

excerpt from the book

SURVIVING

The Best Game on Earth

*Norie Huddle's deep commitment in search
of valid reasons for hope.*

*" Norie Huddle's exploration of America's
thoughts and feelings about global
security and the threat of nuclear war
is by turns heartwarming, funny, frightening,
and reassuring. Truck drivers, admirals,
housewives, scientists - all are grist for
her mill. And these conversations reveal
an unexpected depth of feeling common to
all, and separate from the diversity of
their political outlooks. "*

*--Paul R. Ehrlich, Professor of
Population Studies, Stanford Univ.*

*--Anne H. Ehrlich, Senior Research Asso.
Biology, Stanford Univ.*

Norie Huddle

Foreword Based on an Interview with
Studs Terkel

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SURVIVING

The Best Game on Earth

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Foreword based on an interview
with Studs Terkel

In this remarkable collection of interviews, Norie Huddle has gathered viewpoints of a wide cross section of people on the crucial question of how we can survive—and how we can create a new view of ourselves, our nation, and our planet.

Recognizing that national security is too important an issue to leave solely to the experts, Huddle began a four-year project of traveling around America, listening to people of all walks of life and political beliefs. From 1970 to 1983, she interviewed over four hundred men and women; this book is a journey through the minds and hearts of thirty of these people. The views heard include many well-known individuals who speak personally and with candor, as well as a range of so-called ordinary people who move us with their deep concerns and, often, brilliant insights.

The conclusion deftly weaves together the very different views, creating a new picture of what will bring us true security.

A list of "impertinent questions" is included at the end of the book. Readers are invited to send their ideas and insights to the author, c/o Center for New National Security, P.O. Box 6513, Alexandria, VA 22306-0513. If you would like a response to your ideas or to find out about the activities of the Center, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Messages can also be posted on the electronic bulletin board of the Source.

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Howard Kurtz

Howard Kurtz is the director and co-founder, with his deceased wife Harriet, of War Control Planners, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation. His organization distributes reports and publishes articles promoting research and development of global war-prevention systems, all-nation security and development systems, and global "compassionate power" systems. He lives in Washington, D.C. This interview took place in the summer of 1981.

My wife Harriet and I worked together for more than thirty years trying to understand the roots of war and how to achieve a lasting peace. Back in 1946 I was working in an upper management position with American Overseas Airlines, when the Civil Aeronautics Board granted us the certificate for the New York to Moscow route. I was made responsible for the long-range planning of the operation and was sent back to school for two years of graduate study at Columbia University's Russian Institute. As it turned out the actual operation didn't start for another twenty years, but if it had, Harriet and I and our babies would have all moved to Moscow.

Then in 1947 I got a call from my boss, telling me to drop out of school temporarily and leave early the next morning for Washington, D.C., where my passport and visa had been arranged secretly. I learned I was to leave the next day for Moscow. We had chartered three planes to carry the American delegation and the press from Washington to Moscow for the foreign ministers conference. I had to go ten days in advance to set up navigation, diplomatic, and other arrangements for the first U.S. civil

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airplanes to go behind the Iron Curtain. About nine weeks later we brought the planes in again to take everyone back to the U.S., but I stayed another five days with some newspaper correspondents to watch the 1947 May Day parade. During that parade I saw Soviet-made jet fighters, in quantity, flying over Moscow. As a lieutenant colonel just out of the air force, this had real meaning to me. I returned to Columbia, telling Harriet that I had just seen World War III already beginning to form, and that not only our two babies but many, many young people from all over the world would be sucked up into the next firestorm because the atomic bomb had changed the picture of war so completely.

This got us started on our study of the endless cycles of war and peace which have plagued humanity since the beginning of recorded history. The biggest disillusion came when we realized that none of the scholars seemed to have the slightest idea of what lay behind this endless repetition of war. As we got deeper into the subject, Harriet recognized that behind walls of secrecy, cloaked in the respectable rhetoric of "national security," small groups of men in the White House and in the Kremlin were in hostile confrontation, brandishing power capable of destroying humankind. She saw that it was a power of really mythological proportions, power which most religions claimed that God alone could command. She concluded that the tiny power elites of neither the Kremlin nor the White House were informed enough or noble enough in their goals to command appropriately such God-sized powers. This drove her through six years of study at Union Theological Seminary in New York. She went half-time, commuting seventy miles a day, taking care of a couple of babies and a house, and somehow managing to make many of her own clothes as well. Her search took her into all the world's religions, looking for what sorts of purposes or goals were noble enough for this God-sized power which was now in our human hands. In 1964 she was ordained in a unique ceremony in which Catholic, Jewish, Ethical Culture, Unitarian, and many different Protestant clergy participated. She was ordained in the belief that people of all faiths, and those professing no faith, were created in the image of God and therefore possessed creative powers which would enable us to create new history rather than remain chained to dead history of past wars and suffering.

In the meantime from 1932 to 1954 I worked in key airline

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management positions in American Airlines, American Overseas Airlines, and Pan American World Airways. From 1954 to 1965 I was a senior associate with Handy Associates, a management consulting firm. In 1965, however, I lost my job with them because two of their clients, who were defense contractors, put pressure on the firm to let me go. So since 1966 I have devoted full time and energy to War Control Planners, working together with Harriet until her death from cancer in 1977.

Early on Harriet and I made an important decision. We agreed that we wouldn't go forward with another step in our conceptualization process until, coming from our very different perspectives and backgrounds, we could both agree on that step. Sometimes the gulf between us seemed unbridgeable, but there was so much love between us that we really tried to understand what each other was saying. Perhaps one reason we were able to work together so completely was that even though I am about as far outside of institutional religion as you can get, my work as a pilot and airlines manager had taught me the Golden Rule in action: no pilot can find safety and progress for his passengers and himself except under the universal disciplines of air traffic control. So Harriet and I both realized that in the present age of ultimate danger, anything less than the Golden Rule among nations is unsafe: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Way back in 1969 the editor of *Esquire* read hundreds of pages of our published articles and condensed everything into one paragraph: "Since right now international arms agreements are improbable because no country trusts any other country, the purchase plan would first provide something trustworthy and then ask the military powers to begin trusting it."

What Harriet and I have been proposing is a transition process to help us break out of this terrible cycle of war-peace-war-peace. Before you can ask the present military people to trust this transition process you have to say, "Continue with your defense. Meanwhile let's start a fantastic experiment to design and build, over ten or twenty years, an international system capable of providing military protection to patriotic people of all countries. Only *after* this system has been built and shown to work, only then will we ask nations to begin to support it." People we've talked with at top levels of the United Nations, even in the disarmament section, agree with this. It's a great deception to play on

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the public's yearning for disarmament. There's not going to be anything like disarmament until after a very long period of developing and testing world systems which prove that it will be safe for nations to begin cutting back on their arms. It's not safe today and it won't be safe until someone does this other creative thing. Now *who* is going to be able to do this? Decisions like this are made by chief executives; only someone like a president of the United States can fight a war with one hand and start something vast and experimental like this with the other.

To draw a parallel from history, when the airlines first found that their piston-engine airplanes were becoming obsolete they didn't immediately get rid of them and say, "What are we going to do now?" For another ten or fifteen years they continued to operate piston-engine planes, and even bought, maintained, and sold new ones while they had another group of people develop and test jet transports until they were ready. You can't simply leap from here to there; you need a transition period.

At present I am aware of almost nobody working on developing this sort of massive project, with possibly one exception. In May 1978 the president of France, addressing the General Assembly of the United Nations, proposed that there be set up a United Nations earth-sensing satellite system of a military character to monitor peacekeeping and arms-control agreements among the nations. This was a conceptual breakthrough. The Americans at the General Assembly opposed it right away and abstained from voting. The General Assembly passed a resolution instructing the secretary-general to create a committee of experts to explore the idea's feasibility. He did so several months later, selecting a committee of experts from twelve different nations, excluding the United States and the USSR. They made a year-long feasibility study and their preliminary report says that it's feasible but that there are a great many problems. Which is all obvious. The United States, meantime, is way behind in this sort of conceptualizing. We have one group of people, with white hats, called NASA, working on space exploration, and another set of people, with black hats, working on military space programs for war purposes. Nowhere in the whole American mythology or government is there anybody working on military satellites for the purpose of peacekeeping.

There are so many groups of fine, dedicated people concerned about the issue of world peace. For thirty years Harriet

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and I followed the work of the World Federalists, the world hunger people, the environmentalists, and so on. We saw they were all wonderfully dedicated to sustaining life, and yet year after year we saw the world situation getting worse, not better. Even with these fine people and conferences and all these books, there's something gone wrong. And so our search was for a missing strategic factor somewhere.

Looking at history, we found a parallel in the problem of smallpox, which has killed more human beings than all the wars of history combined. In recent times a decision was made to do two different things: first, to continue to fight each new case of smallpox the best we can, and second, to set up a completely independent group of people to analyze the whole phenomenon of smallpox. This group would ask the question "Is there some one factor which might be touched and controlled to bring smallpox to an end?" That factor turned out to be a particular virus. Until it was controlled the disease continued to plague humanity. Today, thanks to this realization, there isn't a single case of smallpox in the world. That this has been achieved is a total miracle, as big as any written in the Bible.

Think what we might accomplish if we tried this same sort of approach to solve the phenomenon of war-peace-war-peace! There's a beautiful two-volume classic called *The Study of War* written by Dr. Quincy Wright, a leading scholar in this field. In chapter after chapter he enumerates all the different causes of war all back through history. When Harriet and I got into this search, we felt discouraged: if there are that many different causes of war, it's hopeless. Nothing is ever going to change. But as we got deeper and deeper into our theoretical analysis of the phenomenon, we found one very tangible factor, and until it is brought under control, nothing else can matter. When you name that factor, it seems so obvious as to be unbelievable: enemy military power.

The process goes something like this. After each war there are generally two major powers which emerge that are within range of each other. They each have an entity like our National Security Council whose job it is to look around and say, "What may be the source of our next trouble?" Then they focus attention on each other, and the whole buildup process starts again. It is a purely gut-level response to fear of the enemy. Each side does the

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"reasonable" thing—it builds up its defenses to protect itself. This is morally supported by the leaders and everybody, who all say, "Oh, yes, that makes us feel safer." The problem is that each side's actions have intensified the anxiety of the people on the other side. And they view the "enemy" with alarm: "Look what that guy has done; we must do something." So they do the instinctive thing, which is to increase their *own* defense weapons. And all their moral and political leaders and the public itself says, "Ah, good, I support you. That makes me feel better inside." But once again that intensifies the anxiety on the other side. This action-reaction behavior goes back and forth slowly, without particular form or timing over ten, twenty, forty, sometimes one hundred years, with each side doing the justifiable, moral thing, each building its own propaganda on the same imagery. The buildup doesn't happen overnight in such a way that you can see the pattern. In fact most people have forgotten the last set of major moves by the time the next escalation comes along. But both sides soon begin to play on all of the religious, economic, and other forces that can be used to mold or manipulate public opinion to show that "Look out! Mobilize! If they come over here, they're going to threaten your religion, your economic system, and your very life." And so on. Both sides do this, all on a "morally justifiable basis."

So the one factor we could isolate was military capability, whether it's a spear or a gun or a guy on horseback or the cavalry or an airplane or an atomic bomb. Today, however, we have an entirely new situation: the range of potential fighting has expanded until the whole world is involved in it, and if this war-peace-war epidemic breaks out into a new cycle of war, we can effectively destroy civilization as we know it. We have such a little bit of time left, but nobody in the White House or in the Pentagon seems the least bit interested in the subject. They are like firemen in the firehouse polishing their engines and getting ready to go out and fight the next fire. They're apparently not interested in tackling the critical and urgent problem of how you build a fireproof house. That requires an entirely different kind of mentality than either Henry Kissinger or Brzezinski has. And yet all the capabilities are here to mobilize American creativity to help the world develop the system we need to build a war-proof world. The problem is that the guys who control what flows into the

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mind of a president are all from the same financial institutions that are profiting from the current way of doing things. But the reality is that if we continue in this same direction, we are going to kill ourselves. Yet nobody in power dares say that, because the public will lose faith in the system. The whole pyramid of political power in a nation is very much like a religious institution in that it is built on faith. For example, if I give you a hundred-dollar bill, it seems very real to you; but the reality is that the paper on which that bill is printed is worth about 1.8 cents. All the rest of it is faith. Everything we do in the government here in Washington faces about that same ratio of reality to faith. Building on this system of faith, you get into dogma: "Believe this because I tell you it's true, not because you discover it to be true." And just about everything comes right down again to being controlled at the top by a little elite group around a Vatican, a Kremlin, or a White House. They determine what we're going to do and then they hire the public relations people to sell it to the public.

I was first introduced to studying unconscious anxieties of people back in the 1930s when I was in charge of all the stewardesses and food service on American Airlines. When people are trapped in a closed system over which they have no control, they feel a strong sense of anxiety at a subconscious level. If something happens to the plane, this unconscious anxiety wells up and influences the behavior of every passenger on that airplane, no matter what church he goes to or what political views he has. These gut-level anxiety reactions are common to all human beings when they're trapped and feel endangered. And it's only on that gut-level that you can begin to explain what is going on.

Let's go a bit into the geographic story of war. Some two hundred years ago as the thirteen colonies banded together, they perceived threats in the form of Frenchmen coming down through Montreal, Spaniards through Florida, others through Mexico, and Indians in many areas. Each of these groups presented a threat to this "tribe" called the United States. In this situation of threat there is one predictable pattern all through history: defensive expansion. When the tribe is threatened, it expands. The United States expanded, gradually killing off the French and the Spaniards, expanding to get more of a sense of security. We did the same thing to the Indians even though they got to a point where they were not really a threat—just a potential threat; so we just walked in and mowed

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them down until finally we dominated this entire continent. We didn't have to totally dominate Canada or Mexico because they were so weak and were no longer perceived as a threat. We then entered a period of our history where this unconscious anxiety could relax and the conscious mind could begin to have more control over our behavior. We could see rationally that we were protected by great oceans and by the Arctic Circle, and that we had no enemies. This was the unconscious object of all the U.S.: to expand defensively with our military until we got a feeling of security.

Now let's look at Russia. Right after World War II, as soon as they could, Russia did the natural thing from its standpoint of trying to protect itself. It started expanding its influence and gaining control over neighboring countries. This went on until the United States stopped them with our one unique advantage: we had nuclear bombs—and missiles to deliver them just about anyplace in the world. At that point, around 1947 or so, we said, "Stop, or we'll zap you. We will contain you and you will not expand any longer." One thing you learn in studying the phenomenon of anxiety in an airplane is that the mere fact that you say "You're locked in and can't get out" doesn't cause the anxiety to go away. In fact it causes the anxiety to become even more intense. And in the last generation the United States has really done nothing to eliminate the sense of threat felt by the Soviet people.

Pearl Harbor showed us what happens to a nation when it is threatened. The American people reacted to Pearl Harbor by turning themselves over, as one person, to an authoritarian leader, Roosevelt, saying, "Take us, lead us; we will do anything you say. Take our boys and send them into the trenches. Whatever is necessary. We will suffer, we will do without gasoline and rubber." Threat or attack is a unifying thing. Every move that the United States has made in the last generation—increasing the number of our bombers and missiles stationed around them, increasing our threats—has intensified the threat perceived by the Soviet people, which has caused them to turn themselves even more firmly over to their authoritarian leaders: "Take us, we will suffer and sacrifice and die—whatever you need to do to defend our motherland." There's nothing weak about Soviet *patriotism*, and we have given it impetus at every stage.

During the Cuban missile crisis, while the Russians were put-

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ting missiles in Cuba, we pulled this containment number once more. We humiliated them in front of the whole world by making them turn around and go back—which we were able to do because we still had this threat of superior atomic weapons. At that time they said publicly—almost everything they do is public knowledge and can be found in speeches or books, in Marxism and Leninism—“You will never again do this to us.” And they went back and, in addition to their basic military strategy, they took on a supplemental strategy: to build enough missiles and nuclear bombs to cancel out the American advantage in that area. They have done this fairly effectively. The arms race itself, the missile race and the hydrogen bomb race, has reached the point where if either side launches a war the other will respond so quickly that, literally, world civilization will be ruptured. It is to the Soviet advantage to continually focus American attention on the nuclear armaments race because that's the only weapon the United States has had that is holding back what the Soviet leaders believe destiny has in mind for Russian power. We have had only one thing to stop them: our nuclear capability. Their one job was to counter that and to focus our attention wholly on nuclear war, which they have done quite successfully. Most of our peace groups have been sucked into this thing and into just talking about the horrors of nuclear war since it is so awful that we must do anything to do away with nuclear war. And the Soviets for a whole generation have been saying, “Let's negotiate about cutting down on missiles and cutting down on nuclear bombs; let's have disarmament talks.” They will not talk at all about disarming their basic strategic forces, conventional ground forces, to use in taking over more Afghanistans and places like that. They will not discuss them at all. The way our American leaders think is very short term, holding their elections and changing their policies every few years, whereas the Soviet leaders are working on hundred-year strategies. There's no real rush; they can go as slowly as they need to, seeking to dominate the Eurasian continent and then the world. Wherever there is trouble they move in there because they truly believe that all these people really resent being owned or controlled by the United States and that sooner or later they'll try to break away.

A purely defensive response by the United States is not going to solve the fundamental problem. Instead we must begin to mobilize the creativity and resources of America, in all the differ-

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ent areas, to begin providing the research, development, and experimental operation of future global operational systems which will be able to guard the national security of all one hundred fifty-seven countries and release their energies for the production of food, clothing, housing, and other things their people need to ensure their real security.

This system of global security would function in the same way that air traffic control guards the safety and the progress of all airplanes. About fifty years ago the airlines came to the realization that something needed to be done about the situation of a large number of airplanes flying blind in the clouds, because without a system of orderly control they are all in great danger of colliding with each other. There is no future for an industry which cannot guarantee the safety of the passengers—which at that point they couldn't. Thus there was no future for the entire airlines industry until somebody came up with the concept that is now called "air traffic control," a superior discipline combined with the enforcement of laws completely committed to the safety and progress of every airplane in that cloud, large and small. The golden rule of "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is the only rule that works among pilots in an air traffic control system—for unless I'm totally committed to your safety and your passengers' safety, I will never find safety for myself.

And so it is among nations. To set up this sort of global security system is the challenge for the next generation to pioneer. And for the first time in history there are global technologies and global systems available for us to begin this experimental process of testing, finding and eliminating the weaknesses, and building a system which can be properly tested by the nations of the world. There will be no peace until something is developed which convinces the people of the world that it is safe to disarm; at present it's not the least bit safe, and they're not going to do it.

What we're talking about is a third option: instead of either the U.S. or the USSR dominating all these global satellite systems and other systems, there must be an international control. Instead of either of us gaining control over all the resources of Africa or Latin America and other areas, which the people there oppose, there has to be a system created which enables people in every single nation, large and small, to provide their own food, cloth-

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ing, housing, and health for themselves and their children and grandchildren.

One of the problems we must solve is that of communicating these ideas to the public. About ten years ago the editor of one of the major national magazines told Harriet and me that he could envision a picture on the front of his magazine which would sell lots of copies, a vivid picture of war with dead bodies scattered all over the place. He said, "The problem is that I cannot think of a picture that I could put on the cover of a news magazine which would sell the thing and tell the story you're talking about. How can you create a visually gripping picture of a device through which people are managing to keep from killing themselves? You're talking about the Golden Rule among nations militarily, and throughout history no journalist has been able to communicate vividly the story of the Golden Rule."

Sometimes it is quite discouraging to see things getting so bad in the world and to feel so frustrated at being unable to reach the one person, the president, who would be able to make the kind of decision to launch the kind of program which we need to break this cycle of war-peace-war-peace. But I suppose the thing that keeps me going is the driving conviction that we can and must do this thing. And along the way a number of important people have urged us to continue. One of these was Robert Muller [see pp. 251-55], who ten or twelve years ago told Harriet and me, "You must continue the conceptual work you are involved in. Thirty years ago when I went to work for the United Nations, I didn't believe it would ever function properly; but I wanted it to, and so I gave my life to serve it, even though I didn't really believe it could happen. Today I know from my position here that human skills and knowledge in every profession have expanded enormously, across national boundaries and around the world. Today for the first time in history human beings have the capability to build an operational organization to protect all nations. *The problem is that nobody is ordering it to be done.* But for the first time in history we do have the capability, so you cannot cease your work no matter how broke you become, how deep you go into debt. Because for the first time in history humankind has these powers and we are waiting for somebody to provide the necessary leadership."