DHARMA -- APPENDIX-A -- ROAD

Overby's "less traveled by" path --

Limited by space in this article I urge you also to see the two short vitas on my web site and our book. *A Call For Peace, especially* the 2005 edition with its 47 page updated preface.

I was born in 1926 in Montana where the great Missouri River spills itself out of the Rocky Mountains, as the fourth of six children in the family of economically poor and formally uneducated Norwegian immigrant parents. I went to a small high school [35 in the entire high school] in an eastern Montana community of less than 150 people named Redstone -- and graduated in April 1944 as valedictorian of my class of five. With youthful innocence I fell in love with flying machines, and found myself in US Air Corps B-29 tail-gunnery training, destined for Japanese sky, when mushroom clouds ended World War II in a nuclear holocaust.

After World War-II, thanks to the GI-Bill, [a law passed to financially assist U. S. World War II veterans in going to college] I earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering with high distinction (summa cum laude) from the University of Minnesota and an ROTC commission as a second lieutenant in the US Air Force in June 1950. "Second lieutenancy" became my ticket to the Korean War. I was involuntarily recalled to active duty in early 1951, and still passionately in love with flying machines, I volunteered for pilot training, and spent the last six months of that war as a B-29 copilot flying bombing missions from Okinawa's Kadena Air Base to targets in North Korea.

Please note that when I comment on my academic successes – "valedictorian" at Redstone High School, and "summa cum laude" at Minnesota, I do it not to brag -- but rather to help you better understand the next steps and stumbles on my "road less traveled by" – that which fortunately happened to me at the University of Wisconsin.

My war experience was a relatively mild one compared to that of soldiers in all armies who are asked to engage in the brutal hand to hand killing and destruction that is intimate war. My B-29 crew and I somewhat impersonally flatted parts of North Korean cities and innocent children, women and older folks. We dropped our bombs, our "gifts to gooks"[1] where ever our generals thought it appropriate. In Korea we also destroyed dams[2] and flooded the valleys below – acts that were called "war-crimes" when the Nazi's did this to the Dutch in World War II [3]- But all of us, both the intimate and the impersonal killers, are branded in unique ways by our footprints of war.

I have recently been reading a Japanese book, titled *Kike Wadatsumi No Koe [Listen to the Voices from The Sea]* [4] and I learn from the writings home of these literate war-dead World War II Japanese youthful cannon fodder -- that we young people who are asked by our nations to do the killing – are universally connected by our war experiences across all cultures and time. My goodness what a monstrous way to find community with one's fellow human beings.

To help you understand some dimensions of both my love affair and my nightmare with flying machines – please see my web site "Dharma Appendix-B – Poems" where I share some of my "poetry as therapy" on the topic of "flight" – [1] "Unfetteredness," childhood dreams of flight, and [2]. "Night Visions," night bombing in Korea.

After Korea and a few years of floundering, some of it related to the war, I finally found my way to graduate school at that great public university, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where I earned a 1959 master's degree in engineering, and a 1965 interdisciplinary Ph.D.

One indelible thing that my Korean experience did for me was to help me understand how ignorant I was, as a bright engineering graduate, about most everything in life and on Planet Earth other than my little domain of engineering. How sad that we become such ignorant atoms in our existence games of life.

I am so grateful for my eight years at Wisconsin where I began to collect and truly educate myself after Korea. Thus my "less-traveled-path" enabled me to grow in not just engineering, but also from swimming in some economics, political science, history, psychology and medical school physiology (for human factors engineering), philosophy and especially ethics, international relations, industrial relations, international socio-economic development, and some "labor law" in the Wisconsin Law School. This academic milieu in synergy with the rich intellectual and internationalist University of Wisconsin culture -- lifted and launched me on my "less-traveled-path," and as Frost said, "that has made all the difference."

Please see my web site vitas for more on my academic path that includes living and working professionally in other nations like Japan and China, professional engineering time spent working in the U.S. Congress, and even an unsuccessful 1982 run for a seat in the U.S. Congress – in opposition to President Reagan's acceleration of the arms race.

After leaving graduate school, the U.S. Vietnam obscenity and U.S. governmental lies about it – significantly alienated me. My Korean War experience helped me to detect some of the lies.

However, even with all of this great education at Wisconsin -- I had never heard of Japan's Article 9 – until 1981 when I found myself in Japan as a visiting professor in the Chubu University-Ohio University exchange program. In preparation for this visiting professor experience and knowing nothing about the Japan where 30 years earlier I had lived for six months doing war -- I took a course at Ohio University on Japanese history and culture. In this course I first read the Japanese constitution and discovered beautiful Article 9. While in Japan I made my first visit to Hiroshima.

My interest in Article 9 took on new life when in August 1990, Iraq's Saddam Hussein [our U.S. protégé] invaded Kuwait and President Bush the first, rallied the world, including Japan, to send soldiers and money to fight the U.S.'s first Gulf "oil resource war." Bush called for a new "world order." I thought, indeed we do need a new world order but not the militarist one that put 500,000 U.S. soldiers in the Gulf region. I thought that the new world order we needed was one based on Japan's Article 9 – a new world order of non-violent, non-military conflict resolution and war prevention activities – all of which is implied in the "rule of law" that is Article 9. Thus in March 1991, after the first Gulf War ended, with the help of the Athens Unitarian Fellowship group, I founded the Article 9 Society [A9S] a group dedicated to keeping Article 9 alive in Japan and to spreading Article 9's ideas and ideals across Planet Earth so as to become an "Article 9 Without Borders."

I communicated these ideas to my colleague and dear friend, the late physicist Dr. Hiroshi Katsumori, whom I had met at Chubu University in 1981. He became excited and founded Article 9 Society – Japan [A9S-Japan] groups all across Japan. Unfortunately Katsumori sensei died in June 2004 and our "A9S-Japan" groups much need and miss his passionate and

dedicated hand at the tiller. Because of Katsumori sensei's courageous efforts and activities for Article 9, I twice [2002 and 2003] nominated him and Article 9 for a Nobel Peace Prize.

Additional Comment on Japanese Q&RBD and my interests in GTBD and what Japan might do for peace and justice on Planet Earth with Article 9 as its badge of honor

In endnote # 4 of my Dharma World paper, because of space limitations, the editors had to remove some of my endnote commentary on the differences between U.S. and Japanese engineers, scientists, and companies approach to product design and production. In the late 1960s and 1970s when the Japanese automobile industry almost drove the U.S. auto industry out of business – the Japanese were practicing "Quality and Reliability by Design" [Q&RBD] for their automobile industry – analogous to my ideas of GTBD for dear Mother Earth. U.S. corporate engineers and scientists were not at that time focusing on the importance of "quality" and "reliability" criteria at the very beginning of the engineering design process. U.S companies were using fewer engineering resources at this early point in the design process as compared to Japanese. Thus U.S. companies were designing poor quality and reliability vehicles [junk compared to that coming from Japan] and expecting the manufacturing process to produce high quality and highly reliable vehicles using statistical and other methods of factory "quality control." Statistical and other forms of "quality control" are control are important, but the truly critical place to influence "quality" and "reliability" is at the very beginning of the engineering design process by concretely focusing on these design criteria from the very first. By the time that the preliminary design phase of product, process, or system has been completed -- some 90 percent of all future cost and benefits have already been fixed.

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[1] See on my web site, "Dharma -- APPENDIX-B Poems" -- my poem "Night Visions" for an explanation of these Korean War, U.S. military words of love and respect – "gifts for gooks."

[2] June 20, 1953, *New York Times*, Korean War -- Daily Report – 15 B-29s and the Toksan Dam.

[3] Feffer, John, *North Korea South Korea: U.S. Policy at a Time of Crisis*, An Open Media Book, Seven Stories Press, New York, 2003, page 33.

[4] Wadatsumi Society, *Listen To The Voices From The Sea [Kike Wadatsumi no Koe]: Writings of the Fallen Japanese Students*, Translated by Midori Yamanouchi and Joseph L. Quinn, S. J., The University of Scranton Press, 2000.