic System.

February 2-9: World Interfaith Harmony Week.**Where:** Global.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) is an official United Nations program that was influenced by *The Common Word* campaign, a 2007 inter-religious dialogue between Muslim and Christian leaders. On September 23, 2010, King Abdullah II of Jordan proposed the idea of an Interfaith Harmony Week while at the UN General Assembly. The proposal was unanimously adopted and the first week of February was set aside as the timeframe for this interfaith program. Multiple events are set to take place during the 2013 WIHW. Here are two (others will come to light as we draw closer to the designated week):

1. Interfaith meals, lectures, art displays, workshops and meetings will take place at Ma'din Academy, Malappuram, India during the Harmony Week.

2. An interfaith cultural festival will take place in Khanewal, Pakistan.

**February 5-6: Reclaiming Global Governance: Prospects for an Uncertain World.****Where:** Waterloo, Ontario.

This event represents many similar academic conferences that take place each year. This conference, in particular, is sponsored by the Canadian Foreign Policy Journal and is geared as an academic venue for scholars to explore “innovations in global governance,” including the economic side of the equation, “access to global commons (air, sea, space, and cyber),” and the identification of strengths and weaknesses in the current world order. Of special interest is the forward projections expected during this event, exploring what global governance might look like in 20 or 30 years, and how this could impact regional and international management.

February 8-10: National Preach-In on Global Warming.**Where:** United States of America.

The weekend of February 8-10 has been set aside as a time for religious leaders across the US to speak out regarding climate change. Hundreds of pastors and teachers from different religions will deliver sermons on global warming, the need to change behaviors and values, and the desire for a united world response to stem “climate change.” The organization coordinating this political/religious campaign is Interfaith Power and Light.

February 26-27: United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Global Forum.**Where:** Vienna, Austria.

This is the 5th Global Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, a United Nations political initiative meant to “forge collective political will” and “mobilise concerted action” within the realm of cultural and religious pluralism, political pluralism and democracy, and the growing development of new social norms and global ethics. Focal points are education, youth, media and migration, as each of these areas - properly managed - will energize global change. The theme for the Vienna forum is “Responsible Leadership in Diversity and Dialogue.”

March 4-6: Going Global 2013.**Where:** Dubai, UAE.

Going Global is a series of international events hosted by the British Council. Attracting policy makers, academics and education experts, Going Global looks at how education is changing as part of the international landscape. This year's event, held in Dubai, will examine how educational can be systemized at the global level, the role of higher education in "soft power" and cultural diplomacy, and how "global research hubs" can contribute "to global, national, and local community agendas."

March 11-12: The Future We Need – Civil Society Democratizing the United Nations.**Where:** Sao Paulo, Brazil.

"The Future We Need" is hosted by the Forum for Democratic Global Governance (FIM), a Quebec-based organization that arose in favorable response to the UN-supported Commission on Global Governance. Since 1998, FIM has held conferences and workshops around the world, promoting global democratic ideas – a world parliament, international taxation, collective security, planetary environmental governance, and world law. All of this has been at the core of the FIM program, and it comes out in their strategizing sessions and through the empowerment of like-minded non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly Southern-based "civil society" groups (Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia).

The 2013 Sao Paulo event seeks to strengthen the role of civil society (NGOs) as it works to influence the United Nations in shaping global democratic governance.

**March 14-16: Global Health – Innovation, Implementation, Impact.****Where:** Washington DC.

This conference will pursue international, collective health planning in the name of overcoming global health programs. According to the conference literature, "there is a need to guide the future of global health through action." Over 1000 professionals will engage in issues such as; "Global Health Justice" and human rights, interconnectedness of government policy, education and research in global health, cultural challenges, training a global health workforce, financing for global health, and the role of technology in a globally-oriented health system.

March 15-19: Governance and Sustainability: Local Concerns, Global Challenges – The American Society for Public Administration 2013 Annual Conference.

Where: New Orleans, LA.

The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) is the largest public administration association in the United States, and has been in operation since 1939. ASPA works with researchers, teachers, and others involved in the professional and academic fields of public administration.

In 2013, the Annual meeting of the ASPA will take an international approach: Global governance and its impact on social, economic, and environmental administration – from thinking globally to acting locally. According to the ASPA, “this conference will consider whether we have reached or exceeded the limits of our democratic state, the governance implications of these challenges, and the effect of these issues in public management and public policy.”

March 26-30: World Social Forum.

Where: Tunis, Tunisia.

The World Social Forum is the premier event for the global, progressive left. It’s a significant gathering of leftist politicians, environmental leaders, social activists, and internationalists. In many respects the World Social Forum is the trend-setting event for international socialism.

And choosing to place the WSF in Tunis wasn’t an accident, for the Arab Spring was kick-started in Tunisia, and WSF organizers picked this city for the purpose of creating deeper connections with these “new world social actors.”

April 3-6: The Politics of International Diffusion – Regional and Global Dimensions.

Where: San Francisco, CA.

This is the annual conference of the International Studies Association, a global academic body connecting professors, practitioners, and students from around the world. Like other major ISA events, this one will explore a wide range of inter-related topics; the role of international law, global military actions and foreign policy, evolving concepts of sovereignty, the “politics of economic crisis,” the theory and practice of international organizations, and more.

Conferences like the ISA annual meeting are not “earth-shaking” in the sense that they create policy or global political direction. However, these types of settings are important for they allow cross-discipline discussions, give energy to new and up-and-coming leaders, and allow policy makers to interact with scholars as they flesh out what “global order” looks like.

April 12-13: Changing Face of Global Governance: Institutions in the International Legal Order.

Where: Oxford, UK.

Many university-level conferences and workshops on global governance take place each year. This event, to be held at the University of Oxford, is organized by the British Branch of the International Law Association. It will explore the development and changing roles of global judicial systems, the International Criminal Court, the nature of world law and international enforcement, global environmental laws, and how the United Nations and other global bodies facilitate a world legal order. The keynote speaker is Patricia O’Brien, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs.

April 29-30: The European Union and Emerging Powers.**Where:** European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium.

Sponsored by prominent European universities and institutions, this conference –taking place in the European Parliament – will examine the role of the European Union in the context of a changing, unpredictable, and expanding system of global governance. Four areas of research will be focused on: 1) Global economic governance and the European region, 2) Global energy and environmental governance, 3) Global security and the rise of emerging powers, 4) International challenges and opportunities in the Rule of Law and global democracy building.

Participants are expected from across the European bloc, along with policy experts from North America.

**June 13-14: Clinton Global Initiative.****Where:** Chicago, IL.

Started by President Bill Clinton in 2005, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) is a premier annual event bringing together key leaders from around the world. According to CGI literature, “CGI Annual Meetings have brought together more than 150 heads of state, 20 Nobel Prize laureates, and hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations and NGOs, major philanthropists, and members of the media.”

The purpose of the CGI is to bring these leaders to the table, discuss global and national problems, then commit to a tangible action plan that works at solving said problems. Job creation and job training, and access to capital, do occur through the endeavors of CGI - especially as it relates to “green energy” and childhood development. Underlying so much of the CGI, however, is the notion that global problems require a global solution provider, and that this can occur through a concerted effort of blending big government with big business.

June 15-16: Global Future 2045 International Congress.**Where:** New York, NY.

The Global Future 2045 project was launched last year in Moscow. Its purpose: To bring together the world’s leading scientific philosophers, sociologists, thinkers, and technical futurists with the goal of mapping out humanity’s evolution into a new planetary age – a global transhuman shift.

Some of the 59 personalities who are part of this project include:

- Raymond Kurzweil (head of Singularity University).
- Eric Chaisson (Professor of Astrophysics at Harvard).
- Nick Bostrom (Prof. at Oxford and co-founder of the World Transhumanist Association).
- Alexander Bolonkin (NASA Senior Research Fellow).
- Vladimir Pavlovsky (Russian Academy of Sciences).

Because of the recognized stature of GF2045 participants, the findings and suggestions from this Congress are anticipated to carry weight within the international community.

June 17-19: Leadership in Global Governance: 2013 ACUNS Annual Meeting.

Where: Lund, Sweden.

The Academic Council on the United Nations System will hold its annual meeting in Lund, Sweden, with the theme: Leadership in Global Governance. ACUNS is an academic organization designed to further global governance through the family of United Nations agencies and programs. It has Category 1 Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, is accredited with UNESCO, and has NGO Affiliate status with the United Nations Department of Public Information.

June 19-21: Transformation in a Changing Climate.

Where: Oslo, Norway.

Bringing together policy experts, scientists, civil society actors and governmental players, this event looks at climate change as the “perfect storm that will lead to unprecedented social and ecological impacts.” Hence, this forum openly seeks new approaches in terms of total transformational thinking, including the following: The Economics of Transformation, the Politics of Transformation, Technical Transformation, Urban Transformation, Community-based Transformation, Social-Ecological Transformation, and the Transformation of Values, Norms and Worldviews.

June 27-29: IEEE International Symposium on Technology and Society.

Where: Toronto, Ontario.

Hosted by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, this international forum will explore what it means to live in a “smart environment” – a world integrated with miniature cameras, wearable data devices, smart power grids and smart roads, and augmented “smart people” complete with sensors and chips.

Understanding that this “brave new world” is rapidly coming to fruition, this conference is about wrestling with the transformation of society into a globally integrated network of “smart things” and “smart people.”

July 2-4: People and the Planet: Transforming the Future Conference.

Where: Melbourne, Australia.

Treating the subject of global sustainability as a complete package – economics, ecology, politics and culture – this event will bring a cross-section of government, academic and NGO leaders to the table with some big thoughts in mind: “What does it mean to be responsible for the future of our planet?... What is to be done?... to debate how are we going to act now to work towards an imagined future.”

But this conference isn’t a stand-alone event. It has been purposely worked into a broader United Nations framework that includes the recommendations of the UN Global Compact Cities Programme, and the UN Habitat City Changes campaign.

World Vision Australia is a main sponsors.



July 19-21: World Future 2013 – Exploring the Next Horizon.**Where:** Chicago, IL.

This is the annual conference of the World Future Society, an internationally represented organization dedicated to world future studies and progress toward a world community.

A wide variety of topics will be explored during this event, including climate and environmental issues, monetary and economic futures, technology and science, and global governance themes. Part of the conference will include “22nd Century Lectures,” a series of special presentations aimed at modeling and forecasting scenarios for global governance at the turn of this century.

July 24-27: World Federalist Movement Council Meeting.**Where:** New York City, NY.

The World Federalist Movement (WFM) is an umbrella organization specifically geared to the support and creation of a world federal government. In 2012 the WFM held its global congress in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and in 2013, the WFM Council - its upper leadership - will meet in New York. Based on what transpired in Winnipeg, which set the tone for WFM's next 5 years, two items will likely be deliberated with greater detail; 1) The ongoing work to empower the United Nations Parliamentary Assembly Campaign - a quest to formulate an operational world parliament, 2) The commitment to advance the *Manifesto for a Global Democracy*, a short text affirming the desire for a global system of governance based on democratic principles.

August 11-14: In Diversity is Our Strength – NAIN Connect Conference.**Where:** Toronto, Ontario.

“In Diversity is Our Strength” is the theme and title of the 2013 North American Interfaith Network “Connect Conference.” Topics of discussion are expected to include “interfaith and ecology,” social justice themes, interfaith engagement with civic structures, moving beyond tolerance, the challenges of religious inequality, and interfaith responses to globalization.

NAIN is one of the most active interfaith organizations operating in North America, and partners with 56 city, regional, and national interfaith groups.

August 26-September 2: Burning Man.**Where:** Black Rock City, Nevada.

For years The Burning Man festival has drawn tens of thousands of participants to the harsh Black Rock Desert of northern Nevada (about 50,000 participated in 2012 - see the picture of the city on page 11).

Overnight, a tent-camper city arises out of the sand. This town, known as Black Rock City, is built in a massive C-configuration around an enormous figure: The Burning Man. Constructed out of wood, this forty-foot high human effigy is the focal point for the weeklong celebration. At the end of the week, the Man is ritually razed to the ground in a towering inferno, followed by the burning of the Temple on Sunday. This “Temple” is an enormous shrine built with the Burn theme in mind. In 2009 the theme was Evolution; 2010, Metropolis; 2011, Rites of Passage; and in 2012 it was Fertility.

So what is The Burning Man about? It's festival of inclusiveness – a gathering of people from all walks of life, with a decidedly bohemian approach. Artisans of all stripes create unique sculptures and other artistic pieces in the desert, and independent thematic camps are arranged according to participatory group tastes; everything from “inner healing” to the Cold War to dodgeball to Earth Guardians. Sexual adventurism and all manner of alternative lifestyles are accepted. Clothing is optional. It's a week of rituals and pagan ceremonies, partying and debauchery. No one is considered a spectator; all are expected to participate in building the “new world.”

Burning Man is considered a “petri-dish for postmodernism,” and sets a type of cultural standard for America. Regional “burns” and spin-off events now take place around the world.

NOTE: The first picture below is the “Man” on his pedestal during burn week. On the concluding Saturday of the week, the Man is razed to the ground. The second image is an ariel photo of Black Rock City, the camper/tent community that springs up around the Man.



September 1-6: World Water Week.

Where: Stockholm, Sweden.

Organized by the Global Water Partnership, together with the World Wide Fund for Nature and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, this week-long conference will work to raise awareness for global water cooperation. It will “identify issues on education, diplomacy, as well as transboundary water management, financing, national and international legal frameworks, and linkages with the [UN] Millennium Development Goals. It will also provide an opportunity to capitalize on the momentum created at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)...” Regional and global water security, transnational water management, and the role of water as part of the global commons will be addressed.

World Water Week is the capstone event for the UN International Year of Water Cooperation.

September 5-6: G20 Summit**Where:** St. Petersburg, Russia.

Russia, for the first time in the history of the G20, will lead this important gathering of representatives from 19 countries plus the European Union. Unlike the G8, which focusses on heads-of-state, the G20 revolves around central bank governors, finance ministers, and government leaders. It is a meeting of the world's financial, banking, and political elites.

The focus in 2013 will be on creating a global financial framework, reforming international institutions, empowering broad-based financial regulations, multilateral trade, and global job growth strategies. Energy infrastructure and "green economies," two interrelated components of the global development agenda, will be discussed. The role of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, the Bank for International Settlements, and regional development banks in relationship to the globally integrated economy will also be hashed out. It is anticipated that some discussion will take place regarding the status of international reserve currencies.

Commenting on the role and influence of the G20, John Kirton of the G20 Research Group wrote the following, "More broadly, G20 summits are transforming the very architecture of global governance, by building the institutions on which the world depends. They have raised the resources and reformed the voting shares at the IMF and World Bank — tasks that these bodies had repeatedly tried but failed to do on their own. And in a world where international financial regulation has become central, the G20 has created the third pillar of the Bretton Woods system, in the form of the now G20-dominated Financial Stability Board."

Keep your eyes on the G20 as the world's economy continues to be buffeted in 2013.

September 21: International Day of Peace.**Where:** Global.

Instituted by the United Nations, the International Day of Peace (IDP) is meant to bring the world closer together in peaceful co-existence. All major religions participate in this annual event with peace ceremonies, celebrations, rituals, and meditation for world harmony.

According to the International Day of Peace website,

"Since its inception, Peace Day has marked our personal and planetary progress toward peace. It has grown to include millions of people in all parts of the world, and each year events are organized to commemorate and celebrate this day. Events range in scale from private gatherings to public concerts and forums where hundreds of thousands of people participate."



Associated with the IDP is the International Day of Peace Vigil, bringing a grassroots "spiritual dimension" to the IDP project. This vigil is supported by a multitude of religious organizations, including The Aetherius Society (Hindu), the Church of Scientology, A Course in Miracles (New Age), In The Light (an interfaith Hindu/Muslim group), the Yun Lin Temple (Buddhism), and the Mennonite Central Committee.

October (date unknown): World Forum of Spiritual Culture.

Where: Astana, Kazakhstan.

In 2010, about 700 participants from around the world gathered in Astana to discuss the development of a world “spiritual culture” in the context of global social/spiritual harmony, with the aim of setting up a global spiritual forum in 2013 that embraces “one spiritual brotherhood.”

This forum, a “spiritual roundtable” supported by the Kazakhstan government, is now set to take place in Astana’s Palace of Peace and Reconciliation, a 77 meter-high pyramid dedicated to world order and global spiritual oneness. According to the organizer’s press release, the long-term objective of the 2013 Forum is “achieving and sustaining a stable STATE of WORLD PEACE – therefore it is necessary: to establish the scientific and organizational basis for a global social WORLD-HARMONY!” (capitals in original).

December (date unknown): International Conference of Chief Justices of the World.

Where: Lucknow, India.

This is the 14th International Conference of Chief Justices, and it’s meant to encourage judges, court officials, and the legal community toward using and implementing world law, and placing it as a recognized standard for nations and individuals. According to the conference literature, “...there is urgent need for changes in global governance, for enforceable world law and for empowering the International Court of Justice as World Court with wider jurisdiction.

Previous annual meetings of the Chief Justices of the World have centered on “enforceable world law” and global government, and have included almost 500 Chief Justices, Judges, and Heads of State.

A unique aspect of this event is that it’s hosted by City Montessori School in Lucknow – the “largest school by pupils in a single city,” with over 44,000 students. This school has a strong advocacy push for world citizenship and world government, and while the Chief Justice conference is in play, students petition judicial leaders to consider international law as a means to protect the planet’s children.

December 14-21: 13th Session of the Provisional World Parliament.

Where: Lucknow, India.

The World Constitution and Parliament Association (WCPA) will hold their 13th session of the Provisional World Parliament, which seeks to flesh-out and advance the idea of a single global government and world constitution. It’s expected that the WCPA will explore a number of inter-related concepts: Global democracy, a United Nations Charter Review, and a federal world union through an enforceable *Earth Constitution*.

Although the WCPA is relatively unknown in Western circles (it’s a spin-off from the World Federalist community), the organization has garnished the attention of leaders and thinkers from parts of the developing world.

The Fall and Rise of Human Violence



By Berit Kjos (www.crossroad.to)

The world is changing fast. A massive shift from the guidance of a Bible-based conscience to a mindless pursuit of corrupt "thrills" has been fanning the flames of this transformation for years.

The following news items give us some glimpses of the consequences:

2012: "Adam Lanza of Newtown, Connecticut was a child of the suburbs and a child of divorce who at age 20 still lived with his mother. This morning he appears to have started his day by shooting his mother Nancy in the face, and then drove her car to nearby Sandy Hook Elementary School... There, before turning his gun on himself, he shot and killed 20 children."

- *ABC Blotter* webpage, December 14, 2012.

2012: "...in the early morning hours of July 20, 2012, a deranged, fame-starved gunman shot dead at least 12 innocent people and wounded scores more at a midnight showing of 'The Dark Knight Rises,' a Batman sequel... One of the victims killed was a 3-month-old baby. Another was 6'... British reviewer Jenny McCartney [wrote]: '...It's different from other superhero films... But the greatest surprise of all ...has been the sustained level of intensely sadistic brutality throughout the film'."

- Matt Barber, "Our Culture of Death and the Batman Shooting," *WND*, July 20, 2012.

2011: "The upcoming protests ...is closely tied to the founders of ACORN and leaders of major U.S. unions... There are indications the protesters are training to incite violence, resist arrest and disrupt the legal system. The protest aims to take root nationwide."¹

2011: "In Philadelphia, a group of 20-40 youths went on a rampage... resulting in 59 people being beaten and briefly hospitalized ...a mob ran through the Wisconsin State Fair ...beating up people at random. In London, citizens have been besieged by three straight nights of hellish rioting [that] spread to other parts of the nation."²

In her recent article, "How the Liberals Ruined Britain," Melanie Phillips adds these insights:

"The violent anarchy that has taken hold of British cities is the all-too-predictable outcome of a three-decade liberal experiment which tore up virtually every basic social value. The married two-parent family, educational meritocracy, punishment of criminals... and many more fundamental conventions were all smashed by a liberal intelligentsia hell-bent on a revolutionary transformation of society.

Now we can see what they have brought about in the unprecedented and horrific scenes of mob violence, with homes and businesses going up in flames, and epidemic looting... These youths feel absolutely entitled to go 'on the rob' and steal whatever they want...

What has been fuelling all this is not poverty... but moral collapse. What we have been experiencing is a complete breakdown of civilized behavior... and at the very heart of these problems lies the breakdown of the family... [T]here are whole areas of Britain... where committed fathers are a wholly unknown phenomenon... It's a world without any boundaries or rules. A world of emotional and physical chaos."³

A spreading addiction to depraved entertainment has magnified this moral revolution. The rest of this article explains **why** this is happening and **how** we can prepare for the challenges ahead.

History's Lessons

As centuries come and go, history occasionally reveals sudden, momentous changes that transform cultures in ways that defy human logic. One of these astounding leaps began about 400 years ago. Its transforming power brought light into the darkness of the Middle Ages and safety to people bound by fear, superstition and tyranny.

Historian Randall Roth summarizes what happened. His research showed little variation in the rate of human violence between the 14th and the 16th centuries. "Then in the 17th century, there is a very big, dramatic drop," he says. "It's so sudden and rapid that it seems too hard to explain..."⁴

Mr. Roth ought to know. From his base at Ohio State University, he had uncovered detailed documentation of 16th and 17th century murder rates which suggested "that countries don't become more or less civilized that quickly."

Journalist Alexander Stille explores this remarkable shift in his *New York Times* article, "Did Knives and Forks Cut Murders?" Basing his observations on studies done by historians during the last 60 years, he summarizes their findings:

"Although there were no national statistics centuries ago, some historians discovered that the archives of some English counties were intact back to the 13th century. So in the 1970's they began diligently counting indictments and comparing them with estimated population levels to get a rough idea of medieval and early modern crime rates.

Historians in Continental Europe... came up with findings that yielded the same surprising results: that murder was much more common in the Middle Ages than it is now and that it dropped precipitately in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries." [Endnote 4]

Why this drop? How did people suddenly become less violent? These are important questions, for an accurate answer would also help nations deal with today's rising rate of violence.

So in his informative article, Mr. Stille cites some proposed answers to these crucial questions. One such explanation points to the social changes caused by industrialization and urbanization. But this theory was countered by James A Sharpe, a historian at the University of York in England. He

showed that the “big statistical dip in violence preceded industrialization and urbanization by more than a century.”⁵

Other explanations for the plummeting crime rates proved flawed as well. Some scholars have suggested that the nature of crime merely “shifted from bodily assault to crimes of property.” But, wrote Mr. Sharpe, “The great decline in homicide in the 17th century was not accompanied by a rise in property offense prosecutions but rather by their diminution.”

In other words, theft as well as murder plummeted in the 17th century. People had actually changed their values. They had become more honest as well as peaceable. But why? Mr. Sharpe doesn't answer that question. Instead, he wrote that “this drop... remains inexplicable.”⁶

Tom Cohen, a history teachers at York University in Toronto, comes closer to solving the puzzle:

“Both the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation put a lot of emphasis on individual conscience... The conscience becomes the internal gyroscope. There is the growth of introspection... personal self-control...” [See endnote 4]

But while Mr. Cohen hints at the cause, he cloaks it in the humanist terms of today's progressive educator. Therefore, he can't explain how the “conscience becomes the internal gyroscope.”

Instead, Mr. Cohen's answer begs two more questions: How did the people suddenly develop their “individual conscience” and “personal self-control”? And how did their numbers grow to the point where cultures and nations actually reflected this personal transformation?

Ponder the Answer

The seeds of change were actually sown in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries by a few courageous reformers who dared to resist the corrupt religious establishment of their times. Willing to face persecution and death, men like...

- John Wycliffe: (England) - died in 1384, two years after translating the Bible into English),
- Jan Hus (Bohemia) - burned on the stake in 1415 in a fire lit with pages from Wycliffe's banned Bible,
- John Foxe (England) - 1587, who compiled the amazing stories in *Foxe's Book on Martyrs*) chose to follow their conscience and teach the life-changing truths that would - by the 17th century - transform northern Europe.

Martin Luther led the way. As a Catholic priest, he had access to the Scriptures, and his Bible-based conscience could no longer tolerate the twisted doctrines of self-serving bishops nor their cruel exploitation of the poor. He knew that souls were saved by faith in Jesus Christ, not through forced “indulgences” and submission to oppressive human edicts. His rational challenge to the papacy (in 1518) birthed the Reformation and became a beacon of hope to those who longed to know the truth and live in freedom.

The surrounding culture didn't change overnight. The first sprouts from the seeds of the Reformation were still too few to accomplish a change in public consciousness. Many of the early Protestant churches were too closely tied to established traditions and state alliances to freely demonstrate the Christian life. They needed time to study God's Word, clarify the doctrines and define the unfamiliar

terms. And their followers had to learn a lifestyle of faith that would resist and endure what the *Encyclopedia Britannica* called “savage persecution” involving the torture and death of “thousands of humble victims.”⁷

Their courage and commitment bore fruit. Persecution has always built faith rather than failure in God's flock. As Tertullian said back in the 1st century AD, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.”

Ruled by the Spanish King Phillip II, whose deadly campaigns aimed to crush every rebel against his religious empire, Dutch believers faced the brunt of these deadly assaults. But in 1609 the Dutch Republic won independence from Spain. “Protestantism was now firmly established in the northern provinces,” [see endnote 7] and throughout most of northern Europe.

By God's grace, people in northern Europe were suddenly free to print and read the Bible, live by faith and follow their conscience. A century later, the evangelistic zeal that spread God's truth and love throughout Europe began to cross seas and continents to reach the earth's most distant lands and oppressed people.

In the wake of this mission movement which grew quickly in the 19th century, nations were transformed. You might argue that financial exploiters and many colonial leaders served human greed and ambition. That's true. But faithful Christian missionaries did the opposite. They gave all they had - comforts, security, health - in order to share God's love. Facing all kinds of dangers, they built hospitals, schools and churches in distant lands. And as they spread God's truths, moral standards and respect for human life, the world changed. The global slave trade ended, human violence ebbed, kindness and civility grew and travelers no longer feared for their lives.

Christianity had taught men to protect, not abuse, women. So in 1912, when the passengers of the sinking Titanic climbed into a limited number of lifeboats, “women and children came first.” You may recall more recent ship and ferry accidents in which men trampled the women in their path in order to save their own lives. But when the Titanic hit the iceberg, most of the men demonstrated self-sacrificing kindness and old-fashioned chivalry:

“Lifeboats were quickly made ready and women and children were ordered to get into them first. There were 12 honeymooning couples on board the ship. Though all of the brides were saved, only one of the grooms survived.”⁸

Today, we still reap the benefits of a violent world pacified by the spread of Christianity. But it may not last long, for we also see a reversal of that tide that first flooded Europe with truth. Many powerful leaders - religious as well as political - are determined to snuff out the light of God's Word.

The new global education and human resource development systems are designed to replace the personal freedom we have in Christ with a collective society based on religious pluralism and global idealism. Aware of the rising wave of violence in schools and communities, they ban the only viable solution to rage and violence. (Psalm 127:1 and Isaiah 30:15)

As history repeats itself, the civilized world is regressing. Paganism, promiscuity, deception and violent crime are on the rise, while the growing hatred for Biblical Christianity is fanned by a global media and entertainment industry that wants nothing more than the death of Biblical Truth and morality.

At such a time, we need to remember that our God still reigns - even in the midst of the rising evil. As we trust Him and follow His way, He will be our strength and refuge no matter how fierce the battles.

“Thanks be to God who leads us in His triumph!” - 2 Corinthians 2:14

“...in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come... shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- Romans 8:37-39

Endnotes:

¹ Aaron Klein, "Wall Street targeted for Britain-style Riots," *WorldNetDaily*, August 16, 2011

² Arnold Ahlert, "Weapons of Mob Destruction," *FrontPage Magazine*, August 10, 2011

³ Melanie Phillips, "How the liberals ruined Britain," *Daily Mail*, August 11, 2011

⁴ Alexander Stille, "Did Knives and Forks Cut Murders?" *The New York Times*, May 3, 2003.

⁵ While the source of this quote by James A. Sharpe is Alexander Stille's article (listed above), much more information can be found in the first chapter (written by Mr. Sharpe) in the book, *The Civilization of Crime: Violence in Town and Country Since the Middle Ages*. Written "by scholars from North America and Europe," it "demonstrates that both rural and urban communities in Sweden, Holland, England and other countries were far more violent during the late Middle Ages than any cities are today." (University of Illinois, 1996, back cover).

⁶ Eric A. Johnson (Editor), *The Civilization of Crime: Violence in Town and Country Since the Middle Ages* (University of Illinois, 1996) In chapter 1, Mr. Sharpe writes, "We have a number of samples of homicide statistics from the Middle Ages. These show massive variations in homicide rates... [but] a cluster of samples, however, suggest a typical thirteenth-century rate of around 18 to 23 per 100,000. We then have more samples to suggest that the rate dropped a little, perhaps to 15 per 100,000 in 1600, and then fell dramatically over the middle of the seventeenth century. This drop... remains inexplicable." (page 22)

⁷ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Volume 19 (Chicago: William Benton, 1968), page 48.

⁸ "While 'Unsinkable' Titanic Sank, John Harper Preached" at www.christianity.com/ChurchHistory/11630699

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