

**ROTARY DISTRICT 5440 PEACEBUILDER  
NEWSLETTER JUNE 2020      NUMBER 34  
ELECTIONS, WAR AND PEACE**

*The Case for Candidates and their Impact on Policy and Practice*

William Timpson, Robert Meroney, and Lloyd Thomas. the Fort Collins Rotary Club  
Lindsey Pointer, 2017 Rotary Global Grant Scholarship Recipient  
Jim Halderman, Rotary District 5450  
Paul Gessler, Veterans for Peace

In these newsletters of the Rotary District Peacebuilders, we want to invite readers for contributions and ideas, suggestions and possibilities for our efforts to promote the foundational skills for promoting peace, i.e., nonviolent conflict resolution, improved communication and cooperation, successful negotiation and mediation as well as the critical and creative thinking that can help communities move through obstacles and difficulties.

**POST-POLITICS**

*Presidential Cautionary Advice – Washington & Eisenhower*

**Robert N. Meroney, Ph.D.** is a Rotarian and an Emeritus Professor of Fluid Mechanics and Wind Engineering with a long career at Colorado State University. He can be reached at [Robert.Meroney@ColoState.EDU](mailto:Robert.Meroney@ColoState.EDU)

*Hence, ...avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. ... President Washington (1796) Farewell Address*

*Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. ... President Eisenhower (1953) Cross of Iron Speech.*

*In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. ... President Eisenhower (1961) Farewell Address*

US Presidents have sometimes risen above factionalism to give cautionary advice to the American people. The founding fathers were strongly influenced by the evils they saw among European dictatorships and monarchies and were fiercely committed to republicanism and democracy as an ideal. American republicanism was centered on limiting corruption and greed.<sup>1</sup> In this spirit President George Washington was concerned about the dangers inherent in political parties and political factions. In his 1796 farewell address Washington strongly advised the American people:<sup>2</sup>



- To preserve in the face of both internal and external enemies the coherence of America's political fortress through unity,

<sup>1</sup> Republicanism is not limited to today's Republican party no more than Democracy is defined by today's Democratic party. Republicanism and democracy are concepts independent of modern party structure or even platforms.

<sup>2</sup> George Washington Farewell Address: [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/washing.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp)

- To avoid regional factionalism, internal broils, and wars among member states, and distrust the patriotism of those who endeavor to weaken the union through political party misrepresentations,
- To support the new Constitution *“adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its amendment.”*
- To beware of political parties *“by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.”*
- To be cautious of those entrusted with government administration and insist that they *“confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism.”* *“...let there be no change by usurpation.”*
- *“... avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, ...avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt...by vigorous exertion in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear.”*
- *“Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all.”* ... *“In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded... Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence, frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests.”* Similarly, passionate attachment of one nation to another *“facilitates the illusion of an imaginary common interest where no real common interest exists”*, betraying our country into quarrels and wars without justification.
- To beware of the efforts by foreign powers to influence American behavior, *“since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government.”*
- And finally, Washington advised America to avoid foreign entanglements even for commercial relations and have as little political connection as possible since it is logical that every nation must seek its own best interests first; hence, it would be unwise to artificially tie our interests to other countries vicissitudes, politics and collisions.

It is amazing how timely and relevant Washington’s advice still is today more than two centuries later.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> From 1862 through 1984 it was a tradition to read Washington’s Farewell Address before both houses of congress. On Washington’s birthday the address is still read on the Senate floor, alternating between political parties.

One and one-half centuries later President Dwight D. Eisenhower repeated some of these warnings and added others. In 1953 President Eisenhower delivered what is known as the “*Chance for Peace speech*” or the “*Cross of Iron speech*” to the American Society of Newspaper Editors just two months after his presidential inauguration.<sup>4</sup> The Korean War was winding down, the Soviet Union had detonated an atomic bomb, and Stalin had died one month earlier, so Eisenhower took the opportunity to highlight the cost of continued tensions and rivalry. Eisenhower evoked William Jennings Bryan’s Cross of Gold speech<sup>5</sup> as a cautionary tale:



- *“This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population. It is two fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is some fifty miles of concrete pavement. We pay for a single fighter with a half-million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people ... This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.”*

In 1961 President Eisenhower delivered a “book end” closing to his earlier speech from 1953 in his formal farewell address to the nation.<sup>6</sup> In this speech Eisenhower coined the phrase “military-industrial complex,” and he warned:



- *“In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.”*
- *“We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together.”*

In the same presentation President Eisenhower stressed other important points not so frequently quoted which include:

- The danger of massive federal funding warping university research in directions to support groups like the military-industrial complex,

<sup>4</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953: <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/dwighteisenhowercrossofiron.htm>

<sup>5</sup> The reference to an iron cross alludes to the famous slogan of William Jennings Bryan in the debate about the Gold Standard in 1896, where he insisted “you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold”.

<sup>6</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, Farewell Address 1961: [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/eisenhower001.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/eisenhower001.asp)

- The equal and opposite danger that public policy become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.
- The possibility of plundering today for our own ease and convenience the precious resources of tomorrow; hence, mortgaging the future to our grandchildren.
- In our strength the need to avoid becoming an isolated community of privilege regarded with hate and fear by other nations.
- The imperative of disarmament and the need to resolve issues with intellect and purpose.

Presidential farewell addresses have the important attribute that they are offered at a moment when, as Washington claimed, they can be considered to be *“disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel.”* Neither Washington nor Eisenhower subsequently held any national, party, or administrative position from which they gained by their final remarks.

### **POLITICS, PROMISES AND PEACEBUILDING** *A Case Study for Deescalating Violence from Ukraine*

*William Timpson, Ph.D. has been a professor at Colorado State University in its School of Education and a member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club. He can be reached at [william.timpson@colostate.edu](mailto:william.timpson@colostate.edu).*

In the Fall of 2019, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine seemed to be spiraling into something larger, something potentially explosive with powerful forces and weaponry ever so close and poised for a clash. Ukrainian independence had been sparked by the fall of the Soviet Union in 1990 but staggered under different leaders, some closer to Moscow and others seemingly corrupted by the power of the oligarchs or both. When the fires of independence reignited in 2013 and Maidan Square protests exploded into violence, Russia quickly moved to bring Crimea into their fold after a referendum that many thought was itself corrupted.



*Inspirational protests for Independence in Kiev, Ukraine began in a big way at Maidan Square in early November, 2013. This uprising, largely peaceful and youth-led initially, was later met with violence. The crackdown by police and armed thugs eventually claimed more than 100 people killed and 2,500 injured. A memorial honors these events.*

Suddenly Russian separatists were emboldened to intensify their fight for alignment with Russia and break away from Ukraine. Battle lines were drawn and casualties began to mount. Artillery exchanges took a toll in Eastern Ukraine. Ominously larger and heavily armed forces were right



behind these front lines, NATO backing Ukrainian nationalists and the Russians backing the separatists. Ukrainians were caught in the middle and the death toll began to rise. According to the United Nations, by late Spring of 2019 some 13,000 people had been killed, a quarter of them civilians, and as many as 30,000 wounded. As worrisome, other violent and dangerous actors like the neo-Nazis seen below were drawn to this conflict.



*Here was a call to sign a petition to stop weapons and Pro-Ukrainian nationalists.*

Then came a change. In the Presidential election of 2019, a newcomer, Volodymyr Zelensky, without historic ties to Russia or the Ukrainian oligarchs, announced his run for office. Elected he took office in May. One of his central campaign promises was to reestablish relationships with Russia after the violence and tensions of the Ukrainian independence movement had been sparked by protests in Kiev's Maidan Square in 2013.

At that time, I was visiting Russia and Ukraine with some twenty members of a Presbyterian Peacemaking Project, ordinary citizens who wanted to serve as witnesses in the best Christian sense. Without judgment, we were there to listen, learn and hold a space for peace to unfold. Perhaps our presence could have a positive effect since the Russian and Ukrainian orthodox churches were also facing a divide. At the time of our visit in 2019 no one knew what the impact would be of this very fresh face as President.

Now in the Spring of 2020, Zelensky's commitment to a peaceful resolution seems to have showed positive results. Calm has returned as opposing forces of Russian separatists and Ukrainian army have pulled back from a killing zone in Eastern Ukraine. Prisoners have also been exchanged while Russian President Vladimir Putin and Zelensky have planned a peace summit. Where once a very dangerous escalation seemed possible, even probable given the alignment of major military forces with one side or the other, a peaceful resolution now seems likely.

### **Historical background**

The background to all of this is long, complex and, at too many times, horrifically violent and bloody with great suffering. There had been many wars and invasions including Mongols, Poles, Lithuanians, Russians, Austrians, and Tartars. When Stalin ruled the Soviet Union, he and Communist Party leaders in Moscow imposed a collectivization onto the "breadbasket" of the Ukraine, taking the grain they wanted and leaving some 3.4-7.5 million Ukrainians to die of starvation, what has come to be known as the "starvation genocide."

Purges under Stalin's paranoid dictates in 1937 and 1938 left another 680,000-1,200,000 dead but

under a cloud of secrecy until 1995. When the German Nazis forces invaded in 1941, Ukrainian sympathizers joined in the assault on the Jewish population with estimates of deaths exceeding 900,000 and thousands more used as slave laborers.

In contrast to these Nazi sympathizers, Ukrainians joined with the USSR and the other allies to ultimately defeat Nazi forces by the end of WWII, suffering massive destruction to urban areas, an estimated 5 to 7 million deaths while overall Soviet losses are estimated at 24-27 million. By contrast, U.S. deaths in World War II were 416,000 plus with more than 318,000 deaths for the United Kingdom.

The good will of these allies in the fight against fascism ended all too quickly with the advent of the Cold War as communist influences battled for ideological and practical supremacy with Western capitalism. The in January of 1990 Lithuania declared its independence from the Soviet Union after Mikhail Gorbachev had inspired many under Russian control in the era of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring).

Much of the world held its collective breath, wondering if the Soviet army would march in to crush the revolt as they did in 1956 in Hungary. But no, that did not happen and we should understand why. As described in my 2019 book, *Learning Life's Lessons* (Tucson, AZ: Peace Knowledge Press), this period of openness may have inspired later leaders to make public the dark histories of these purges.

Данные о числе расстрелянных на полигоне Бутово по дням в период с августа 1937 г. по октябрь 1938 г.

1937 г.				1938 г.											
август	сентябрь	октябрь	ноябрь	декабрь	январь	февраль	март	апрель	май	июнь	июль	август	сентябрь	октябрь	
11	227	228	210	133											
12	25	162	310	268											
13	25	162	310	247						116					
14	116	135	161	120						135					74
15	116	135	161	120						113					
16	116	135	161	120						113					
17	116	135	161	120						113					
18	116	135	161	120						113					
19	116	135	161	120						113					
20	116	135	161	120						113					
21	116	135	161	120						113					
22	116	135	161	120						113					
23	116	135	161	120						113					
24	116	135	161	120						113					
25	116	135	161	120						113					
26	116	135	161	120						113					
27	116	135	161	120						113					
28	116	135	161	120						113					
29	116	135	161	120						113					
30	116	135	161	120						113					
31	116	135	161	120						113					
32	116	135	161	120						113					
33	116	135	161	120						113					
34	116	135	161	120						113					
35	116	135	161	120						113					
36	116	135	161	120						113					
37	116	135	161	120						113					
38	116	135	161	120						113					
39	116	135	161	120						113					
40	116	135	161	120						113					
41	116	135	161	120						113					
42	116	135	161	120						113					
43	116	135	161	120						113					
44	116	135	161	120						113					
45	116	135	161	120						113					
46	116	135	161	120						113					
47	116	135	161	120						113					
48	116	135	161	120						113					
49	116	135	161	120						113					
50	116	135	161	120						113					
51	116	135	161	120						113					
52	116	135	161	120						113					
53	116	135	161	120						113					
54	116	135	161	120						113					
55	116	135	161	120						113					
56	116	135	161	120						113					
57	116	135	161	120						113					
58	116	135	161	120						113					
59	116	135	161	120						113					
60	116	135	161	120						113					
61	116	135	161	120						113					
62	116	135	161	120						113					
63	116	135	161	120						113					
64	116	135	161	120						113					
65	116	135	161	120						113					
66	116	135	161	120						113					
67	116	135	161	120						113					
68	116	135	161	120						113					
69	116	135	161	120						113					
70	116	135	161	120						113					
71	116	135	161	120						113					
72	116	135	161	120						113					
73	116	135	161	120						113					
74	116	135	161	120						113					
75	116	135	161	120						113					
76	116	135	161	120						113					
77	116	135	161	120						113					
78	116	135	161	120						113					
79	116	135	161	120						113					
80	116	135	161	120						113					
81	116	135	161	120						113					
82	116	135	161	120						113					
83	116	135	161	120						113					
84	116	135	161	120						113					
85	116	135	161	120						113					
86	116	135	161	120						113					
87	116	135	161	120						113					
88	116	135	161	120						113					
89	116	135	161	120						113					
90	116	135	161	120						113					
91	116	135	161	120						113					
92	116	135	161	120						113					
93	116	135	161	120						113					
94	116	135	161	120						113					
95	116	135	161	120						113					
96	116	135	161	120						113					
97	116	135	161	120						113					
98	116	135	161	120						113					
99	116	135	161	120						113					
100	116	135	161	120						113					

*In 2017 in Moscow, the Russians have opened a mass grave at the former KGB headquarters where over 20,000 Russians were executed during purges in the 1930's. This memorial now stands as testimony to efforts to uncover the horrors of the past so a new truth can emerge for building a more peaceful future.*

As described in our 2009 book, *147 Practical Tips for Teaching Peace and Reconciliation* for Atwood Publishing, Linda Groff argues for three categories of peace education. While “negative peace” describes the absence or prevention of war, “positive peace” refers to the building of processes and practices that, for example, enhance communication and cooperation. The opening of mass graves in Russia and what may also happen in Ukraine will hopefully be a kind of important step toward “positive peace.”

## RESTORATIVE PRACTICES AND THE ELEVATION OF WOMEN'S VOICES

**Lindsey Pointer, Ph.D.**, a graduate of the Restorative Justice Program at Victoria University of Wellington, is a past recipient of the Rotary Global Grant Scholarship. She works as a restorative justice facilitator, trainer and researcher. Her recently released book is titled:

*"The Little Book of Restorative Teaching Tools."* She can be reached at

[lindseypointer@gmail.com](mailto:lindseypointer@gmail.com).

If there is one thing that I think would make a significant positive difference in the trajectory of life on this planet, it is the elevation of marginalized voices including racial minorities, the economically disenfranchised, and women. It is important that these voices are heard not only for the principle of equal voice and the respect it communicates, but also because these voices offer much needed perspectives and priorities capable of shifting policies and resource allocation for the betterment of humankind. Women, for example, tend to identify different things as problems and are more likely to think about the needs of families, children, and how we can care for those who have least in our society.<sup>7</sup> This critical perspective is often lost because women's voices are not heard.

A recent book titled [\*The Silent Sex\*](#) by Christopher Karpowitz and Tali Mendelberg shares the results of a study looking at how different group compositions and decision-making protocols impacted how often women's voices are heard. For the study, the researchers established groups of five people with varying compositions of men and women. The groups were asked to split their collective earnings and to determine how economic redistribution should work in society at large.

Half of the groups were told to decide by majority rule (representing the most common protocol decision-making bodies use). In these groups, the researchers observed the behaviors that are all too familiar to women who have been part of group conversations in the workplace and elsewhere. There was dramatically unequal talking time between men and women. It took not just a female majority, but a supermajority (meaning four out of five) for women to have proportionate talking time to men. Outnumbered women in the study spoke at best, three-quarters of the amount of time a man spoke and on average, women spoke two-thirds as much as a man.

The women in these groups were also routinely interrupted, and most of these interruptions were negative, meaning the interjections were discouraging, things like "I don't think so" or "That's not right." In the groups that had one woman alone with four men, 70 percent of the interruptions she received were negative. When there were four women in the room and only one man, men become less aggressive and only 20 percent of the interruptions were negative.

### Shifting from Majority Rule to Unanimity Rule

What is interesting about this study is what happened to the other half of the groups. These groups were told to make their decision by unanimity rule. The results were astounding.

- Female talking time increased for women in the minority. A lone woman participated nearly as much as a man.
- Unanimity rule significantly increased positive interruptions—interjections that affirm and validate, like "Yeah" and "I agree." Such positive interruptions tripled for women in the minority.

---

<sup>7</sup> Rogers, Brittany. "When Women Speak." *BYU Magazine*, 2020. [https://magazine.byu.edu/article/when-women-dont-speak/?fbclid=IwAR1jfNjAlHX-\\_aiLQy9KoPod7YNIWNvwLVwJOW52V0UYAG52di\\_535zpl-0](https://magazine.byu.edu/article/when-women-dont-speak/?fbclid=IwAR1jfNjAlHX-_aiLQy9KoPod7YNIWNvwLVwJOW52V0UYAG52di_535zpl-0)

- The influence gap narrowed for a lone woman. She had almost as much of a shot as a man at being voted the most influential member by her group.

As Karpowitz explains, “Unanimity rule sends the message that everybody’s voice matters.” This empowers women’s voices and allows us all to benefit from the perspectives, experiences, and knowledge they bring to the group.

This finding is particularly interesting from the perspective of restorative practices. In restorative practices, all agreement outcomes are decided unanimously. The group discusses the needs of the individuals involved, what would repair the harm caused, and employs creativity in addressing those needs, until they reach a specific list of actions that all participants agree would work to make things right. In restorative processes, we see how this reliance on unanimity rule ensures equal voice and respectful communication.

The demonstrated successes of the unanimity rule approach in restorative practices and the specific structures that make this protocol successful (such as the circle) may have applicability in other areas of social life. [What would a restorative approach to politics look like?](#) Could more emphasis on unanimity rule mean less hostile partisan divides, more compromise, more respect, more compassionate policies, and more women in leadership?

### **ASSERTIVE INTEGRITY LEADERSHIP** *The Tool for Global Security*

*Jim Halderman teaches court ordered, private, and prison-oriented anger management and communication skills. A Rotarian of 29 years he is a Past District Governor, district peace committee chair, and ombudsman for District 5450. He can be reached at [jimspeaker@comcast.net](mailto:jimspeaker@comcast.net).*

After many years teaching anger management, I decided it was time to rewrite my program incorporating several new techniques. First, however, I thought about what I felt important to such a class, with what skills would I like people to leave the class. I came up with seven goals as follows:

- 1) Build tools to deal with challenges, perceived and real
- 2) Develop skills to deal with negativity from self and others
- 3) Develop skills to control emotions
- 4) Positive communication skills to share your desires and opinions
- 5) Feel better about yourself and bring more joy to your life
- 6) Better health and understand why and how
- 7) Build peace internally and externally by calming the heart and mind

It may seem a stretch to be speaking about an individual anger management class when writing about world peace or global security. How can something that might change the attitude and skills of one individual bring peace to the world? How can one individual stop an army with the skill of controlling their emotion? Why would we believe someone with an anger issue, that takes a class on self-esteem, ostensibly be prepared for a global challenge?

The common denominator of every government, every association, and every legal organization is people. All members of any governing body are individuals, entering into positions of authority with all previous life’s traumas, emotions, knowledge and skills. All individuals are sentient beings, meaning we have feelings, emotions, and judgments we have developed combined with an eternity of evolutionary intuitions. As Will Rogers explained to us: “Everybody is ignorant, only



on different subjects.” Many have accumulated a great deal of knowledge, and we attempt and hope to select some for our leadership positions. I consider knowledge, though, as a circle with what we know on the inside and what we don’t know on the outside. Thus, the more we know, the more we know that we don’t know. The point being, knowledge is a great start, though influenced by our perceptions, and limited by our focus.

I believe **assertive integrity** should be expected and demanded of our leaders, taught in our schools, and used throughout our communications. By **assertive** I am referring to a style in which individuals clearly state their opinions and feelings, and firmly advocate for their rights and needs without violating the rights of others. Assertive communication is embedded in high self-esteem. The assertive individuals value themselves, their time, and their emotional, spiritual and physical needs, and are strong advocates for themselves while being very respectful of the rights of others. While **integrity**, for me, refers to the adherence to the moral and ethical principles, soundness of moral character, and honesty.

Will Rogers also, as every late-night talk show host today, makes fun of our politicians. We laugh while thinking they are just being politicians, that’s typical. We accept it as humorous, typical, just the way it is, maybe with a little frustration. We cannot expect the world to change if we do not expect more of ourselves first and then more from our leaders. We accept “white lies” as a way of saving face to a potentially embarrassing question. But when do those white lies begin to turn gray, even black? Twenty-five years ago North Korea shot down one of our helicopters that had flown into their territory. The pilot, Bobby Hall, lived and was later returned to us.

Upon research of how it happened credit was given to the fact that during training a plane or helicopter may fly out of bounds a little with no consequence. It was no big deal as it is all our territory and not hurting anyone. But what was a small infraction without consequence during training, became an international incident with the co-pilot losing his life and the loss of a helicopter. An athlete, a musician, must continually practice maintaining the skills for when the big opportunity may come. They cannot wait for the event then prepare – the same with integrity – it must be practiced continually.

The basic structure of our government was designed intentionally with many checks and balances, designed to allow the greatest level of services, while maintaining the maximum level of freedoms. Checks and balances are a recognition of the imperfection of the single individual, the acknowledgment of the emotional element, the disparity in erudition. A founding father, James Madison, was well aware of this when he said: “If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary.” He recognized we are not angels and we have free will. Checks and balances are essential for a fair and just society.

We currently have in our government many designed systems for checks and balance. Globally we have the IMF, UN, ICJ, WHO, WTO, UNESCO, and many more attempting to bring working relationships amongst a diverse community of international players. What is lacking is a basic sense of **assertive integrity**. We have been, for too long, accepting our leaders who will stretch the rules on our behalf. I am greatly troubled by leaders that stand firm on a position until the opposing party is in office then completely reverse their position. No rule or law is any better than the integrity of the individual carrying it out.

**Assertive leadership** stands strong for their belief while listening, with empathy, to the other side. The best way to build walls, at any level (in communication), is through name calling, not listening or understanding the challenges of another, looking for the win/lose, believing in the zero/sum game. When leadership consistently remains in integrity, trust is developed. Individuals, countries,

and world leaders follow those we trust. Germany, New Zealand, and South Korea had the least challenges to Covid-19 as the people trusted – then followed – the requests of their leaders. I am less worried about directly negating the excesses in militarization as it will fade once we begin to move towards more assertive integrity leadership as a core. Once trust in governance is regained, all will benefit and rise with international goodwill and understanding.

Richard Florida, in his book *The Creative Class*, speaks of the growth value through diversity. Though at the time of writing he was on the faculty of Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh and talking of US cities, it's true for anywhere. He speaks about the most successful communities had the greatest respect for diversity. The successful communities were strong in the arts, gay societies, and all culturally diverse populations. Great diversity is the garden of fresh ideas, new ways of doing and thinking. When we learn respect for all, listen with intent to learn, and learn the skills to change aggression to assertion, we will begin to grow, our community will begin to grow, as will our country and so on. Plant the seed, water, feed, and watch it grow.

So, am I trying to stop tanks with kind words? Perhaps I am. Assertiveness is not passivity; it is taking action. A country's budget is representative of its morals, its values. It reflects who we are as a people. A good place to begin is by demanding a budget that moves our values to greater education, public health, and green technology. Another good place to begin is to call out/vote out our leaders who show lack of integrity. Make integrity a part of a required platform. We can do this once we begin to demand integrity of ourselves, then our leaders, and then ask our leaders to demand that of the world community.

When we begin to operate with **assertiveness**, and demand the same from our leadership, it will create inclusiveness and multiplicity of ideas. It will treat all others with respect. It will take responsibility when changes are needed. It will consider the needs of all – equally. Operating with integrity creates trust. Trust develops true leadership that others are willing to support and follow. **Assertive Integrity Leadership** looks for win/win benefits in every situation. **Assertive Integrity Leadership** is adaptable to its citizen's needs, is resilient to changing demands, and looks to raise the level of all its peoples, from wherever they may be.

The greater the respect from the world the less militarization is necessary – at a greatly reduced sum. Even our former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, in a 2007 speech to Kansas State University, said that “soft power” (diplomacy, strategic communications, foreign assistance, civic action, and economic reconstruction and development) are just as important as “hard power” in achieving our national interests and dealing with terrorism. He went on to say the more you spend on diplomacy, the less you spend on military.

Yes, I believe we as individuals, our leaders, our world, imbedded in **Assertive Integrity Leadership** will stop tanks.

### **COMMON MISTAKES AND CORRECTIONS WHILE CREATING What Elected Candidates and Elected Officials Could Do to Rebuild Peace**

**Lloyd Thomas, Ph.D.** is a longstanding member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club, a licensed psychologist and a life coach with a long history of writing regular columns. He can be reached at [ljtdat@aol.com](mailto:ljtdat@aol.com).

All of us human beings have enormous, and usually untapped, reserves of creativity, of which we are unaware or habitually fail to use. Without conscious awareness of how we create, the process is hindered, is determined by old unconscious habits, is left to circumstance, and remains inactive or is abandoned altogether. Mistakes along the path of creating are like speed bumps on a road. The

creating process is slowed, but rarely stopped, and often re-directed. If you don't make small course-corrections, you will soon be off the road. Here are 16 common mistakes people make when they want to create anything new for themselves. The consequences of the errors are presented, followed by the "course corrections" (CC) needed to get back on track. These are not in order of importance.

*Mistake 1:* Not programming the subconscious mind for success at creating. Our subconscious minds are usually filled with childhood beliefs, conclusions, images and habitual thought patterns. Without re-programming our subconscious minds, we usually re-create the "same old outcomes." Course Correction (CC): In your imagination, with photographic and sensory rich clarity, regularly picture the outcome you desire to create. Practice this at least daily. Highly successful philanthropist and network marketer, Mark Yarnell, once wrote: "Successful people always concentrate on the end result, while others get stuck focusing on the process, the 'how.'"

*Mistake 2:* When the creative process slows, increasing mental effort. Unlike the consequences of physical effort or exertion, the more mental effort one makes, the slower the progress toward creating. CC: Still the mind and relax the body. Like the surface of a lake, when it is still, the pebble thrown into it has much more impact on what is reflected than when the surface is "busy." When your mind is still, chosen thoughts and affirmations have much greater impact on the subconscious mind.

*Mistake 3:* Not altering your beliefs about yourself. Whatever we believe about ourselves filters and colors what we make manifest in external reality. For example, if we believe we are unable to play golf, the likelihood of creating a par game is greatly diminished. CC: Update your self-concept. Attend to those "seedling" qualities in you and you strengthen them and make them grow. Believe you already are who you wish to become. Act "as if" you were the person you wish to be.

*Mistake 4:* Counting on your "will power" to get you through the "slow times." Will power is driven by the conscious mind. It does not have the power and energy to alter the programmed beliefs and "preponderance of data" programmed in the subconscious mind. CC: Use your will power to re-program the subconscious. Thereafter, creating what you want seems "natural" or "easy."

*Mistake 5:* Losing concentration or mental focus on the outcome you desire. Like a camera lens, when you are out of focus, your creation (outcome) blurs and even disappears. Then, what you print on the film of your life is also blurred or absent. CC: Put "blinders" on to distractions, detractors, interruptions, and anything else which might change your focus. Remember that "problems" are those events which occur when we lose sight of our desired outcomes.

*Mistake 6:* Attending to the "problems" and "difficulties" or "mistakes" rather than imagining solutions and immediately letting go of mistakes (unless you need to learn from them). That to which you attend becomes stronger...more powerful, and is what your body responds to. CC: If you want to have positive outcomes, keep your conscious mind focused on positive things, positive events, positive elements in all circumstances and events. Attending to positive elements of life makes them stronger too!

*Mistake 7:* Not learning to control the content of the conscious mind. The conscious mind thinks 4 times faster than we can speak. It is quick and mobile...jumping from thought to thought in singularly rapid fashion. In Zen Buddhism, this activity is referred to as "the monkey mind." When your thinking never lands on a thought for any length of time, your conscious mind

becomes very cluttered. CC: Practice “single-pointed” conscious activity. When you consciously focus your attention on a single thought, your mind becomes controlled, sharp, and manageable.

Mistake 8: Repeating the same activities while expecting different outcomes. This is one definition of insanity. All subconsciously programmed activities create the same results. Repetition of those actions, only strengthens the program. It never alters the outcomes. If you don’t like the results...

CC: change the subconscious program first, then consciously change your actions to those activities which support your desired creation.

Mistake 9: Not writing down and continually revising (in writing) the multi-sensory description of your envisioned outcome. A vision unwritten is soon forgotten. Conscious memory cannot recall all the images, sensations and information with which it is bombarded. CC: Writing down your detailed description of your envisioned creation is making it permanently manifest in the external world. It will remain there, in all its detail, until forever...unless you choose to alter it! Re-writing your creation strengthens the subconscious program, repeatedly manifests your creation and influences you to remain focused.

Mistake 10: Not having a definite, written plan. Without a created plan of time and action, you become a “wandering generality.” You remain reactive to circumstance and victim of old programming. It’s like walking through the woods without a map or compass. You may walk a lot (old programmed activity), but never arrive at your desired destination. CC: Always put in writing your long-term outcomes, your medium range signposts, your short-range objectives, and your daily actions. Make certain they are all supportive of your moving in your desired direction and attaining your envisioned outcome. Use your “goal map” to guide your daily actions.

Mistake 11: Fear of risk or of trying new things. Without risking new thoughts, new emotions and new behaviors, you never consciously control your changes. You will always be “defending” against your fear. Unnecessary defenses may lessen the fear, but they also imprison you in the familiar status quo (your comfort zone). CC: Decide to have at least one new experience per week. Then plan on having one new experience every day. With each new experience you survive and/or enjoy, you lessen your fear. Engage in all activities you fear that you consciously (intellectually) know are not dangerous.

Mistake 12: Fear of failure. You were not born with a fear of failure. You had to be taught what “failure” was and taught how to be afraid of it. When you fear failure, you become paralyzed. You take no action. You never consciously create anything. CC: Shift your mind-set (perceptual paradigm) to: “No matter what the outcome, I am always safe.” Think about it! If events don’t kill you, you will survive and continue to be alive. As long as you are alive, you are safe! Besides, 97% of those things we fear, *never occur*. Learn to focus your mind on probabilities, not possibilities. “Failure” is a concept living only in your mind. Change your mind-set and “failure” becomes impossible.

Mistake 13: Failure to write down long-term, medium-range and short-term goals. These serve as milestones on your creating path. Until you have written down your goals, they are not goals, merely mental wishes. CC: Convert wishes to objectives through making them manifest at least once by writing them down. Refer to Mistake 10.

Mistake 14: Lack of desire to experience the benefits of your creation. Lack of awareness of such benefits. We are always skilled at anticipating possible “malefits.” It is a necessary part of our survival skills. Most of us have no desire to experience “malefits.” Therefore, we have no energy available to create them. CC: Keep in your imagination the benefits when your creation is complete and manifested. Future benefits compared to present conditions, gives rise to



desire. When desire is born, energy becomes available to move you toward creating your envisioned outcome.

***Mistake 15:*** Failure to analyze where you are now, your current situation. Avoiding knowledge of the obstacles you will overcome or detours you find appealing. Not know how you might sabotage the creating process. Without awareness of old habits, subconscious programs, and possible hindrances, your creating becomes slowed, side-tracked or even defeated. ***CC:*** Awareness and analysis of your current situation (what already exists), creates a gap between what exists now and what you desire to create. That differential (gap) generates emotional energy to empower you to create whatever you want!

***Mistake 16:*** Responding to the gap between what exists now and what you want to create with the childhood habits, archaic subconscious programs and reactivity. When you do this, you create the same old results...of(f)course! ***CC:*** Use your “gap-created” emotional energy to move you toward taking those actions supportive of your creation. Pain is a more powerful motivator than pleasure.

**GUEST ESSAY: ELECTIONS, WAR, PEACE AND A ROLE FOR ROTARY?**  
***A Challenge for Rotary International, its Priority for Promoting Peace and Preventing Conflict***

***Paul Gessler** is a Poet, writer, conscientious objector, Veteran Advocate and member Of Veterans For Peace. He was a member of a team while stationed at F. E. Warren AFB In the early 1970's. He can be reached at [pumapaul@frii.com](mailto:pumapaul@frii.com).*

Is it possible to have civil and fair elections in a society more at war than at peace with itself? Can we tolerate an election season where large sums of money will be used for ads that will have more dis-information than truth; more vitriol against an opponent than anything positive? Will this kind of election trigger post-traumatic stress for veterans and civilians? Obviously money could be better spent on health and homelessness prevention, for example. Can we even have civil elections in the midst of this current mental health crisis?

We are now in an election season and it already looks bad to me. The President directed a letter to accompany our one-time economic stimulus check as Mr. Potter from the movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*: “Here’s \$1200 dollars Mr. Bailey, and you have enough to start your own savings and loan. You won’t have to pay any interest on the loan, but you will have to pay the rent, because our wealth producing landlords need their rent payments to pay off their loans. Shouldn’t you vote for me?”

The sobering reality is the business plan is still: “socialism bad”. The “Emperor” was not lying when he said in 2016 that the election was rigged.

There are many questions I must ask: Will the American people take back their nation? Can they do it alone? Who will lead and rescue us? I challenge Rotary International to be a responsible citizen, an advocate and voice for a fair and honest election.

But how can that be done? By allowing the pandemic to be our ally. And how can that be accomplished? By seizing the day as only Rotary can do.

For example, Rotary could bring panel discussions on peace into the election narrative. The media may just catch on. This election can be fair if it isn’t about a fight for control and security interests. The pandemic has exposed a damaged chain of command within the military. America needs Rotarians to be the leaders the nation deserves.

And why not a Global Cease Fire in this time of pandemic? Why not bring all the troops home to protect and serve American citizens? And let's stop and ask, what are those "American interests" our troops are protecting? Why can't we make saving lives and protecting American people the new mission of the America's military? Has not our military destroyed enough other nations? American veterans are the rightful stewards and advisory board members for the Department of Defense and they have earned those rights the hard way. Don't we all deserve a peace dividend from all these arguably illegal wars?

The Pentagon budget is not sacrosanct. Should there be a part of that budget that could serve in the defense of our own people by providing funds for them? Should Rotary Clubs of America exercise their civic responsibilities by serving in an advisory capacity to the Pentagon? Could they be more just and responsible than those military think tanks and corporate arms manufacturers who have such a huge influence over the Pentagon today? Have we not lost America's soul by fighting and losing where we should never have gone?

Can we exert our collective wills and have these Rotary forums promote a global cease fire in the very midst of these American elections? The conspiracy theory of peace!

### **PRIORITIES OF THE ROTARY FOUNDATION**

See the RI website: <https://my.rotary.org/en/learning-reference/about-rotary/our-priorities> If you would you like to respond to one of the pieces in this newsletter, check out our blog [www.rotarypeacebuilder.com](http://www.rotarypeacebuilder.com) and join the conversation! If you would like to contribute to a future newsletter, visit [www.rotarypeacebuilder.com/submit/](http://www.rotarypeacebuilder.com/submit/). You can find some of our past issues at the Rotary District 5440 website: <https://www.rotary5440.org/sitepage/peace-building-newsletters>. Future issues may explore the following: JULY—(Thomas) Human diversity and leadership skills for peacebuilding; AUGUST—(Thomas) Characteristics of successful families and peacebuilders. If you have ideas for future topics, please send them to any of our writers.



