

Why War is Not the Answer¹

By Jose Hernandez, Madison West High School
May 2015

War and violence are never the answer. The main reason that people go to war is because they disagree over something that truly matters to both parties. I think it's great that people care about things, but there are other alternatives to solving issues and problems rather than using war and violence. It has been proven that when two countries or nations go to war in the end both countries lose a lot of resources, countries often end up in a worse state than they were in the beginning. In the end both countries don't really benefit compared to all the pain and suffering war creates. War between two countries is mostly for resources, money, or control. Let's make a scenario that countries A and B go to war because country A wants country B's territory. Country B does not want to give their territory and so they go to war over it. Country A wins and gets the territory. Through those acts you have planted the seed of war and violence. A seed of war and violence will only grow to be a plant of war and violence. On the other hand if both countries negotiate with one another they will both win and prosper. If both countries negotiate they will have planted the seed of negotiation. The seed of negotiation will grow up to be the plant of negotiation. Negotiation between two state powers usually creates peace and good living conditions for both countries citizens. On the other hand war will cause violence and harsh living conditions for the citizens of both countries. Violence will only cause more violence and this will only create a circle of pain. When two state powers go to war, war is waged by the leaders of those states. But it is the citizens of those states that do all the fighting. Families are separated

¹ Editor's note: Jose's essay is the 2015 Madison WI peace scholarship winner. He will receive a \$1,200 scholarship to attend Madison College.

and broken apart. Many times families have to leave their homes in order to relocate to a safer place. Mothers lose their sons and daughters at war. Sometimes people are forced to commit brutal acts and killings. In a war zone there are no rules. You either kill or get killed. Entire towns and cities are obliterated. People lose their jobs and don't have the income to support themselves and their families. People are afraid to go outside of their houses for fear of getting hurt. Overall people's well being decreases. Even after a war has officially finished countries have to rebuild themselves. Sometimes countries have debt after fighting a war because they may need loans from other countries in order to rebuild themselves. Along with debt the economy of a country after war is bad since the country isn't producing as much as they are consuming. The truth is that war takes a huge amount of money to fund. A lot of the money goes to things like training soldiers to fight and kill and even more goes to devising and manufacturing weapons and machinery for fighting and killing. This is money that could have been used to fund our children's education, help create jobs to help our economy, pay for the medical expenses of our sick and elderly, create programs to help the millions of people living in poverty in the US. All of these would be much more useful to us and the future of humanity than fighting a war. It is pointless to fight for something that is not yours. This planet is for everyone, if we could just realize that we would astound ourselves with what we could accomplish.

The thing about war that really gets me is the fact that war is entirely a human made disaster unlike an earthquake or a tsunami. Someone made the decision that war was ok. We the people have the power to save millions of lives in the future. War is made by humans and is entirely against humans, there are no winners just losers. We are all human beings and we must come to face the reality that we are hurting ourselves and our planet through war and violence. We only

have one planet and we must take good care of it and everything in it. Let's not separate families anymore. Let's not have to give mothers and fathers the news that their sons or daughters have lost their life at war. Let's not have to see the next generation of young bright minds go to waste over nonsense. We are all in this together. It is through respect, understanding, and love that we can live in a world of peace. We are stronger united, we are capable of so much more if we help each other. I know I may sound a little bit preachy but it is clear to me that war and violence are never the answer. I hope I have planted the seed of peace in you so that it can one day grow to be the plant of peace and spread its roots.