



Militarism and Climate Change

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War is hell.

So said General William Tecumseh Sherman.

So, if the generals feel this way, why do we keep repeating behaviors that create a living hell here on Earth?

This has always been true about war. Circumstances are such now that it is not only war that is hell, but the aftermath of war that now lingers for generations. The conditions that define war today guarantee that when over, hell will last for the last of our lives and beyond.

Nuclear weapons, exploded not just in war but in preparation for war, have left behind toxic material the half-lives of which will endanger life on this planet for thousands of years.

Battlefields of yore are peppered with landmines that, two generations having now passed, still claim lives and limbs.

Entire cities and forests are now laid to waste in war, the result of carpet-bombing raids and defoliating chemical gases. Their rebuilding will take generations, and what we are left with is a mere approximation of what was lost.

The environmental devastation caused by today's war tactics and preparations will ensure disasters rage in climate and weather for as long as humans have a future on this planet. The US military is the world's single largest producer of carbon emissions. One fighter jet in boost mode consumes 23,000 gallons of fossil fuels per hour—or over 350 gallons a minute.

With over 750 military bases worldwide, just the supplying

of logistical support to troops at those bases—things like food and fuel for generators and the disposal of sewage—burns an enormous amount of fossil fuels.

The war in Ukraine alone has devastated cities and destroyed arable farmland, and it continues to threaten massive nuclear disaster: Putin's army have named fifteen nuclear power plants as targets, and Putin has made his own threats to deploy nuclear weapons.

The Earth's average temperature has risen one degree Celsius already, halfway to the figure of two degrees that we have been told signals the coming of an apocalypse none of us want to imagine and few of us will survive.

War may be hell, but long after it ends the hell it creates continues to manifest horror, devastation, and destruction. Whatever we once used as standards for proposing Just War Theory are, in my humble opinion, utterly useless and obsolete. There may be causes worth defending, but by whatever calculus we count the gain and loss, there can hardly be left any conclusion that sees the aftermath of war as a better option than the choices that were available before the war started.

It is high time we start teaching Just Peace Theory.

It is high time we create a Peace Cabinet whose sole responsibility is to use and teach methods like Reconciliation, Sanction, Reparation, Embargo, Restorative Justice, etc. as viable alternatives to war.

It is high time we take away from our young toys that romanticize war.

Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with us. The Earth is finding it harder and harder to survive the next war.

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