

Johan Galtung: **THE STATE OF THE WORLD--BY PEACE JOURNALISM**

Imagine a team of journalists traveling the world from one "trouble spot"--arenas of past, present, and future violence--to the other. Not to mirror the world, but to make it more transparent. Where would they go, what questions could penetrate below the surface?

We know the answers if they were going to places of major illness or threats of illness. They would ask for diagnosis, the causes of the illness; for prognosis, the consequences; and for therapy, "what are you doing to restore health". They would not take "ice to lower the fever" for an answer but ask why so many have fever, for causes.

There is no consensus about diagnosis, prognosis and therapy to restore peace. But peace studies have identified two underlying causes of violence: unsolved conflict, unconciled trauma from past violence. It makes as good sense to use "the talking method" (Freud) to try to identify them, as it makes good sense to ask a patient where it hurts.

Journalists, physicians and mediators have one thing in common, they are expected to ask questions. Having worked as a journalist for some years for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation and a medical family background and nearly 60 years as a mediator, the idea came. Why not suggest to journalists to ask questions mediators ask, like:

- * What does the Middle East look like where you would like to live?
- * What is the situation right now?
- * Was there a good time, what went wrong, what could have been done?
- * What is the worst that happened and the worst that could happen?

Journalists should not mediate--they are not trained for that, They should make the world more ready for mediation, also by readers-listeners-viewers. People will answer, and have interesting answers.

Of decision-makers journalists could also ask questions like:

- * Mr-s President, what conflict is underlying yesterday's atrocity?
- * Mr-s President, what are you going to do to solve that conflict?

However, whereas authorities often are parts of the solution for

illness, they are often parts of the problem for violence-war.

They cure illness well or badly, but usually not with illness. For violence, however, authorities often recommend more violence to stop violence. Thus, state terrorism kills more innocent victims than the ever-growing non-state terrorism it may even stimulate. However, the term "state terrorism" is ruled out, and journalism focused on that is controversial, "not fit to print".

In some media. But not in some others. There are openings.

In today's world, what would be a peace journalism itinerary?

- * Washington, how they would like to see Europe, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Libya, Somalia, East Asia, IS, Russia, China, Latin America; and how to achieve those goals? Warfare? Peacefare?
- * London (Scotland, Ireland): the same, the "special relation" to USA, Brexit and EU, Brexit and UK, relations to Africa?
- * Brussels-Paris-Berlin-Moscow-Beijing: a German EU vs Eurasia, BRICS.
- * NATO-Warsaw-Bucuresti, Moscow: confrontation vs a European House.
- * Ukraine: USA-UK-EU-Kiev-Donetsk-Moscow: confrontation vs federation.
- * Middle East/West Asia: Israel, Palestine, (League of) Arab States, all parts of Iraq, all parts of Syria: the future of the Middle East.
- * West vs Islamic State: all of the above; for IS London, Baghdad.
- * Central Asia: Afghanistan, Pakistan, the "stans", Iran: the future.
- * East Asia: Japan, 2 Chinas, 2 Koreas, Russia: islands, the future.
- * South China Sea: 2 Chinas, ASEAN-Philippines-Vietnam-Brunei: future.
- * All over, countries exposed to US-UK bombing: and the results?
- * All over: relations to the environment, climate: and the results?

Imagine weekly publications for 12 weeks in media willing to publish not only their side, aka propaganda. Multiple viewing angles is what makes the world more transparent, like when scanning a body. Readers could be encouraged to propose solutions; to start with the past-oriented rule of law, then compromises, then creative futures.

This could contribute to what we badly need: a culture of peace in

general, and of peaceful conflict transformation in particular, as opposed to the current culture of war and violence, of killing.

Both states and non-states invent new ways of killing. Read the Chilcot Report on the weapons used in the attack on the 2003 Baghdad laboratory, experimenting with new weapons when the professed goal for Iraq was democracy. By white phosphor? By new types of napalm?

The other experiments with planes and trucks, new IEDs, taking enormous risks, paying, with their own lives.

This is not the whole "state of the world", however. Much peace is also going on, good things flow between parties for mutual benefit; even better had the trade been more equitable. But today polarization involves huge parts of the world population, like West vs Islam, NATO vs SCO, EU vs Eurasia, Japan-USA vs 2 Chinas, 2 Koreas, Russia over islands. USA personalizes, psychiatrizes, and polarizes, "us vs them".

Peace journalism around the world should include peace arenas, like ASEAN, inside EU, Nordic countries, much Africa, Latin America. Same questions, also to find out what makes them tick peace, not war.

And peace journalism should cover such deeper issues as the long shadows of history, from the split of the Roman Empire along Catholic-Orthodox lines over 1600 years ago in Europe, the 1893 Durand line in Central Asia, the 1916 Sykes-Picot lines in the Middle East, to see whether consciousness and joint processing of history could be useful.

Among deeper causes are hidden scripts, assumptions, deep in the collective subconscious. Like US Dualism-Manicheism-Armageddon--two parties; one good, one evil; for evil only a final battle is needed.

One day journalists may also ask questions to shed light on these shadows, and to make the subconscious conscious, After all, they ask competent questions about bacteria and toxic pollution.

Most violence in these conflicts is West against East or against South. Maybe one day peace journalism will make miracles come true:

the West recognizing past errors, rejecting scripts for the present (Italy did, for 1911). Both could be made compelling by the media.