

## What is the War System?

In the war system, all diplomacy is conducted with the expectation that, if necessary, violent attack will be used as a means to achieve the desired results. Unfortunately, this system still rules much of international intercourse.

Consequently, all national or regional governing bodies - the actors in a war system - must maintain military preparedness, both offensive and defensive, if they wish to ensure their own safety and interests. The scale of military capacities reached by any actor must be proportionally matched by all others wishing to keep them in check. Those not willing or able to fight for their interest will be taken advantage of by those who are. When actors find that they cannot command respect through conventional military means, they must either seek to do so through non-conventional means (i.e. guerrilla action and terrorism) or resign themselves to the will of other powers.

The war system is one of anarchy. Its participants can and do act in any way they please (or feel that they can get away with). There are in fact rules that are supposed to dictate how nations act; we call them "international law." When stressed, however, these rules crumble, showing themselves to be what they really are -- non-binding, unenforceable arrangements to be observed only so long as they are seen as advantageous.

*Peace and security can be established and assured only if we, the sovereign people, who ... have delegated parts of our sovereignty to cities ... provinces ... [and] to our national governments to attend to national problems, [now in order] to protect ourselves against the danger of inter-national wars, delegate part of our respective sovereignty to bodies capable of creating and applying Law in inter-national relations.*

-- Emery Reves

## How Does the War System Affect Our Lives?

The dire effects of lawlessness are visited upon citizens of the powerful nations as well as the weak. A large proportion of humanity suffers the consequences of these negatives, including:

- Conflicts using conventional weapons have resulted in *hundreds of millions* of human casualties (usually civilians or conscripted soldiers), drastically disrupted the lives of millions more, and caused the destruction of immeasurable quantities of their possessions and structures.
- Nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons threaten all civilization and, possibly, the very existence of life on earth.
- Actions taken during war often directly create environmental distress. (Examples include the atmosphere-choking oil fires, destruction of rainforests with carcinogenic Agent Orange, and the spread of low-level radiation from depleted uranium weapons.)
- The war system requires countries to divert massive amounts of monetary, natural, and human resources to militaristic activities that could otherwise be spent on the promotion of rewarding lifestyles, cultural endeavors, scientific progress, and the creation of a healthy relationship between humans and our living planet.
- The war system often leads to subordination to a particular nation, ethnic group, ideology, or religion, while fueling discrimination against those considered to be outsiders.
- Those living under the war system are exposed to constant fear and suspicion. These feelings are not only extended to outsiders, but also back onto one's own group in a form of domestic paranoia. Such conditions can result in curtailing civil rights as seen in the American examples of WWII Japanese internment camps, McCarthyism, and the U.S. Patriot Act.

## What's the Answer?

While the propensity for conflict may be inherent in human nature and will probably never go away, there is a way to resolve it without resorting to violence. How? The same way it has been achieved in every other level of human society -- through the Rule of Law.

Law has been proven to create relative peace and security between entities within a community regardless of whether those entities are individual citizens, cities, or provinces/states within a federal union.

Take a minute to think about it. With any luck, you don't have to carry a weapon with you to protect your own safety as you go through your daily routine. The city of Minneapolis does not need its own militia to settle disputes with St. Paul, nor does California have to maintain an army to protect itself against the interests of its neighboring states.

This is because in each of these cases the individual citizens in their community have submitted themselves to the authority of a larger system of law. To work properly, that law must be binding, enforceable, and transparent, and, in order to be acceptable to those under its rule, it must be created through democratic representation and limited by a system of checks and balances.

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## What Must We Do to Achieve World Peace?

It's not enough for us to call for peace from our leaders and try to protest individual conflicts. As long as the war system is in place national leaders, whose job it is to preserve the self-interest of their nation, can't afford to not play by its rules. The only way to stop violent international conflict is to completely replace the war system with a law system created and backed by governing structures.

While creating global law (and a global government to administer it) is a major task, it is not by any means beyond our reach. Already, humankind has made great strides in refining the practice of governance, witness the European Union. We can apply the lessons that we've learned as we model a world government.

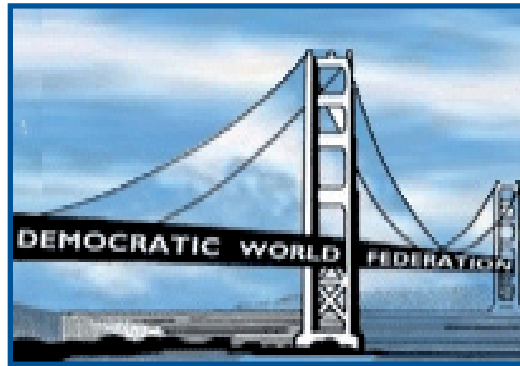
More and more people in our world are living in democracies, in which there is a reasonable level of law, order, and justice. Those people already understand the ways that the application of law works to promote their quality of life, and they should be willing to extend that system to the world level. They are also increasingly aware of their interconnectedness as citizens of the Earth and should therefore be more willing to work for the common good of all humanity.

The real question facing us now is not how can we create a system of global government, but whether humanity can survive without one!



*Hearken not to the voice which petulantly tells you that the form of government recommended ... is impossible to accomplish.*

-- James Madison (Father of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights), *The Federalist* No. 14



## Democratic World Federalists

55 New Montgomery St. Suite 225  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3421

Phone & Fax: (415) 227-4880

Email: [dwfed@dwfed.org](mailto:dwfed@dwfed.org)

Website: [www.dwfed.org](http://www.dwfed.org)

For over 60 years, World Federalists have worked to promote an understanding of the need for good world government, and sought to help individual citizens, institutions, and governments achieve that goal.



# SOLUTION TO THE WAR SYSTEM

*Government is the thing.*

*Law is the thing.*

*Not brotherhood, not international cooperation, not security councils that can only stop war by waging it ...*

*Where does security lie anyway -- security against the thief, the murderer?*

*In brotherly love?*

*Not at all.*

*It lies in government.*

E.B. White,  
Editor -- *The New Yorker*