

The results of many professional studies — in several other countries as well as Canada — force us to ask what sort of world we are building when so many young people cannot envisage the future because they believe that there will be none. They think it will have disappeared, consumed in a war before the year 2000; the war will have been fought with nuclear weapons, there will be no winner and total devastation.

We must ask ourselves: what is happening in our world that young people have such a fatalistic view of their futures and are left with such a sense of powerlessness?

- How is education to cope with these attitudes?
- How can educators inject hope into the minds of our youth?

No one should be in a hurry to taint the precious and all too transitory nature of childhood with premature discussion of war and nuclear annihilation. Parents and teachers have a natural and understandable desire to shield children from such unpleasant facts. However, the fact remains that children are absorbing all the realities of the modern world through exposure to the media. Modern communication forces adults, particularly parents and teachers, to be prepared early in a child's development to address the question of nuclear war. This in turn means that adults must educate themselves on the issues involved.

There are many people working to produce effective programs for arms control and disarmament, but it must be admitted that the results are meagre — especially compared to the rising level of danger. Without discounting the importance of political action today which is attempting to produce a more secure world, I want to examine here how we can help young people cope with the existing situation in their formative years; and also how to form them so that they grow up with a better understanding of the integrity of all human relationships.

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The roots of the problem underlying all of today's conflicts are deeper than "nuclear accountancy." The problem is traced to the aggressiveness that has underlain so many wars of the past, and must be examined in the totally new condition of our times: planetary interdependence. The problem of insecurity today is directly related to our approach to life in which geographical boundaries mean less and less, to living with one another on one planet, to sharing scarce resources. The world will move closer