

The Deeper Roots of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atrocities

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World Constitution and Parliament Association
India Chapter

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On Friday, May 27th, 2016, President Obama visited the Hiroshima Peace Park for two hours commemorating the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. He offered no apology, but gave a stirring speech about the need for a moral transformation of human beings on the Earth that will end war and establish a peaceful, interdependent world. His speech ended with these memorable words:

“That is why we come to Hiroshima. So that we might think of people we love. The first smile from our children in the morning. The gentle touch from a spouse over the kitchen table. The comforting embrace of a parent. We can think of those things and know that those same precious moments took place here, 71 years ago.

Those who died, they are like us. Ordinary people understand this, I think. They do not want more war. They would rather that the wonders of science be focused on improving life and not eliminating it. When the choices made by nations, when the choices made by leaders, reflect this simple wisdom, then the lesson of Hiroshima is done.

The world was forever changed here, but today the children of this city will go through their day in peace. What a precious thing that is. It is worth protecting, and then extending to every child. That is a future we can choose, a future in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known not as the dawn of atomic warfare but as the start of our own moral awakening.”

In the week following Obama’s visit, my wife and I were in Hiroshima for three days speaking with Japanese citizens of that city who had witnessed President Obama’s speech. What were their thoughts and feelings about this historic visit (the first by a sitting American President)? One of our hosts was Professor Mineko Morishita, who was interviewed by the Associated Press regarding Obama’s statement.

There have been some excellent articles analyzing the hypocrisy and crassness of this spectacle engineered for public consumption by President Obama and the U.S. State Department at Hiroshima. Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick outline a truer history (than that implied by President Obama) behind the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki three days later. They point out that 100 Japanese cities had already been destroyed by firebombing,

including Tokyo in March 1945, five months earlier. They point out that Japan was ready for surrender, and that the key event that led to surrender was the Soviet Invasion of Japanese held Manchuria on August 8.

They point out the lies in history textbooks in the U.S. that claim these bombings were necessary to save the U.S. from having to invade, which would have lost many more lives than those of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We know today, they point out, that the real motive of using these horrific weapons had nothing to do with saving lives. The intent was to send a message to the Soviets that would supposedly cow them before the might of the U.S. military (instead the result was that the Soviets threw all their energies into building a bomb of their own). They intimate as well that the state of war was used as an excuse to test these weapons against human populations. The two bombs were different forms of atomic bomb (one fission-based uranium and the other an implosion plutonium based device) for which the U.S. wanted to test for their actual effectiveness as weapons.

The last time I visited Hiroshima, in February of 2005, I saw testimony in the Hiroshima War Memorial Museum that the U.S. brought in medical teams immediately after the bombing

and Japanese surrender. Although there were many thousands with horrific burns and terrible wounds from the blast, these medical teams did nothing for the victims. Their purpose was to assess the effects of the blast, to record its effectiveness as a weapon. Has Obama had a change of heart? Is he different from the callous war-criminals like President Truman who mercilessly and needlessly used these weapons against civilian populations?

The call for “moral awakening” in President Obama’s speech comes from the one individual who has served as the most powerful agent of US imperialism worldwide for the past eight years. It issues from the Commander in Chief of a military that is in the process of surrounding Russia with offensive military weaponry, including nuclear weapons, that is challenging China’s need to protect its primary trade routes through the South China Sea, that is waging a dozen clandestine wars in Africa, including support for a brutal Saudi Arabian assault on Yemen that targets many civilians, that is promoting coup d’états in Brazil and Latin America, that has recently destroyed the stable societies and civilian infrastructures of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and that is currently supporting terrorist forces bent on “regime change” in Syria.

Obama heads a military and security machine that has killed several million persons in this process since 2001, the vast majority of them civilians, women and children, just like those in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This speech issues from the man personally in charge of a program of targeted killings by militarized drones, who assumes the arrogant power over life and death of people anywhere in the world whom he decides, without trial, by so-called “secret evidence,” are guilty of resistance to imperial forces and must be executed remotely, with inevitable “collateral damage” to families, women, children, their homes, lives, and hopes. Surely the words quoted above illustrate the epitome of callous, compassionless, meaningless rhetoric.

William Boardman correctly identifies Obama’s speech as that of an “empty suit”: “the sterile language of a detached president illustrates how far we are from facing the reality of our own government’s deliberate atrocities.” He points out the “passive voice” used by Obama. It as if this atrocity just happened, as if no one was actively responsible. While Obama currently spearheads a one trillion dollar upgrade of the U.S. nuclear weapons systems, the “empty suit” speaks of “America’s commitment to peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons.”

The callousness of this publicity stunt defies the imagination.

This technique of propaganda (i.e., “we care so much and seek a moral awakening for the world”) reminds one of that of Nazi minister of propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, who, following Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, used the principle of the “big lie” to mold the German people to the will of the Nazis. If the lie is big enough, he declared, people will believe it even in the face of apparently contrary evidence. They will not be able to imagine a lie that big, in such contradiction to the reality they are experiencing. So too with President Obama: his entire record of speeches for the past eight years evidences a perpetual lie about morality, responsibility, concern, and ideals that bespeaks the exact opposite of his actual record of criminal wars, crimes against humanity, and callous use of terror and violence at the head of U.S. global imperialism.

However, neither Obama, with his contention that human beings must morally grow, nor Stone and Kuznick with their admirable commitment to bringing forth an honest history of the past century, nor Boardman who rightly exposes the moral atrocities of the atomic bombings that are continued in the on-going war crimes of the Obama administration, have penetrated to

the heart of the matter of these bombings and the perpetual wars of which they are simply one manifestation. I was in Hiroshima to meet with the leading World Federalists of Hiroshima and with the Directors of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation that sponsors the “Mayors for Peace” project worldwide. The Chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, Yasuyoshi Komizo, told me that there were more than 7000 mayors of cities around the globe who work with them for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Mayors, he told me, were closer to the people than heads of state, and perhaps understand more concretely why nuclear weapons must be eliminated from the Earth.

My friends at the World Federalists of Hiroshima put the matter more in terms of the world system: it is the existence of autonomous territorial entities called “sovereign nation-states” that is itself a central root of war and violence everywhere on Earth. World Federalists believe in “World Peace through World Law.” It is the due process of enforceable democratically legislated laws that can establish fundamental peace. We do not have to wait, as Obama declared, for human beings to awaken morally and finally end war and live in peace (somewhere “beyond his lifetime”). Indeed, as

long as absolute territorial nation-states exist, living in peace will be impossible, because the rule of law does not exist between or over the nations. And without the enforceable rule of the due process of law, there remains only power relationships: the powerful do what they please (like execute people worldwide by remotely controlled drones) and the weak resist violently (with suicide bombs and surprise terror attacks). The system of sovereign nations is inherently a war-system.

I pointed this out in my talks with the people of the Universal Love and Brotherhood Association (ULBA) in Kameoka, Japan: internally Japan is at peace because all the individuals and cities there live under the common rule of enforceable laws. Externally, the U.S. is urging Japan to repeal Article 9 of its Constitution (the article placed there by the U.S. after WW II prohibiting Japan from having a military) and to remilitarize itself. The argument is that there are hostile nations nearby, whether China or North Korea, from which Japan might need defense. Hence, the U.S. is urging Japan to come back into the war-system of fear, mistrust, secrecy, arms races, and ultimately war. In a world without enforceable laws this is inevitable.

To my friends at ULBA, the World Federalists

of Hiroshima, and the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation presented copies of the Constitution for the Federation of Earth. We want not just to end weapons of mass destruction, we must end all war, all extra-legal executions, all state and private terrorism. The only practical and really actualizable way to do this (within our lifetimes) is to transform the war-system into a world peace system through uniting all nations under a World Parliament and the enforceable rule of democratically legislated laws.

Under the Constitution, every nation has representation in the World Parliament where they can dialogue with one another about how together we can best pilot our Spaceship Earth. No more arms races, fear, and distrust, but rather dialogue and discussion on how we can work together to solve our planetary problems. The Earth Constitution is our best bet for doing this. It is widely available and brilliantly designed for planetary unity in diversity (www.worldparliament-gov.org).

This is also the key to the moral ascent of humanity. We will only grow to world-centric compassion and conscience if we can end the fragmentation of militarized sovereign states, allowing people everywhere to identify as

brothers and sisters and fellow world citizens. The root cause of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki terror is the sovereign nation-state system itself. What we need most is a democratic world parliament, legislating laws enforceable by civilian world police, under the authority of the Earth Constitution and the sovereignty of all the people who live upon the Earth.



Dr. Glen T. Martin is Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Radford University in Virginia and founder in 1994 of the Radford University program in Peace Studies. During his twenty-five years at Radford University, Dr. Martin has been active in both national and international work of philosophers focusing on issues of peace. Since 1996, he has been President of International Philosophers for Peace, an organization with members in 25 countries that works to promote the social, political, and economic conditions necessary for world peace. Since 1995, he has also been active in the movement to create non-military, democratic world government under the Constitution for the Federation of Earth. In this capacity, he has been a member of the World Executive Council of the World Constitution and Parliament Association (WCPA, www.wcpa.biz) which coordinates a network of tens of thousands of people from 120 countries worldwide in their work toward these goals. On behalf of the Earth Federation Movement, Dr. Martin has travelled and lectured widely with respect to world peace and the need for democratic world government. Since December 2003, he has served as Secretary-General of WCPA, of which currently is the President.

Martin has published or edited seven books and many articles and reviews on a variety of topics in comparative philosophy, the spirituality of human liberation, economic democracy, and democratic world government....(from www.peacefromharmony.org)