FRIEDENSNOTE NR. 36

The Key to Real Peace

„Give Peace a Chance“ is the peace anthem for generations of pacifists all over the world, and even after 50 years it has lost none of its relevance.

„Give Peace a Chance“ by John Lennon and Yoko Ono is one of the most popular anthems of the peace movement of the 1970s.

As much as the song captivates through its simplicity, its origin story is just as extraordinary.

Instead of pointless blah-blah, the artist couple called for non-violent, positive peace activities and thereby set in motion a dramatic turn.

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AUTHOR	Alexandra Streubel
SONG	Give Peace a Chance
PERFORMER	John Lennon
ALBUM	Shaved Fish, 1975

During their honeymoon in March 1969, John Lennon and Yoko Ono staged a Bed-In at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal. During this time the two sat side by side in bed, received guests, gave interviews and recorded the song Give Peace a Chance.

They justified the action by arguing that demonstrations were leaving the public increasingly indifferent, and that through a Bed-In one could draw people's attention to problems by other means.

The song consists of four verses in march rhythm with a repeating text that recalls the reciting of mantras, along with the striking refrain "All we are saying is give peace a chance".

The more or less arbitrarily assembled, partly invented terms point to the pointless blah-blah that the peace movement was engaged in at the time: "Bagism, Shagism, Dragism, Madism, Ragism, Tagism", summed up with _"This-ism, that-ism, ism ism ism"__.

In contrast to the endless discussions that prevailed within the peace movement at the time, John Lennon called for unity, with the essential demand of giving peace a chance. This shift toward concentrating on non-violent, positive peace activities is the dramatic turn among activists that took place at that time.

On 4 March 2022 at 08:45, 150 public European radio stations broadcast this song for peace and against the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

What has become of this call for peace? Why do politics keep returning to the mistaken assumption that peace can be brought about through war and arms deliveries?

Conflicts are not inherently bad. Conflicting interests can be the starting point for constructive social change, and many democratic achievements were reached in this way.

Positive peace is not only the absence of overt violence, but also the presence of social justice.

This requires empathy, respect, tolerance and solidarity toward all people, as well as the courage to critically question one's own actions. All of these are abilities that would not only be the key to peace on the current theatre of war, but that would also have protected us over the past three years, which were full of aggression, blame, fear and threat, and could have let us grow as human beings.

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FIRST PUBLISHED ON MANOVA

www.manova.news/artikel/der-schlussel-zu-echtem-frieden

AUDIO VERSION OF THIS ARTICLE · RADIO MÜNCHEN

radiomuenchen.net/de/podcast-archiv/sendeformate/friedensnoten/2184-friedensnoten-35-give-peace-a-chance-john-lennon-yoko-ono.html

THE SONG IN ITS ORIGINAL · YOUTUBE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3_0GqPvr4U

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Auf „Alles Anders“ bloggt sie über Health- und Life-Design. 2020 hat sie ein Dialogforum ins Leben gerufen, das sich aktuell mit Zeitzeugeninterviews der Dokumentation und Aufarbeitung der jüngsten Vergangenheit widmet. Weitere Informationen unter praxis-am-see.at und alles-anders.at.

Website: praxis-am-see.at

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