

There are many faces to peace. It is the hope that accompanies the cry of the newborn child, the earnest expression of an adolescent demanding a world of justice without weapons, the desire for happiness felt by those in love, the future of a country raised from ruins, the gleam of affection in the eyes of a dying person as he looks at his loved ones, the joy of a refugee returning home and the drying of tears when a soldier returns. It is the triumph of the spirit over the sword and of life over destruction.

To favour peace is to mobilize permanently to defend this fragile entity. In my personal quest for truth, I seek out sources that are as neutral as possible and stay away from opinion-makers who play with words and distort the facts. I denounce the abuse of terms like "rebels," "traitors" or "deserters," which betray the prejudice of the person using them, and even words like "pacifism," which in the official language of colonizers is intended to be a negation of liberation movements. Similarly I reject all unilateral versions of facts concerning crucial matters such as the arms race, terrorism, conflict in the Middle East and so on, preferring debate and meditation on these matters and their underlying causes. My search for truth is part of a concern for justice that encourages me to militate for a new world economic order that is more equitable toward the Third World, exploited as it is by our wasteful, selfish society.

Truth and justice are necessary for peace, but they are not enough in themselves. To work for peace means tolerating others and accepting their differences. My involvement in the search for peace would be incomplete if I failed to express my agreement or disagreement with Canada's conduct internationally. I must take an interest in seeing the activities of the United Nations and its international organizations strengthened and denounce anything that undermines its credibility, such as the veto power of the Security Council, where one of the major powers is often both the accused and the accuser. In the interest of peace, I must of course uphold pacifist and non-violent movements, especially those that are calling for Canada to become a nuclear-free zone, and for passive resistance in place of armed struggle. I also encourage the denunciation of violence in the media and especially in sports, where a visceral type of nationalism seems to prevail. I dream of an Olympics of peace in which players from hostile countries would find themselves on the same teams. Because we must learn to value peace at an early age, I am in favour of less aggressive, more humane television programs. I feel that history should be taught objectively and critically, and I am against statements that would exalt one country over another and play on the national pride of the audience. Finally, I feel that languages such as Russian, Arabic and Chinese should be studied to encourage direct exchanges with other peoples and to show our respect for them. Failing this, there are associations that one can join to learn about other cultures.