

West Suburban Faith-Based Peace Coalition



**Presents
Peace Essay Contest Winners**

**August 27, 2016
The 88th Anniversary of the Kellogg-Briand Pact**

Our Mission Statement:

- Promoting peace and justice in public policy
- Educating ourselves on legislative issues
- Advocating from our faith perspective
- Communicating with our legislators
- Encouraging others to be involved

Who are we?

We are an initiative of faith-based peacemakers from across Chicago's western suburbs. WSFPC includes clergy, congregations, church staff, lay persons, faith-based peace organizations, peace and justice committees, religious communities, and more, spanning from Oak Park to Elgin and Joliet. WSFPC is committed to sustaining work of peace through activities such as prayer vigils, public witness, peace education, peace essay promotion, lobbying/legislative initiatives, and interfaith dialogue.

Some of our Member Organizations are: Fellowship of Reconciliation, PAX Christi IL, the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, the Lombard Mennonite Church, and the York Center Church of the Brethren.

Where and when do we meet?

The **Legislation Workgroup** meets the first Wednesday of every month at the First United Methodist Church of Downers Grove from Noon to 2:00PM in room #202.

The **Servant Leadership Team** meets the second Thursday of every month at the Lombard Mennonite Church from 7:00PM to 8:30PM.

Our **Educational Forums** take place the third Tuesday of every month at the Lombard Mennonite Church from 7:00PM to 9:00PM.

How does one become a member?

Send a check for any amount (\$30 suggested) and your name, email address, and telephone number (please print) to: **WSFPC, 213 S. Wheaton Ave., Wheaton, IL 60187.**

The West Suburban Faith-Based Peace Coalition is a Fellowship of Reconciliation Affiliate. Donations to WSFPC are tax deductible.

West Suburban Faith-Based Peace Coalition

Peace Essay Contest

Award Presentations

August 27, 2016

The 88th Anniversary of the Kellogg-Briand Pact

Peace Essay Judges

**Leila Bannon, Villa Park, IL
Amira Boctor, Oak Brook, IL
Dave Karcher, Lombard, IL
Carol Urban, Glen Ellyn, IL**

Peace Essay Coordinator

Frank Goetz, Wheaton, IL

Keynote Address

Kathy Kelly

Peace Activist

**Co-coordinator of Voices for Creative Nonviolence
Thrice Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize**



Presented at Abbington, Glen Ellyn, IL

Peace Essay Winners

First Place Award

Anene Obinna Chinemelum, Enugu State, Nigeria

Second Place Award

David McCallum, Washington, D.C.

Third Place Award

Rory Fanning, Chicago, IL

Special Recognition

Dr. Robert Reuschlein, Madison, WI

Honorable Mention

Connor Anthony, 16, Washington, D.C.

Landen Buckson, 16, Upper Marlboro, MD

Emediong Francis Boniface, Abak, Nigeria

Jim Burrill, Redwood City, CA

Matthew G. Diamond, 17, Bethesda, MD

Jim Fitz, Evanston, IL

Michael Flynn, 16, Silver Spring, MD

Theodore Joseph, 16, Germantown, MD

Jonathan Mairiga, Samaru Zaria, Nigeria

Rusty Nelson, Rockford, WA

Julian Nieh, 17, Burnaby BC, Canada

Micaiah Paige, 16, Upper Marlboro, MD

Adewole Richard, Ondu State, Nigeria

Cliff Wallace, Jr., 16, Washington, D.C.



First Place Award

Anene Obinna Chinemelum, Enugu State, Nigeria

HOW CAN WE OBEY THE LAW AGAINST WAR?

The United Nations Charter in article 2, paragraph 4 states that “all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state or in any other manner inconsistent with the purpose of the United Nations”.

The Kellogg-Briand Pact or pact of Paris is a General treaty for renunciation of war, a 1928 international agreement in which signatory states promised not to use war to resolve disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them. This pact has been signed by close to sixty-two nations promoting the peaceful handling of conflicts.

The General Act for the pacific settlement of international Disputes signed in Geneva, also mandated it's signatories to constitute reconciliation commissions in the occurrence of any form of dispute.

Therefore it is obvious that there are cascades of international treaties all promulgated to reduce the occurrence of wars. However the Kellogg-Briand part and other similar treaties have not lived up to expectation as signatories to it have continued to commit acts of war.

According to the words of General W. Sherman: “War is hell” There is no empirical evidence as to the existence of hell, therefore war has nothing to be compared with. War devastates the society. It leads to severe loss of lives and properties. War delays development and in extreme cases can take a society centuries back in the clock of civilization. A lot of reasons have been cited by different parties engaged in war. However no reason is good enough to justify the lives lost in such tragedies. How can we then obey the law against war?

Patriotism to our society, country and the world at large is a common denominator that will enable the world avoid wars. Humans have become notorious for their inability to accommodate each other and respect laid down treaties. All inhabitants of the planet earth must learn to be good ambassadors of this planet by respecting treaties already put in place by the international community to curb the occurrence of wars. Wars apart from its ability to cause loss of lives and properties also lead to environmental crisis. The United Nations in its sustainable development goals project has marshaled out strategies aimed at combating the present global environmental and energy crisis. Hazardous and life- threatening material are released into the atmosphere during wars. This has no benefit to the entire world populace. Patriotism and love for peace is the ultimate. We must endeavor to be the change we desire.

Foreign and local polices (including armament and disarmament) made by different nations of the world must be geared towards the promotion of world peace. There have been cases of conflicts in countries such as Ukraine, Russia, Sudan, Syria etc as a result of faulty government policies. Most times these policies are made to keep a few political elites perpetually in power (totalitarianism). It is important to note that no nation's or person's political interest is worth the objectives of global peace and the protection of life and property.

Settlement of international disputes involving land and sea boundaries etc should involve dialogue and reconciliation. There should be no room for war. Several international treaties have recommended the formation of reconciliation commissions to handle cases of disagreements among nations. Strict observance of the statutes of these committees must be made mandatory in order to avert wars. This has worked in many regions.

The control of the activities of intelligence/spy agencies on foreign soil is necessary in avoiding wars. In recent times, there have been cases of intelligence agencies carrying out spy/secret operations on foreign soils and waters. Hacking into official databases and fraudulently obtaining information belonging to other nations is an indirect way of engineering war. Countries such as China, Russia and United States have had different levels of altercations as a result of these practices. It should be entirely frowned at by all nations.

The use of religion to trigger wars should be totally avoided. This has led to the sponsorship of terrorism and discrimination in many parts of the world. The life of every human is sacrosanct despite his/her religious affiliation. The world should oppose the problem of racial profiling, backlash against immigrants and human right violations.

Poverty, unemployment and illiteracy in third world countries should be addressed through grants and aids in order to reduce aggression associated with these regions.

Summarily, the Kellogg-Briand Pact despite its binding effect on nations and being a legal basis for the definition of crime against peace has its limitations. However strict compliance to this pact and similar treaties will enable the world achieve sustainable peace and development.

Bibliography

1. Abrams, Irwin, "The Nobel Peace prize and the Laureates" an illustrated biographical history, 1901-1987, Boston: G.K. Hall and co.
 2. Hatt, Christine: "The first World War", 1914-1918, London: Evans, 2000
 3. Black, Jeremy. "War and the new disorder in the 21st Century" New York: 2004.
-

Response

--- On Thu, 3/31/16, Red John <redjohn760@gmail.com> wrote:

> From: Red John <redjohn760@gmail.com>
> Subject: Feedback - how to obey the law against war
> To: Juniormobis@yahoo.com
> Date: Thursday, March 31, 2016, 1:22 PM Dear Obinna,
> I received your mail on ways
> to obey the law against war.i must
> say that your article was excellent. I have read several publication
> concerning such laws especially that of Geneva convention but this is
> my first time of reading about the kellogg briand pact. I will
> endeavour to do everything in my capacity to spread the message. There
> iis no alternative to peace. Best regards.
> Mr Ogonna
>

Coordinator follow-up with email exchange:

Dear Anene Obinna Chinemelum,
Congratulations! Please tell us a little about yourself

Goodday sir,

Thank you very much for your message. I do not have enough words to express my happiness. My success in this competition indicates that the United States is a country where anyone can achieve success on merit unlike what is obtainable in some parts of the world. God bless America!

I would love to be present during the award ceremony in order to meet and exchange ideas with like-minds and fellow lovers of peace. However the cost of transportation from my country to the US is far beyond my student budget.

I wish to appreciate the organizers for the opportunity given to me. Kindly notify me should my attention be needed on any issue. I would be glad to reply.

Thanks a lot Sir.
Anene Obinna Chinemelum
University of Nigeria

Please tell us a little more about yourself

Goodday sir,

Thanks for your message. I don't have much to say since I have not won a nobel prize or become a professor yet.

My names are Anene Obinna chinemelum. I was born in Nsukka :a rural part of Nigeria 23 years ago. I am a christian from Anambra state in south eastern Nigeria. I am a student of the faculty of social sciences ,University of Nigeria.

I found out about the Peace Essay Contest while searching for something else online. I became interested and decided to participate. Growing up in Nigeria,

I have heard a lot of my fellow country men lament that our British colonial masters joined different people who have nothing in common to form Nigeria . People have lost their lives in Nigeria and other places around the world in situations that would have easily been solved if PEACE was given a chance.

This contest gave me the opportunity to express my opinion as any society that does not embrace PEACE will definitely end up in the wrong side of history. There is no alternative to peace. Thanks

Anene Obinna Chinemelum
University of Nigeria

Can you tell us a little about your Dad?

Thank you Sir,

My Dad's name was Mr Anene Amobi Chinemelum. He was an epitome of honesty, humility and simplicity. He was a civil servant until his unfortunate demise in a road accident some months ago.

I am studying Geography at the University of Nigeria and hope to graduate by mid 2018. If I have the means, I would want to do my advanced program in Political Geography and International Relations.

My country is not really a place where individuals get things on merit. There is massive unemployment, hardship and even the few opportunities are reserved for the unborn generation of the powerful and well connected while the highly talented are left to rot and waste away. Therefore it will be very difficult to quote categorically what my future goals are due to the challenges and realities of my environment.

However, If I am given the opportunity, I would love to pursue a career in any organization that has the capacity of spreading PEACE around the world, improving the lives of people and changing the world. What we invest into life is more important than what we harvest from it.

I believe that together we can change the world and hand over to the future generation a better society than the one we were born into.

YES, WE CAN.

Anene Obinna Chinemelum
University of Nigeria

Thank you, Obinna.

Peace,

Frank

Second Place Award

David McCallum, Washington, D.C.

Dear Leaders McConnell and Reid:

I write to ask your consideration of an important question: *How Can We Obey the Law Against War?* I am a participant in the Peace Essay Contest of the West Suburban Faith-Based Peace Coalition (www.faithpeace.org) and it is my hope that you will consider co-sponsoring a resolution recognizing the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

As a new student to U.S. history, I have spent my junior year at Gonzaga College High School learning about the impacts of many wars on our society and its people, from the invasion and settlement of North America to the French and Indian War, and from the Spanish-American War of 1898 to World War I.

I was surprised to learn that shortly after World War I, the Kellogg-Briand Pact made the act of war illegal. On August 27, 1928, fifteen nations promised not to use war by signing the “International Treaty for the Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy,” which became known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact. This Pact encouraged diplomacy, renounced the act of war, and called for the peaceful settlement of disputes. By 1933, more than 60 nations, including the United States, pledged to observe the Pact. Unfortunately, this diplomatic effort did little to prevent countries, even signatories, from committing aggressive acts of war.

Perhaps Franklin Roosevelt captured the sentiment of war best in his 1939 address to Congress when he said, “Any war anywhere retards the progress of morality and religion and impairs the security of civilization itself.” While some may argue that war is necessary for national progress, the loss of life, extreme economic strain, and dehumanization of individuals, cultures and religions bear lasting and grave consequences; consequences we ignore at our own peril.

As an active leader of my school’s Peace Club, I’ve learned that the costs of war are enormous. In retrospect, if the U.S. had invested the trillions of dollars spent on fighting wars and building our military directly into domestic infrastructure, research and development, and education, we would have made a stronger, longer, and more direct impact on our economy. Complicated technical and social issues would have solutions. For example, keeping 9,800 troops in Afghanistan in 2015 cost us more than \$20 billion. Today, we are spending only \$1 billion for the National Cancer Moonshot in 2016. It is hard to argue that the spillovers of military conflict have no benefit; global positioning systems, duct tape, and jeeps are really cool! But, I bet any of the 1.6 million people diagnosed with cancer this year would give up such war-borne technologies for a cure.

I have grown up in Washington, D.C. —the epicenter of war monuments honoring soldiers who have given their lives to defend our nation. I regularly pass the World War II, Vietnam Veterans, Korean War Veterans, and Marine Corps Memorials. These stunning tributes have touched me on more than one occasion—and I have seen the personal reactions of many visitors. The Washington Monument—an instant people magnet—always draws my eye. It, too, wears a scar; bi-color stones serve as a permanent reminder that this monument was completed by a nation rebuilding after the Civil War.

I find it ironic that these war memorials dot the landscape around a towering statue of Martin Luther King, Jr. His presence on the National Mall is in stark contrast to other memorials, which represent significant wars and the personal loss they caused. His important words denounce violence. “I am not unmindful of the fact that

violence often brings about momentary results. Nations have frequently won their independence in battle. But in spite of temporary victories, violence never brings permanent peace.”

In 1928, the United States Senate voted to ratify the Kellogg-Briand Pact for peace by a vote of 85-1. U.S. support of this pact has never been rescinded. As leaders in the Senate today, you have the power to carry on this worthy tradition. I am optimistic that I provide you with a subject you can collaboratively endorse in a time of strong partisan politics.

By co-sponsoring a Senate Resolution recognizing Kellogg-Briand Pact Day on August 27, 2016, you will help remind the world of the importance of choosing peaceful resolutions over war.

Thank you for your continued service to our country. I would greatly appreciate a reply to my letter but I would be most encouraged to read in the news that you have joined together in support of a Senate resolution that reminds our nation of the lasting value of peace.

Sincerely,
David K. McCallum IV

Response:

Dear Mr. McCallum:

Thank you for contacting me. I always enjoy hearing from young and engaged citizens, and I am impressed by your participation in the Peace Club at your school.

I share your concerns regarding the immense cost the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have had on our nation. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have taken the lives of thousands of American troops and produced a generation of veterans in need of support upon return to the United States. The citizens of Iraq too have felt the cost of war, with millions dead, displaced, or facing the constant threat of violence. Additionally, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have cost our nation hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars, and they continue to pose new and unique threats today.

In the face of unprecedented challenges around the world, from the worsening humanitarian crises urgently in need of response, to ever-changing threats to our national and global security, President Obama and the Administration have worked to address national security crises without repeating mistakes of the past. The Obama Administration has led a coalition with our international partners to thoughtfully address emerging threats around the world, including the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

ISIS is a terrorist organization responsible for extreme violence and destruction in Iraq and Syria, and for the horrific murder of hostages from around the world, including Americans, ISIS has captured parts of Iraq and Syria and is attempting to continue its violent advancement throughout the region, murdering innocent civilians, targeting and murdering religious minorities, forcing women into marriage, and defying the sovereignty of the Iraqi government. My heart goes out to their families and friends, and to all of the people who are being terrorized by ISIS.

President Obama has said that he does not have plans to put combat troops on the ground. Instead, the U.S. is leading a coalition that includes European, Arab, and other nations in a targeted, strategic mission to stop ISIS. To that end, the U.S., along with our friends and allies, has conducted targeted air strikes against ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria, as well as against a network of al Qaeda operatives in Syria known as the Khorasan group. On April 25, 2016, President Obama announced the deployment of an additional 250 U.S. military personnel, including Special Forces, to Syria. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter also announced new accelerants to assist the government of Iraq in coordinated attacks against ISIS, including additional advisers, helicopters, rocket launchers, and financial assistance.

I believe it is important to use peaceful and diplomatic methods whenever possible, which is why I continue to support programs that help the United States work with other countries to promote peace and security around the world. To that end, I am proud of our membership and commitment to the United Nations (UN) which, though an imperfect entity, serves a critical role in providing a forum for our countries to resolve disputes. I helped lead passage of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114-113), which President Obama signed into law on December 18, 2015. This law provides \$2.46 billion for U.S. assessed contributions to UN Peacekeeping missions and \$1.4 billion to support U.S. contributions to UN organizations.

Lastly, I have noted your support for a Senate resolution recognizing the Kellogg-Briand Pact. The Kellogg Briand Pact was signed on August 27, 1928, to prevent war and advocate for peace. In my role as Senate Democratic Leader, I rarely introduce or cosponsor legislation. Please be assured I will remain mindful of your views should related legislation reach the full Senate for consideration.

Again, thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me. I encourage you to remain interested in our nation's national security issues, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

My best wishes to you.

Sincerely,

HARRY REID
United States Senator

Third Place Award

Rory Fanning, Chicago, IL

I've been in search of creative ways to frighten myself, apparently to relive the moments in the military I said I never wanted to go through again--or so a psychiatrist told me anyway. Most days, for instance, I lift weights at the gym to the point of crippling exhaustion. A few years ago, I walked across the United States with 50 pounds on my back for the Pat Tillman Foundation in an obsessive attempt to rid myself of "my" war. On the weekends, I clean my house similarly obsessively. And it's true, sometimes I drink too much.

According to that doctor it's common enough for my unconscious to want to relive the feeling of learning that my friend had just been blown up by a roadside bomb. Somehow my mind considers it perfectly appropriate to replay the times when rockets landed near my tent at night in a remote valley in Afghanistan. Or when I was arrested by the military after going AWOL as one of the first Army Rangers to try to say no to participation in George W. Bush's global "war on terror."

And here's the good news at a purely personal level: the older I get the less I'm inclined towards such acts of masochism, of self-inflicted pain. Part of the change undoubtedly involves age, but there's another reason, too. I found a far better place to begin to put all that stored up, jumpy energy. I began speaking to high school students heavily propagandized by the U.S. military on the charms, delights, and positives of war, American-style, about my own experiences and that, in turn, has been changing my life.

My thought now is full disclosure going forward. If a teenager is going to sign up to kill and die for a cause or even the promise of a better life, then the least he or she should know is the good, the bad, and the ugly about the job. I had no illusions that plenty of kids--maybe most of them, maybe all of them--wouldn't sign up anyway, regardless of what I said. But I swear to myself: no moralism, no regrets, no judgments.

Think of it as a different way to be a Ranger in a world that will never, it seems, be truly postwar. We live in a time that too often feels impossibly removed from August 27, 1928, the day the world came together to sign the multilateral Kellogg-Briand Pact in Paris. The Pact, still technically in effect, is a commitment to resolve international conflicts without war. But as with all things: easier said than done.

You'll bring too much "tension" to our school, one teacher tells me with regret. "Most of my kids need the military if they plan on going to college," I hear from another who says he can't invite me to his school anyway. But most of my requests simply go out into the void unanswered. Or promises to invite me go unfulfilled. Who, after all, wants to make waves or extracurricular trouble when teachers are already under fierce attack.

I understand and yet, in a world without a draft, JROTC's school-to-military pipeline is a lifeline for Washington's permanent war across the Greater Middle East and parts of Africa. Its unending conflicts are only possible because kids like those I've talked to in the few classrooms I've visited continue to volunteer. The politicians and the school boards, time and again, claim their school systems are broke. No money for books, teacher's salaries and pensions, healthy lunches, etc...

And yet, in 2015, the U.S. government spent \$598 billion on the military, more than half of its total discretionary budget, and nearly 10 times what it spent on education. Confronting the attacks on education in

the U.S. should also mean, in part, trying to interrupt that school-to-military pipeline. It's hard to fight endless trillion-dollar wars if kids aren't enlisting.

Just the other day I spoke at a college in Peoria, Illinois. "My brother hasn't left the house since returning home from Iraq," one of the students told me with tears in her eyes. "What you said helped me understand his situation better. I might have more to say to him now."

It was the sort of comment that reminded me that there is an audience for what I have to say, and further proof that the peace-loving fire that fueled the signing of the Kellogg-Braind Pact still burns in so many people. Believe me, I'll continue to write about, pester, and advertise my willingness to talk to soon-to-be-military-age kids in Chicago. I'm not giving up, because speaking honestly about my experiences is now my therapy. At the end of the day, I need those students as much as I think they need me.

Response

This essay was directed to teachers, principals, and military recruiters in Chicagoland who allow Rory to speak to their students and the first such encounter proved to be cathodic. The students were startled by the message. The authorities were pressured to not invite Rory back. In the Veterans For Peace Quarterly Newspaper, *Peace in our Times*, a **front page feature** in the Spring 2016, Volume 2 Number 2 Edition is entitled: *The Wars in Our Schools, An Ex-Army Ranger Finds a New Mission* by Rory Fanning. This article continues on the entire pages 4, 5 and 14. Highlighted quotes from the article include these:

- *I began speaking to high school students heavily prpogandized by the U.S. military, and that. In turn, has been changing my life.*
- *Chicago-area high school students aren't used to hearing such talk. The public school system here has the largest number of Junior ROTC students – nearly 10,000 of them, 45% African-American and 50% Latino – of any school district in the country.*
- *I can tell that the kids are really paying attention, so I let it all out: 'The Taliban had surrendered a few months before I arrived in Afghanistan in late 2002, but that wasn't good enough for our politicians back home and the generals giving the orders. Our job was to draw people back into the fight.'*
- *In a world without a draft, JROTC's school-to-military pipeline is a lifeline for Washington's permanent war across the greater Middle East and parts of Africa. Its unending conflicts are only possible because kids like those I've talked to in the few classrooms I've visited continue to volunteer.*

Rory concludes with this: *I'm not giving up because speaking honestly about my experiences is now my therapy. At the end of the day, I need those students as much as I think they need me.*

Special Recognition

Dr. Robert Reuschlein, Madison, WI

Dear Future US President,

America has signed and ratified the law against war and even the threat of war, the Kellogg-Briand Treaty of 1928. To bring America into compliance with the treaty would have significant economic benefits to the nation as well as extremely positive worldwide implications. The Treaty is the supreme law of the land, according to the US Constitution. You may not have been asked about the Treaty as part of the process that has gotten you the Presidency. However, this should not dull the importance of the Treaty for you and the nation as a whole. The lack of attention to the Treaty reflects a kind of historical amnesia, one which this letter and many other efforts, we hope, will end.

Perhaps you are unaware of the op-ed of Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz in the British paper *The Guardian* on January 22, 2003. He was, of course, President Bill Clinton's chief economic advisor in the nineties. In this op-ed titled "The Myth of the War Economy," Stiglitz says "War is widely thought to be linked to economic good times... Today, we know that this is nonsense. The 1990s boom showed that peace is economically far better than war. The Gulf war of 1991 demonstrated that wars can actually be bad for an economy. That conflict contributed mightily to the onset of the recession of 1991 (which was probably the key factor in denying the first President Bush re-election in 1992)."

In fact, redirecting the capital rich military economy between 1985 and 1999 and allowing those potent economic resources to be applied to the manufacturing economy instead lead to unprecedented prosperity in the post Cold War 1990s. Further proof of this critical choice between the manufacturing sector and the military sector is the fact that manufacturing increased in the late nineties despite various trade deals that are sometimes presented as putting the US at a disadvantage. Manufacturing will indeed boom if given the resources normally devoted to a nonproductive military economy, and the US can compete with other nations if it refrains from military buildups and active conflicts.

Evidence for the proposition that military spending hurts the economy has only mounted since 2003, as the 2.8 million manufacturing jobs lost in the twenty-four months after 9-11 are coupled with the military buildup and jobs lost through shifts in trade. 1.7 million jobs were lost to the military buildup and one million jobs to trade (as was often discussed in the 2004 US election). A steady rise in unemployment leading up to the Great Recession began after the Iraq "surge" troops began to be deployed in July 2007. The unequal real estate boom from the military buildup fooled many parts of the nation into expecting the economy to continue upward. When it did not, the drain from the \$70 billion "surge" apparently pushed the fragile mortgage economy into a severe decline. This pattern is similar to the 1980s with the military buildup transferring moneys from the productive economy to the unproductive economy, distorting the local real estate market until the Savings & Loan (S&L) bailout was the result. The murder rate is also linked with military spending. Although no criminologists can explain the drop in crime in the nineties, military spending and murder rates strongly correlate among the youngest five members of the G7, America, Japan, Germany, Canada, and Italy. The Cold War peace dividend benefited the nineties economy and crime. It is becoming more evident through the decades that the economic stagnation caused by high levels of military spending leads to the collapse of empires and the related social decay.

Another benefit is that lower military spending improves the national strength over time, as military spending can actually increase faster as a small percentage of a fast growing economy. Tailoring the military can make it more nimble than ever and less encumbered with obsolete heavy forces; it can also improve America's image in the world. Let more regional forces deal with the world's ground military problems and primarily provide technical backup. With decreases in military spending, America will become more closely compliant with the lofty goals of the Kellogg Briand Pact of 1928. The Pact may have been wrought in a previous century, but it provides guidance that reaches far into the future.

As you face the future as the President of the United States (from whatever party or background you hail), considering the Pact as a guiding principle alerts the world that the US is deeply committed to its own economic wellbeing along with larger global peace and justice issues. It may seem that following the Treaty is an act of altruism. However, the Treaty's direction would lead the US into a more prosperous and productive-- as well as peaceful-- future.

Dr. Robert Reuschlein, details in www.realeconomy.com

Response

This letter was directed to: Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, Donald Trump, Ted Cruz and John Kasich. No responses were received by May 15.

Dr. Robert Reuschlein has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

About the Peace Essay Contest

This project was inspired by David Swanson's book, "When the World Outlawed War" and by Kathy Kelly (thrice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize) who gave the book to Frank Goetz.

The West Suburban Faith-Based Peace Coalition (WSFPC, www.faithpeace.org) regards the multinational agreement to outlaw war 88 years ago a major advancement of civilization. It should not be the world's best kept secret.

The WSPFC established the Peace Essay Contest in 2012 to inform the public, particularly students, about this historic event and promised \$1,000.00 to the author of the best essay. In 2013 we transformed it to an Essay-Response Contest to emphasize the need for essays which have the potential of moving us closer to a world without war. Last year we were pleasantly surprised that news of this contest has spread to many continents and inspired heavy participation (17 essays each) in two elementary schools: Grant School in South Chicago Heights and Winners International School in Nigeria. Last year we added a new category, Honorable Mention, to acknowledge others who submitted excellent essays.

This year we received 33 Peace Essay Contest applications but only 18 participants submitted essays. We added a Special Recognition Category this year to honor the decades-long statistical research of Dr. Robert Reuschlein showing the many benefits of sharply curtailing military spending.

The WSPFC appreciates all who participated in this Peace Essay Contest, especially the 33 authors who submitted the essays and the three judges who evaluated them. [Sadly, Dave Karcher had a heart attack and has not been able to participate as a judge; we urge all of his friends to continue to pray for his recovery.] We would also like to acknowledge all who promoted the Peace Essay Contest, especially Amira Boctor, Leila Bannon, Steve and Karen Jackson, Carol Urban, David Swanson, who posted a link to the essays and responses on www.warisacrime.org and International Peace Organizations including Pax-Christi, Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Veterans for Peace who distributed the Rules to its members all over the world.

Special thanks go to Kathy Kelly and Rev. William O'Shea for making this Fourth Annual Awards Luncheon such an inspiring and memorable event. We congratulate the winners! And we invite your comments and suggestions regarding this project.

WSFPC will announce the Rules for the 2017 Peace Essay/Response Contest in September, 2016. No major changes are anticipated. Both the essays submitted and the responses documented will be judged.

For more information contact: coordinator Frank Goetz (frankgoetz@comcast.net).