

THE STATE OF THE CULTURE OF PEACE IN NEW HAVEN 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following analysis is based on a series of interviews of local activists conducted by David Adams on behalf of the New Haven Peace Commission. They were based on the concept of “culture of peace” as defined by the United Nations and consisting of sustainable equitable development, democratic participation, equality of women, tolerance and solidarity, disarmament and security, education for peace, free flow of information and human rights, all inter-related.

The most progress in 2013 was considered to be in **sustainable equitable development** thanks to the project New Haven Works which got underway this year and promises to seriously address the great problem of unemployment and under-employment, and to the projects for local food production and distribution that have come out of the “food summit” held a year ago. There is not much progress, however, in solving the serious development problems of taxation, pollution and over-reliance on the automobile for transportation.

New Haven Works is the direct result of advances over the past few years in **democratic participation** by which a Board of Alders was elected on a platform of providing more and better employment in the city. Another advance in democratic participation, the referendum held a year ago in which New Haveners demanded that the US military budget be reduced and the money used for social services, was followed up this year by a state-wide “Futures Commission.”

Although **equality of women** remains to be achieved in many areas, the election of the first woman mayor of New Haven was seen as a major step forward.

New Haven continues to be a national leader in **tolerance and solidarity** by providing identity cards to undocumented Latin American immigrants. As a result of the city's leadership, the State of Connecticut has now allowed undocumented immigrants to obtain drivers licenses and state tuition benefits for higher education.

As for **disarmament and security**, there continues to be a high level of violence in the city (exaggerated by media emphasis on violent news), which is related to unemployment, a failing education system, destruction of the family and family values and easy access to drugs and guns, among other causal factors. The emphasis on community policing is seen as taking a good direction, but it has just begun so it cannot yet be seen if it will produce good results.

Education needs to be strengthened at the neighborhood level, much as neighborhood policing is now been strengthened, but unfortunately, the emphasis continues to be on magnet and charter schools to which children are bused out of their neighborhoods and which, in the long run, tends to increase rather than decrease the widening gulf between the rich and the poor.

With regard to the **free flow of information**, there are important new sources in recent years that employ the Internet in support of a culture of peace, such as the New Haven Independent. However, the main commercial media continue to emphasize the news of violence which ultimately supports a culture of war and violence.

Although there are new initiatives as described above, New Haven, like the rest of the country continues to slide backwards in basic **human rights** such as food, housing, healthcare and employment. “The sheer numbers of the poor are increasing. The social safety net is frayed and tattered and more people are falling through it.”

All of those interviewed have agreed to be interviewed again next fall to determine if New Haven is making progress towards a culture of peace.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1999 the United Nations adopted the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace which defined the culture of peace as a goal much broader than the traditional idea of peace as the absence of war.

The culture of peace (CoP) includes all of the components necessary for a peace that is profound and lasting.

disarmament and security
sustainable, equitable development
education for peace
democratic participation
human rights
equality of women
tolerance and solidarity
free flow of information

The rationale for this analysis by the United Nations is explained below in Appendix I. Although the resolution was conceived and adopted in terms of the Member States of the United Nations, it is equally applicable to cities.

With this in mind, on behalf of the New Haven City Peace Commission, 15 New Haven activists have been interviewed in all of the above areas and a summary of their considerations are presented here. Most of them were interviewed two times, one in the fall of 2012 and again in the fall of 2013 in order to determine if the state of the culture of peace in New Haven has advanced or not during the past year. For more information about the methodology, see Appendix II at the end of this report.

INTER-RELATIONS AND PRIORITIES AMONG THE EIGHT COP COMPONENTS.

As will be evident below, the eight components of culture of peace are all inter-related and dependent upon each other. Thus, it is not possible to say that one is more important than another. They are all important and linked together, and it makes no difference where we start in the analysis. To illustrate this, the linkages that appear in each section are indicated in boldface.

SUSTAINABLE, EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

According to most of the activists interviewed, the greatest advances in culture of peace this past year have been in the domain of sustainable, equitable development.

In particular, there has been progress towards full employment through the program of New Haven Works, and this is especially important because unemployment, especially among young people, is not only a fundamental violation of **human rights**, but also is a major cause of our high level of violence and lack of **security**.

The New Haven Works initiative is the result of the advance in recent years in **democratic participation**, by which a community coalition spearheaded by the Yale trade unions got many new members of the New Haven Board of Aldermen nominated and elected in 2011 and re-elected in 2013 on a platform promising fuller employment for New Haven citizens. New Haven Works officially opened in June with a ceremony that included the governor and other state officials, representatives from New Haven's largest employers, and testimonies from several people who had already obtained employment through the pilot project. It has already received half a million dollars in grants, mostly from the State, thanks to the active involvement of State Senator Toni Harp, who is now the new mayor of New Haven. Its Board of Directors includes New Haven's biggest employers, including Yale, the hospitals and United Illuminating, as well as the Chamber of Commerce and representatives from trade unions, community organizations and youth. As of November, five months into the program, there were already 1100 "members", i.e. people who have gone through the orientation and assessment process, which probably represents about 10% of New Haven's unemployed. A priority for the next year is to get them placements and help them with case managers to succeed and hold their jobs. Other priorities include increasing the membership pool and obtaining grant money to concentrate on youth employment.

At New Haven's largest employer, Yale University, the recent union contract has made progress to ensure 1000 jobs for New Haven residents over the next five years, as well as obtaining better benefits including better pensions for its membership.

According to some who were interviewed, there are limits to what this project can accomplish since unemployment is so endemic to the system not only in New Haven but throughout the country. As one of the activists interviewed expressed, "We haven't even begun to know our potential for sustainable, equitable development, because our development depends on the capitalist system that doesn't want it to work. Full employment is not even on its agenda." In particular, there is concern that it will not be easy to greatly increase employment among those who lack training and experience, and it is they who need it the most. Only time will tell if this project can overcome the difficulties and realize its potential.

Another major advance this year was in the area of food distribution which also addresses the basic **human rights** of New Haveners. This followed a "food summit" at City Hall in October 2012 which included a food action plan and resulted in the establishment of 5 working groups: school food; food assistance to the poor; development of urban agriculture; sustainability issues such as composting; and cooking and food education. There was even a major forum among mayoral candidates this year on food issues. New Haven is a leader among cities on these issues, with numerous farmers' markets, a specialized high school (Common Ground High School) and a "mobile market" which distributes food around the city to senior centers, senior housing and low income neighborhoods.

In addition there are numerous other local initiatives around food issues, including some 50 community gardens, City Seed, the New Haven Bioregional Group, school gardens, and a Food Policy Council that is an official part of city government and that has brought local farm products to school lunches.

Some aspects of sustainable development slid backwards in 2013. Symbolically, the office of sustainability in City Hall was lost with the ending of the federal grant that sustained it. As one activist remarked, the office of sustainability was not sustainable!

Many other aspects of sustainable development remain problematic.

It is not possible to separate development at the city level from the problem of taxation which has always been a problem throughout the country. Cities are caught in a double-bind situation as they are forced to pay for social services, especially **education**, from a base of property taxes that has continued to shrink for decades as manufacturing has left the city. New Haven is in a particularly difficult situation because its largest employers, Yale and the hospitals, are exempt from property taxes. Ironically, the city has recently sold a street to Yale in order to raise money! There seems to be no serious solution to this dilemma. An example of the dilemma is the recent move of Gateway Community College to downtown New Haven. On the one hand, it brings educational services to the community and, to some extent, income to local businesses. On the other hand, it takes more space off the tax rolls and it increases the expense of providing parking spaces.

Another of the activists interviewed pointed directly at the culture of war as the basic problem. "We have massive unemployment across the country which is the core problem, and it is due to the priority given to the military budget. Unlike what some people think, the military budget reduces employment rather than increasing it. We can see that with Pratt and Whitney which is now reduced from over 40,000 to under 1500 workers despite tripling of the military budget during that time. What we need is economic conversion from military to civilian production."

The question of economic conversion from military to civilian production was addressed in the referendum sponsored by the City Peace Commission in the 2012 New Haven elections. The referendum, which called for reduction of federal military spending and increased spending on human needs, was passed by a margin of 85%. One result was the formation of a state-wide "Futures Commission" which is mandated to plan for a "green economy" not based on military spending. New Haven's leadership in this regard has been recognized by other American cities who are trying to achieve similar results.

There is now a general understanding that we cannot allow pollution to continue. In particular, the pollution of air and water continue to be major problems, especially in the poorest communities where air pollution is a major cause of asthma. In this regard, the New Haven Environmental Justice Network, which is part of a statewide coalition, has achieved some success in influencing important decisions about power plant pollution and reversing the pollution in West River, along with a new organization, the "West River Watershed Coalition."

The Greater New Haven Water Pollution Control Authority is supposed to reduce the problem of sewage in our rivers and streams, but it depends on a sewer separation project that is enormously costly and long-term. Meanwhile, shorter-term and less costly solutions such as increasing "green infrastructure" to absorb heavy rainwater, have not been effectively implemented. The Connecticut Fund for the Environment has had some success in the restoration of waterways. Meanwhile, in Connecticut as a whole, we have not begun to deal with how to get rid of nuclear waste.

Recycling has moved forward in recent years, but it is not consistent. In some neighborhoods there is over 50% recycling, but in others less than 15%. Compare San Francisco with 70%! And like San Francisco we should do composting with food waste.

As for urban planning and transportation, there is a greatly increased interest in bicycles and alternatives to automobile transportation. According to the American Community Survey, New Haven's proportion of bicycle commuters (~5%) is one of the highest in the country. Unfortunately, however, New Haven's city planning decisions are still determined by the automobile, as could be seen in the final results of the Downtown Crossing Project. As one activist put it, "we are going backwards with public transport. More and more planning is done for automobiles, while bus transportation remains uncoordinated, and unavailable on many lines in the evening and there is still insufficient parking at the railroad station."

Increasingly it is understood that we must develop alternative energy sources, both to reduce carbon emissions that contribute to global warming and to reduce dependence on the importation of oil. However, other than riding bicycles and eating locally-grown food, there is the feeling one cannot do much about this on the level of the city. On the national level, our Congressional representatives and national government do not even have a strategy to take action. Meanwhile, New Haven harbor remains a major center to receive imported oil on huge tanker ships, with periodic oil spills that are given little publicity.

People are increasingly convinced that the banking system is corrupt and unsustainable, but there seems to be little or no action in Washington to deal with this. The frustration was expressed by the Occupy Wall Street movement, which managed to keep its tents on the New Haven Green longer than in most cities. There is a growing tendency to invest in local banks and credit agencies as an alternative, but it is still small in comparison.

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

Two major advances in democratic participation in recent years were sustained in the past year. Both have already been mentioned: the election of a Board of Alders dedicated to full employment and union rights; and the overwhelming vote of New Haveners in 2012 in favor of the referendum to demand Washington to reduce the military budget and use the funds for human needs.

Thanks to the door-to-door campaigning of over 400 volunteers, many from trade unions, the elections of 2013 returned union activists to the Board of Alders following up their victories in the elections of 2011. As mentioned under **sustainable development**, this has made possible a serious project for employment in the city. The Board is now a good model for **women's equality** and **tolerance and solidarity**, as it now consists of two-thirds women, including some from Yale union locals 34 and 35, and a racial membership that reflects the city's population. It is symbolic that the Board will change its official name next year from the Board of Aldermen to the Board of Alders. The priorities for the Board in the coming year are jobs, youth opportunity and street safety.

As will be expanded under **women's equality**, this year's election also resulted in the first woman mayor in New Haven history. Unfortunately, the election was also marked by a great deal of mud-slinging, including anti-union propaganda and in the end, the voting was split along racial lines with Black neighborhoods voting for the Black candidate, and white neighborhoods voting for the white candidate. Fortunately, the new mayor, in her first speech, said that her task is to unify the city and she acted on this by naming a transition team that is truly multi-racial.

Over time, the voter registration and voter turnout in Black and Hispanic wards has been increasing, but it is still not adequate for full democratic participation. In general, New Haven shares the weakness of American democracy that voters are often not well-informed, while elections are determined by large sums of money on media advertising that is so superficial that it ultimately demoralizes the voters and makes them skeptical and alienated from the entire process of democracy.

And as mentioned earlier under **sustainable development**, the results of the 2012 referendum on the military budget have made possible the state-wide initiative for a futures commission.

Democratic participation includes, but must also go beyond the mobilizations and campaigns that involve people in the elections for mayor, alders and representatives to state and national government. A good example of this was the series of public hearings sponsored by the Board of Alders on Charter Revision. As a result, in the fall election, voters endorsed a partially-elected Board of Education and a Police Civilian Review Board which will be further discussed under **education** and **security** respectively.

We see more and more examples of local initiatives. One example is the dog park on Union St which was accomplished without government help. Another is the web-based organization SeeClickFix, which encourages citizens to report problems in their neighborhood, and mobilize people to take care of these problems if the city government does not respond. SeeClickFix started in New Haven and has now gone national and international in scope. As one activist said, "I see more people doing volunteer work and taking care of each other, which reflects an increase in the attitudes of **solidarity**."

Unfortunately, the structure of city government ensures that the Board of Alders is ill-equipped to make policy. Alders get only \$2000 a year which does not allow them to spend their own full time, let alone engage staff to deal with the problems of the city. This leaves real power in the hands of the mayor. Decisions are made "downtown." One activist noted that it does not have to be this way. Elsewhere, including in New York and Chicago, there are some initiatives that put certain financial decisions in the hands of the people in the neighborhoods, in what may be called "participative budgeting. But this can't work unless people are educated to participate."

Finally, as is the case throughout the country, with few exceptions, the **educational system** is not designed to prepare students for democratic participation. Instead, students are expected to simply follow instructions with little voice in how their education is structured and administered.

WOMEN'S EQUALITY

Virtually every person interviewed, when asked about women's equality, mentioned immediately the election of Toni Harp as the first woman mayor in New Haven history. And they remarked further that she is not only an African-American woman, but also someone who has proven her abilities as State Senator and head of its Appropriations Committee. Following her election, she remarked that in the Senate she got a lot of money for New Haven, and now she wants to see that it is spent properly. She provides an excellent role model for the young women of New Haven.

Over the years we see more and more women in positions of authority. Yale, in general, is an influence for equality, especially since women were admitted almost a half century ago. The most active trade union, Local 34, is women-led, and has achieved major victories for women's wages, healthcare, pensions and housing mortgages. It is not accidental that a majority of the new alders they helped elect last year are women (see section on **democratic participation**). In addition, New Haven's congressional representatives (state and federal) include many very active and effective women, as well as men who are very supportive of women's rights. And especially important, the new community policing approach includes women managers in 3 of the 10 districts.

On the other hand, many major problems remain unsolved. A large proportion of the poor in New Haven are women heads of households, some unmarried, some divorced or widowed, and too often with a husband in prison or unemployable because of a prison record. If they are married, their husbands are often victims of unemployment (see section on **development**). And if they are employed it is often part-time and for substandard wages without benefits. Women's non-union wages remain stuck at a level of 77% of the wages to men in equivalent jobs. Even if they make a good wage, women's income may be largely eaten up by expensive daycare. The program of Head Start which used to take their young children during the day has been cut in recent years. Women are especially inconvenienced by the requirement of the **educational system** that students must be bused to distant schools.

Not to mention other particular problems that are not often considered, such as, for example, the high cost of providing disposable diapers for babies.

Even if there is a man in the household who contributes to the family income, there is too often a problem of domestic violence, as will be mentioned later in the earlier section on **security**.

In the past there were national organizations working explicitly for women's equality, such as the National Organization of Women, the National Women's Political Caucus and NARAL, but now they have reduced influence or have completely disappeared. On the other hand, several women's sororities (the "Deltas") remain strongly active for women in the Black community..

Teen age pregnancy is rampant. One activist told us that 30% of Latino girls have at least one baby before the age of 18. Although women's reproductive rights continue to be under attack on a national level, New Haven is fortunate to have a very active organization of Planned Parenthood that defends women's reproductive rights on a day-to-day basis.

The Planned Parenthood program on parental sex education, Real Life Real Talk, trained over a thousand parents a few years ago, working with local churches and community organizations, especially in the Black community, but unfortunately it could not be continued due to its high cost. Planned Parenthood now talks of "reproductive justice" rather than a narrow focus on birth control. In fact, they are especially pleased by a privately funded daycare for teenage student mothers at a local high school: "Although some claim that this encourages teenage pregnancy, we don't think that this enters into the decision-making of teenage sex. What is important is that they should be able to continue their education."

TOLERANCE AND SOLIDARITY

New Haven, like many American cities, has long received new generations of immigrants. As described by one Peace Commission member, New Haven is a truly multi-cultural city with a progressive social and economic history. At the end of the 19th century, the principal immigration was Irish, and at the beginning of the 20th century the Italians and European Jews. At mid-point in the century it was the African-Americans who came up from the South seeking jobs in post-war industry. And now it is the immigration from Latin America. These succeeding waves of immigration are especially evident in neighborhoods such as Fair Haven and the Hill. Each succeeding wave of immigration has had to fight against intolerance by those who came before. One activist from the Peace Commission provided us a very instructive history of the organization of the Latino population over the past 50 years in the face of racism and intolerance. A key role was played by access to **education**. The full history goes beyond the scope of this report and deserves a separate account..

The lack of **human rights** such as employment, housing and medical care are compounded for immigrants, especially those who are undocumented. In recent years, New Haven has taken national leadership by providing identification cards for undocumented immigrants. This was started in 2004 by the Fair Haven Junta and Unidad Latina En Accion, and supported by hearings backed by the New Haven Peace Commission, which led eventually to acceptance by city hall in 2007. Among other things, prior to that, undocumented immigrants could not put money in a bank which made them vulnerable to be robbed. According to one activist, these ID's are now being used by perhaps half of the undocumented immigrants in the city, and they are increasingly accepted by employers and public institutions. Thanks to a recent state-wide efforts, inspired by New Haven's experience, undocumented immigrants can now obtain driver's licenses and obtain college tuition for Connecticut universities.

The Latino population has found support in many New Haven institutions. Last May Day there was a rally on the New Haven Green dedicated to immigrant rights and sponsored by the Trade Union Movement. In Fair Haven, immigrants receive priority treatment from the Fair Haven Health Clinic and have found a home in Saint Rose's Catholic Church which is one of the largest churches in the city. Saint Rose's took part in addressing the racist anti-Latino problems in neighboring East Haven, which led to a US Department of Justice investigation and a shake-up of the East Haven police department. The new jobs program, New Haven Works (described under sustainable development), is making a specific outreach to Latino neighborhoods and community organizations.

As mentioned in the section on **democratic participation**, the results of this year's election for mayor were split along racial lines. Racism, which has long been a major problem locally as well as nationally, continues to exacerbate other problems, such as racial profiling by police, the extremely high imprisonment rate of African-Americans, the high drop-out rate of Black and Hispanic students, and the extremely high unemployment in the African-American and Hispanic communities (see section on **development**). The Amistad Committee continues to be an effective initiative by publicizing the historic Amistad trial and the contributions of African Americans and Abolitionists to New Haven history; last year it celebrated its 25th anniversary with an official delegation coming from Sierra Leone.

Religious intolerance, like racism, has long been a problem locally as well as nationally. In recent years this has been manifested especially in discrimination against Islam. To combat this problem, there are now a number of important inter-religious solidarity organizations that involve Christians, Jews and Muslims in New Haven and other neighboring cities.

In general, most activists agree that there is increased consciousness on the part of most New Haveners against racism, for religious tolerance and acceptance of immigrants. The question is to what extent this increased tolerance is being translated into concrete solidarity and real social change. There is a problem, for example, that many non-profit organizations are funded to deal with these problems, but do not advocate radical social change from fear of losing their funding from sources that tend to be more conservative. In general, it is difficult to escape completely from the national trend toward right-wing fundamentalism in politics and mass media. As one activist puts it, "The public space in the United States becomes 'meaner and meaner' as political parties stoop to anything in order to win."

DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY

New Haven continues to suffer from a high rate of homicides among young men, mostly minorities. This is linked to the lack of employment opportunities (**development**), failures of **education**, destruction of the family, the easy access to guns, the drug trade which promises quick money and power, and a "culture of violence" among many young people. As a member of the Peace Commission expressed, "the fistfights of yesterday have turned into the gun battles of today."

The causes of violence go far beyond the scope of what can be done in New Haven. The national government provides an implicit model of violence when it goes to war or engages in assassination either directly or through its unmanned drones. The drug trade involves international channels of exchange of cocaine and heroin for guns that were established during the wars with Vietnam, Nicaragua and Afghanistan, among others.

The easy access to guns is also related to national policies that are largely determined by the "gun lobby" Several years ago the New Haven Peace Commission took part in an initiative to ban automatic weapons in Connecticut, but the US Supreme Court ruled that cities and states do not have the right to limit gun ownership. Last year there was hope that the renewed debate on access to assault weapons following the massacre of schoolchildren in Newtown, would lead to some substantive changes, but once again the gun lobby has managed to limit the effectiveness of the new laws that were passed as a result.

On the streets of New Haven you can see young people wearing buttons of those who have been killed in gun violence, some of them innocent bystanders, others presumably involved in the drug trade or other vendettas. On one hand, this is a traditional process of mourning and regret; on the other hand, it can serve to glorify the culture of violence as if one measures "how many people will come to my funeral." As one activist told me, "Many young men do not expect to live beyond 18 years of age in this culture."

Another casualty of the drug wars and gun violence is the high rate of imprisonment, especially among African-American men. The high rate of imprisonment contributes to the destruction of family structure. These are both cause and effect; as one activist remarked, "In the 1950's we had the values of 'good family training,' but this is no longer prevalent. Working with returnees from prison, I find that they have no values to go back to. Instead, they have brought back to our community a kind of ex-convict culture, ranging from violent rap music and ill-fitting clothes like those in prison to the belief that you must carry a gun to defend yourself. What is needed, and the new mayor and school superintendent should take the leadership in this, is a major campaign to 'shun the gun.' We must stop being enablers of the gun culture; we must stop treating the carrying of a gun as normal behavior."

Although the drug wars, gun violence and crime involves a rather small percent of the population, often people who come from outside the city, it receives the headlines of newspapers and television which produces a climate of fear among the population in general. This will be dealt with later in terms of the **free flow of information**. Hence, in addition to a real problem of insecurity, there is an even larger problem in the perception of insecurity. People still say, "I'm afraid to go in the park."

The perception of insecurity is being addressed by the new police chief's emphasis on community policing. Police are now based in 10 neighborhoods with the goal of being integrated into the neighborhood's activities. As the chief said in one remarkable interview, it is important that the community should not perceive the police as an "occupying army." This is a major change from the previous policy, and it requires changing the methods of existing police officers and recruiting new police with a neighborhood approach. Door-to-door recruiting was initiated last year, and there are many new young officers. So far the results are promising, but it will take time for the police and the community to adopt this new approach. For one thing, according to one of the activists interviewed, it will be necessary to change the nature of discipline in the police force by introducing some kind of mediation that involves the neighborhood as well as the police hierarchy. The adoption of a Civilian Review Board, as part of the City Charter Revision this year, may help as well.

According to some who were interviewed, the high-level "Project Longevity" involving government, police, local ministers and political figures and educators and social-service chiefs risks to move in the opposite direction, i.e. towards an "occupying army" perception. By targeting young males with a criminal record for continual observation, it risks to increase the gap of confidence between the police and the youth rather than dealing with the root causes of violence. Instead what is needed is to open community centers, such as re-opening the Dixwell Q House to provide young people with positive after-school and vacation programs.

Other community initiatives are considered to be promising, for example those of the New Haven Family Alliance. Last year at Gateway Community College there was a very successful youth congress run by high school age kids who had trained and paid to research the causes of violence in their neighborhoods.

Domestic violence is another issue of great importance, linked in part to the destruction of family values, as mentioned above, but also reflecting long-standing values of male domination in the general population or "machismo" as it is called in the Latino community. Male domination has always been a fundamental component of the culture of war, just as **women's equality** is essential for a culture of peace. In New Haven, there are numerous programs addressing domestic violence, including major programs in some churches.

EDUCATION FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE

Everyone seems to agree there is a crisis in education and that it is linked to the problem of unemployment. Here are comments from some of the activists interviewed:

- "We are completely and utterly failing the kids – in both education and jobs."
- "If education is to be successful, there must be a partnership between students, teachers and parents, but that is not working under the present system."
- Education, to be successful, must be tied to employment. Students must have confidence that school work will lead to stable employment with a decent wage and benefits.

We have already remarked on the negative relationship between **development** and education, as the funding for education depends on local property taxes which continue to decline in the city while they rise in the suburbs.

Although the new emphasis on neighborhood policing gives promise of renewing neighborhood solidarity and **security**, the push in recent years for the busing of children out of their neighborhoods and out to magnet schools is moving in the opposite direction. Rather than renewing neighborhoods, it is weakening them, since children no longer go to school with their neighbors, and parents have a harder time getting involved in their children's school. Ironically, the busing approach was developed originally as a way of addressing racial inequities in education, but instead it has weakened the parent/teacher relationship and further impoverished poor neighborhoods by depriving them of community schools. Gone are the days when your teachers knew your parents because they all grew up in the same neighborhood. The tendency toward magnet schools is sustained by the method of school finances; while the state provides education funds to supplement the local dependence on property taxes, the funds are greater for magnet schools than for neighborhood schools.

Magnet schools are better funded than neighborhood schools and hence they are popular for the parents of children who do well in school, despite the fact that their children have to travel out of the neighborhood. In fact, magnet schools such as the Common Ground School, the Sound School, The Educational Center for the Arts, and the High School in the Community get high marks from most who are concerned. In the long run, however, the trend to magnet schools widens the gap between the rich and the poor. The education of children from poor neighborhoods who do well in a magnet school gives them the possibility to escape from their neighborhood, and this further increases the gap, as will be discussed further under **human rights**.

As a result of changes in the City Charter adopted in this year's election, some School Board members will now be elected, and all appointments to the Board will be reviewed by the Board of Alders. It remains to be seen if the new Board and the new superintendent of schools can address the challenge of improving neighborhood schools. These schools need better textbooks, more teachers and paraprofessionals and pre-school programs. Unfortunately, the Headstart program has been cut, which used to provide a preschool education to poor kids, some of whom, as a result, went on all the way to university degrees.

The fundamental nature of American education is criticized by those who were interviewed. The great emphasis on test scores narrows education and leaves out essential aspects. Critical thinking is not supported, nor are the cultural aspects of education that teach us to respect and live with each other which are values essential for people's **security**. Schools at times seem more like prisons where discipline and obedience take precedence. Many youth end up dropping out of school, often after being suspended many times, sometimes simply for "insubordination." As one activist stated, "The present system simply pushes kids into the streets and the culture of violence." The suspension and dropout rate is especially high for minority youth, which puts a racist bias on the results of the educational system.

For those who manage to remain in school, there is the difficulty of getting an education that is sufficient to prepare them for good jobs or to go to college and university. According to some who were interviewed, most graduates of New Haven public schools are poorly prepared for higher education.

Nor can one separate the question of education from that of **democratic participation**. Here are quotes from three activists:

- * "How can we expect people to participate in democracy when they are adults when they have not been able to participate in the decisions of their schools?"
- * "If people are not educated, democracy can't work."
- * "You can grade the schools 'F' in their failure to prepare children to become active citizens."

It seems that everyone loses by the present system. Neighborhoods lose their schools and children lose contact with other children of the neighborhood. Family structure is weakened as family time is lost to travel time to and from distant schools, and parents no longer have contact with teachers. While some children may get a better education, the majority, faced with the high levels of unemployment, are not motivated to study: "Why should I study when I can't make money from what I learn?"

Faced with all of these problems, there are many local initiatives in New Haven to improve the educational system on a day-to-day level. For example, one organization helps students establish their own action-oriented groups that lobby school administrators for students' rights, such as questions of dress codes, better textbooks, discipline procedures, quality of cafeteria food, lack of physical facilities (for example, the poor state of toilets), and (as already mentioned), the problem of violence on school buses.

Increasingly, there is a good response of school administrators to these initiatives, as they realize that they need the involvement of students and teachers in educational planning if it is to be effective. Also on the positive side, school administrators have cooperated with the New Haven City Peace Commission to involve the school system in the annual celebration of the International Day of Peace. Each year a different neighborhood is involved.

There are many institutions of higher education in New Haven, but to what extent are they involved in the culture of peace of the community? In addition to Yale which attracts students and faculty from around the world, there are Southern Connecticut State University, University of New Haven, Quinnipiac in Hamden nearby, and now the new campus of Gateway Community College downtown. Gateway has an explicit peace education program which involves local students, many of them from immigrant communities. Quinnipiac has the Albert Schweitzer Institute focusing on peace issues and Yale Law School has the Orville Schell Center for International Human Rights, but for the most part these two programs are not directly involved with New Haven.

Aside from Gateway, only a small proportion of the students of the other universities come from New Haven, since the city's public schools prepare few students adequately for higher education, not to mention the many youth who do not even complete their high school education. Obviously, there is a great need for improvement here. Gateway, however, provides education to many local students and is a good example of **solidarity**, as its student body is very diverse and multicultural.

FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION

At the national and international level there is more secrecy and disinformation than ever, connected on the one hand to war and the preparations for war, and on the other hand, as a cover for incompetence and corruption. Whistle-blowers such as Julian Assange and Edward Snowden are pursued as enemies of the state. The situation is different at the local level where government is free from involvement in war and war preparation, but disinformation and lack of information can still be used to hide incompetence and corruption.

As several activists emphasized, free and complete access to information is essential to **democracy**; only an informed public can know how to choose among the candidates who stand for election. The 2013 election was marked by a record number of public debates (15 in all, often with overflow crowds) that dealt with essential subjects. As one activist stated, "I never thought I would see the day when candidates would hold a full debate on social justice." On the other hand, there needs to be more transparency in information about the city budget; for example, at the present time it is almost impossible to know how much is spent department by department.

The situation for access to information is paradoxical. On the one hand, the national mass media is increasingly in the hands of very few, wealthy entrepreneurs, who use their control of the media to defend their economic and political interests. National political campaigns, based on the media, are outrageously expensive, and again, they serve the economic and political interests of the richest 1% of the population. Locally, there is decreased coverage of the news by the mass media. The Advocate, which for many years was a good source of information, was disbanded completely in December. A generation ago there were six local radio newsrooms; now there are none. Local television is not much better. The New Haven Register has reduced their local reporters to only a few.

The New Haven Independent, based on the Internet, has become the major source of information for many people. In fact, most of the activists interviewed cited at least one Independent article in describing the New Haven situation. A recent book, *The Wired City*, by Dan Kennedy tells the story of the New Haven Independent, and concludes that it "has created a promising model of how to provide members of the public with the information they need in a self-governing society." "Of course, we cannot please everybody," explained editor Paul Bass in our interview. "We give voice to all opinions, and needless to say, our readers will not agree with all of them."

The Internet has opened the door to enormous amounts of information. Along with informal networks of email, Facebook, Twitter, etc., they have broken the monopoly of the mass media. Local institutions such as Yale and City government also provide abundant information via Internet and email listserves. There is increased pressure on city government and the Board of Education to provide full information, but there is not always full compliance. For example, they now release information on the financing of schools, but it is not complete since it does not include teacher benefits which are paid by the state rather than the city.

The biggest challenge is how to sift through the mountains of information available on the Internet to find and decide what is important. Are people more informed? It depends on how they use the new sources: for some they are valuable and useful, for others they simply add more "noise." As one activist said, "When I first ran for political office, I thought there was an information deficit, but now I think the information is there, but people don't look for it or read it."

The content of the media often supports the culture of war. The commercial mass media continues to put its emphasis on violence and catastrophe. There are so many murders portrayed on television, in movies and on video games that violence has become banalized. Actors are shown murdered one day, and return the next. As mentioned earlier in the section on **security**, media violence increases the fears of the audience and results in more feelings of insecurity. Internet is not a simple solution to this because one can find sources on violence and catastrophe or culture of peace, depending on what the Internet user is searching for.

In general, the content of the mass media is aimed at the lowest common denominator. As one activist remarked, "one individual can poison the atmosphere on television and radio talk shows. This cannot be stopped by passing laws, but only through rebuilding community and renewing morality in public life."

A bright spot in New Haven is furnished by the branches of the New Haven Public Library which not only loan books and videos but also provide public lectures, films and displays on progressive themes relevant to the community. Not only do the libraries provide computer and Internet access, but they also train people how to use them, bridging the "digital divide." When you enter a New Haven library, you find the computers all occupied. Libraries also help with job-hunting and writing of resumes, in coordination with community agencies. In the library, everyone is welcome and everyone is equal, whether you are rich or homeless. Thus, the libraries contribute not only to the free flow of information and **education for peace**, but also to **sustainable development** and **tolerance and solidarity**.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights, as defined by the United Nations, includes the rights to a decent job with fair wages sufficient to support a family, the right to trade unions, to housing, healthcare, education, and a clean and peaceful environment.

In New Haven, as across the country, the overall situation for human rights has gotten worse in recent years. As one activist described, "We have a new record of people using our food pantry, which means more poverty. The sheer numbers of the poor are increasing. The social safety net is frayed and tattered and more people are falling through it. We have established a country of winners and losers. The trickle-down approach does not work. Past approaches often helped primarily those who were already well trained and experienced, what I call 'going for the low-hanging fruit.' What is needed is an approach that is bottom up, raising the level of the poorest and unskilled as the basis for full employment. A culture of peace must be for everyone, not just the privileged." Her remarks were echoed and supported by almost everyone who was interviewed.

Under **sustainable development**, we have already discussed the problem of chronic unemployment and under-employment which, unfortunately, is endemic to America's economic system. The massive unemployment and the presence of undocumented immigrant workers in New Haven makes it possible for many employers to pay sub-standard wages without benefits. Usually this involves small enterprises that are not unionized. If you have a family you may be forced to work two jobs, because one does not pay enough to support them. This helps destroy your family since taking the second job means that there is less time to spend with them.

As for equal pay for equal work and the right to trade unions and leisure time, New Haven has a long history of trade union organizing, including unions in its traditional main employer, Yale University. As mentioned under **democratic participation**, gains have been hard fought and required community support over the years. However, the struggle is not finished. New Haven's largest employer is now the two hospitals, both now related to Yale, and, since the Yale-New Haven food workers unionized 40 years ago, the hospitals have resisted further unionization.

With regard to housing, there is a high rate of homelessness. And although there has been an upgrading of the quality of low-income public housing in recent years, there has been no increase in the quantity of public housing. Many landlords refuse to accept the poor who must depend on section 8 to pay the rent. Instead, there is expansion of existing businesses, universities and schools that takes land by destroying private housing previously occupied by the poor. According to one activist, "It seems that city authorities would prefer that the poor move to other cities and seek housing there. And the housing that does exist is priced beyond the incomes of the poor; how can you pay \$600 for rent if your income is \$650? And besides there is very little housing available under \$1000 a month!"

Now there is a new influx of people into poverty – those who used to be employed and own their own homes, but have lost their employment, have exhausted their unemployment benefits and then lost their homes in the mortgage scandals of recent years. An important activity of some community organizations is the support of families who can't pay their mortgages, and defending them against bank abuses.

With regard to medical care, this was the year in which the Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") was started. The activists interviewed all said that it is still too early to tell if it will achieve the objective of giving good care to the millions of people previously excluded from the system. At least the President did not cave in to Republican demands to gut the program. Those who are directly engaged in health care, such as Planned Parenthood, have already seen important advances. However, many are pessimistic that it can fully achieve its goal of universal health care. As one said, the reforms were left in the hands of the insurance companies, while what we need is a single-payer health system. At least in Connecticut, unlike other states ruled by the Republican Party, the "Access Health" program is being enacted.

Locally the Fair Haven and Hill Health Centers continue to be bright spots as which reach out to the poor in their communities. Many are aware that these centers owe much to the presence of Yale and its excellent school of public health, but as one activist recalled, "Few people realize that these health centers did not originate as Yale initiatives but as outgrowths of the community organizing associated with the Black Panther Party in New Haven in the 60's."

As for the right to quality **education**, we have already discussed problems of public education: the high drop-out rate of students, and the fact that many children have no choice but to go to distant schools. In terms of its content, the present education system with its emphasis on testing for technical knowledge fails for the most part to address the following provision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace."

Looking in general at the deteriorating situation of human rights, one activist said “we are in a moment of definition in the history of our country. What should be our priorities? Do we exist to make the rich richer and the poor poorer? There is a gigantic ideological struggle which came to a head in the shutdown of the government this year. We can no longer afford to put bandaids on the wounds of our culture, but we must address the underlying disease!” “Unfortunately,” as another activist expressed, “when it comes to the federal government, it is confrontation not cooperation which is the value of the day.” In the end, however, both of these activists came to the same conclusion: “What we need is hope and optimism to keep us working for a better world!”

Where Are We?

In general New Haven seems to be moving forward on a culture of peace, but slowly and unevenly.

In some respects, sustainable development, democratic participation and tolerance/solidarity have advanced in the past few years, while human rights, as in the rest of the country, have slid backwards. There is some good promise for advance in security if the community policing initiative develops as planned. Serious problems remain to be addressed in education, women's equality and free flow of information.

The New Haven Peace Commission will continue to help consolidate our progress and deal with our problems, in coordination with the city administration and the civil society. We are looking for more partners to work on these issues with us. Contact us at [**to be specified**].

APPENDIX I THE NEW HAVEN PEACE COMMISSION

The City of New Haven Peace Commission was established in 1988. The proposal grew from movements in the 1970's for a nuclear weapons freeze, against apartheid in South Africa, and people-to-people exchanges with the Soviet Union.

The Peace Commission helped formulate the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities designated by the General Assembly of the United Nations. New Haven was one of the first to be named a Peace Messenger City in 1985, and its chairman, until recently, was its International President.

One of the first major acts of the Peace Commission under its President Tom Holahan in 1989 was to put a referendum on the ballot in the November election to cut the military budget and direct the savings to the nation's cities. It received an 85% favorable vote! More recently in 2012, a similar vote was obtained on a similar referendum.

Over its 25 year history the Commission has engaged in many activities in addition to those mentioned above:

- * Children's marches for peace on the New Haven Green (until 1992)
- * Programs of live streaming on the Internet linking schools on the International Day of Peace, September 21 (since 2010)
- * Peace parks in the West River neighborhood and at East Rock Park
- * Annual public hearings on the negative impact of the military budget on the City of New Haven
- * Annual commemorations of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
- * Credit course for New Haven teachers on conflict resolution
- * Work on legislation that promoted the Connecticut General Assembly to ban assault guns
- * Initiation of the first public hearings on immigrant rights
- * An initiating organization of the Coalition to End Child Poverty in Connecticut
- * An initiator of the Connecticut Coalition on Human Rights
- * Initiation of a Sister City relationship with Hue, Vietnam, the first in the US to partner with a Vietnamese city
- * Hosting of an international exhibition of anti-war posters at Gateway College

APPENDIX II**HISTORY OF THE UN CULTURE OF PEACE INITIATIVE**

The Culture of Peace initiative was launched in 1989 by UNESCO at an international peace conference in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire. Its final declaration called for the construction of "a new vision of peace culture based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between women and men."

The Member States of UNESCO then adopted in 1992 a proposal for a Culture of Peace Programme to bring peace to states newly emerging from conflict. With the full support of the UNESCO Director-General, national programmes were then established, beginning with El Salvador and Mozambique, and over the next few years extended to a number of other countries. But the national culture of peace programmes did not receive the financing that had been expected from the UNESCO Member States, and by the end of the decade they had mostly disappeared.

Meanwhile, at the UN General Assembly in New York, the Member States from the South began as early as 1995 to request a global culture of peace programme for the UN system. In 1997 the General Assembly recalled in its resolution A/52/13 that "the creation of the United Nations system itself, based upon universally shared values and goals, has been a major act towards transformation from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace and non-violence." The following year, the General Assembly proclaimed an International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) in its resolution A/53/25. At that time, they had already declared the Year 2000 as the International Year for a Culture of Peace, and they had received from UNESCO a draft document for a Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

The culture of peace concept, as presented in UNESCO's draft document A/53/370, was specifically presented as an alternative to the culture of war. For each of eight fundamental aspects of the culture of war, eight alternative programme areas were proposed for the culture of peace.

CULTURE OF WAR	CULTURE OF PEACE
Development by exploitation	Sustainable equitable development
Authoritarian governance	Democratic participation
Male domination	Equality of women
Having an enemy	Tolerance, solidarity and international understanding
Armament	Disarmament and security
Belief in power based on force	Education for peace
Secrecy and propaganda	Free flow of information and knowledge
Political and economic inequality	Human rights

The draft resolution from UNESCO called for "a global movement" involving "partnerships for a culture of peace . . . between the United Nations and the Member States with various inter-governmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations, including educators, artists, journalists, parliaments, mayors and local authorities, armed forces, religious communities, and organizations of youth and women."

In 1999 the UN General Assembly, after long deliberations, adopted a Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (Resolution A/53/243) which included the eight programme areas proposed by UNESCO and which called for a "global movement for a culture of peace" that would include initiatives of the civil society as well as governments and the UN, and that would be "promoted through sharing of information among actors on their initiatives in this regard".

For the International Year in 2000, UNESCO organized a campaign to involve the civil society and individuals around the world. Over 75 million people signed the Manifesto 2000, committing themselves to cultivate a culture of peace in daily life.

During the International Decade (2001-2010), the leadership was taken by over a thousand civil society organizations as described in World Civil Society Reports at the mid-point and end of the Decade, available at <http://decade-culture-of-peace.org> . Civil society reports are continually updated at <http://cpnn-world.org> as well as a blog based on this at <http://decade-culture-of-peace.org/blog> which makes the case that the culture of peace is advancing on a global level, even though it is not recognized by the media or academia.

More detailed information on the history of the culture of peace is available at <http://culture-of-peace.info/history/introduction.html> . A strategy for arriving at a culture of peace through city initiatives is elaborated in two books: World Peace through the Town Hall at <http://culture-of-peace.info/books/worldpeace.html> and I Have Seen the Promised Land (A Utopian Novella) at <http://culture-of-peace.info/books/promisedland.html>

APPENDIX III METHODOLOGY OF PRESENT ANALYSIS

In order to make the transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace, we need to be able to measure our progress. In the present case, it is proposed to measure progress in a particular city. For reasons explained elsewhere, it is not very useful to measure progress towards a culture of peace at a national or international level.

The culture of peace is well defined by the UN Resolution A/53/243 of 1999 as being composed of 8 inter-related areas: sustainable equitable development, democratic participation, equality of women, tolerance and solidarity, disarmament and security, education for peace, free flow of information and human rights. All of these are relevant areas for a city.

There are no absolute, objective measures of these areas (only partial objective measures), but we can develop relative and subjective measures. This can be compared the situation of a typical stock market index which is based on a set of "representative" stock values. The absolute value at any given moment, i.e. the sum of the values of these stocks, is not especially interesting. What is important is whether the value is going up or down over time, and, if so, which sector of stocks is responsible for the change.

That leads to the next question: what is the equivalent of "representative stocks?" We propose that it consists of a set of individuals who have a good knowledge of the state of this particular area. In order to obtain a good overall view, it is important that interviews should be conducted with two or more individuals with intimate knowledge of each of the eight areas of a culture of peace. That requires about 15-20 interviews. Since the eight areas are very inter-related, those with extensive knowledge in any one area will necessarily have extensive knowledge in other related areas as well.

The most important measure is the trend over time, for example over succeeding years. For this, the survey needs to be repeated with the same people at more or less the same time every year.

Hence the methodology for this study:

- 1) Choose a basic set of people to be interviewed, based on their extensive practical knowledge of the eight areas of a culture of peace in the city. In other words they should be "activists" in this area. We start here with several present and former members of the New Haven City Peace Commission.
- 2) Enlarge the group of activists interviewed by asking each person interviewed to suggest others who can provide relevant information beyond what the interviewee can do. In this regard it is important to finally achieve a balance of men and women, activists from the Black, Hispanic and white communities, elected or government officials and civil society activists who can effectively criticize the city government.
- 3) Conduct face-to-face interviews of 1-2 hours with each activist, beginning with their area of expertise and asking for both the strengths and weaknesses of the city in this area, and how the strengths and weaknesses have developed over time.
- 4) After discussing the initial area, review with them the other 7 areas, and ask for suggestions of other people to be interviewed in all of the 8 areas.
- 5) Take detailed notes, because it is the specifics of their analysis that will be important for this annual report, and which need to be re-visited in the followup interviews in succeeding years. Obtain their agreement to use their ideas in the report and to interview them again one year later, as well as in succeeding years.
- 6) Write an extensive report including all of the information provided by the activists interviewed. It

is not necessary to include the names of the activists interviewed. No one has demanded to be anonymous, but there is no special reason that the names need to be published.

7) Write a one-page executive summary of the full report.

8) Provide drafts of the full report and the executive summary to all of the activists interviewed to obtain their corrections and additions.

9) Publish both the executive summary, both on the Internet, and in local media that are read by people of the city.

10) Repeat the process annually, interviewing, if possible, the same people. Recall for them their previous remarks and the previous annual report, and ask them where there has been progress, lack of progress or retrogression. Again, draft, verify and correct and then publish the annual report.

11) Of course, the same people may not always be available. In that case, as is done with stock exchange indexes, it is necessary to substitute another person with similar practical knowledge of the subject. Be especially aware of potential gaps in the report, and fill in these gaps over time by enlarging the group of people interviewed.