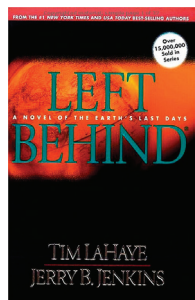


leaders serve as a means of a self fulfilling prophecy that just brings us closer to a third world war?

It is not that difficult for anyone on the left to see the value of following hope rather than fear. This is why they are often lead to support political candidates who don't believe attacking the enemy is our best option. But when there are just as many people on the opposite side who fear the left, consensus towards a nonviolent approach isn't easy to sell.



The Left Behind novels exemplify the right side's fear of evil emerging from the extreme fringe of the liberal left.
(<http://www.leftbehind.com>)

Those on the right have an entirely different set of fears that are triggered when they see liberal politicians cozying up to the religious and atheist left. Connecting the dots makes it hard not to see the parallels between what the right imagines and what seems to be taking place.

Could it be possible the new president shares the anti-American sentiments that came from the pulpit of his pastor? Would a peacemaker commander and chief not believe in the threat of evil and seek to appease it in the same way Neville Chamberlain did with Hitler and the Nazis? Is Barack Obama secretly a Muslim in league with terrorists who are in league with the Anti-Christ? In the conservative nightmare the liberal peacemaker president signs a peace treaty

with terrorists only to have it result in a second holocaust in Israel and America.

In each case of fear emanating from the left or right, there is no escaping the commonality of each side's vision for a potentially disastrous outcome culminating with our nation's destruction. One side's fear that Barack Obama will betray our nation by negotiating with the enemy may be just as palpable as the other side who feared that if John McCain became president, he would betray the possibility of any future peace with a preemptive strike on Iran or threats of war with Russia.

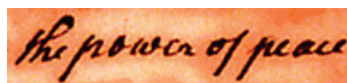
If we want to end the strife between the red and blue and prevent the collapse of our nation, we must rise above our mistrust to see clearly enough in building bridges between our opposite.

Will we succeed in building these bridges by favoring the left or the right? Will we make our nation and the world a safer place through the power of peace or the power of war? Whether we move away from or towards World War III may be determined by how we decide to answer these questions and whether we seek to follow our hopes or our fears.

The chief designer of the Great Seal of the United States stated, "The Olive branch and arrows denote the power of peace & war." What's more, the American Eagle looks toward the olive branch, this ancient symbol of peace held in its stronger talon.



In other words: The power of peace is superior to the power of war (symbolized by the bundle of arrows in the eagle's left talon).
<http://www.great-seal.com/peace/>



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FEAR BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT

Between the dual opposites of left and right, there is often a common denominator of fear. There are people on each side who believe in the enemy and identify with good while fearing their opposite could become the vehicle through which evil enters the world.

The Yang vision of evil is influenced by western religion which teaches the great battle between light and dark has been raging ever since Satan became an enemy of God. Their common vision for violent redemption is that good will eventually destroy and triumph over evil. Even though Christ is evenly

matched by his polar opposite the anti-Christ, this cannot stop him from obliterating Satan in the end.

The Yin vision of evil is influenced by eastern religions such as Buddhism which teach that concepts of good and evil are ultimately an illusion that can only be transcended through an enlightened mind. When the evil Mara shoots poison arrows at the enlightened Buddha, he transforms them into lotus petals. This symbolism illustrates the conception that engaging enemies on their own terms through battle will do nothing but strengthen evil's power. Nonviolence is the method used, not to seek destruction but transformation.



The concept of non injury towards all beings was born out of Jainism, whose earliest practitioners in India lived nine centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ and half a millennium before Gautama Buddha. These Eastern influences most likely played a role in inspiring non traditional stories in the West which veer away from typical tales of good versus evil. Rather than destroying the greatest enemy through violence, they are instead redeemed by the hero through compassion.

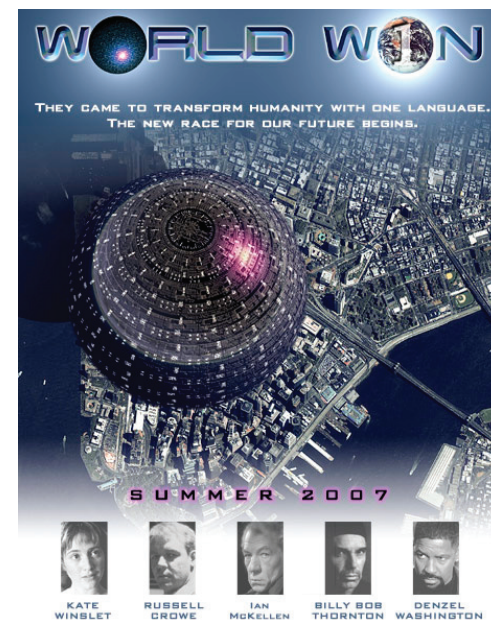
The idea of transforming enemies into friends is a concept those in the mainstream often dismiss as naive or incapable of influencing politics in East or West. Evil is feared by both alike and the overwhelming response is to meet it with violent warfare. For nonviolence to gain traction in our world and provide an alternative to the self destruction of World War III, we need to turn our focus away from fear.

This is impossible if we follow the Western conception of evil and how its rise in the "End Times" is hopeless to prevent. Because this perspective holds we are unable to change course from facing the ultimate evil and the destruction it will reign upon us, all we can do is be swept away in the currents of the status quo and business as usual. The tragedy of this mind-set is in the despair of seeing any move against the continuation of warfare as a futile act going against the preordained will of God.

Although it is the more difficult path, we must seek to follow the Eastern conception whose hope seeks removal of evil's mask to reveal the hidden good. Rather than escalating tensions through further demonization, we must look deeper to find our shared humanity. If this hadn't been the course during the height of the Cold War, the United States or Russia may have decided their enemy was evil and not trusted to rational thought. A preemptive nuclear strike by either side would have destroyed the world as we know it.

If World War I and II weren't stopped by fearless people who escaped group mind manipulation, will events be any different for ending fear today and stopping humanity from going over the precipice of World War III? To follow the path of nonviolence and enlightenment, one's fears of the past repeating itself must first be overcome. We must also shine the light of hope on our greatest fears of the evil we imagine appearing from our opposite. For most of humanity, this is of course easier said than done.

From the perspective of someone on the left and right, there is a powerful fear born every time their opposite triggers points of misunderstanding or pushes buttons that are perceived to evoke cruelty and hate. This takes place for those on the left when they see conservative politicians cozying up to the religious right. Connecting the dots makes it hard not to see the parallels between what the left imagines and what seems to be taking place on the other side.



The story WorldWarIII exemplifies the left side's fear of evil emerging from the extreme fringe of the religious right. (<http://homepage.mac.com/eliw/worldwar3>)

Seeing what has happened makes one on the left wonder if it's possible the Republican candidates have been paving the way for an American theocracy. Was John McCain serious when he called America a "Christian nation?" Did Sarah Palin share her pastor's world view that Alaska would play a key role in "End Times" events as a refuge to the people in the lower 48 fleeing the mass destruction in America? Would these perspectives among our political