

The Promotion of World Peace and Harmony: WHO IS KEEPING THE PEACE?

David C. Saxon Humanitarian Essay Competition

Canadians have been known for their efforts in keeping the peace for almost a century. During the First World War, Second World War and the Korean War more than 110 000 Canadians lost their lives fighting overseas for rights regarding freedom and peace. The late Lester B. Pearson proposed an idea to the United Nations involving a multi-national peace keeping force, and for this, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Thanks to Pearson peacekeeping became a widespread agenda. Peacekeepers attempt to limit interactions between opposing forces at risk of war; they provide humanitarian aid and help in the relocation of refugees. They support the stable government and human rights. In 1988 the UN Peacekeepers were recognized for their efforts in limiting violence and promoting peace. They were collectively awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The United Nations Peacekeepers are, and for many years have been, trying to maintain peace and harmony, but are they alone in their efforts? Should they be alone in their efforts?

Many people do not realize that peacekeeping is about more than protecting the borders between feuding countries. Peacekeeping is about creating solutions to achieve and maintain peace, it's about resolving and preventing conflicts, it's about restoring law and order in political and social situations, and it is so much more. Peacekeeping can be as simple as resolving conflict, and conflicts are often resolved without the help of a UN officer, everyday people can keep the peace. In Canada peace and freedom are rights, but unfortunately this is not the case everywhere. Canadians are fortunate enough to live in a well established, safe environment, and for this we should be grateful. Everyday many Canadians make an effort to maintain peace, be it on a personal, regional, provincial, national or international level. It all counts, it's all

peacekeeping. A single act can and will make a difference. Average people are making a great effort to maintain peace and harmony, but more often than not, they are not recognized for their efforts.

Resolving personal and regional conflicts may not be considered peacekeeping by everyone, but it should be. Millions of small disputes and feuding people across the world are only slightly better than major conflicts between countries. Ultimately, to obtain world peace, the majority of the human race should be at peace. They must be at peace with themselves, their families and even their friends. Although this may not seem like a big deal, it is still important. No, conflict between friends will probably not lead to war or global distress, but conflicts can escalate and cause great problems, even for those not involved. Everyone has a right to happiness; no one should have the right to take it away from someone else. Peacekeeping can be as simple as stepping in to help two friends resolve an argument or standing up for someone being bullied. Peacekeepers are also people who strive to maintain friendly competition between two groups, such as sports teams or even entire towns. There will be rivalry, but there is no need for hatred or enemies. Municipal councils, school boards and even smaller organizations within communities and schools should be considered keepers of peace. People are doing what they can to make others happy. If people are at peace on a personal or regional level, they are more likely to attempt to maintain peace between others. Anyone can be a peacekeeper; they simply have to want it. Peace comes from the heart.

Peacekeepers on the provincial or national level are far more recognized for their efforts than those of regional or personal levels. These people who aim for peace and harmony are the reasons we live in a safe and beautiful country, they are the reasons why we have no need for worry. Members of both the provincial and federal governments have one thing in common, they

all want for Canadians to be happy, and peace can lead to happiness. These politicians may sometimes seem unscrupulous, or willing to do anything to gain power, but the majority of them are really just trying to make things better. They try to push laws and decisions in the direction they feel most effective and suitable for their province or country. Here in Canada, peacekeeping involves pertaining to the rights of the aboriginals as well as the francophone. It involves advocating the rights of both minorities and majorities. Anyone who tries to help their province or country avoid and resolve conflict should be considered a peacekeeper.

The term peacekeeping most often refers to the United Nations efforts in maintaining peace internationally. Maintaining international harmony is probably the most important form of peacekeeping as it can affect everyone across the globe. An international conflict is high risk, if provoked it can lead to war or terrorism. Even small wars affect the entire human race. A simple war can cause distress in countries that are seemingly unaffected, it can cause a lack of available imported products, and often countries that aren't involved feel that they should become involved due to alliances or based on morals. There are many international organizations that can proudly say world peace is their main goal. People involved in such organizations should and have been recognized. The United Nations, the driving force behind world peace have participated in 63 peacekeeping operations. Currently, there are UN peacekeepers working in the Middle East, Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Africa and the Americas. The military is still the core of peacekeeping operations, usually planted on borders between countries in a threatening conflict but recently peacekeeping has expanded. Often average people with average jobs are peacekeepers. There is a new emphasis on peacekeeping involving administrators and economists, police officers and legal experts, the monitoring of human rights, civil affairs and governance, humanitarian workers and public communications. These new branches of

peacekeeping are easy to become involved in, average people across the world are working together to make the world a better place. Other peacekeeping organizations include the United States Peace Corps, Search for Common Grounds, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Peaceful Tomorrows, Veterans for Peace and CodePink: Women for Peace, as well as an extensive amount of others. The main goal of the Peace Corps is promoting friendship and world peace among interested countries; citizens of the United States strive to aid residents of such countries. Search for Common Grounds is another American organization which is attempting to change the way the world sees and deals with conflict, they lean towards collaborative problem solving. NATO is a well known military alliance. Peaceful Tomorrows is an anti-war organization originating from the survivors of the tragedy of September 11th, 2001. They advocate non-violent alternatives in the pursuit of justice. Veterans for Peace is an organization promoting alternatives to war. CodePink: Women for Peace is a group, led by women but welcoming the participation of men, fighting for peace and social justice, working to end current wars and stop new ones. All of these organizations have one common focus, world peace. Although some organizations emphasize different aspects of world peace, they all fight for human rights. All these organizations are made up of average people simply looking for change. However, these people are not just looking for change, they're working together to obtain it.

Peacekeeping efforts are being made across the world, by many people. Ordinary people with ordinary lives are trying to keep the peace. Many people do not realize that it is not necessary to have special training or be in the military to maintain peace. Peace can start with one individual, and spread from there. Being at peace with yourself leads to being peaceful towards others. Peace is contagious. The most important thing relative to peacekeeping is desire, desire for a free, harmonized, and peaceful world. If everyone had a great desire for peace, it

would be achieved globally. Already, there is a great amount of average people who truly desire world peace; they are working hard to promote peace and this desire for peace. Regular people with regular jobs and regular lives are keeping the peace, and as long as they continue in their efforts, world harmony can only improve.