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### **Peace Activism in a Violent World**

Thank you for inviting me to speak with you tonight. I especially want to thank the English Graduate Organization and the Diversity Committee here at the University of Louisville, which have been most generous in bringing me here, and Kelli Grady, who has kept in touch with me, alerted me to your interests and needs, and arranged my stay.

You've asked me to speak on the subject of peace activism in a violent world.

I hardly need to remind you, even on this peaceful evening among friends, of the precariousness of the world today. Recent fighting in Iraq has claimed the lives of over seven hundred Americans and uncounted thousands of Iraqis. Retaliatory terror attacks are being planned for U.S. cities and transportation systems this summer. Osama bin Laden, who has been called "the best known CIA trained terrorist," is still at large. While no weapons of mass destruction have yet been found in Iraq, the ingredients for small scale "backpack" nuclear devices are becoming increasingly available on black markets all over the world. Recipes for bombs like the ones that caused the railroad disaster in Spain can easily be found on the Internet. The most well-equipped, efficient, technologically superior fighting force on the planet, the United States Army, can be rendered irrelevant by small scale groups and even individuals, once enough people the world over are convinced that we are the enemy. Yet our government keeps assuring us that violence can be contained by force, that killing, killing, and more killing will ultimately make us safer. This is what peace activist Walter Wink calls the myth of redemptive violence – the idea that violence cleanses, that one last war will end all wars, that with enough violence, we can rid the world of evil, once and for all.

But you know, I'm not falling for it.

I believe that human beings have the right to live in a world without war.

Not a world without disputes between countries or peoples, or a world without harsh feelings, or a even a world without bad actors or attempts to carry out nasty power grabs or retaliatory vendettas. I expect that we will never be able to completely escape such difficulties.

But I do believe it is possible for us – or our children, or grandchildren – or great grandchildren – to live in a world without the kind of violence that is right now being organized, bankrolled, glorified, and carried out by governments, armies, terrorist organizations, police forces, and even ordinary people like you and me though our taxes, our apathy, and our silence.

Our right is to live in a world where the trillions of dollars that finance the organization and control of state violence is invested, instead, in learning and teaching peace. Our right is to live in a world where human intelligence is put to work solving problems between people in ways that are worthy of human beings.

At an anti-war rally in Ann Arbor recently, I saw a little girl carrying a sign that said, "War Is Stupid." I couldn't agree more.

But war is more than stupid. Jonathan Shay, a psychiatrist who is an expert on combat trauma and advises the top brass of the United States Military, said at a talk at the University of Michigan last year that "war is ritualized torture carried out by slaves."

Let's look at that for a minute. Ritualized torture. Many combat veterans have described this fact of war for us in graphic detail. The head of your best friend exploding in front of your eyes. An urban firefight that turns buildings into raging infernos and their occupants into human fireworks, reminding us of the World Trade Center disaster. The organized, systematic rape of civilians – including grandmothers and little girls; the prostitution camps, the filming of rape scenes for pornographic entertainment, something that was even indulged in by NATO peacekeeping troops in Bosnia. This is war as ritualized torture.

And these heinous acts, these acts of war, are carried out by slaves, who of course are not called slaves, but young military men and women, the pride of many a community the world over. Why are they slaves, we might ask, especially if they have joined the army of their own free will, maybe because there were no jobs in their town, or because they didn't have any other way to get to college? Dr. Shay points out that free will ends the moment military service begins. In ancient times, he said, a warrior could decide to leave the battlefield when he saw that his own personal defeat was imminent. Not today. Once young people enlist, or are drafted, they are punished, even sentenced to death, for desertion or refusal to fight. Their minds become the province of their training sergeant, who teaches them to overcome their natural horror of killing other human beings and instead, to see murder and torture as glorious and patriotic.

This training is important, since it is so difficult for most people to give up their resistance to doing extreme violence to another human being. Army psychologists tell us that throughout most of history, the majority of combat soldiers refused to kill, even to save their own lives and the lives of their comrades. In World War Two, for example, only fifteen to twenty percent of US riflemen actually fired their weapons. But as the so called art of war, has advanced, training methods have become more and more effective. Military instructors strip recruits of their dignity, and ridicule normal emotions of fear and aversion while at the same time, filling them with stirring words: freedom, democracy, duty, protection. Future soldiers (or future slaves) are kept carefully isolated from any whisper of dissent. ROTC members on our campus are told not to speak to anti-war activists, or pick up any fliers, or engage in debate.

In this way, young people learn to give up the critical thinking and intelligent questioning of motives and reasons that they learned in college or high school or around the family dinner table. They even come to believe they do not know enough about politics to make an intelligent assessment of the reasons that war might be necessary. A recruiting company commander recently told high school students who asked him why the U.S. was invading Iraq, “It’s not important whether we support this. Our job is to obey. If you’re a normal person you don’t want to go to war. You don’t want to go into another country and kill someone. But if that’s what you are told to do, then you have to stand by your duty.”

Not only are soldiers required to murder enemy soldiers and civilians, they might also be forced to turn on one another. A graduate student who heard one of my anti war talks told me, with much emotion, how his father, a career Army officer in the Gulf War, had begun to remember experiences he had repressed as he watched television footage of the invasion of Iraq. When their unit was about to enter an area where poison gas might have been used, he had been told by his commanding officer to order the lowest ranking soldier remove his mask to see if the air was clear. If the soldier refused, he was to shoot him. Fortunately, it never came to that, but the student’s father and a fellow officer had talked about a plan to shoot their superior instead.

Even civilians back home are urged to stop public debate in wartime, to obediently support the enslavement of young people – sometimes their own children – and to take pride in the torture and murder they are forced to inflict on other human beings. Those who question or protest are called unpatriotic, or jeered at for their silly naivete. But insiders know full well what is going on. Major General Smedley Butler, of the United States Marine Corps said, “War is just a racket. A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of people. Only a small inside group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few at the expense of the masses.”

If we always spoke of war in these terms, would it be so easy to carry out – even as a so-called “last resort”?

I like to think of myself a radical pacifist, or maybe an activist pacifist, that is, someone who not only believes that solving human problems through violence is self-defeating and morally wrong, but one who is actively working towards a future where all human societies see state-sanctioned violence as a remnant of their “uncivilized” past – the way human sacrifice is viewed today.

My pacifism is rooted in my Quaker faith. Quakers have been pacifists since the 1600s, when Quakerism was founded. In a declaration to King Charles the Second, in 1661, Quakers said, “We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons for any end or under any pretense whatsoever. This is our testimony to the whole world.”

It's true that not all Quakers are pacifists. Many fought in World War II, after becoming convinced that this was a good war, necessary to preserve peace and freedom, and to free others from oppression. But many other Quakers were conscientious objectors, opposed to all war as a matter of principle. I joined their ranks after September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

This is how I came to that realization in my life. Two days before the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, I was on my way back from Cambodia, where I had spent several weeks traveling and learning about the people and their history, and giving a paper at a conference called "Language and Development" that drew participants from all over Southeast Asia. On my 17-hour plane ride back to Detroit, I had plenty of time to think about what I had learned there, especially about the shocking history that the beautiful country of Cambodia has had to endure. Between 1975 and 1979, Cambodia was a hell on earth. In a horribly misguided social experiment, the Khmer Rouge government, under the leadership of Pol Pot, suspended all education, burned books, abolished money, blew up the central bank, halted postal services, and sent two and a half million people, including children, the elderly, and sick people roused from their hospital beds, on a forced march from the capital, Phnom Penh, to the countryside to work as slave labor in the rice fields.

Hundreds of thousands of teachers, doctors, artists, engineers, technicians, and students were executed by the Khmer Rouge, often after being starved and tortured, because their education and skills threatened the regime. I visited a former high school, the infamous S-21, where 17,000 men, women, and children, all considered "enemies of the organization," were chained on cement floors, with their fingers smashed and genitals shocked and burned, starving, for months, before they died. Children were often recruited to do the killing. Ten year olds learned to slice people's throats, or drown them in rice paddies by wrapping their heads in plastic bags and pushing them under water. The authorities took pictures of everyone before they killed them. You can tell by the eyes of some of the younger victims that they went mad with shock and grief.

As I talked informally with people at the conference (which, by the way, had nothing to do with Cambodia's brutal past), I asked them what they remembered about this period. A beautiful young woman, a teacher-trainer, told me in a whisper how she lost her father to the killing fields and two older sisters to starvation. A translator remembered seeing the Khmer Rouge in his village execute an old man for stealing a potato that he had grown himself. A teacher – who in the 1970s was an ordinary farmer -- told me about the 14-hour days he endured in the rice fields and the single meal of gruel – a bit of rice boiled in water – that was allotted to him at the end of each day. We sat at the conference lunch table, talking, and three times he went back to the buffet to heap his plate with pats of butter, which he ate straight – without bread. He still remembered the feeling of that awful hunger after twenty-five years.

Who were these monsters that inflicted such suffering on the Cambodian people? They were not an external enemy, nor were they some different ethnic or religious group. They were Cambodians who had turned against their neighbors, their teachers, their colleagues, even their own families. This is what haunts Cambodians today, that they did all this to

themselves, that they became so brutalized by an idea, and committed such atrocities, out of fear, or revenge, or cold-blooded self righteousness. Looking around as I walked through the streets of Phnom Penh and the other villages and towns I visited, I realized that many of the people I saw had been young adults during those terrible years, and had either been very, very lucky, or had participated in some way in this system.

But strangely enough, I did not see a nation of people degraded by evil. In fact, I found Cambodians to be some of the most gentle, hospitable, and delightfully sunny people I have ever met. As a nation of Buddhists (which they have been for thousands of years), they revere all forms of life and deplore inflicting pain on others. To get angry in public – over a cab fare or some other petty complaint – is considered childish and embarrassing. Even raising one’s voice is culturally inappropriate. This is not something that arose recently, after the experience of such opposite sentiments. These values have been present throughout Cambodian history. I was also struck by the connectedness people seemed to feel in traffic jams. Trucks, cars, and especially motor scooters were all over the road, going any direction, the roads deeply potholed, the potential for accidents extreme, yet everyone seemed to watch out for each other, passing within centimeters without incident, without fear, without a hint of road rage. Were these the same people who gave rise to the demented fanatics of the Khmer Rouge regime only a generation ago, I wondered? Or was the concept of “demented fanatic” somehow wrong?

The conclusion I came to in my seventeen hours over the Pacific, flying over the ice floes and glaciers of the Canadian North, over the huge, beautiful earth that is our home, was this: People who commit unspeakable crimes and who aid and abet such crimes are not “inhuman.” They are not monsters. They are victims of an idea – whether that idea is a militant political philosophy or a twisted interpretation of a religious creed. And most importantly, they happen to live in a time and place where conditions are right for that destructive idea to take hold and feed upon itself, blooming and mushrooming until it explodes in violence. And as that violence begets an ever more violent response, the idea grows even stronger, and those who hold that idea, who are in a sense the victims of that idea, believe more and more firmly that they must carry out these crimes and that their society, their values, their dignity, their way of life, all depend on it.

The hijackers who so terrified and angered us were not monsters, not demented, not inhuman. In fact, the Washington Post described them as educated, well-traveled people, technologically proficient, who had lived a few years in a Western country and perhaps suffered personal humiliation or a deep sense of culture shock during their stay. One of the perpetrators was described by his professors as “deeply intelligent,” a former doctoral student at a US university who wrote an excellent dissertation about city planning, then became depressed and angry about the casualties of the Gulf war – where 100,000 of his people, people he identified with as a Middle Easterner and a Muslim, were blown to bits by U.S. military might. Another hijacker was married and had a child; the husband and wife were described by a neighbor as “nice, ordinary people” who hosted a children’s party for the neighborhood, complete with McDonalds Happy Meals, before they vacated their apartment, before the husband and father boarded the plane and steered it very deliberately into the side of the World Trade Center.

There is no doubt that these attacks were crimes against humanity. The people of the United States did not deserve to suffer this; no human being deserves such a fate. But if the perpetrators were not monsters, but ordinary people seized by a vengeful idea, ordinary people, who *could* act compassionately at a different time and in a different context, can Americans really be all that different? And if Americans are not all that different, then maybe our actions in this crisis share some of the same characteristics with those of the people who oppose us. How can we deplore the suicide bombing and at the same time, send our own young people to Iraq to kill for God and country? What is the difference between the terror, grief, and outrage felt by the victims and their families in the World Trade Center disaster, and that of civilians who died or were maimed for generations in the atomic blast at Hiroshima? Are “they” the only ones who are capable of such extreme acts of intolerance? Are these acts worse when they’re done to us than when we take the initiative to do them to others? Are we less culpable when we convince ourselves that we are forced to respond in kind?

Here is a definition of extreme intolerance:

- absolute certainty that your way of seeing the world is the only right way
- willingness to demean, ridicule, and abuse groups or members of groups, or see them as “sub-human”
- readiness to kill and die for your views
- willingness to subject yourself to authoritarian control in order to carry out your attacks on others

All that happened in Cambodia, and fascist Germany, and among religious extremists who believe God is calling them to kill themselves to defend the faith. But doesn’t this definition of intolerant extremism sound eerily familiar? Our leaders frequently tell us we’re engaged in a battle of civilization versus barbarism. “They hate our values,” President Bush told us recently, referring to the insurgents in Iraq. In fact, “they have no values. They hate our system. They despise our way of life.” On the battlefield, hateful ethnic slurs come into fashion among the troops and are tolerated, even encouraged, by the leadership, and soon they find their way home and into the national vocabulary: A-RAB, camel jockey, sand nigger. Insurgents in Fallujah are now called “Ali Babas” or “hajis,” (for the haj, or pilgrimage to Mecca that devout Muslims undertake once in a lifetime) strange terminology for Iraqis who have lived under a secular Socialist regime for the last thirty-five years. Is it any wonder we have seen hundred of attacks on Arab Americans, Muslims, and South Asians who look vaguely Middle Eastern since 9-11? A few days ago I heard a commentator on National Public Radio referring to spin-off terrorist groups as “baby Al Qaedas,” as if they were spiders or some other form of lowly, disgusting creature, which of course makes it easier to obliterate them. Are we, too, victims of an idea?

Politicians and military brass make a strong show of their religious convictions in times like these. They call for a moment of silence out of respect for the dead. They show up at the National Cathedral to pray for victory. They expect the support of churches and synagogues and mosques in the endless war on terror.

How could they have forgotten that major tenets of all the great religions are: the love of life, and the restraint from violence?

The Talmud states: “What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow man. That is the entire law; all the rest is commentary.” Hinduism and Buddhism offer similar expressions of the Golden Rule: “This is the sum of duty, do naught to others which if done to thee would cause thee pain,” says the Hindu Mahabharata. Buddhism teaches, “Hurt not others with that which pains yourself.” The Koran tells Muslims that they are not allowed to kill women or children or unarmed men. It is prohibited to destroy buildings. It is prohibited to destroy even one tree that has a green leaf. And Christianity teaches: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to those that hate you. When someone strikes you, present to him the other cheek. Resist not evil.”

What happens to these teachings when our emotions tell us to seek revenge? What happens to them when our leaders, our *very religious* leaders, tell us, in effect, that these teachings are worthless in times of danger? Isn't this exactly the moment those teachings were designed for?

Of course it's not enough to say that war is not the answer. Besides simply exposing war for what it is and denouncing its assumptions and principles, we need to be able to suggest alternatives – alternatives that are saner than ideas we've had in the past, like mutually assured destruction, alternatives that are more culturally savvy than diplomacy, subtler than empire, more democratic than the United Nations Security Council, and certainly more spiritually rich than apathy or defeatism.

We need to believe, first of all, that a world without war is possible. If history textbooks didn't ignore nonviolent movements, high school students would know, as surely as they know about the invasion of Normandy, that peace activism works. Although the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the bloodiest in all of history, it also saw the birth of nonviolent direct action that allowed ordinary people on every continent to overcome forces that had every conceivable advantage against them.

In India, Gandhi led a civil disobedience campaign against the British, defying oppressive laws, holding general strikes and economic boycotts, filling the jails, and eventually achieving independence from Colonial rule.

In Chile, people overcame their fear and submission to Augusto Pinochet, a dictator who vied with Saddam Hussein in his cruelty, and nonviolently displaced him.

In Denmark, ordinary people resisted the Nazi occupation by refusing to aid the war effort.

In Germany, individuals working quietly saved thousands of Jewish children from death in concentration camps.

In the American South, Martin Luther King and many local leaders such as Louisville's own Anne Braden, inspired people to challenge and overcome an evil system that denied African Americans their rights as citizens and human beings.

In Poland, long years of organizing, labor strikes, negotiations, and nonviolent underground resistance defeated Communist repression.

In Argentina, mothers of the disappeared staged protests and marches until the legitimacy of the country's military junta was undermined, leading eventually to its downfall.

And a student movement, with help from democratic groups abroad, toppled Europe's last remaining dictator, Slobodan Milosevic.

These nonviolent movements and others – in South Africa, Czechoslovakia, the Philippines, Palestine, and El Salvador – added to the world's store of knowledge about strategy, about tactics, about goals and possibilities for nonviolent resistance and social change. But these are just the beginning.

Just think what we could learn if we put the same resources that we now use for war and military technology into studying peaceful means of resolving conflict: peace colleges instead of war colleges; peace training instead of helicopter gunship training; peace medals instead of war medals; peace scholarships instead of ROTC scholarships? What if young people automatically registered for peace training when they turned eighteen? What if courses in conflict resolution and healthy relationships were mandatory in everyone's high school education? What if police officers were hired, promoted, and retained for their proven ability to treat all people from all ethnic groups respectfully and professionally, to use nonviolent techniques for calming and subduing suspects, to practice community-oriented policing, and to submit to strict scrutiny by civilian review boards? What if weapons of war and police brutality became so obsolete the only place we would see them would be as relics, in museums?

If you have argued for nonviolence you know that people -- even people who long for a saner world -- may dismiss the idea because it seems to imply softness or weakness. But nothing could be further from the truth. Nonviolence protest always risks a violent response. Peace activists, civil rights activists, peace team members protecting civilians from violence, all have suffered physical and mental brutality the same as soldiers do in wartime. And since they have nothing but their words, and their nonviolent actions, and their convictions to protect themselves, one might say they are even stronger, at times, than those who carry weapons, or hide behind bunkers and shields, or drop bombs on human targets from high in the air, or send drones to maim and destroy with no human pilots at all. Peace activists and unarmed aid workers in war zones risk the terror of kidnapping, and the agonizing possibility of having their own murder filmed on videotape. They risk being used for target practice as they try to shield children from an occupying army. They are run over by bulldozers as they protect homes of innocent people from being demolished. And they can be jailed for the rest of their lives in their own country, as have several American nuns, for trespassing on military property and



pouring their own blood on stockpiled nuclear weapons. No, nonviolence has nothing to do with weakness.

If you've argued for nonviolence, you've also heard it equated with inaction. When Al Qaeda strikes, and you caution against violent retaliation, the most common retort you hear is . . . "So should we just sit here and do nothing?" Of course we shouldn't do *nothing*. But a nonviolent response isn't as simple-minded as calling out the posse. Each nonviolent action requires complex planning, deep and careful understanding of human behavior, historical and cultural knowledge of what the group has against us, and the transformation of that knowledge into principled, humane, and effective action. Solving global problems without violence involves dedication to the difficult process of coalition building, and the involvement of all people, with all their different points of view and religious and political convictions, with all their emotions and fears and susceptibilities to powerful ideas. Peace activism requires organizing and strategizing and the patience to wait years, at times, for visible progress. And since nonviolent response isn't taught or learned in any systematic way, tactics may have to be invented and reinvented every time violence arises. Nonviolence is anything but "doing nothing."

When you publicly argue for nonviolence, writing letters or op-ed pieces, or speaking at rallies, or organizing your neighborhood, you may get letters denouncing you for being un-patriotic or un-American. Consider this:

Historians have estimated that over half of the European Americans now in the United States are direct descendants of anti-war protesters – immigrants fleeing military conscription in their countries of origin. In addition, most present-day African Americans are descendants of men and women who protested their conditions of slavery, indentured servitude, and segregation through such nonviolent tactics as work slowdowns, sit-ins, civil disobedience, strikes, and many forms of indirect communication: song, language, metaphor, and humor, that passed along crucial information and helped to counter assaults on their dignity and humanity. Latinos, Native Americans, and Asian Americans too, have historically used demonstrations, slow downs, strikes, blockades, and petitions of protest to gain the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution to all Americans.

Far from being unpatriotic, nonviolent protest is woven into the fabric of American culture. It's as American, one might say, as tortillas and beans, ham hocks and greens, sweet and sour chicken, fry bread and apple pie.

One of the major news channels, doing a short segment on the nonviolent demonstrations against the Iraq war (demonstrations which, by the way, were the largest protest in history, involving ten *million* people all over the world) told viewers that they might be surprised to learn of the existence of organized anti-war protests during World War II. In fact, the defining event for the emergence of the modern peace movement was the first World War. In 1915, Jane Addams, founder of Chicago's Hull House, joined 1,000 women from twelve nations in The Hague in an appeal to the neutral countries to negotiate peace. Pacifist religious leaders, inspired by their British counterparts, formed a

Fellowship of Reconciliation in the same year. That group is still active in many places in the U.S. including here in Louisville. In fact, when my town, Ann Arbor Michigan, was trying to figure out how to deal with the threat of both a visit from the Klan, and protesters determined to use “any means necessary” to persuade them to leave, we asked YOU for advice and help, and were delighted when Mattie Jones a Louisville native from the Fellowship of Reconciliation came up to help us with strategy.

Soon after the meeting of anti war activist women in The Hague, The American Friends Service Committee and the American Civil Liberties Union were established to support conscientious objection to WWI. Outspoken pacifists like A.J. Muste, YMCA leader Kirby Page, Socialist leader Norman Thomas, and strong network of pacifist women contributed to the movement for nonviolent resistance to the war.

Even before the first World War we find the roots of a principled nonviolent movement at work in the religious pacifism of the peace churches, Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren. In the early days of our country, the rejection of war and killing, and the belief in the equal dignity and worth of all people made Quaker Pennsylvania a place of safety and respectful interchange for Native Americans and colonists alike. Small, religious peace societies went national with the formation of the American Peace Movement in 1829. And nonviolent tactics were shaped and perfected by women’s suffrage activists, who used rallies, marches, petitioning, strikes, vote-ins, picketing, fasting, and lobbying for both women’s rights and anti-slavery campaigns.

Although the U.S. labor movement was marred by violence, thousands of activists dedicated their lives to help perfect the labor strike as a peaceful means to secure what today all U.S. workers take for granted: a minimum wage, the eight-hour day, the concept of the weekend, overtime pay, the abolition of child labor, and a democratic means of solving problems in the workplace. All these ordinary blessings came from hard work, cooperation, vision, insistence on fairness, planning, organizing, action.

What can we do to make a world without war a reality? It seems so daunting. But if enough people are fed up with war, if enough people believe that it is possible to create a world based on fairness, cooperation, mutual understanding, civil liberties, religious freedoms, international law based on shared principles and values, and a strong commitment to non-violent conflict resolution, change *will* happen.

Each of us can do our part. We can join one of the hundreds of organizations that already exist to protest the war, we can uphold human and civil rights, teach inter-racial understanding and the end of white supremacy, insist on the preservation and care of the environment, sponsor conflict resolution in the schools, and reduce the disparities between rich and poor – one of the great injustices that promotes violence and despair. We can send hand-written letters to our state and national representatives urging that the United States cooperate with other nations, rather than using its military might to keep the rest of the world in line. We can sign on-line petitions insisting that the U.S. sign the Kyoto Protocol that curbs global warming, but cannot do so effectively without US support. We can teach peace to children, preach peace in our religious institutions, create

courses on nonviolence and anti-racism here at the University of Louisville and in the high schools, and in the elementary schools, and even in the kindergartens, where children are already convinced that violence from powerful people against little people is wrong. We can protect minorities from hate crimes and soul-destroying messages on campus. We can make a private decision that whomever we support for President in November will know from us personally that endless war will never make us safer.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, writing against an earlier war, said: "There is no good now enjoyed by society that was not once as problematical and visionary as this."

Problematical and visionary perhaps. But peace is a truth that human societies have always known.

2600 years ago, Lao Tse, a Chinese sage, wrote:

Weapons are the tools of fear  
a decent man will avoid them  
except in the direst necessity  
and, if compelled, will use them  
only with the utmost restraint.

Peace is his highest value  
If the peace has been shattered  
how can he be content?

His enemies are not demons  
but human beings like himself  
He doesn't wish them personal harm  
Nor does he rejoice in victory

How could he rejoice in victory  
and delight in the slaughter of men?

Thank you.