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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN;

I have read the three articles by Professor William O. Peterfi,

1. "American Foreign Policy: The Prospect Toward World Government"
2. "The International Enforcement of Human Rights:  
The Concept and Practice of the European Court of Human Rights"
3. "The Second Fundamental Human Right: The Right to Peace"

All three of them are very clearly written, and there is no doubt about the author's knowledge of both the field of human rights, and general theory of peace.

In fact, the three articles fit so well together that they constitute the contents of a good, small book. In the first article Peterfi states very clearly what to him is a contradiction between world government as an effective super national organization and American foreign policy. Personally I think Peterfi makes too much out of the oath a U.S. president has to swear, in connection with the declarations of war and entering the U.S. into treaties with other countries. I think the major difficulty where the U.S. is concerned relative to world government is the country's perception of itself as a chosen country, as a nation not like the others--implying by that any concept of world government would have to be compatible with U.S. interests since those interests are seen as a higher expression of human interests in general. But the author's view of not only general world government plans but also those originating in the United States is fascinating.

From this high level of idealism the author demonstrates his ability also to deal with the technicalities of a highly concrete

organization: the European court of human rights. Since in this case we are dealing with a system of states more or less at the same level of social and economic development, some big and some small but with a relatively high level of mutual respect, a horizontal system of human rights practices has emerged and is nicely analyzed by the author. The problem, of course, is that if this is seen as the model for the world as a whole the discrepancies in all kinds of power between the biggest actors and the smallest ones, not to mention the sub-national actors on the world scene makes the European model less than relevant.

However, Peterfi does not fall into this trap. The third article is a very nicely reasoned piece which essentially states a basic position for those operating within the so-called third generation of human rights: that peace should be seen as a human right, not as a state of affairs that happens to come by--and one could add, development and a stable environment could be seen in the same light. Given the reflection in connection with his second article one might, however, argue that adding peace as a human right as the author suggests, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 might be a verbal declaration of some interest, but perhaps not much more. The conditions obtaining in the European setting do not obtain in the world as a whole, and peace is more threatened in the world as a whole than in Western Europe in particular, or inside North America.

If, on the basis of these three articles I should try to characterize Peterfi as a researcher I think I would first of all emphasize his command of the facts and the literature in the field. Of originality of concepts I have not found any particular example, he uses the concepts as used by others, do not subtract or add to common usage. I have no difficulties with "soundness of theoretical foundation", but might perhaps add that Peterfi is not the type of author who engages in grand theory, he stays fairly close to the ground. In so doing he is a fine thinker with precise, good interpretations and a very clear style and command of the field.

This is also well reflected in the excellent journal he is editing. The Journal of World Peace is definitely one of the better in the field, with highly interesting, even important articles within all fields related to peace studies. I think it deserves a much wider circulation, and I feel that Peterfi himself should be given the means needed in that connection.