

“NEED TO PROMOTE THE GANDHIAN PHILOSOPHY OF TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE TO ESTABLISH A PEACE-LOVING HOLISTIC GLOBAL SOCIETY”

Pune Statement at HISTORIC WORLD PARLIAMENT OF SCIENCE, RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY.

October 2 to 5, 2018

By Bernie Meyer
“American Gandhi”

Abstract: Approximately 70,000 years ago homo sapiens experienced a powerful change in brain structure enabling thought processes to perform significantly more operations than ever before. Creative tools, intercommunications, common actions enabling out-performance of the Neanderthals and homo erectus led to homo sapiens eliminating all comers. The brain changed is called a “cognitive revolution. In 2018 humanity is at a “do or die” crossroads, i.e. evolve or die. Either overcome its self-created suicidal constructs, nuclear weapons and climate change, or pass on to depletion along with most living creatures on Planet Earth. Humanity is in the Sixth Extinction. These analyses are presented by social and physical world scientists, most gifted spiritual leaders, and highly reputed journalists. This paper presents Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s nonviolent experiences and principles together with an explication of the two suicidal threats. The danger is happening now. The time scales are not the human normal experience over all previous millennium. The time scale is catastrophic.

Bernie Meyer’s BRIEF AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PEACE MAKING

May 17 2018

Having been asked to write my history of working for peace with a one page approach, I find myself reflecting on so many influences that I can only identify a few high points. My family nurturing, the teenage years in the 1950’s with a Jesuit education, the Explorer Scouts trips to New Mexico encountering challenging wilds, switching to the Seminary after two years of university education, ordination to the priesthood in 1965, got me started as I learned to make choices in a world of turmoil. The pivotal year for me was 1967 to 68.

As a new priest of two years in the inner city of Cleveland, Ohio, I volunteered for the Clergy Intern Program to assist clergy of all convictions to deal with the realities of poverty, racism, oppression, and human hardships. This one year program funded by the National Institute of Mental Health based itself on sensitizing experiences “on the streets and in the institutional settings”, study, and action. Know that this was a time of inner city riots and burning, of the Civil Rights Movement, of the escalating Vietnam War, of the War on Poverty, and for Catholics of the Vatican II Council calling the church to involve itself in the issues of the times. John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1962, Malcolm X in 1965, Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, Bobby Kennedy in 1968, and the 1968 death of one of my teachers by his writings, Thomas Merton. This Program focused on systemic change. Identify the causes of injustice and act on them. I involved myself in the racism present in secondary education, while writing Love and Hate, Urban American Style. Systemic emphasis has been my emphases throughout. However, due in a major way learning Gandhi and Eastern spiritualities I now emphasize both internal and

systemic development.

Not only these, I went beyond the inner city causes to the War in Vietnam and co-founded the Cleveland Catholic Peace Movement, after I returned from Ivan Illich Inter-cultural Center in Mexico during the Christmas break of the Program.

After the Program I was without an assignment by the Diocese, so I traveled and looked up Dan Berrigan to find out about the Catonsville Nine who burned the draft board records with napalm. This led to me participating in the DC Nine action on March 22, 1969 where we broke into the Dow Chemical office in Washington, DC and dramatized the criminal participation of Dow in the Vietnam War. This led to prison in 1970. To further challenge the Church for change in the celibacy requirement, I married two weeks before imprisonment. I married one I loved. Excommunication resulted. At the same time I co-founded the Thomas Merton Community in inner city Cleveland.

From 1970 until 1995 I held several social advocacy positions. While in Colorado from 1974 to 1978 I volunteered with the Rocky Flats Action Group working to terminate the plant that made the nuclear triggers for H-Bombs with Hanford's plutonium. When I moved to Seattle in 1978 I participated in actions against Sub Base Bangor to stop the Trident Submarine with its first strike weaponry. Upon "retirement" in 1995 I joined the corp group of Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action where I have participated in many actions at Kitsap Sub Base Bangor to this day.

In 2002 I was asked to bring Gandhi's presence to the National Council of FOR in honor of Richard Deats and Janet Chisholm. (I had joined FOR when I moved to Olympia in 1990.) This followed a request to bring Gandhi's presence to India "to educate youth." I have been traveling to India to participate in a wide variety of events and actions at least once yearly since. In this process I have developed a deep and wide understanding about Gandhi, India, culture, and spirituality, including a real appreciation of the Jain and Hindu religion. I find that my spirituality has developed and integrated bringing together East and West. In 1991 at the start of the first Gulf War I began a study of the motivation for human violence along with nonviolence which continues to this day. In 2007 I published *THE AMERICAN GANDHI, My Seeking Truth With Humanity at the Crossroads*. This book emphasizes my learning about peacemaking and human motivation. And in 2016 I published my six scene act, *GANDHI, UNIVERSAL INSPIRATION, Grist for Meditating, Scenarios of Discovering and Living Experiments In Truth and Love, With Sequel on Bernie and Gandhi today Applied to Nuclearism*.

I am amazed at this personal history and where life has taken me. I owe so much to all the persons who have nudged me along, especially my parents who nourished me as a straight arrow citizen and then accepted my radical actions. I have made mistakes and I feel good about my life.

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Pune Statement

“To me God is Truth and Love; God is ethics and morality; God is fearlessness. God is the source of Light and Life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist.”

“I believe in the fundamental truth of all religions.” (*Young India*, March 25, 1925)

“I am a Hindu, a Jew, a Christian, a Muslim, a Buddhist. By pondering these thoughts, I came to understand that truth is God.”
(Thoughtfully) Sat ... truth, reality, that which is. “Pure consciousness”

“The seeker after truth must become humbler than the dust. Only then and not until then will he even have a glimpse of truth.”

Dr. Karad, member participants in this world parliament, I very much appreciate the invitation to take part in this event to face the violence today from a Gandhi point of view. We humans and all living species are in the midst of the Sixth Extinction caused in a dominant part by human activity. As Dr. Karad listed the violence components, including Artificial Intelligence, in the conference brochure, he pointed out the need for the type of education called for by the 13th Century Indian Philosopher Saint Shri Dnyaneshwara. I will attempt to bring Gandhi's light to our search for the necessary kind of education required at this time in human experience.

My deliberations revolve around the question which Gandhi experimented: “What is right mind?” Gandhi said, “My teaching is as old as the hills.” I have developed a six scene script, one person act, called *GANDHI, UNIVERSAL INSPIRATION, Grist for Meditating, Scenarios of Discovering and Living Experiments In Truth and Love*. This portrayal identifies the essentials of Gandhi's way, the way of purification, the way of acquiring and disciplining his mind.

- Scene 1, Gandhi's Creative Experiences, when he was thrown off the train in Pietremeritzberg in 1893 for refusing the third class

coach. Indians in South Africa were called “coolies” or indentured servants.

- Scene 2 September 11, 1906, when he found another way with “violence in the air” and created non-violence to replace violence, the nonviolent equivalent of war.
- Scene 3 Satyagraha, the deep and broad meaning of “truth force”.
- Scene 4 Swaraj and the Great Trial in 1922, when he became leader for the liberation of India.
- Scene 5, Great Salt March, 1930, when the people of India stood up for the first time to the forces of subjection.
- Scene 6, The Assassin’s Bullet as Gandhi’s victory, January 30, 1948.

Now, I offer the portrayal of Scene 3, the core essentials of Gandhi's way.

Passive Resistance

Gandhi, Introduction: *(Sitting and meditating)* The Bagavad Gita, the Hindu Bible, begins with the struggle of two armies facing each other for battle, family relatives on each side. Arjuna, the warrior, is in his chariot with his driver, Lord Krishna, observing at a distance. Krishna embodies the ultimate truth and wisdom, the supreme personality of the divine. Arjuna questions Lord Krishna about his struggle with violence in the impending battle. There are two interpretations of the Gita: Literal, a real battle. And, the internal struggle about violence as Arjuna experiences. I believe the scene is poetic: about our own internal struggle with violence.

(Optional to quote essence of Gita in Chp. 2, see Appendix)

“How would you describe the man whose wisdom is steadfast, Krishna? How does the wise man speak? How does he sit, stand, walk?”

BAGAVAD GITA, the essence from Chapter two. Stephen Mitchell translation:

ARJUNA SAID:

How would you describe the man
whose wisdom is steadfast, Krishna?
How does the wise man speak?
How does he sit, stand, walk?

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

When a man gives up all desires
that emerge from the mind, and rests
contented in the Self by the Self,
he is called a man of firm wisdom.

He whose mind is untouched
by any misfortune, whose craving
for pleasures has disappeared,
who is free from greed, fear, anger,

who is unattached to all things,
who neither grieves nor rejoices
if good or if bad things happen ---
that man is a man of firm wisdom.

Having drawn back all his senses
from the objects of sense, as a tortoise
draws back into its shell,
that man is a man of firm wisdom.

Sense-objects fade for the abstinent,
yet the craving for them continues,
but even the craving vanishes
for someone who has seen the truth.

At first, although he continually
tries to subdue them, the turbulent
senses tear at his mind
and violently carry it away.

Restraining the senses, disciplined,
he should focus his whole mind on me,
when the senses are in his control,
that man is a man of firm wisdom.

If a man keeps dwelling on sense-objects,
attachment to them arises;
from attachment, desire flares up;
from desire, anger is born;
from anger, confusion follows,
from confusion, weakness of memory;
weak memory --- weak understanding;

weak understanding --- ruin.

But the man who is self-controlled,
who meets the objects of the senses
with neither craving nor aversion,
will attain serenity at last.

In serenity, all his sorrows
disappear at once, forever;
when his heart has become serene,
his understanding is steadfast.

The undisciplined have no wisdom,
no one-pointed concentration;
with no concentration; no peace;
with no peace, where can joy be?

When the mind constantly runs
after the wandering senses,
it drives away wisdom, like the wind
blowing a ship off course.

And so, Arjuna, when someone
is able to withdraw his senses
from every object of sensation,
that man is a man of firm wisdom.

In the night of all beings, the wise man
sees only the radiance of the Self;
but the sense-world where all beings wake,
for him is a dark night.

The man whom desires enter
as rivers flow into the sea,
filled yet always unmoving ---
that man finds perfect peace.

Abandoning all desires,
acting without craving, free
from all thoughts of "I" and "mine,"
that man finds utter peace.

This is the divine state Arjuna.
Absorbed in it, everywhere, always,
even at the moment of death,
he vanishes into God's bliss.

"I am a warrior. In nonviolence, courage is in dying, not in killing."

"My greatest weapon is mute prayer."

Gandhi: (Stand with the Gita.) “Passive resistance.” I am not passive. My method is called “passive resistance.” The term has no appeal for me. I offered a prize to anyone who could come up with a better term. My cousin, Magdenlal Gandhi, offered the term “satagraha”, firmness in a good cause. This suggested to me Satyagraha. “Satya” means truth, love. “Graha” means firmness or force, a clinging to. Truth force, love force, even soul force ... *connotes power*. Satyagraha actually means the power of ultimate truth, implying so much more than “passive resistance.” Satyagraha is active, engaging, and interactive. Satyagraha gives rise to *truth discovery* through *meeting the opposition* in conflict. Satyagraha means standing one’s ground in truth, engaging those in opposition in *joint discovery*.

The idea of active engagement first came to me from the Sermon on the Mount in the Christian Bible. In the book of Luke (6:27) Jesus says: ‘love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who hurt you, pray for those who treat you badly.’ Jesus is the satyagrahi par excellence. My own Bhagavad Gita brings the wisdom and discipline of detachment to the method. Discipline all the passions and desires. And detach from the results. Put all your energy into living the truth; let that power bring the results. In every time of trouble and quandary I looked to the Gita...never let me down. (Optional, Read from the Gita, chapter 2.)

Sat

The deep meaning of TRUTH is **beyond the senses, unseen**. Through meditation, experimentation and time its many facets and profound meaning can be discovered. In Hindi “Sat” is truth, reality, that which is. Sat goes to ultimate reality, ultimate power. In South Africa and in India for years I said, “God is truth.” In 1928 my meaning became “Truth is God.” “I have always known God as truth. There was a time when I doubted the existence of God, but even at that time I did not doubt the existence of Truth. This Truth is not a material quality but is *pure consciousness*. That alone holds the universe together. It is God because it rules the whole universe.” This power is the power of nonviolence. (*THE ESSENTIAL WRITINGS OF MAHATMA GANDHI* by Raghavan Iyer, p. 233)

The world rests upon the bedrock of satya or truth. Asatya, meaning untruth, also means nonexistent, and satya or truth also means that which is. If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of the question. And truth being that which is, can never be destroyed. This is the doctrine of satyagraha in a nutshell.

In our **material realm** we are left to relative truth, therefore, open to error and subject to limits. Everything created by human culture can be questioned because it is limited in its existence. In human development of babies and children truth is in the parent; later truth is claimed by society; to the wise truth is in nature of the universe as I have described. (Iyer, p. 233)

“In the midst of death, life persists; in the midst of untruth, truth persists; in the midst of darkness, light persists; hence I gather that God is **life, truth, and light.**”

Atheist Quote

“To me God is Truth and Love; God is ethics and morality; God is fearlessness. God is the source of Light and Life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist.”

“I believe in the fundamental truth of all religions.” (*Young India*, March 25, 1925) I am a Hindu, a Jew, a Christian, a Moslem, a Buddhist. By pondering these thoughts, I came to understand that truth is God. (Thoughtfully) Sat ... truth, reality, that which is.

“The seeker after truth must become humbler than the dust. Only then and not until then will he even have a glimpse of truth.”

Ahimsa

This is why ahimsa is the way of satyagraha. Ahimsa means nonviolence in English. Nonviolence is an inadequate translation. “Himsa” means to do harm. The core meaning of ahimsa is “Unwillingness to do harm”. Satyagraha sees truth in everyone. In

seeking truth by doing violence to another, opponent or friend, violates truth, violates the possibility of discovering and living the very reality that unites humans. I believe that everyone has that truth within. The *dignity* of every human person is rooted in Truth. This understanding began during that first South Africa trip when I was left to freeze on the Meritzberg Railroad platform. I see ahimsa as expressing the true *meaning of love and human dignity*.

The Power of Satyagraha /No Compromise /Suffering

“Up to the year 1906 I simply relied on *appeal to reason*. I was a very industrious reformer...But I found that reason failed to produce an impression when the critical moment arrived in South Africa. My people were excited; even a worm will and does sometimes turn on threat—and there was talk of wreaking vengeance. I had then to choose between allying myself to violence or finding out some other method of meeting the crisis and stopping the rot; and it came to me that we should refuse to obey the legislation that was degrading and let them put us in jail if they liked. Thus came into being the moral equivalent of war...

“Since then the conviction has been growing upon me, that things of fundamental importance to the people are *not secured by reason alone* but have to be purchased with their *suffering*. Suffering is the law of human beings; war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears, which are otherwise shut, to the voice of reason...*I have come to this fundamental conclusion, that if you want something really important to be done you must not merely satisfy the reason, you **must move the heart too**. The appeal to reason is more to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man.*”

“Ahimsa sees the *ends in the means*. Threats, manipulations, lying, are violent, just as physical abuses are. Ahimsa places caring for the opponent from the very beginning. That is why suffering is a basic part of my way. I would oppose British policies to the death, but seek the enduring friendship of the English.

Our goal is *neither to defeat nor to embarrass* the opponent. Our goal is to come to an understanding with our opponent that we both agree about. I wanted to be friends with the British when they left India. I wanted them to believe that self-rule was truth for the Indians and truth for the British. That is why I would never take advantage of the British when they had other problems by conducting a Satyagraha campaign.

Human/Beast

“Nonviolence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute, and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law.” “If love is not the law of the human species, my argument falls to pieces.”

Satyagraha Ahimsa Tapasya

In understanding my way, we have satyagraha, ahimsa, and tapasya. “Untruth is quenched by truth, anger is quenched by love, violence is quenched by suffering. This is the way, not only for the saints, but for all.”

“The test of love is tapasya and tapasya is self-suffering.”

My journey portraying Gandhi was preceded by my own seeking “right mind.” After two years of university in engineering study I entered the Roman Catholic seminary, soon to discover Saint John of the Cross writings in the library. He was a 16th century contemplative monk reformer. A saying which stayed with me in my practice was: “in detachment, it matters little that a bird is tied down by a string or a chain. It will not be able to fly.” Gandhi summed up his religion in two words, “No desire.” Or, “nishkam karma.”

The second discovery I made in my first year were the writings of Thomas Merton, a monk, who remains as one of my main teachers. My favorite book on Gandhi is Merton’s *Gandhi on Non-Violence*, containing a profound introduction classically showing how Gandhi found his “right mind.”

Merton echoes Gandhi when he wrote to Czeskaw Milosz: "I cannot be a Catholic unless it is made quite clear to the world that I am a Jew and a Moslem, unless I am execrated as a Buddhist and denounced for having undermined all that this comfortable and social Catholicism stands for; this lining up of cassocks, this regimenting of birettas." (Asian Journal 316)

Merton begins the Introduction:

"The white man, says Laurens Van Der Post, came into Africa (and Asia and America for that matter) like a one-eyed giant, bringing with him the characteristic split and blindness which were at once his strength, his torment, and his ruin. With his self-isolated and self-scrutinizing individual mind, Western man was master of concepts and abstractions. He was king of quantity and the driver of those forces over which quantitative knowledge gave him supremacy without understanding."

After describing what it means to have a second eye, the eye of wisdom, Merton spends the next twenty pages in small print showing what it means and what it meant for Gandhi to discover his "right mind." This means:

"What is most striking in this concept of Gandhi's is its breadth, its integrity, and its unity. This is his lesson and his legacy to the world: The evils we suffer cannot be eliminated by a violent attack in which one sector of humanity flies at another in destructive fury. Our evils are common and the solution of them can only be common. But we are not ready to undertake this common task because we are not ourselves. Consequently the first duty of every man is to return to his own 'right mind.' in order that society may be sane." 16

Merton quotes: Ananda Coomarasamy, ..., "once outlined the meaning of the process called *metanoia* or recovery of one's right mind, the passage from ignorance of self to enlightened moral awareness. 'Repentance,' he said, quoting Hermas, 'is a great understanding' (and by no means an emotional crisis!). It is the ability to cast off the intolerable burden of the past act, no longer seen as irreversible. But

obviously no man enclosed in himself can utter an omnipotent word of command and abolish his own sin. The 'knowledge' and 'understanding' which is truly the 'great [and repentant, liberated] understanding' is therefore 'understanding-with' or 'con-scientia' (conscience). "A kind of synthesis or agreement by which our internal conflict is resolved and 'all the knots of the heart are loosed.'" It is to understand 'with' our inmost self '*in a union transcending consciousness of a within or a without.*' 17

Where did all this lead Gandhi? Merton quotes Father Monchanin: "When we hear the voice of Gandhi we hear the voice of his Mother [India] and of his nurse. We hear the voice of all the peasant masses bending over the rice fields." 10

Developing the meaning and implications of Gandhi's and our "right mind," Merton concludes his introduction:

"Gandhi's observations on the prerequisites and the disciplines involved by satyagraha, the vow of truth, are required reading for anyone who is seriously interested in man's fate in the nuclear age." 20

We live in the nuclear age. Merton was probably assassinated in 1968 in Thailand, before awareness of the climate catastrophe was in our minds. Gandhi on the eve of his assassination was asked by Margaret Burke-White, Time Magazine journalist, "How I would meet the Atom Bomb...*with non-violence?*" I replied, "Non-violence is the only thing the atom bomb cannot destroy. I did not move a muscle when I first heard that an atom bomb had wiped out Hiroshima. On the contrary, I said to myself, 'Unless the world adopts non-violence, it will spell certain suicide for mankind.'"

As we come together at this World Parliament, we need to pause and go to our inner voice like Gandhi did nights and days before the idea of the Salt March came to him in 1930. Humanity has never faced the kind of threats of nuclear weapons and of what has come to be called anthropogenic climate change mean. (As Einstein said, "Nuclear weapons have changed everything except our way of thinking.") We humans created nuclear weapons. We humans created the conditions

for climate change. The fact is we humans can reduce the effects of both. But, scientists are saying NOW IS THE MOST URGENT TIME, and most interpret this to mean that we have lost the so-called “normal” pace of change in human experience. The feedback loops are kicking in and a time will come when they are beyond control, if they are not already. No one knows for sure how much time we have to prevent the demise of living species on beautiful Planet Earth. A very credible group of scientists who are not afraid of losing their jobs thinks the end could be by 2026.

“These developments can take place at such a speed that adaptation will be futile. More extreme weather events can hit the same area with a succession of droughts, cold snaps, floods, heat waves and wildfires that follow each other up rapidly. Within just one decade [from 2016], the combined impact of extreme weather, falls in soil quality and air quality, habitat loss and shortages of food, water, shelter and just about all the basic things needed to sustain life can threaten most, if not all life on Earth with extinction.” by [Jon Queally, staff writer](#) (<https://HumanExtinctionby2026?ALastDitchStrategytoFightforHumanSurvival/countercurrents.org/2018/08/14/human-extinction-by-2026-a-last-ditch-strategy-to-fight-for-human-survival/>)

Another warning:

“We Climbing Rapidly Out of Humankind's Safe Zone': New Report Warns Dire Climate Warnings Not Dire Enough

"It is no longer possible to follow a gradual transition path to restore a safe climate. We have left it too late; emergency action, akin to a war footing, will eventually be accepted as inevitable. The longer that takes, the greater the damage inflicted upon humanity." —David Splatt & Ian Dunlop, report authors

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2018/08/20/we-are-climbing-rapidly-out-humankinds-safe-zone-new-report-warns-dire-climate>)

Another warning:

“There have been five mass extinction events on Earth, and it is a [scientific fact](#) we are well into the sixth mass extinction event.

By far, the worst of these was the Permian mass extinction that occurred roughly 252 million years ago. That one annihilated 95 percent of all life on Earth.

During the Permian mass extinction, global warming caused by a massive amount of CO₂ released from volcanism warmed both the oceans and the atmosphere, which then triggered the release of colossal amounts of methane that had been trapped underneath the ice in the Arctic. This caused an even greater spike in planetary warming, which wiped out nearly all life on Earth.

In our current mass extinction event, however, rather than the CO₂-caused warming coming from a volcano, it is anthropogenic (human-caused), and the climate is not just warming, it is disrupted. And this time, rather than the process taking tens of thousands of years as it did during the Permian mass extinction, humans are increasing atmospheric CO₂ levels far, far more rapidly.

Whether or not humans go extinct remains to be seen, but there is no denying that sustaining [7.6 billion](#) humans while we are forcing the extinction of between [150-200 other species](#) each day and have pushed Earth's climate out of its natural state is very much in question. I've spoken to prestigious scientists both on and off the record who believe that sooner rather than later, global population will be reduced to around 1 billion humans.

Whichever scenario runs its course, we are all facing massive loss in the future. It is only then can we decide what is truly important in our lives, and how to comport ourselves as we go through our days.

Just as warming seas caused the release of methane stores in the Arctic, driving the Permian mass extinction, we are now facing what appears to be a modern-day equivalent of this phenomenon.”

Dahr Jamail, a Truthout staff reporter, is the author of [*The Will to Resist: Soldiers Who Refuse to Fight in Iraq and Afghanistan*](#) (Haymarket Books, 2009), and [*Beyond the Green Zone: Dispatches From an Unembedded Journalist in Occupied Iraq*](#) (Haymarket Books, 2007). Jamail reported from Iraq for more than a year, as well as from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Turkey over the last 10 years, and has won the Martha Gellhorn Award for Investigative Journalism, among other awards. His third book, [*The Mass Destruction of Iraq: Why It Is Happening, and Who Is Responsible*](#), co-written with [William Rivers Pitt](#), is available now on Amazon. Dahr Jamail is also the author of the book, *The End of Ice*, forthcoming from The New Press. He lives and works in Washington State.

(<https://truthout.org/articles/sixth-mass-extinction-ushers-in-record-breaking-wildfires-and-heat/>)

Another warning:

“The spectacular rise of human civilization—its agrarian societies, cities, states, empires and industrial and technological advances ranging from irrigation and the use of metals to nuclear fusion—took place during the last 10,000 years, after the last ice age. Much of North America was buried, before the ice retreated, under sheets eight times the height of the Empire State Building. This tiny span of time on a planet that is 4.5 billion years old is known as the Holocene Age. It now appears to be coming to an end

with the refusal of our species to significantly curb the carbon emissions and pollutants that might cause human extinction. The human-induced change to the ecosystem, at least for many thousands of years, will probably make the biosphere inhospitable to most forms of life.

The planet is transitioning under our onslaught to a new era called the Anthropocene. This era is the product of violent conquest, warfare, slavery, genocide and the Industrial Revolution, which began about 200 years ago, and saw humans start to burn a hundred million years of sunlight stored in the form of coal and petroleum. The numbers of humans climbed to over 7 billion. Air, water, ice and rock, which are interdependent, changed. Temperatures climbed. The Anthropocene, for humans and most other species, will most likely conclude with extinction or a massive die-off, as well as climate conditions that will preclude most known life forms. We engineered our march toward collective suicide although global warming was [first identified in 1896](#) by the Swedish scientist Svante Arrhenius.” By Chris Hedges is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, New York Times best selling author, former professor at Princeton University, activist and ordained Presbyterian minister. He has written 11 books,... (<https://www.truthdig.com/articles/saying-goodbye-to-planet-earth/>)

Reflecting back to the one-eyed giant, what second eye, the eye of wisdom, can we find now?

I go to the second human-caused threat to species survival to reveal more about human motivation and the need to evolve for survival.

In my *Sequel to GANDHI, UNIVERSAL INSPIRATION* I quote Psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton, who spent his long career interviewing victims and victimizers of modern human mass death scenes like the A-bombing of Hiroshima, Chinese mind control victims, the Nazi doctors, the Vietnam soldiers. Lifton wrote copiously on nuclearism. The definition:

“THE ULTIMATE CONTEMPORARY deformation (of one’s self-image) is a condition we may call *nuclearism*: the passionate embrace of nuclear weapons as a solution to death anxiety and a way of restoring a lost sense of immortality. Nuclearism is a secular religion, a total ideology in which ‘grace’ and even ‘salvation’—the mastery of death and evil—are achieved through the power of a new technological deity. The deity is seen as capable not only of apocalyptic destruction but also of unlimited creation. And the nuclear believer or ‘nuclearist’ allies himself with that power and feels compelled to expound on the virtues of his deity. He may come to depend on the weapons to keep the world going.” Would that we had time to parse this definition!

Think about the main point: “Nuclearism is a secular religion, a total ideology in which ‘grace’ and even ‘salvation’—the mastery of death and evil—are achieved through the power of a new technological deity.”

Robert Jay Lifton’s underlying analysis is covered in his primary book, *The Broken Connection*, and more about the threats, *The GENOCIDAL MENTALITY, Nazi Holocaust and Nuclear Threat*, written with Eric Markusen.

“Nuclear--weapons policies keep Americans and Russians—in fact, all human beings—constantly at the threshold of genocide, with a willingness to cross that threshold being constantly asserted.

“Just as the Nazi genocidal intent, prior to crossing the threshold, was a good deal less clear than many people have believed, so is genocidal intent in nuclearism greater than meets the eye. A chilling lesson, though rarely drawn, of the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 is that the superpowers not only reached ‘the brink’, the absolute threshold, but when there, were willing to take risks that could result in crossing the threshold into genocide or provoking the adversary to do the crossing. The superpowers took the risks, even as they sought to avoid nuclear holocaust, because they were entrapped by policies and mind-sets resulting from longstanding nuclearism.

“That entrapment at the nuclear threshold has been little recognized—possibly because it is so alarming.” Lifton/Markusen 173

Within the same Sequel I also quote Merton during the 1960s in this context:

“The great sin, the source of all other sins, is idolatry. Never has it been greater, more prevalent than now. It is almost completely unrecognized—precisely because it is so overwhelmingly total. It takes in everything. There is nothing else left. Fetishism of power, machines, possessions, medicine, sports, clothes, etc., all kept going by greed for money and power. The Bomb is only one accidental aspect of the cult. Indeed, the Bomb is not the worst. We should be thankful for it as a

sign, a revelation of what all the rest of our civilization points to: the self-immolation of man to his own greed and his own despair. Behind it all are the principalities and powers whom man serves in his idolatry. Christians are as involved in this as everyone else.”

In conclusion, I go to the invitation to participate in the planning meeting for Gandhi’s sesquicentennial in 2019 on May 2nd this year from Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi. I was one of two international participants and given three minutes to make a statement. After outlining Gandhi’s principles, I briefly described the times we now live in. My most determined statement was:

“Finally and most important: We must initiate an urgent, emergency, immediate truth force (satyagraha) action to eliminate and abolish nuclear weapons and at the same time do all we can to reverse CO2 in the atmosphere, limit climate destruction.”

As stated in Addendum 1, I list a number of very important issues in my draft statement to Prime Minister Modi which Gandhi addressed. The threats in Kashmir include nuclear war between India and Pakistan. People like the former Secretary of Defense for the United States, William Perry who is very highly regarded on this subject, believes that the greatest risk of nuclear war exists right here in India and Pakistan. He also has stated that the world is under a greater risk of nuclear war between Russia and the United States than at any time during the Cold War.

You might ask me: Why are you placing this priority over all the other important issues about racism, poverty, economy of consumption, etc? The simple answer is that all these issues will disappear when there is no humanity, when there is no life on earth. As Martin Luther King Jr. said, “It is not a choice between violence and non-violence, it is a choice between non-violence and non-existence.”

Yet, we have the teachers like Gandhi. To listen to them and act like them, experimenting with truth, is to face all issues.

“To me God is Truth and Love; God is ethics and morality; God is fearlessness. God is the source of Light and Life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist.”

“When we hear the voice of Gandhi we hear the voice of his Mother [India] and of his nurse. We hear the voice of all the peasant masses bending over the rice fields.”

Our wisdom must come from our finding and living by our “right mind.” Let us join together by dedicating ourselves to universal truth, loving all in loving one.

Addendum 1

The following is a list of additional recommendations:

DRAFT OUTLINE OF IDEAS FOR THE GANDHI SESQUICENTENNIAL PLANNING MEETING IN DELHI ON MAY 2 AT THE INVITATION OF PRIME MINISTER MODI by Bernie Meyer

“My way is the way of the Vedas. If all the upanishads were vanished, but the way of the Ishopanishad survived, we would have the root of the Vedas, the root of Hinduism, the root of all truth. ‘The Creator, the divine, the reality pervades all creation to the smallest atom, the last quark. The Bhagavad Gita is my bible and explains the Ishopanishad. Truth is the way, Nonviolence, Love is the way, Nonviolence is the greatest power.’”

Humanity and Planet Earth are in an era of change unlike any that humanity has faced before. Two forces are at work, both threaten life on earth:

Climate Change, called anthropogenic climate destruction, 2 to 3 degrees centigrade in a couple decades, 4 to 5 degrees by the end of the century if drastic action is not taken

Nuclear weapons: exchange between the US and Russia would end most life, between India and Pakistan would kill two billion.

Also, water and natural resources are being depleted. These changes are human caused and can be modified by humans. My book, *The American Gandhi, MY TRUTH SEEKING WITH HUMANITY AT THE CROSS ROADS*, was written in 2007. The “crossroads” are more immanent now.

EVOLVE OR DIE: Humanity transform ourselves to our “right mind.”

Gandhi’s Way: Satyagraha, Ahimsa, Tapasya; Constructive Program must be applied. Live in truth, nonviolently, taking the burden on ourselves.

My six scene portrayal teaches the authentic Gandhi: *GANDHI, UNIVERSAL INSPIRATION, Grist for Meditating, Scenarios of Discovering and Living Experiments In Truth and Love*.

Gandhi said his teaching is “as old as the hills.” Humanity must go to these teachings, beginning with the First Upanishad. My teachers say emphatically, humanity is in crisis for ignoring the reality of Pure truth.

I suggest that the Sesquicentennial establish consciousness education about Gandhi’s values, principles, methods of action emphasizing also swaraj and sarvodaya as he experimented with truth.

Also, I call for intensive meetings with the following constituencies with their issues in order to come up with democratic plans of action to solve the problems:

1. application of world climate goals
2. nuclear abolition
3. relations with Pakistan
4. poor masses of the villages and the urban residents
5. dalits
6. Muslims
7. women
8. Kashmir
9. adivasis

India has a rich, ancient spirituality which the world has a “do or die” need of. Gandhi left us with a most needed heritage for our living and action.

I also recommend the establishment of an International Institute for “Gandhi: Relevance in the 21 st Century.”

Finally and most important: **We must initiate an urgent, emergency, immediate truth force (satyagraha) action to eliminate and abolish nuclear weapons and at the same time do all we can to reverse CO2 in the atmosphere, limit climate destruction.**

Addendum 2 resources recommended:

Former Secretary of Defense William J. Perry and his book, *MY JOURNEY at the NUCLEAR BRINK*. Regarding our present situation, he states that “I am terrified.” After spending his life working to prevent nuclear war, at 89 he continues. Of particular interest are his experiences destroying nuclear weapons with the Russians in the 1990s.

Daniel Ellsberg lays out the present dangers in his book, *The Doomsday Machine, CONFESSIONS OF A NUCLEAR WAR PLANNER*. Both Ellsberg and Perry give inside views at the highest levels of US government about the dynamics of the systems.

On July 30, 2018 I received a letter from John Burroughs, Executive Director of The Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy. He said “We have two overarching concerns: the increased danger of nuclear conflict, and the marked erosion of international law.” In other words, “rules-based international order.”

John Burroughs also included “Nuclear Crossroads: The Urgent Need for Action to Prevent Catastrophe issued by International Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms (IALANA)”. This is a clear summary of the major issues with actions needed.

(see www.lcnp.org)

Addendum 3

I have been working with a scientist who is writing a manual, ***THE Goodness Field: A Guidebook for Proactive Nonviolence***. Bob Aldridge works from Gandhi's ideal of constructive program. Aldridge was working for the largest weapons corporation, Lockheed Martin, designing the Trident Missiles. He came to the light that this was a first strike weapon capable of destroying the Soviet Union in the 1970s. Aldridge resigned his position and entered a path to life. He motivated Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action which I have been supporting since 1978. Bob shared his unpublished book, *My Universe: My Faith*, with me, which describes the scientific process of creation.