

World Federalism

Beyond War, Totalitarianism, and Donald J. Trump's "State of Emergency"

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If we want a future on this planet, we must move beyond the current fragmented paradigm of militarized sovereign states to the holistic paradigm of unity in diversity based on the discoveries of every field of human endeavor for the past century. Human beings are one species. Human civilization is one historical movement from primitive beginnings in Africa two million years ago, spreading globally over the past one hundred thousand years to every continent and every corner of our planet. The biosphere of our planet, into which human beings are inseparably woven, is one holistic reality that cannot be saved as long as we continue to operate with the anachronistic paradigms inherited from centuries ago that placed human beings above and separate from their natural environment.

Similarly, war, that today involves supersonic weapons of immense destructive power, cannot be abolished as long as we cling to the fragmented early modern paradigm that divided the world into absolute, "sovereign" nation-states with military forces capable of defending their absolute territorial borders and capable of aggression into other such sovereign territories. Institutional arrangements have consequences that can be studied and predicted. We can examine the history of militarized sovereign nation-states, a history of endless wars, imperial ambitions, and international intrigue, and conclude correctly that this institutional system for governing our planet has been an unmitigated disaster. Indeed, since 1945, as European thinker Jürgen Moltmann declares, humankind has entered its "end time" (2012: 46). At any moment, we can wipe out humanity with our nuclear weapons.

The United Nations Charter declares that the UN system was founded to "end war." However, the UN system is a "confederation" of sovereign nation-states. This means that the UN Charter gives the Security Council and the UN authority to use sanctions or military coercion against entire nation-states, not against individuals. Under the UN Charter, all legal authority over individuals is exclusively a function of the sovereign nation-states. Each nation has enforceable law authority over its individual citizens.

Even the development of the International Criminal Court (ICC) does not supersede this fragmented paradigm. The Rome Statute governing the Court has retained deference to the "sovereignty" of the nations in the Assembly of States Parties who joined as a group to establish the court. The court is powerless over individuals within these "states parties." It cannot operate without the consent of the governments within which the court has identified some individuals guilty of crimes against humanity, war crimes, or crimes of aggression. The ICC, even though it gestures toward individual accountability, retains the form of a confederation and therefore remains helpless to seriously advance the rule of democratic law on planet Earth.

The argument is sometimes made that a world federation, by creating a single supreme government for the Earth, would remove any possibility of resistance that now exists. For example (the argument goes) the U.S., being free from the domination of Europe and Asia by the Nazis and the Japanese imperialists during the Second World War, was able to come to the rescue of the world through defeating these imperialist

totalitarian governments. However, this reasoning is false on several levels. The very structure of the system of sovereign nations creates a world where such emergencies are endemic. For militarized sovereign nation-states, recognizing no enforceable law over themselves, are forever tempted to use their military and economic competition with other such nation-states to their own advantage through aggression or economic manipulation. The US, far from being a bastion for freedom, has invaded Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, and numerous other nation-states, causing immense death and destruction. In a recent article (2018), social scientist James Petras identifies the many current targets of US aggression.

Critical social thinker Ernst Bloch describes the “concealed dictatorship of the bourgeois constitutional state” that exists in today’s class societies, all of whom suffer under the domination of capitalism (1986: 150). Class dominated society under capitalism is “concealed” because the ideology claims that unrestrained “free enterprise” is a function of democracy. The population is indoctrinated to think that their poverty and struggle with economic scarcity is a function of their freedom, while the top 10%, who own 90% of the wealth and clandestinely control the government are reaping the benefits of their concealed dictatorship in the form of ever more wealth and power. Karl Marx had already pointed this phenomenon out during the mid-19th century.

Secondly, nearly every sovereign nation-state feels that it must militarize. Given the speed and power of modern weapons, it must be ready for an emergency response to sudden attack. To do this requires a “national security state” that operates in secret, and that spies not only on other nation-states but upon its own population as well. Democracy and its rule of law are therefore diminished, and all societies live today on the cusp of an emergency that might need to be declared because of subversion or sudden attack. In addition, within the past half century, the sovereign nation-states (with their concealed dictatorships) have discovered a new form of threat that requires similar “emergency” measures: terrorism. Their war against terrorism, a function of the lawlessness inherent in the system of sovereign nation-states itself, means a permanent suspension of human rights. Philosopher of law David Luban writes:

That means that the real aim of the war is, quite simply, to kill or capture all the terrorists—to keep on killing and killing, capturing and capturing, until they are all gone.... The war has no natural resting point, no moment of victory or finality. It requires a mission of killing and capturing, in territories all over the globe, that will go in perpetuity. It follows as well that the suspension of human rights implicit in the hybrid war-law model is not temporary but permanent. (2003: 59-60)

Totalitarianism requires both the threat of enemies and internal emergencies to come to power. It requires the “suspension of human rights” as a perpetual emergency measure. As Bloch asserts, the “concealed dictatorship” of capital is always ready, if necessary, to emerge as an unconcealed dictatorship if they find this necessary to retain their dictatorial powers. In my recent article on “Global Democracy,” I described the role of capital in bringing Hitler and the Nazis to power during the 1920s and its continuing role in supporting their totalitarian dictatorship of 1933-45. Totalitarianism requires both some emergency and designated enemies to successfully emerge. (In that article, I described the “enemies” designated by the Nazis, but neglected to mention that they also targeted homosexuals and anyone outside of traditional German gender stereotypes.)

When the Bolsheviks came to power in 1917, with an absolute power soon leading to the terrible Stalin dictatorship in the early years of the Soviet Union, the claim was that the civil war in Russia required emergency solutions. During the Stalinist era, it was the Trotskyites and bourgeois compromisers who had to be eliminated. When the Nazis came to power, as described in my “Global Democracy” article, they cited not

only enemies, but also the economic crisis of terrible inflation and chaos. Their chief political theorist, Carl Schmitt, argued that democracy (imposed upon Germany by the victors in World War I) was inherently unstable and required a “decisionism” in the form of commands from a supreme commander in chief. The state of emergency, with enemies both abroad and internal to Germany, required establishing the totalitarian system to restore and maintain order.

When Pol Pot came to power in Cambodia, their country and its institutions had been devastated by the US saturation bombing of Southeast Asia. The dictatorship declared that the emergency required the genocidal winnowing of their own population (enemies within) to address the crisis and implement their communist ideology. The genocide in Rwanda during 1994, as Michel Chossudovsky (1999) has shown, was significantly caused by the “structural adjustment” programs imposed by the IMF and World Bank on this already poor nation. This externally caused economic desperation and chaos brought to power one tribe that designated another tribe as the “enemy within,” with well-known genocidal consequences.

After the attack on the US in September 2001, the government declared a state of emergency in which civil liberties were severely curtailed, internal spying on Americans and others around the world was officially launched, and perpetual war was declared on terrorism, with the consequences described by David Luban in the above quote. The Bush and Obama administrations continued this systematic attack on universal human rights through their lawless policies of assassination of suspected “enemy combatants.” Today, Donald J. Trump, after giving massive tax breaks to the capitalist ruling class in the US, now threatens to invoke his power to declare a national emergency to build his wall against the “threat” of lawless immigrants and terrorists on the southern border of the US. All these elements of totalitarianism are clearly functions of the system of militarized sovereign nation-states integrated with the “concealed dictatorship” of capital.

None of this would have much chance of happening if the world were organized as a universal federation under the *Constitution for the Federation of Earth*. As John Scales Avery (2018) has observed, the UN has failed in its declared mission to “end war.” This is mainly because it remains a “confederation” of sovereign nation-states in which so-called “international law” primarily involves rules governing the behavior of entire nations and not laws holding individuals responsible to the law as in a federation.

Within a federation, local affairs are addressed by local government, regional affairs by regional government, national affairs by national government, and planetary affairs by the World Parliament. The *Earth Constitution* holds *individuals* responsible to the law worldwide and thereby eliminates the need for any military forces anywhere on Earth. Because the UN system fails to do this, the UN Security Council is empowered to keep the peace internationally through the use of “land, air, or sea forces,” in other words, by war.

In a planetary federation under the *Earth Constitution*, the people of Earth are empowered *above* the corporations, the wealthiest top 10%, and the national governments. The “concealed dictatorship” of capital is significantly ended along with the ever-present threat of totalitarianism. No agency or officials of the Earth Federation government will have the power to declare a state of emergency and suspend the *Constitution*. This authority is simply unnecessary within a democratic world federation (cf. Martin 2016, Chap. 7). All individuals are responsible to the laws, which are enforced by civilian police: world laws by civilian world police, national laws by national police, regional laws by regional police, and local laws by local police. War

and the threat of totalitarianism are effectively ended, precisely because the sovereign nation-state *war system* is effectively ended.

There are a number of national federations today that embody this principle. For example, the US is a federation of 50 states with national laws enforceable over all individuals, and none of the 50 states has or needs a military. Rather, they have their own civilian state police forces enforcing state laws. One can travel from one state to another without visa or passport. This is what a *peace system* looks like (at least to the extent that this is possible under current economic and political paradigms), and this is the only way to bring peace to the world. A world federation under the *Earth Constitution* constitutes a world peace system. And that is why the UN system has not been able to achieve peace, nor prevent genocides, or prevent totalitarian governments from arising. The UN Charter needs to be replaced by the *Constitution for the Federation of Earth* and all viable UN agencies integrated into the democratic world government under the *Constitution*.

Donald J. Trump has the authority to declare a state of emergency on false pretenses and assume dictatorial powers, just as Hitler assumed dictatorial powers after the false-flag “emergency” of the burning of the Reichstag. These powers derive from a world political system based on a false paradigm. The holistic world system under the *Earth Constitution* raises human institutions into a new paradigm of unity in diversity, a paradigm that conforms to the holistic reality of our human situation as revealed by all contemporary sciences. The paradigm includes world federalism, the principle of unity in diversity under which all persons are held accountable to democratically legislated laws enforced by civilian police.

The deeper problem is not dictatorial personalities like Donald Trump, Muhammed bin Salman, Vladimir Putin, or Adolph Hitler. The problem of totalitarianism, wars, genocides, and perpetual human rights violations is most fundamentally a *system* problem. We will not solve this problem until we change the system.

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