"How Newton Parodied Kepler," in the textbook *Meta-subject: Knowledge,* this concept is still unclear for us. If it coincides with Newton's, and you are merely criticizing his method of work, then we are very disappointed in your work. We think that it is absolutely uninteresting from the standpoint of science, albeit entertaining from the standpoint of the history of science, and the history of human delusions.

I hope very much, that Mr. LaRouche will be able to reply to this letter, and that we shall continue to work with our schoolchildren on his approach to gravitation.

6. In conclusion, I would like again to emphasize that the cultivation of the value of theoretical thinking, under conditions where mass-media technologies are aggressively influencing our minds, is of utmost urgency. It is just as necessary to unite our efforts in this endeavor, as for the solution of other problems that remain to be solved.

Reconstruction Through Multicultural Education

by Areti Demosthenous

Areti Demosthenous, an educator from Cyprus, gave this presentation—titled in full, "Reconstructing a Bankrupt World Through Multicultural Education with Reference to the Different Religious Traditions in the Middle East"—to the Bad Schwalbach conference session of March 23.

Reconstruction of a bankrupt world requires identification of the existing problems, strengthening civil society through multicultural education, and involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the reconstruction. The financial development is not included in the above three factors which are required for the reconstruction of a bankrupt world, because this is the basis for education. Financial development is the *sine qua non* for a healthy educational system.

The so-called theory of the Clash of Civilizations could be faced through multicultural education. Two problems are to be faced in this regard. The first one is that peace is hidden by history. This happens because children learn more about wars and victories, not much about the way to treaties, and the national victories of the neighboring countries. The second

problem is that politicians usually exploit religious fanaticism of the people. Getting to know the unknown neighbor may be of great benefit, because new perspectives will be laid down for mutual understanding. The unknown neighbor may be a friend, not always an enemy!

Peace is unfortunately hidden by history, since children at school usually learn more about wars, their own national victories, and ignore long periods of peaceful co-existence. . . . Historical thinking can foster the creation of an educational system based rather on peace subjects, and cultural historical events of the past, than on conflicts and war-educational elements.

Multicultural education can be developed through lectures, workshops and programs focussing on the common rather than on the different or the dividing elements. It can provide, with necessary knowledge, cultural as well as religious social and legal elements. In order to identify the existing problems and strengthen civil society, we need education, information, publicity! Moreover, the problem of structuring heterogeneous societies in a region can not be solved without multicultural education. This may cost money, acceptance of the differences, willingness to have peaceful settlement of conflicts.

Common Elements of Religions

The case of Cyprus is quite interesting in this regard. In Cyprus we have a political problem, a cultural problem, a "national" security problem; but mainly, two communities with different financial status! The different religious traditions in the Middle East can contribute positively to mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence. This of course can be fulfilled if we look for the common and not the dividing elements. In Judaism, for instance, prophets gave kings authority to rule. Judaism developed the concept of the welfare state: One-tenth of the income has to be given to the poor! "Islam" means submission to Allah. The distinguishing feature of education in Islam is submission to God. According to Muslim law, wealth has to be distributed honestly. Charity is a virtue! Interest has to be given to the poor. The word "jihad" derives from the Arabic "*jahad.*" It means assertion of faith in front of an unfaithful king or a leader!

On the other hand, Jesus Christ ordered people to give the Caesar what is to be given to him and give God what is to be given to Him. This means that God demands from people spiritual values, and not money or goods. This is quite important, especially at a time when confusion and misunderstanding exist among many religious groups and their moral education.

Islam, from the first years of its advent, respected the religious dignity of "People of the Book" (*ahl al-Kitab*), above and beyond legal regulations. It is a matter of fact that the tenets of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are only "apparently irreconcilable," since these world religions really share many things, especially the faith in one God. Difference

of religion is not to blame for its worldwide exploitations for reasons beyond its real spirit.

Nevertheless, religious groups use religious fundamentalism in order to have political or economical advantages. What can be done? Politics has to be based on education of peace. Peaceful co-existence has to be priority. Whatever the cost will be, conflicts have to be peacefully settled. Terrorism has to be faced through international policy based on UN resolutions, and human rights have to be respected by everybody, the governments and the religious or ethnic groups. A war can only be the last choice.

In case it comes to lasting wars and conflicts which could be regarded as a result of a Clash of Civilizations, the gap between these civilizations will become greater and greater. This will have unthinkably bad consequences for the social and political development of the people of the region and destroy their economic sufficiency as well. Besides, it will increase religious fanaticism, which will empower terrorists to attack civilians and destroy any kind of peace process now and in future.

The Example of Cyprus

In order to find out the potential of a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus problem and make a small contribution to the reconstruction of our world, I use multicultural education through lectures, and radio and TV programs, as a tool. Multicultural education helps people respect others' faith and find out common concepts and common interests. The mobilization of students and teenagers in order to deal with multicultural issues is of great significance in this regard. We try to mobilize them by asking them to interview people of ethnic or religious difference in the country, or people involved in social work, or in mixed marriages between adherents of different religions. They make questionnaires, and discuss with these people issues of interest, trying to find out whether the difference is a problem or if it creates problems, whether people respect others' faith or discriminate.

Students organize round table discussions with leading NGOs' personalities, and visit NGOs who work for the development of civil society, too. Examples of multicultural lecture titles given at the University of Nikosia (Cyprus), at the University of Erfurt (Germany) and MASHAV Workshop (Center for International Collaboration, Israel) are: "Strengthening Civil Society Through Multicultural Education"; "Sociological Structures of Islam Compared to Those of Christianity"; "Introduction to Muslim Law's Economic System"; 'Introduction to Islam; Peace or War?"; "Models of Co-existence Between Muslims and Christians in Cyprus Since the 16th Century"; "Family Law in the Main Religions of the Middle East (Judaism, Christianity, Islam)." Religious leaders often forget that religion is established in order to contribute positively to people's moral and physical development! The vital dilemma that the world religions have to face, now and in future, is how they shall use their differences; as tools for

creation of conflicts, or as tools for peace and development?

Multicultural education can be promoted also through TV and radio programs. Basic objectives of this kind of programs are "getting to know the unknown," to build on the common, and to use the differences for social and financial development. An example is a weekly radio program of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corp., "Our Neighbors and Us," a radio program focusing on peaceful co-existence in the Middle East. There are broadcasts about neighboring countries, their culture and peace movements; broadcasts analyzing key words like war, peace, co-existence etc.; and broadcasts related to politics and development. The program invites guests and listeners to call and ask questions.

According to philosophy, "war unites" although "peace divides"! This happens because it is easier for people to work together to create conflicts instead of working for peace. For this reason it is necessary to educate people, and especially the younger generation for peace.

I would like to close up this small speech with what Mr. Lyndon LaRouche stressed in his introductory: "Peace movements alone do not establish peace! We need leaders!" This is, in fact, realized in many countries. We have many peace movements all over the world, but we do not have peace! Let's hope that future leaders will be leaders of peace and development; not leaders for war and corruption!