

# Rage Against the War Machine: What Rage? ‘When will they ever learn?’

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*In his iconic 1950s anti-war hit song [‘Where Have All the Flowers Gone?’](#), Pete Seeger posed the eternal question about war: ‘when will they ever learn?’ Of course, Seeger’s question was primarily directed at those individuals who choose to participate in the fighting. But it might equally have been directed at those in the ‘anti-war’ movement.*

A few years later in 1963, Native Canadian Buffy Sainte-Marie penned the equally iconic [‘Universal Soldier’](#) to draw attention to ‘individual responsibility’ for war.

The question ‘Why war?’ has troubled human beings for millennia and individuals of conscience have long resisted it, sometimes paying a heavy price for doing so. And back in 1932, two of humanity’s giants – Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud – grappled with the question, exchanging letters on the subject.

See [‘Why War?’](#)

Beyond war, a great deal of effort has gone into understanding conflict and violence, including their structural and cultural components, and I have noted some of these efforts, including my own, in a wide range of documents such as these:

[‘Why Violence?’](#),

[‘Comforting a Baby is Violent’](#),

[‘The War to End War 100 Years On: An Evaluation and Reorientation of our Resistance to War’](#) and

[‘Einstein and Freud’s ‘Why War?’](#)

[Revisited: Why Anti-War Efforts Go Nowhere’](#).

Four things fundamentally missing from all previous efforts to halt a particular war or to end

war generally, however, are these:

1. a serious effort to understand the dysfunctional psychology, and what causes it, that drives human violence generally,
2. a serious effort to analyse war as a system of power: Who is causing it, why and how? (This is important because understanding how power works in the world system as well as who, precisely, is driving what is happening, why, and how they are doing it are crucial prerequisites for developing an effective strategy to resist, or end, war.)
3. a sophisticated nonviolent strategy based on this understanding and analysis that is thoughtfully designed to address each of the foundational components of war, and
4. sufficient courageous people committed to implementing this strategy by participating in it themselves and mobilizing others to do so too.

Consequently, to say that anti-war efforts lack sophistication is to put it mildly in the extreme. As the very long history of 'anti-war' struggle clearly demonstrates.



Source: [Rage Against the War Machine](#)

And so it was listening to the anti-war speeches delivered in Washington DC at the Rage Against the War Machine rally on 19 February 2023. You can watch whole or abridged versions of these speeches here: [Rage Against the War Machine](#).

Rage might give a person power in some contexts but, in itself, rage has zero strategic value. And are these people really feeling 'rage' about the ongoing war all over the planet or even the war in Ukraine? And acting on it? Of course not. Even if they were, as mentioned 'rage' is no substitute for acting powerfully (that is, strategically) to end war.

Moreover, there is a simple reason for this. Most anti-war activists do not feel rage against the war machine for the simple reason that they are terrified of it.

And this fear incapacitates them, leaving most anti-war activists too scared to seriously commit themselves to doing what is necessary to end war. Again, as the record demonstrates.

Hence, they complain powerlessly, rather than analysing, devising strategy and then acting powerfully knowing that their actions will contribute to the long-term struggle to end war once and for all.

So let me go back a step and analyze why the anti-war movement is so frightened and powerless and why it cannot learn from its own history of failure.

### Why do most people complain?

In essence, this happens because when they were children, their parents interfered with their emotional expression which, in turn, stifled those innate behaviors bestowed by evolution to ensure that the baby, and later the child and then adult, acted to have their needs met. Usually by a young age, the child will learn to complain powerlessly when they do not get what they want. But complaining, rather than acting, does not meet their needs.

Thus, just as the child, endlessly thwarted by a parent who ignores the child's genuine needs and then ignores their pleas to have these addressed, is trapped in the mode of complaining, most activists never learn that the role of politicians is to ignore them too. Of course, the value in this for those who genuinely wield power in society and whose aim is to facilitate perpetual war to achieve a variety of Elite ends (notably including the ongoing consolidation of Elite power and the maximization of corporate profits by financing both sides in any war) is that efforts of this nature, such as public protests against 'government policies' absorb and dissipate dissent, as intended.

And so it was on 19 February 2023 when a list of anti-war speakers echoed the eternal cries of powerlessness at one of the latest manifestations of an anti-war street protest:

'Enough is enough! We demand change! Do the right thing! Implement ceasefire in Ukraine!' See ['Twenty Years after the Start of the War in Iraq, People Around the World are still Raging Against the War Machine'](#).

Really?

As even former US Secretary of State Alexander Haig once noted about a massive anti-war demonstration: 'Let them march all they want, as long as they continue to pay their taxes.' See [Alexander Haig](#). As a four-star general, Haig, not regarded as the most intelligent Secretary of State in US history, certainly understood that tactical choice is a question of strategy. Most activists have no idea.

### So What Must We Do to End War?

Earlier in this article I identified four elements missing from the anti-war movement's efforts. Let me restate them and offer my own learning in relation to these points.

1. a serious effort to understand the dysfunctional psychology, and what causes it, that drives human violence generally.

As the final stage of more than four decades investigating the cause of violence, I spent 14 years living in seclusion with Anita McKone. You can read what I learned in the document [‘Why Violence?’](#), in which I explain the destructive impact of the ‘visible’, ‘invisible’ and ‘utterly invisible’ violence that adults relentlessly inflict on children – resulting in the bulk of the adult human population being unconsciously terrified, self-hating and powerless, with Anita’s description of our process in:

[‘Fearless Psychology and Fearful Psychology: Principles and Practice’](#).

If you like, you can also read other articles I have written such as

[‘The Psychology of Projection in Conflict’](#) and

[‘Challenges for Resolving Complex Conflicts’](#).

2. a serious effort to analyse war as a system of power: Who is causing it, why and how? This is important because understanding how power works in the world system as well as who, precisely, is driving what is happening, why, and how they are doing it are crucial prerequisites for developing an effective strategy to resist, or end, war.

I made considerable effort to explain this as part of a wider study identifying the Global Elite and how its power is exercised in the world system. This included explaining why the Elite has a vested interest in ensuring that war continues. For more than 200 years, members of this Elite have carefully facilitated the precipitation of war and then profited immensely from financing both sides in any war of significance as well as the rebuilding of infrastructure and the care of injured soldiers in its aftermath. Hence, preparations for war, the conduct of war and the rebuilding/healing necessary post-war is the most profitable economic venture, by far, conducted on Planet Earth and it greatly enriches Elite families, such as the Rothschilds and Rockefellers, as well as their agents.

See [Historical Analysis of the Global Elite: Ransacking the World Economy Until ‘You’ll Own Nothing.’](#)

3. a nonviolent strategy based on this understanding and analysis that is thoughtfully designed to address each of the foundational components of war.

First, this requires a completely different approach to parenting if we want to raise powerfully nonviolent children.

See [‘My Promise to Children’](#) and

[‘Do We Want School or Education?’](#)

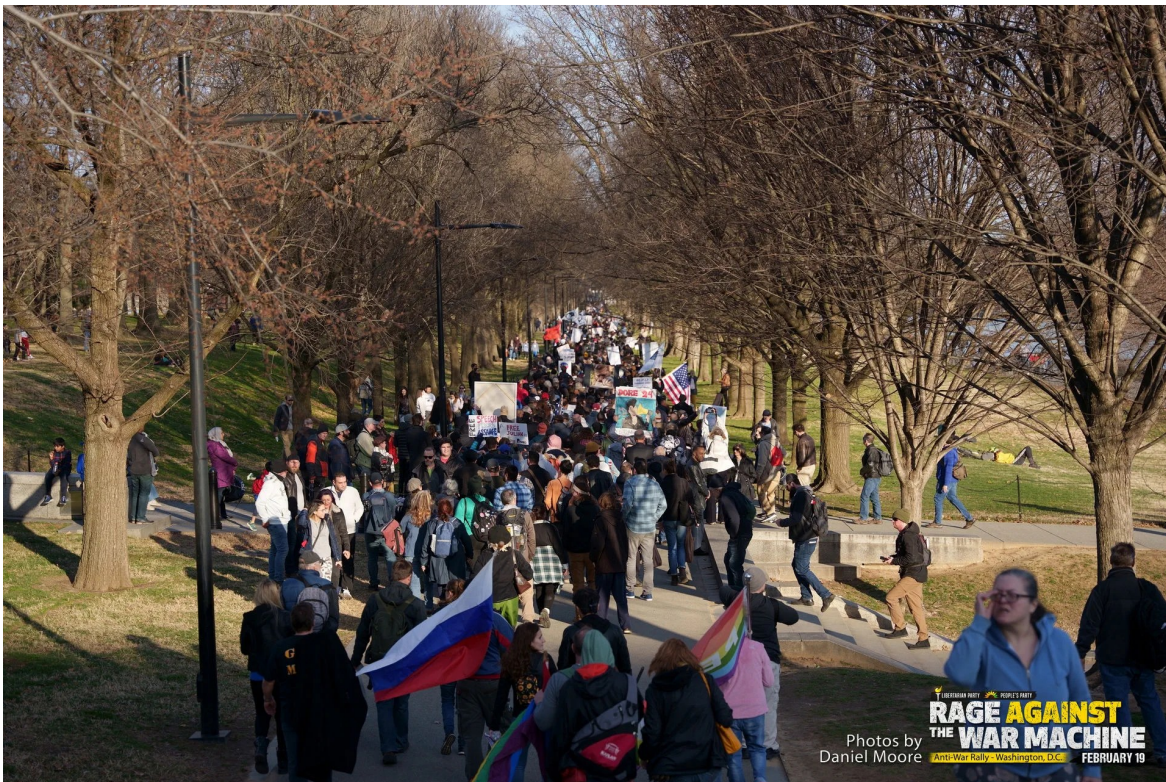
And given that strategy has long been a passion of mine and nonviolent strategy particularly, I investigated this thoroughly when I wrote [The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach](#).



But for the simplest explanation of nonviolent strategy to end war, you can read it on this website starting with the list of [‘Strategic Goals for Ending War’](#).

4. sufficient courageous people committed to implementing this strategy by participating in it themselves and mobilizing others to do so too. This is important because nonviolent activism to end war has a price, measured in jail terms, adverse psychological assessments from people intent on stopping you, and a myriad other penalties depending on the legal jurisdiction in which the activist operates.

But if the antiwar activist is not willing to pay the price of their nonviolent activism, then the victims of wars in other places will pay the price of war with their lives.



Source: [Rage Against the War Machine](#)

Clearly, identifying sufficient courageous people is a primary challenge and the obvious shortage of courageous and tenacious people committed to strategically resisting war is just another outcome of our violently dysfunctional parenting of children mentioned in the first point above.

So if we are going to mobilize sufficient people willing to act powerfully over an extended period to resist all of those foundational elements that make war possible, we must profoundly alter our parenting model to produce powerful children and offer adults a chance to heal from the violence they suffered as children as well.

See [‘Putting Feelings First’](#) and [‘Nisteling: The Art of Deep Listening’](#).

Otherwise we are condemned to watch people speak against war and march up and down in ‘anti-war’ rallies (or employ other tactics devoid of strategic impact) until the world is blown up.

## An Obvious Criticism

An obvious criticism of the approach I have outlined above is that it is 'too slow'. It offers no quick solution to deal with the immediacy of the threat we face at the current moment with the proxy war being fought by the US and NATO through Ukraine against Russia which includes the risk of the war 'going nuclear'.

See [‘The Dire Significance of Putin’s Feb 21 Speech’](#).

And I am well aware of the many calls for negotiations on the one hand – see, for example, [‘The Ukraine War: Think Deeper Or We Shall All Lose’](#) – and long-standing US war-fighting policy on the other as routinely explained in a plethora of US Government ‘defense strategy’ documents.

See, for example, [‘2022 National Defense Strategy of The United States of America’](#) and a thoughtful discussion of US nuclear strategy by Professor Michel Chossudovsky in

[“‘Preemptive Nuclear War’: The Historic Battle for Peace and Democracy. A Third World War Threatens the Future of Humanity’](#).

I am also aware of calls, such as that by Scott Ritter, for US anti-war activists to focus on nuclear arms control as the highest priority for now.

See [‘Scott Ritter on the War Machine and the Future of the Antiwar Movement’](#).

And other perspectives and proposals besides.

But the obvious response to the ‘too slow’ criticism of my longer-term proposals above is simple: The result of the current crisis is so far beyond the existing anti-war movement to realistically influence, it is laughable. And so, in my view – which is consistent with my research into, and analysis of, what has transpired historically:

see [Historical Analysis of the Global Elite: Ransacking the World Economy Until ‘You’ll Own Nothing.’](#) – the war will most probably end when Russia has defeated the Ukrainian state but only after the war has been dragged on for as long as it can be conducted profitably, from an Elite perspective.

And while there is undoubtedly considerable risk of the war ‘going nuclear’ through policy or strategic miscalculation – see [‘Stanislav Petrov, “The Man Who Saved The World,” Dies At 77’](#) – accident – see [Command and Control](#) – or rogue local ‘initiative’, the Elite will ‘gamble’ against these possibilities while (presumably) constraining it at policy level, as has most likely occurred throughout the nuclear age.

Insane? Of course, it is insane. See [‘The Global Elite is Insane Revisited’](#). It’s just that, in my view, there is nothing new to observe here: Just repetition of what we have seen before, which includes being taken to the brink of nuclear war and relying on ‘unknown factors’ – including, but not exclusively, background control by the Elite – to avoid it.

## Conclusion

War is brutal. The Elite perpetuates war endlessly to capture control of people and resources to maintain the existing system of world power and make monumental profits. It will not be

stopped because we make fine speeches, chant anti-war slogans at rallies or call for negotiations.

The human world is a system of power. And we need to understand how that system of power works to understand, and change, the world. This applies particularly when dealing with systems, structures and processes at the heart of Elite power, such as economics and war.

But underlying even this we need to understand the psychology of human violence because this also enables us to understand why the Elite controls world affairs to precipitate war (among a vast range of other violent and exploitative outcomes) as well as why 'ordinary' people fight in wars and the vast bulk of people who identify as 'anti-war' are so powerless.

In essence, war will be ended by analysing and understanding what makes it all happen and taking action intelligently, courageously and tenaciously to change what makes it possible; that is, by resisting in strategically appropriate ways the foundational components on which the entire system of war is built.

And given the ultimate foundation of the war system is our violent parenting model that renders virtually all humans into a state of fearful submission to violence, we haven't even started the long journey to end war yet.

Nevertheless, while my own lifetime of effort has failed to remedy anything significant about the war system, out of love for my uncles, great uncles and humanity generally – see [‘Who Am I?’](#) – I continue to focus my own attention on undermining its foundations as documented above. It is slow, ‘unrewarding’ work in the short term.

But my hope is that some future generations of humans, assuming we effectively resist a myriad of current and future threats notably including the vast range of threats we all face at the hands of the Elite now – see [‘We Are Being Smashed Politically, Economically, Medically and Technologically by the Elite’s “Great Reset”: Why? How Do We Fight Back Effectively?’](#) – will live in a world without violence and war.

Obviously, given the precarious state of the world in many respects, a tremendous amount of intelligent, strategically-oriented action will be needed for this hope to be realized.

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