

The Rubik Cube is simple compared with the omni-interdependence of the world today. Everything seems impossible--and possible.

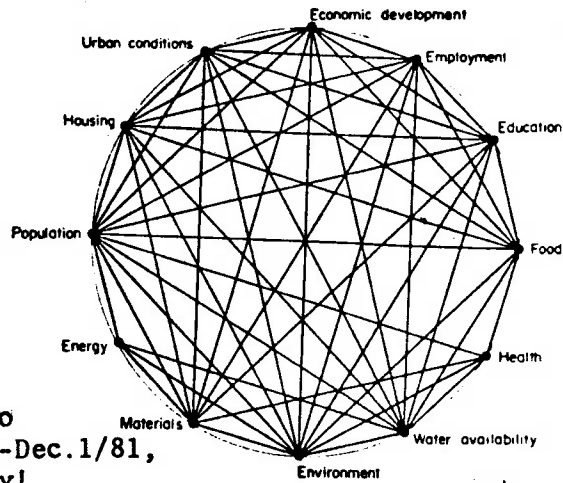
#1601 and #1602 are paste-ups of materials from Howard Kurtz, whose WAR CONTROL PLANNERS, INC. makes more sense to me than any other proposal of action toward global peace.

When I told Howard I'd like some materials I could use with a peace conference I was to lead at Craigville Conference Center Nov.29-Dec.1/81, I was flooded by return mail special delivery! These four sheets are typical of this ministry.

Howard is hard-headed practical and saintly--and he's both in unusual, fresh ways. It was my privilege to give the charge to the candidate at the UCC ordination of his wonderful wife Harriet, cofounder of War Control Planners, whose life and death were --and continue to be--witnesses for peace.

NOTE:
While I encourage you to write to Howard Kurtz for literature, please send some \$ if you do so: this ministry is, as it has always been, \$-submarginal!

Areas of Interdependence



International Federation of Institutes for Advanced Study
The state of the planet.

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(See also Elliott #1602.)

OVER

COMMENTARY

Bruce Callander

A Plan to Do Away With Wars

THE REV. Harriet B. Kurtz, 61, died of cancer here in late June. She was a minister of the United Church of Christ and founder, with her husband, of a peace group known as War Control Planners, Inc.

What follows is not an obituary of Harriet Kurtz. Her life was made up less of dates and places than of ideas — one consuming idea in particular: That civilization cannot long exist if people remain preoccupied with perfecting the means of destroying each other.

Readers of *Air Force Times* may recall reading about Harriet and Howard Kurtz and the War Control Planners.

The Kurtzes seemed, on the surface, to be the original odd couple. She, a graduate of Wellesley College (1937), studied for two years at the Russian Institute of Columbia University (1946-48) and earned her master's in divinity from Union Theological Seminary (1962). He, a War II lieutenant colonel with the Air Force, was an engineer with American Airlines and later with a consulting firm which had defense contracts.

In 1947, while helping set up New-York-to-Moscow airline service, Howard got a look at Soviet weaponry in the May Day parade. Knowing something about the corresponding U.S. arsenal, he felt he was observing the next world war in its embryonic stages.

Through the 1950s, the Kurtzes discussed global politics and possible alternatives with friends and concerned strangers. Their interest in the "peace movement" cost Kurtz his job, but eventually crystallized in a plan for what the pair

called the "Global Information Cooperative."

The concept is packaged in an elaborate audio-visual briefing and in lengthy documentation of Man's unsuccessful history of trying to find security in arms.

Hoping for converts among high-level leaders, the Kurtzes showered successive administrations with their documents. Some leaders were turned off by the unorthodox approach of the project. Others shied away from what they took to be religious and moral concepts.

At its heart, however, the plan for the Global Information Cooperative is neither moralistic nor at odds with national policy. It is simplistically realistic.

The basic premise is that the world's technology can be shared to the mutual advantage of all nations. The satellites with which nations spy on each other could be used, the pair argued, to manage the world's resources. They could help Man search for mineral deposits, monitor the weather, detect natural disasters, control agriculture and spread the world's natural wealth equitably among nations.

At the same time, the Kurtzes contended, no nation need yield up its national sovereignty or security until it felt safe in doing so. The exchange of information to aid humanity would parallel separate national programs for defense. When the nations trusted one another enough to begin disarming, the same satellites which monitored nature could be used to inspect and enforce the arms agreements.

The trick, the Kurtzes always realized, is to get one nation to take the initiative in launching such an approach. The logical one is the U.S., which has the military

strength to accept the risk, the technology to lead the way and the wealth to underwrite the initial steps.

They always conceded that there would be some expense, though they contended that it would be less in the end than the cost of a global war. The risk, they predicted, would be minimal — since the plan allows each nation to maintain its defenses until threats to its security have been removed — and the risk would be nothing to that of a continued arms race.

To Howard and Harriet Kurtz, the alternative always was the unthinkable use of power to destroy humanity. The solution always was "pro-human" use of resources and technology. Their frustration has been that successive national leaders agreed with them in principle, but failed to see the plan as a workable solution to basic world problems.

The Kurtzes had some encouragement from the Carter administration. It appears to be less than the polite acknowledgments which have raised, then dashed, their hopes so often in the past.

Critics of such peace plans argued that they are idealistic and counter to human nature. The Kurtzes' approach is not, after all, so different from those other centuries-old approaches to pacifying human behavior — that naive childish notion in the Golden Rule, for example.

To which Harriet Kurtz probably would have agreed, noting, however, that such philosophies have not really failed. They have just never been tried.

What set the Kurtzes apart from other peacemakers of recent vintage, however, was less a matter of philosophy than of style. They managed to be zealous in their

belief without becoming fanatical. They preached without pounding. They never gave in to the notion that the remedy for violence could be violent. While others pursued "peace" by bombing the war machine, they sought it by testifying before Congressional committees and bending whatever ears they could reach in the White House.

From all reports, Harriet Kurtz died on the brink of what most people would call poverty and Howard Kurtz continues their effort on a shoestring budget. Their work brought neither any material wealth for the investment of time and effort. But it is not the sort of thing which lends itself to an easy profit-and-loss accounting. They have had something else in mind.

One day, when nations have spent the wealth of several more generations on protection and seem no nearer to the desired security, something Harriet or Howard Kurtz said may stick in somebody's mind and sound more reasonable. It is doubtful that either name will be linked with it by then.

But that, one suspects, would not matter too much to them. If it works and if it helps, that probably will be enough.

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OVER