

Peace Child International

presents

Peace Child in the Gulf

by

David Woollcombe

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"This performance is based on the original musical play "Peace Child" with songs by David Gordon, adapted from the Peace Book by Bernard Benson. The Peace Child Foundation is an educational foundation for youth designed to promote international and intercultural understanding through the arts. Each summer, the Foundation arranges International programs where students aged 12-19 write, rehearse and perform a new adaptation of the Peace Child play under the direction of top professionals. For further information about Peace

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INTRODUCTION

What do you say to a frightened 10-year old who tells you that everyone in their town is going to die because Iraqi terrorists have poisoned your water supply? - or to the kid whose father/sister/uncle is in the Gulf? - or to the class that takes on a collective fixation about facts, figures and ghoulish stories on the war to the exclusion of all other conversation?

Peace Child in the Gulf has been written for such children. It is designed to help them cope with these extraordinary, confusing and terrifying times.

Written in the hours following the outbreak of war, it does not deal with the war directly. There are more than enough television, press and radio stories to deal with that. Rather it seeks to raise children's eyes from the present and ponder the time after the war, focussing their attention on the positive, life-affirming task of building peace, rather than the deadening facts of battle.

The play, of course, begs many questions: who won? - what happened to Iraq? - how many soldiers got killed? - did Israel get drawn in? - did the war go nuclear? As you read this, you may already know the answers to these questions. That is why I have left so many spots in the play for you and your cast to write. It would be foolish to attempt to be prophetic. There are bound to be lines in the script that you, with hindsight, will have to change. But whatever happens, peace must break out in the region: writing this play gave me a chance to imagine how it might look. It helped me deal with what's happening right now. I hope it helps you and your children.

David Woollcombe, Washington DC,
January 17th 1991

Background: What is Peace Child ?

This play is the latest in a long line of Peace Child plays that look at issues which concern young people. The first, back in 1981, dealt with US-Soviet relations and the threat of nuclear war. That play found resolution in starting US-Soviet Youth/cultural Exchanges - which the Peace Child Foundation did in 1986 when it brought the first Soviet School age children to the US, along with the first Soviet Rock Group officially to perform there.

Subsequent plays have dealt with the environment("The Bridge"), Central America, Israel, Chernobyl, the Pacific Rim, Antarctica and, most recently, the problems of US cities ("City at Peace").

Each play follows the same basic format: it is set in the future when the problems that frighten children of today have been resolved. Children are invited to imagine first what that future world might look like? What has changed? How are people, governments, institutions, attitudes different? In each play, the children of the future act out the story of how the peaceful world they desire is achieved, starting back in the early 1990s. More than half the songs in each play come from the authorized Peace Child collection, seven of which are included here; each story involves a central relationship or series of relationships between children from different ethnic, cultural, national or ideological backgrounds; each delivers a solution that is achieved by the children themselves. Finally, crucially, each play includes sections written by the children themselves where they invent characters, scenes and dialogue that express their own thoughts about the issues they are addressing.

Peace Child is designed to empower children - to give them confidence and a powerful, realistic sense of optimism based on a clear understanding of the issues and facts involved. By setting each play in a future in which the problem is solved, children can look back at the present confident that we shall get through - in this case, that the people of Milwaukee did not all die, that nearly all the soldiers did come home and that the countries of the Middle East became full, prosperous members of the family of nations.

A naive hope? – In 1982, the Peace Child fantasy of close US-Soviet relations was dismissed as “dangerous nonsense!” by a major newspaper. Life has imitated art in that case. I dare to hope that the children’s dream in this play will be realised too.

David Woollcombe

Quotes to Ponder

"After the killings on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, the UN Security Council voted unanimously to hold an International Conference on the Middle East. But, guarding against "linkage", Mr Bush refused to allow the Iraq-Kuwait war to be included on the agenda. Thus, it might be said, that the allies went to war over an agenda item!

"Isn't it better to hold a Peace Conference before the war rather than after it."

Ambassador John McDonald

"Militarily, I am persuaded that there is no way that President Bush can lose this war; politically, he has made so many promises, – to Israel, to Congress and others, – there is no way he can win the peace."

Dr

Aziz Said, American Univ.

"At 6.30, (as I watched the war unfold on TV,) I shed tears of outrage because I believe, resolutely, that we did not have to go to war.... Again human beings on this planet have lost the great opportunity to show ourselves that we have the audacity to think beyond war, that we can evolve beyond the archaic notions of fighting and killing and dying as a way of solving problems."

Congressman Ron Dellums, CA.

"Bush succeeded in persuading Shamir, the Israeli Prime Minister, not to carry out a pre-emptive strike against Iraq by undertaking to veto any firm commitment by the coalition to a Middle East Peace Conference. Yet all Western Governments

agree that there is no chance of lasting peace and security in the region without a solution to the Palestine problem.

"It is not impossible that, before the war is over, Israel may have expelled the Palestinians from the West Bank into Jordan to make room for Soviet Jewish immigrants... The UN must prepare a coherent plan for tackling these and other problems immediately. This is necessary not only to prevent chaos once the war is won but also to keep the coalition together long enough to ensure victory...."

Rt.

Hon. Denis Healey, MP

"Even if this war runs like clockwork, the Post-war Middle East will be a mess. But the Middle East was a mess before... The West cannot impose peace, order and democracy at the point of a gun. That is colonialism, and it doesn't work."

The Economist.

"With modest conservation strategies, the United States could declare independence of Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil. What Mr Bush calls our "vital interests" are in fact our vital excesses. (We have gone to war) not for what we need but for what we waste."

Colman

McCarthy, Washington Post

"This is the first in what will be an increasing number of Resource Wars. There is about 33 years supply of oil left in the world, half of it in the Middle East. Who controls it? If war is the only way to decide such questions, what will happen when natural gas starts to run out, or coal, or uranium....?"

Robin

Blackburn, Essex University.

Iraq: Population: 17.6 million people; land area: 168,000 square miles, bigger than California. Geography: flat alluvial plains in the south rising to mountains in the North. Labor Force: 50% in agriculture. Main crops: dates, rice, cotton, grains; Industry: Oil, textiles, cement, armaments; Defense: 42% of annual GNP; Government: Ruling Council headed by Saddam Hussein al Takriti (b. 1935); Provinces: 18 (19 with Kuwait);

History: The valley of the rivers Tigris and Euphrates was originally called Mesopotamia. City states were founded there as early as 3000 BC which is why the area is sometimes called "The cradle of Civilisation". Throughout history, the area was conquered and colonised by Babylonians, Assyrians, Arabs, Mongols, Turks and, after World War One, by the British. Independence finally came in 1932 and a socialist Arab revolution established the present Republic of Iraq in 1958.

Throughout the 60s and 70s, Iraqi foreign policy was oriented towards the Soviet Union: industry was nationalised; agriculture was forcibly collectivised. When Saddam Hussein took over power in 1979, relations with the USSR had already become strained: Iraq was looking to warmer relations with the West. Throughout the 8-year war with Iran, the west and several Arab states, in particular Kuwait, were pleased to give Iraq support against the threat of spreading Islamic fundamentalism led by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. That war ended with a UN-mediated ceasefire in July 1988.

Amnesty and other groups had long protested Saddam's human rights violations. These were brought into focus by the sudden execution of a British journalist in February 1990. Diplomatic arguments developed between Iraq and Kuwait over re-payment of loans made by Kuwait to support the Iraqi war effort and what Iraq felt to be an artificially low price for oil. Iraq also protested the current position of the Iraq-Kuwait border, as well what they felt to be theft of their oil by Kuwait through slant-drilling across their border.

In July, the US Ambassador told Saddam that the US had "no position" on their border dispute. On July 28th, Iraq walked out of an Arab summit called to resolve the problem when its proposals proved unacceptable to every other representative. By this time, 100,000 Iraqi troops were massed on the Kuwaiti frontier. On August 2nd, they invaded and occupied Kuwait promising to turn the place "into a graveyard" if there was any attempt at retaliation.

At first, President Bush's stated that there would be "no immediate retaliation". Following consultations with staff, and a significant meeting with Margaret Thatcher who discussed with him her experience of the Falklands war, Bush made plans for a military buildup. By August 7th, convinced by satellite photographs of troops and missiles aimed toward Saudi Arabia, the Saudi government invited US and other troops to assist in the defence of their frontiers. The UN Security council passed a resolution calling for the complete withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Further UN resolutions followed culminating in one that allowed for "all necessary means" to remove Iraqi forces if they had not withdrawn voluntarily by January 15th 1991. US, Kuwaiti, Saudi and British war planes attacked military installations throughout Iraq during the night of January 16/17 thus beginning the Gulf War.

PRODUCTION DETAILS

SETTING: Bare stage. Peace Child plays can be done in almost any kind of Theatre – gymnasium, cafeteria, community hall, but this one will work best if you can set up a stage that extends a central area into the audience, thus:

LIGHTS, PROPS, COSTUMES: Dimmable lights are needed to provide blackout between scenes. More elaborate lighting may be used as available. Props and costumes should be discussed and, if possible, designed and chosen by the children themselves. Arab robes etc. are useful.

CAST: This play is designed to be performed by 15–25 children of various ages between 7–17. A chorus of 50–60 children may be added; a male–female mix is preferable, as is ethnic and cultural diversity.

MUSIC: Instrumental tapes are available for all the songs included here, but we urge you to have a music director and/or band who can play the music live, and rehearse the songs with the children.

SCENE ONE

Time: Early morning, Peace Day 2000

Place: Small Town anywhere.

BLACKOUT – Taped sound effects of battle, distant at first, coming closer – with music, like a TV News report: "Showdown in the Gulf". gunfire, sirens, bombs going off, people screaming – all frighteningly real. The lights on stage flash, giving glimpses of of bodies frozen in silhouette in poses from combat. The noises get louder, harsher – the screams dominate. Complete darkness. Suddenly: sounds stop & lights come up to full bright as the American brother enters – the stage is clear; a Young American girl lies asleep center stage.

Brother: Hey! What's up?

Sister: (waking) Where am I?

Brother: You're home! It's a holiday – no school!

Yeay!! –

(concerned) Are you OK ?

Sister: There was a war – guns, bombs, people exploding, dying in the desert right near me....

Brother: (comforting her) Heey! – you've been having a nightmare ...

Sister: No it was real!! You were there – you had a gun and you were running – in the desert ...

Brother: Do I have a gun? Am I running – has Westchester (or name of your town/county) county become a desert?? (she smiles. He frowns)

Was Dad there?

Sister: (clamming up) I don't want to talk about it.

Brother: (accepting it) OK. You better get dressed or we'll be late...

Sister: (checking her watch) Hey look at the time! Why aren't you at school ?

Brother: Because it's a holiday – Peace Day!?

Sister: (leaping up) Peace Day??!! – why didn't you wake me?

Brother: That's what I just did – !!

Sister: (fixing her hair, pulling on a shoe) Aren't you going downtown to the Parade of Nations ?

Brother: Sure – I was going to take you....

Sister: We'll be late!! You should have woken me.... (runs offstage to dress)

Brother: (Shouting after her) You were going to wake me, remember?! Instead you were off in the desert playing war games. With Dad –

Sister: (returning, thoughtful) It wasn't a game, ----- (name of brother). Where's my T-shirt??

Brother: (gives it to her) Happy Peace Day!

She pulls it on, and they go off as music starts.

SCENE TWO

Time: Later that morning

Place: Town Square, the Parade of Nations

House lights come up as the entire cast and chorus enter through the aisles carrying the flags of all nations – singing:-

SONG ONE– Peace Day

Soloist 1: Come into my joy
Come into my pain
Come – you be a friend of mine!
I'll be the same.

Soloist 2: – repeat –

Soloist 3: As I go through my years with many
passing fears
I've never seen my guiding light,
The clouds in front of me won't ever let me see
And I'm so weary of the night
I've tried so many times to read between the
lines
But the words keep turning round
And a thousand fears are ringing in my ears
And 'm so weary of the sound –

Soloists 1,2,3: So give me Peace enough, Peace
enough, peace enough!
So give me peace enough for peace of mind,
Everything coming up sunshine. (Repeat x 1)

Chorus: (Enters down the aisles, greeting the audience)
Come into my joy,
Come into my pain
Come – you be a friend of mine
I'll be the same. (Repeat x 1)

Part of the chorus moves on stage forming a tableau with the soloists. Together they create a space into which the dancers

process, streamers poised. The Chorus & soloists sing majestically:

Chorus: PEACE DAY PEACE DAY WE ALL SAY !
 HAPPY WORLD, HAPPY DAY !
 WEAR A LEAF AND SHOW THE WAY
 CELEBRATING THIS PEACE DAY!

The music switches back into fast tempo: the dancers start a fast, festive dance and the whole cast sways in rhythm with the music as they sing:

Chorus: Peace Day Peace Day we all say
Happy world, holiday,
Wear a leaf and show the way
Celebrating this Peace Day!

Peace Day, Peace Day – sing and dance
It will be a big romance
People of the world as one
Peace Day, Peace Day has begun.

Celebrations, jublations
Laughter, shouting – lots of fun.
Singing dancing – take your partner
Celebrations have begun.

Celebrations, jublations
Laughter shouting – join the fun!
Smiling dancing – grab a partner
Happiness for everyone!

Peace Enough for all mankind
Healthy body, happy mind
Faith and love, the world as one –
Peace Day, Peace Day has begun.

Come into my joy,
Come into my pain
Come – you be a friend of mine
I'll be the same! (Repeat x 2)

On stage, members of the cast dance a festive celebration, colorful, joyous! The number builds to a climax with the cast forming a glittering tableau. A senior member of the cast separates from the group and addresses the audience:

Master of Ceremonies: Welcome to Peace Day – the year 2000!!

This is the dawn of the Millennium of Peace, the era when people and nations, parents and children will experience the joy and power of working together in trust and friendship! Today, we're going to tell you the story of how children helped to bring to an end decades of conflict and mistrust in the Middle East. Those of you that are interested, please move inside with us now. The performance is about to begin.....

The Brother and Sister are in the chorus. They hang back.

Sister: I don't want to go ...

Brother: I think you should.

Sister: Let's go home now -

Brother: It's not about the war - it's about how they made peace!

Sister: I know all about that - !

Brother: Yeah right! Only what Mom told us! We never talk about it. C'mon! you're 16! You've got to grow up sometime -

MUSIC plays under. The sister hesitates, nervous, biting her lip; her brother takes her hand, put his arm around her and takes her off as lights change.

SCENE THREE (Transition Scene)

Time: Peace Day 2000

Place: Small Town Theatre

Single spot on singer as he/she sings:

SONG TWO:
Child for a Day

I was a child who ran full of laughter,
I was a child who lived for a day
My eyes full of sunshine
My heart full of smiles,
I was a child for a day -

We were the children who sang in the morning
We were the children who laughed at the sun

Who listened to those,
Who spoke with their wisdom
We were the ones we would say

We're getting older as time goes by
A little older every day
We were the children – of yesterday!

The Master of Ceremonies comes out as the song ends to set the scene:

MC: It was towards the end of 1991; the war in the Gulf had been over for some months and the nations of the world had been gearing up for the big International Conference which had been called to decide how to establish Peace in the area. There were all kinds of diplomatic and political obstacles delaying the start of the conference. So in some schools around the world, children decided to set up their own Model Conference to discuss ways to secure Peace in the Middle East!

SCENE FOUR

Time: Late Summer or fall, 1991 (or later)

Place: The Classroom

Lights change, filling the whole stage area. The MC leaves, passing a young girl who hurries in with a bag of books looking very at home. A second child enters looking very lost:

Mike: Is this the second period?

Becky: Yeah. Can I help you?

Mike: I'm supposed to join you...

Becky: Oh. What's your name ?

Mike Mike.

Becky: Where you from?

Mike Chicago. Originally.

Becky: I'm Becky – from New York. Originally...

Mike: Great! (They look at each other awkwardly)

The rest of the group come in, talking noisily. They all wear

the names of countries written in big letters on large white cards pinned to their chests. They bring in chairs which they set out in a circle as a leading kid shouts instructions:

Kid 1) OK – so let's get these chairs organize. Every body sits in alphabetical order, Algeria first, round to Yemen here. Imagine a big round table in the middle.

Kid 2) OK – so I'm the chairman: I want to call this meeting to order...

Becky: Wait – we've got a new kid!

Kid 3) Who ?

Mike: Me. Hi! I'm Mike – this is my first day

Kids 4/5/6: Ach! – just when we got it all set up/ not another! No room etc.....

Kid 1) No – it's OK! He can be a Scandinavian observer! "The Observer Member from – er... – Iceland!" (He sets up a chair for him.)

Kid 2) OK – So are we ready? (looks blank) How do I start this thing ??

Kid 4) It's like the Model UN: you make an opening address from the chair!

[START WRITING HERE..... Now we get to the heart of the play where the students work out how the allies, having won the war, now win the peace. They take on the roles of delegates from the different countries that are likely to be involved in an International Conference on the future of the Middle East. Your cast should be encouraged to re-write this scene! – this is where they take over and make it your own play! All that I am giving you here is a shape for the scene: read it, then forget it. The following process may help you:

- Set your cast up in the circle;
- assign them nationalities; (These could include: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, a Palestinian representative and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: Britain, China, France, USA, and USSR.)

- have them improvise a dialogue; (One suggestion: invite them to imagine sitting down to talk peace with the representative of a country that had just flattened your

cities with bombs, humiliated your people for forty years, and/or killed many of your friends;)

- ask each to do some research on their national position;

- After doing this, invite them to improvise a dialogue that moves through the three dramatic stages of the scene I have drafted here:

- 1) Opening comic run-around;

- 2) It gets serious: Mike and Becky take on their actual nations; tempers flare;

- 3) Mike and Becky talk alone;

Then PAUSE – reflect on how the scene works dramatically. Does everyone get a chance to speak? – Does it hold your interest? – does it build toward a climax? – is there humor?(there should be!) – does it flow naturally into the resolution you create for the following scene?

If not, go back and start again.

If you are pressed for time, you may take this scene and perform it as written. But remember: the heart of the Peace Child process is dumping what you find in print and allowing the children to come forth with their own ideas, expressing them in their own way, using their own vocabulary, idioms, patterns of speech. That is what gives them confidence. So – GO FOR IT !]

SCENE FIVE

Time / Place: The Same

The Conference begins

Kid 2) Right! Well.... I'd like to welcome all the distinguished delegates here today. I hope your hotels are OK, that you all had a good breakfast....

Kid 5) Whadya talking about??!!!

Kid 2) I don't know! She asked me to welcome you !

Kid 5) OK so we're welcomed. (standing up and declaiming) So I'm the guy from Morocco – an Arab, right. And I'm mad 'cos you Americans are walking all over Arab governments demanding to keep your armies here to protect your oil!

Mike: You're walking all over the table – !

Kid 5) What ?

Mike: There's a big round table in the middle ...

Kid 5) I'm making a point! I like standing on tables! What I'm saying is that it is not your oil! It's our oil and we can protect it without you!

Kid 6) (attempting an accent) I'm the Emir of Kuwait and I'd like to point out that this was the problem: we could not protect it without the Allied armies for which we are eternally so profoundly grateful.

Kid 8) What kind of accent is that ?

Kid 9) Sounds like an Indian!

Kid 1) Yeah - let's skip the accents. I'm the delegate from Jordan and I'm telling you that this problem is about one thing - Israel: Is-ray-el! We are 200 million peace loving Arab peoples in this region but bring in 5 million Jews who take over our land, build up huge armies, get nuclear bombs - and whaddaweget? - wars, wars, wars!

Kid 10) Wait a minute! Israel, my country, did not make war on Kuwait as I remember! It was the entire Arab world that made war on us in '48, '67 and '73! Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East - we are a light unto your nations and a hope for the world! You should all be like us!

Kid 1) You mean all Arab nations should have nuclear bombs!? (they laugh)

Kid 13) I'm the delegate from the Soviet Union: what we're talking about here is whether we should allow the US to keep its military forces here to police the region. I say "NO!" - I say it should be a multi-national peace-keeping force under the command of the United Nations.

Kid 8) (cynically) But who controls the United Nations? We figure it's the USA - so it'd come to the same thing...

Kid 2) Please identify yourself before you speak.

Kid 8) I'm the guy from Iraq.

All: Oooo-ooouh!

Kid 9) Tunisia here: (to Kid 8) we understand that your country isn't going to exist after this!

Kid 10) Yes - my country, Turkey, stands ready to undertake the burdens of administering the former nation of Iraq!

All: Wait a minute!! - Hold on! - Let's be fair!
etc.

Kid 11) (outrageously) My country, Saudi Arabia, paid 40 Billion dollars to liberate Kuwait and bring down the Iraqi dictator: if anyone should get Iraq, it should be us. We bought it!

Kid 12) But the US paid for it with the lives of its young men and women!

Kid 13) So did the British!

Kid 14) And the French!!

Kid 15) Israel suggests it could become a great homeland for the Palestinians!

Kid 13) No no, make it a homeland for the last members of the Communist Party! The place is a write-off! They can't make it any worse.

Kid 17) No - I disagree with my distinguished friend from the Soviet Union. The US sees great commercial possibilities in Iraq - a "Desert Disneyland" perhaps? We could rebuild the Hanging Gardens of Babylon as a resort complex, - Baghdad as an Islamic Theme Park... get the picture?

Kid 18) You could make the entire Iraqi cabinet work there as short-order chefs on the food stands instead of sending them to prison!

Kid 19) Hussein's Hamburgers!

Kid 20) No - Sa-Damburgers! (The kids crack up)

Becky: This is getting stupid!

Mike: Can the observer from Iceland say something?

Kid 2) Go ahead? (there is silence)

Mike: Mike is not my real name. It is Mohammed. My parents are from Iraq. (Shocked silent gasps) This isn't a joke, guys - everyone else here is American, right?

Becky: Well - not exactly... (They all turn to her)

Kid 1) I didn't know that -

Becky: I was born in Israel and moved to New York as a baby: my parents have dual citizenship. But I feel like an American, and

Mike: So do I - I've lived here all my life.

Kid 2) Anybody else? (silence) OK - well, I don't think this changes anything. The point of all this is that we step into other people's shoes and try to look at the thing from their perspective.

Kid 1) Great - so why don't you become the Iraqi, Becky - you be the Israeli, Mike?

Mike: You've got to be kidding!

Kid 8) No - come on, this isn't reality! It's a game! Try it! (others join in urging them both. They are pushed into it reluctantly.)

Kid 2) So change the cards, and let's continue. Go on, Mike:

SCENE SIX

Time/Place: The Same

The conference continues

A shadow has passed across the meeting. The jokes are over. The kids are suddenly serious. Mike hangs the ISRAEL card round his neck and speaks.

Mike: (shakes his head, assumes an accent) This has been a terrible time for the people of Israel; many have died; much has been destroyed. As the representative of the state of Israel, I want to offer all the skills and talents of my people to help rebuild our area. I believe Israelis have much to offer. But in order to help - I must have a cast-iron assurance that you accept the right of Israel to exist: that you - all of you - would protect the security of Israel if a future dictator tried to wipe Israel off the map as Saddam tried to erase Kuwait. Will you give that assurance ?

Becky: The representative of Iraq believes we have no choice.

Kid 21) I am the representative of Palestine. I don't know what to say -

Kid 1) Say what you feel

Kid 21) I feel I must say "Yes!" - but then I think of all the cruelty, my brothers and sisters killed on the Temple Mount, through the Intifada, - of our houses bull-dozed to the ground, our land and villages occupied and my people festering in refugee camps in the Gaza dreaming of returning home one day.

Becky: Waidaminit! Who started the Intifada ... ?

Kid 1) Sssh! you're the Iraqi!

Kid 21) It is not easy to give up a land we have lived on for 2000 years and say: "This is your's - have it!" But yet I feel I must or else there will never be a solution.

Kid 8) Would a Palestinian homeland on the West Bank make that decision easier ?

Kid 21) It would help. But then we would look at our villages in the Galilee and elsewhere - Haifa, Jaffa, Nazareth - and I know we would want them back too. It's natural.

Mike: That's a good answer!

Kid 13) It's not! It's a terrible answer!! The solution is not greater separ-ation; it's coming together, isn't it? Like our European Comm-unity - single currency; single market - no frontiers!

Kid 17) Yeah - have a United States of Arabia!

Kid 18) A second USA!

Mike: You don't understand at all, do you? It's a joke listening to you! You think America has all the answers! - if only everyone just learned English and acted like Americans, there would be peace and happiness. Wrong! Arabs aren't like you - I know! I'm the schizo Arab-American, right!

Kid 2) You're supposed to be the Israeli, remember!

Mike There are Arabs in Israel too.

Becky Too many of them - ! (sharp intakes of breath; Mike

glares; she corrects herself) I'm sorry, (taking off her "Iraq" card) - I can't get into this other nationality stuff: I'm Jewish and - well what's so great about Arabs? They chop people's hands off, blow up airplanes - look at this guy, Saddam: murdered children in Kuwait for not saluting his picture. What kind of culture is that?!

Kid 3) Does it matter??

Mike: Does it matter??! Listen to what she thinks is Arab culture! Iraq is the cradle of civilization - the Caliphs of Baghdad were ruling great Empires while Europe was still in the dark ages. America hadn't been discovered yet, and Arabs were inventing arithmetic, writing beautiful poetry, music, building great palaces and mosques! And all she can think of when you say "Arab" is "Terrorist!" or Murderer! I'm a moslem

Kid 15) Don't bring religion into this ... !

Kid 13) Why not? There are a billion Moslems in the world. None of them are that keen on America after what we've done to Iraq.

Mike: With Israel's support!

Becky: (furious) Come on!! - who sent Scud missiles into Israel ??

Mike: Who occupied Palestine ?

Becky: Who invaded Kuwait!! Who poured oil into the Persian Gulf?? Who - ? (pauses, thinking) You'd have fought for Saddam, wouldn't you?

Mike: I'd have fought not to fight at all -

Becky: C'mon!! If push came to shove, you'd have been on his side! Wouldn't you? Wouldn't you??

Mike: Yes I would - you know why? 'Cos Saddam stood up for Arabs - for the poor Arabs, not the oil-rich sheikhs who are all in the pockets of the Westerners. None of you have any respect for Arabs - you think of us as terrorists. Turkey occupies Northern Cyprus, China occupies Tibet, Israel occupies Palestine - UN resolutions are passed, but nobody takes any action because those countries are important allies. But Iraq occupying one tiny oil-rich Emirate - and you leap all over us. We're only Arabs.

Becky: (Heavy with contempt) I can't believe it: this man who has murdered women and children, who has perpetrated the worst act of environmental terrorism ever committed on our planet – who pushed the world into a violent, bloody war.... You would have fought for him?! You disgust me.

Kid 12) I can't believe that all those soldiers died just so that you guys can go on fighting.

Kid 1) The war solved nothing!

Kid 10) War never does. (MUSIC starts – the lights change)
Friendship alone can heal. Love! One thing that gives me hope about all this. It started on the birthday of Martin Luther King – the man who preached friendship between White America and Black America – who dreamed of black children, white children playing together! Why can't that dream become real in the Middle East – ?

Mike: Impossible!

Becky: Right!

Kid 10) I saw you, Mike – Becky – as we came in, before you knew where you were from. You were like – friends! Remember King's dream! Drain that hatred out of your soul
(sings)

SONG THREE

I have a Vision

SONG THIRTEEN: I have a Vision

I have a vision, I have a dream
I have the answer or so it seems.

Don't you see the truth, to fight is not right,
We shall have our rainbow, we will have our sunlight
If we unite!

There's a way you see, where no one gets hurt
There's a way with love if you try!
There is hope and faith to keep you alive
In your darkest day, just pray!

Reach out with love, gather all your courage,
Reach out with love, seek a brighter day!
Love as our sword, peace as our weapon
Reach out with love! Let us win this way!

Martin Luther King had a vision! He had a dream
He had the answer, or so it seemed!
He knew the truth – to fight is not right
We can have our rainbow, we can have the sunlight!
We must unite!

A new world, A new light!
A new world, A new light!
A new hope! A new light –

Reach out with love, gather all your courage,
Reach out with love, seek a brighter day!
Love as our sword, peace as our weapon
Reach out with love! Let us win this way!

I have a vision! We have a dream.

She addresses the song chiefly to Mike and Becky who stand apart. The entire cast and chorus, apart from these two, join in the final chorus. They hold a tableau at the end. The chair of the meeting, sensing the hostility, suggests a recess:

Kid 2) Ladies and gentlemen, I suggest we take a 10-minute break to allow tempers to cool. Agreed ?!

All Yes (they start to leave)

Kid 1) (stopping everybody) No – (to Becky and Mike) Not you! I propose to conference that we instruct the representatives of Israel and Iraq to hold a bilateral session to see if they can find common ground. All those in favor say “Aye!”

All “Aye!”

Mike/Becky: Now waidaminit....!!

Kid 2) Agreed! We look forward to hearing your proposals when we return!

The kids all go off forcibly constraining Mike and Becky to stay.

SCENE SEVEN

Time/Place: The Same

Bilateral Dialogue

Becky and Mike are left standing either side of the central stage. Neither wants to start the conversation. Becky tries to escape. She comes back -

Becky They've locked the door!! (she looks for another way out.)

Mike: (forcing a smile) Well - do I shoot you or do you shoot me ?

Becky: (coldly) Don't talk to me, please -

Mike: Why don't we just say we're American and forget this ?

Becky: What would that solve ?

Mike Might help us get through the next ten minutes....

Becky: I can't believe they did this to us...

Mike: Well - they want us to come up with a solution. Let's try this: Land for Peace! (Goes over to her and picks up her book bag) This is a nice bag! I think I'll keep it!

Becky (instinctively angry) Give that back!!

Mike Oh - I'm sorry!! Was it your's?? Look - have a couple of books. I'm sorry, I need the rest....

Becky (trying to snatch it) Give it Back!

Mike Don't be violent! You're not a Palestinian!(she lets go her grip on the bag) See? (he places the bag between them) That's the nub of the argument right there: your land or mine? There's no answer to it!

Becky: I have an answer: it's nobody's land. Land belongs to the earth. As the native Americans say: you cannot own the earth any more than you can own the wind.

Mike: So why did you waste all those lives and money protecting the Emir's right to "own" Kuwait ?

Becky: I didn't!

Mike: Why do you hate me ?

Becky I don't hate you - no, ----- (Kid 10) was right: when you came, my first thought was 'What a neat kid!'

Mike (approaching her) I am your brother – you are my sister. We are from the same blood – your Abraham is our Ivrahim. We are connected.

Becky (amused) So you mean all this is just a small family squabble!

Mike In a way. But look at the cost! It's crazy. I want to be a doctor – to save lives, not destroy them.

Becky A doctor? That's incredible!

Mike Why ? You don't think Arabs should be allowed to be doctors – you think we should be taxi-drivers or street-cleaners...?

Becky No! No – I just got through with applying to five medical schools!

Mike Huh! Two people wanting to be healers, incapable of healing their own lives. We're not getting very far, are we? They'll be back soon.

Becky (not listening) Your people are not afraid of death, are you? It's a real honor to die in a Holy War, isn't it?

Mike I don't know. I'm afraid to die. Death hurts!

Becky We don't want to die! That connects us too. We want to live, right?

Mike Yes – ! (MUSIC Starts – he turns to her:) So – ?

Becky That's it!! That's what connects us! We want to live, to grow up, travel, see places – have a good job, a family, a home of our own! We want to grow old, feeling we have achieved something – given something back to the world! Right?

Mike: Yes!

Becky: I don't want War! I don't want to die

Song Four

I want to live

Becky (singing) I want to live, I want to live
The right to live my life
I want to search far and wide
Have the right to wonder why

I want to fly through the air
Like a bird in the sky,
I want the chance to see the world
What I am before I die.

Mike I want to be, I want to see
A world that's good and free
I want a home, someone to love
To share their life with me

Becky I want to have and to hold
A child of my own

Becky & Mike I want to live, I want to love
The right to grow old....

I want to Live!

They join hands for the first time as they sing the last line.

Becky: If only Saddam had gotten to talk to kids before war
broke out, I'm sure we could have done something...

Mike: A group of kids did go. Group called "Children are the
Peace-makers" led by a blonde American lady, Pat Montandon.

Becky: Did they get to see him ?

Mike: No - they'd gotten to see the Pope, Presidents of the
USA, USSR, China - but Saddam just said "No!"...

Becky: I wonder what might have happened if he'd said "Yes!" -
(MUSIC starts - LIGHTS change)

SCENE EIGHT

Time/Place: The Dream Scene

An ethereal atmosphere is created. Mike and Becky look from
the central stage to the upper stage. A desk is quickly set up
Stage Left. "Saddam" in a Military jacket sits at the desk
speaking into a microphone marked "Baghdad Radio". He should
speak in an Arab accent.

Saddam: The mother of all battles has begun! The Great Satan -
America - will be annihilated! The desert sand will crackle
with the splinters of American bones; the rivers will run red
with American blood - and cotton irrigated by those waters
will turn the red of their discredited red white and blue....

A Soldier enters with a group of about 6 International
children.

Soldier: Those children you agreed to see, most high and noble one!

Saddam: How dare you interrupt my address to my people of Iraq !

Soldier: I hesitate, Oh excellent one, but their plane leaves in an hour -

Saddam: What do they want to tell me ?

Child 1: We want you to leave Kuwait.

Saddam: No -

Child 2: If you do not, there will be terrible violence, death, destruction.

Child 3: You will lose!

Saddam: I shall not!! No western army has ever won a war in Arabia!

Child 4: But there are Arabs standing against you too.

Child 5: We are not against you. We love you - we want to help you.

Saddam: (shocked a moment, then resumes his martial poise) We fight for all Arabs, for a free independent Palestine, for a sharing of the riches of oil between all Arab peoples....

Child 2: OK, - we know all that.

Saddam: You - you are American children, yes? - It is your country who is the aggressor! Go talk with your President - tell him of your wish for Peace!

Child 5: We shall - but we want you to come with us!

Child 1: We love you - we love him. We want you both to be friends.

Saddam: (again shaken) Ridiculous. Get these children out of here!

Child 3: Don't be angry. Feel deep inside yourself - you have the power to love people too - (she goes up and kisses him: his jaw drops; he's speechless)

Child 4: This war would cost more in a day than UNICEF gets in a whole year; more than we spend on the UN Environment fund! We cannot afford for you to waste our world's precious money or young soldiers in your war.

Child 2: You must become friends with our President!

Saddam: Leave me now, will you. I am very busy -

Children: (softly) No -

Saddam: (shouting) LEAVE ME !!

Child 5: We want you to come with us -

Saddam: How dare you disobey MY orders. Soldier - shoot these children!

(goes back to his speech)

Soldier: Yes sir! (raising his gun) -

Child 4: (quietly looking at him) Go ahead -

Soldier: (lowering the gun) I can't, sir !

Saddam: (looking up) Give me the gun. (He points it at the children)

Child 3: Go ahead - (she cowers close to her neighbour)

Saddam looks down the barrel at the children, then suddenly swings and fires, killing the soldier who falls in agony. The children quake looking at the body. One dressed to look like a glamorous lady in a blonde wig comes hurrying in at the sound of the shot. She moves to comfort the children - but they do not need her. Child 5 rises and slowly moves to take the gun from Saddam's hands. He allows her to take it like a child.

Child 5: That was not - wise. But we forgive you as we would forgive you if you shoot us. Still we love you - (she kisses him) - you are my brother. Look - your hand is much like mine. The finger that pulled that trigger is shaped like mine. We are family. Our President is your brother also. Come - we must go see him!

Saddam: (severely shaken) No! - I'll shoot him !

Child 2: There is no longer any use for guns. Only love and friendship are allowed where we are going...

Several children are now crowding around him. Child 2 quietly removes the revolver from his holster as he speaks. Saddam is like a child, incredulous.

Saddam: Where are we going ?

Child 1: You are coming with us to Washington !

Child 3: To make friends with our President!

Saddam: But - but... You idiots! How can I leave my country at this time?

Child 4: Give us the wig, Pat -

Child 5: Hurry - the plane leaves in twenty minutes....

The children jam the blonde wig over Saddam's head, tie a skirt around him, and force his arms into a pretty blouse. The lights begin to fade as they start to put make up on him - pulling off the big black moustache, putting lipstick on his lips, powdering his face. The child playing the glamorous blonde dresses up as Saddam, putting on the military jacket, the moustache etc.

In the semi-blackout, the soldier gets up, takes off the military jacket, puts on a blue blazer and straightens his tie. The desk is moved to stage right. He sits behind it and becomes President Bush. The sign on the microphone is now turned around: it reads "US Radio". Bush speaks into it:

Bush: Saddam embodies the evil that we fought against fifty years ago when we freed Europe from the Tyranny of Hitler. Today, America is called upon to free the Middle East from Saddam's Tyranny! And what a blood-soaked, vicious tyranny it is! Murder, rape, pillage - crime beyond our wildest imaginings all at the behest of one evil, wicked man....
Who are you ?

The children, accompanied by Saddam, have entered from the Central Stage.

Saddam is still in the blonde wig, dressed as a woman

Child 2: Mr President, Saddam Hussein !

Saddam: I will shoot the man - as a matter of honor, I must shoot him!

Child 3: Don't be so uptight! Shake his hand - he's a

really nice guy!

Child 1: Talk about the puppies....

Child 5: Barbara – anything! (to Bush) Come on, sir
– !

Bush: Is this some kind of joke!

Saddam: No joke, Bush – these children have spirited me here by tricks!

Bush: Call security – !

Child 4: (firmly) No! – this is the only security. (The children take the hands of Saddam and Bush and force them together.)

Child 5: We will leave you now. The lives and happiness of thousands of people are in your hands: if you choose to be friends, they will live. If you choose to hate, they will die and our world will be much the poorer.

Children: Please – for us – make Peace!

They leave. Bush and Saddam are still holding hands: they notice the fact and separate, rather embarrassed. Bush finds his voice first.

Bush: Well – as long as you're here, you better sit down.

Saddam: This whole occasion is completely lacking in diplomatic dignity!

Bush: Oh I don't know: I rather like you without the moustache!

Saddam: (snatching off the wig, glaring at Bush) Is there anything on which we can agree ?

Bush: I doubt it. You could agree to observe the UN resolutions and withdraw your army from Kuwait.

Saddam: You don't understand, do you? Why should 200,000 Kuwaitis live like kings when 17 million of their Arab neighbours live in poverty?

Bush: They are only poor because you choose to spend your wealth on your war machine.

Saddam: For centuries, Kuwait was ruled from Baghdad - !

Bush: Yes - but you weren't just after Kuwait, were you? You wanted Saudi Arabia as well.

Saddam: Not at all!

Bush: You did. We saw the way your missiles and tanks were heading. You would have had Saudi within the week if we hadn't stopped you.

Saddam: I could have done -

Bush: That would have meant 50% of the world's remaining oil reserves in your hands! We couldn't allow that!

Saddam: No! Because you want 100% of it in the hands of US oil companies! You spit upon Arabs - you desecrate our religion. You support the Zionists to destroy us in Palestine....

Bush: Why did you never display this touching interest for the Arabs on the West Bank until a month after you'd invaded Kuwait?

Saddam: Look! I offered you a formula: to get out of Kuwait in return for Arab self-determination on the West Bank. You spit in my face!

Bush: This is the first time I have seen your face. And I assure you, I never spit....

Child 1: (returning with the others) How you doin' ?

Child 2: You figured out a way to avoid the war yet ?

Bush: Not even close, kids! You can dress a guy like this up in funny clothes, but you can't change him. This is the man who ordered the rape, the killing, the torture of women and children - children just like yourselves....

Child 3: We know.

Child 4: We forgave him already.

Bush: This isn't some playground bully who'll thank you for forgiveness. He is a cold, merciless killer who will use any advantage to pursue his own, cruel, self-interested agenda. He is the embodiment of evil.....

Saddam: But I am strong!! That's why you hate me! You are a

nice man, Mr Bush – but you are weak! People in my country love me, Mr Bush, because they fear me! They want to be on my side because that makes them feel strong. People don't love you like that – you are too nice! Too good! Too decent!! You know if I made one mistake in this whole business, it was to move on Kuwait the day you were having lunch with that Margaret Thatcher. She challenged your manhood with her stories of how she stood up to poor Galtieri over the Malvinas Islands. She made you do something....

Bush: You're dead wrong! When I saw your tanks heading for Saudi, I didn't need any persuading. I was right on your case.

Child 4: And we're now on your's. You guys have got to come to a decision soon so we can get Saddam back to Iraq before he's missed.

Bush: Impossible –

Saddam: Sorry children –

Child 1: Think of the wives and children of those poor soldiers waiting out there in the desert –

Child 2: Think of the pain of their deaths – and the aching pain your war will leave in the hearts of millions of people – for ever !

Bush: I think of it every waking moment of the day –

Child 3: Look! The billion dollars you'll spend each day on your stupid war would pay for schools, feed hungry people,

Child 4: – heal the environment.

Child 5: We need every cent of that money to ensure that there's still a world left for us when we grow up.

Child 4: You have to make a deal.

Bush/Saddam: We can't –

Child 3: Sure you can! How about you leave Kuwait in return for a Mid-east Peace Conference and the promise of aid.

Saddam: All of Kuwait ?

Children: Yes!

Saddam: No deal.

Bush: We couldn't agree either !

Child 2: OK - so how's about you de-militarise Iraq, have an arms embargo for ten years, and have a UN-peace-keeping force in the Gulf for ever ?

Bush: That's interesting -

Saddam: No part of Kuwait for me ?

Child 4: None.

Child 5: Just money, promise of aid and friendship -

Child 1: And perhaps a permanent solution in Israel.

Saddam: Sounds good - but I couldn't I just keep a little bit of Kuwait ?

Children: None!

Saddam: Just the teeniest bit.... ? (They shake their heads)
OK - so, if I accept, what would we do about Palestinian problem ?

Child 2: Beats me!

Child 3: That one's been knocking around since long before I was born.

Child 5: We figured that, since you guys are getting along so well now, maybe you could figure it out.

Child 1: Yeah - we'll just leave it with you....
(MUSIC starts - they back off)

Saddam: Hey - wait a minute! Don't leave - we can't do this without you!

The children stand back and sing:

SONG FIVE
Palestine or Israel

While the song is being sung, the two men talk. As it ends, they come forward to center stage where Becky and Mike sit watching their dream.

Bush: So you'll talk to Arafat ?

Saddam: I don't foresee a problem. You'll handle Shamir ?

Bush: It's going to be hard -

Saddam: If you need any help, I'm strong, remember !

Bush: But you're dumb! I'm smart, remember. If you need any help with the diplomacy, call me.

Saddam: We're partners, right?

Bush: (sighing, and taking his arm) Politics makes strange bedfellows -

Saddam: (walking out with him) Who said anything about getting into bed ?
EXIT.

The Lights change. Mike and Becky stand to watch them go. Mike puts his arm around her:

Mike: It would have been so simple.....

Becky: It's still possible.

Mike: But harder, much harder. It would have been so much smarter to have had the peace conference before the war, instead of after...

SCENE NINE

Time/Place: The Same

The conference continues

The rest of the group come back. They see Becky and Mike holding hands and leap to conclusions.

Kid 18) Woh! Check it out! Make love not war!

Kid 19) Creative!

Kid 20) Nobody told us peace was that easy! (They all crack up...)

Becky: We just had the greatest idea !

Kid 2) Good! We have to present our conclusions to Assembly.

Mike: What ??

Kid 3) Yeah! Didn't you know? The whole school is doing this.

Kid 2) So what did you come up with ?

Becky: All we have to do is to persuade the leaders to be friends!

Mike: Like us!

Silence. Some kids begin to giggle.

Kid 6) Earth-shattering!!

Kid 7) The power of the intellect that worked that one out must have been truly awesome.

Kid 15) Deeply perceptive!

Kid 11) I like it. If everybody agreed on that, we could all be happy.

Kid 1) We've got to have more to present to assembly -

Kid 12) Why ?

Kid 1) 'Cos it's embarrassing - going out there and saying we want to live and be happy. They'd laugh at us.

Mike OK - so we need something to ensure that people don't laugh at us and can be astounded by the powers of our collective intellect?

Kid 2) You gottit! Any suggestions - ?

Kid 1) My mind's a blank!

Kid 21) Why don't we suggest setting up a Middle Eastern Economic Community like in Europe?!

Kid 17) A single Middle Eastern market!

Kid 8) Incredible: everyone would want to join!

Kid 9) But to get in, you'd have to be a democracy!

Kid 10) You could have the Headquarters in Jerusalem – the meeting point of Arab and Jew!

All: Yeay! – sure!! Great Idea!.. etc.

Mike: Wouldn't work...

Kid 8) Why not ?

Mike: 'Cos you don't know!! You don't understand the Arab mind. You can't take a European system and dump it on the Arabs and expect it to work....

Kid 7) We don't know, do we....

Kid 8) So why don't we go talk to them?

Kid 5) How ?

Kid 8) Go there !

Mike: That's an answer! (the group looks dumbfounded)

Becky: There's enough of us. Two kids could go to each of the countries, interview the kids and find out what they'd like to see happen.

Kid 9) Like – take an opinion poll of Arab and Jewish kids!

ALL: Yeah! Right ... (great enthusiasm)

Kid 8) Then we could all come back to ----- (Cairo or wherever the International Conference is being held) and lay a kids solution on the leaders.

Kid 9) We've got plenty of time; the leaders won't start for months!

Kid 18) They'll probably still be discussing what shape to make the conference table!

Kid 15) – or be having long, philosophical discussions on the meaning of the word "Middle" as in "Middle East" !

Kid 1) How would we get there? – and how would we talk to Arab kids if we didn't know Arabic?

Mike: You'd raise some money to buy a plane ticket – and you'd find an Arab kid who speaks English to be your interpreter!

Kid 2) Simple!

Kid 1) Look – isn't this a little far-fetched. I mean – how many of you would really go out and raise the money to go talk to kids in the Middle East ??

Most kids: I would – Yeah (etc.)

Kid 18) It would mess up the summer vacation as well.

Mike: (firmly) Well guys, you have to decide what's important: Peace in the Middle East – or the beach ?

Kids 18/19/20: (look at each other) The Beach!

Kid 5) They've got some great beaches in the Mid East –

Kid 6) They should! They've got enough sand – !

Mike: Seriously – !

Kid 21) Well I don't know who you are: you're new here, but I trust you – and you're an Arab. So if you and Becky think that this plan will help bring peace to your homeland, I'll do anything to help!

All: Aaa-ahh!

Becky: Anybody else ?

All Sure – Yeay! – come on! Of course! etc.
(MUSIC starts)

Everybody feels great! – they slap palms, hug each other, and troupe out through the aisles, singing and hoisting Mike and Becky on their shoulders:

SONG FIVE
"Sing!"

Cast: Sing! I do wish the world would sing!
I do wish the world would say
How they love to live and play
How they need each other's –
Peace! That is all we want to have,
That is all we want to share
Let us live our lives in peace
Oh let us give this life a chance to –

enthusiasm of the children raised all the funds they needed to get themselves to the Middle East. They went off in pairs to different countries to canvass the opinions of youth! Now we do not have the time or the funds to hire a cast to represent the thousands of children who were interviewed by our heroes – so we invite you to imagine yourselves in the Middle East nine years ago, just before the Historic meeting began – look into your hearts and ask yourselves how you would feel about the children’s proposal.

There is a bustle of activity as the children hand out sheets. If seating arrangements allow it, they go about interviewing members of the audience in person, writing down their answers. Where possible, cast members should offer the audience soft drinks, candies – etc. Intermission Refreshments!

As the Discussion draws to a close, the cast start inviting those children in the audience who are enthusiastic to come up on stage and join the cast for the final scene of the show. Thus the stage fills with cast and audience kids. The MC welcomes them:

MC: The children gathered before the great citadel where the leaders were beginning to gather for the conference. Many thousands of children joined them.

Kid 2) Who are all these people ?

Kid 7) They thought our ideas were so great, they wanted to support them at the International Conference – that’s right, isn’t it? (an affirmative murmur)

Kid 1) (coming on excited) There’s thousands of students demonstrating out there – is that anything to do with us ??

Kid 6) Yeah! Those are some of the kids that we interviewed! Isn’t it great!

Kid 1) And you guys all want to come to the presentation tomorrow?

All: Yes!! (repeat the question to get a louder cheer x 2!)

Kid 10) Where are you going to sleep??

Kid 9) Where will you eat ?

Kid 12) We better go get some stuff checked out for you guys!

The children all crowd on to the proscenium stage area. Mike

and Becky plus 2 other kids come on to the Central Stage area with the sheets. They start by reading some new proposals from the audience:

Becky: We got some great ideas from the kids: listen to this - (reading) -

Kid 4) What about this! (reading) -

Kid 5) This is a great one! (reading) -

Mike: What I get from all this is that we genuinely are one family of people. We can be one family of nations - here in the Middle East, and everywhere else in the world. (to Kid 5) You'd better get these sheets back for the final count...

[NOTE: there should be a designated group of 5-10 cast members who work throughout this period to count the responses, evaluate the new proposals, and decide which ones to include. They should start work immediately collecting the sheets and devise a method to add up the scores.]

The two kids exit, leaving Becky and Mike alone. Several older kids come on amongst the audience dressed as soldiers, carrying guns.

Becky: So - we did it!

Mike: Yeah - Here we are in (name city) - at the International Conference! (looking out at the audience) Think of all the leaders gathered here: if you blew that lot up, you could take over the world! No wonder they've got half an army protecting them!

Becky: Look at all those tanks!

Mike: They say there's 5,000 soldiers guarding the place. They must be really scared

Becky: I'm not! For the first time, I feel like I'm really amongst friends -

Mike: It's because you have learned to treat us like equals, not second class people!

Becky: Did you feel second class?

Mike: Of course!. Everybody used to dump on the Arabs - Turks, British, then you guys! It was like being a kid, nobody took you seriously.

Becky Do you think they'll take us seriously today?

Mike: I doubt it. What can kids do against guns ?!

Becky: (grasping his arm, intensely) Be friends! If they were friends like us, they wouldn't need any of that stuff!!

Mike: No – but grown-ups aren't like us. (he detaches himself from her) We'd be like butterflies crushed under the jackboots of the military.

Becky Butterflies always find a way to come back in the spring. If it doesn't work this time, we'll keep coming back until it does work – even if we have to wait until we're 60.

Mike: You really believe they're going to listen to us, don't you?

Becky: Don't you?? – why did you come all this way, raise the hopes of all these other kids if –

Mike: (interrupting) Sure, I believe.... Hey – I'd better get over and see that those kids get some food –
(Exits)

Becky: (calling after him) Mike – (he turns. She goes to him) – you absolutely have to believe it tomorrow, and the next day, and the day after that – on and on, even if you have to stay here 'til you're sixty!

MUSIC starts. He smiles and walks over to the other part of the stage where the children are waiting. He pauses, a thought occurring to him. Meanwhile, Becky begins to sing:

SONG SIX
Reach out

Reach out for a star!
Come out from where you are
Show me what you can do
Believe in me, I believe in you!

Reach out for your dream
It's not as hard as it may seem
Together we can make it through
Together – me and you!

Wake up, open your eyes
This is our world – our paradise

Becky You'd better believe it! (They go off together – BLACK OUT)

SCENE ELEVEN

Time/Place: The Same

The Presentation:

A spotlight picks out the Master of Ceremonies now suitably attired in Arab robes. He speaks to the adults of the audience as though they were the assembled leaders:

MC Your Excellencies, we are required by Article 12 of the Conv-ention on Children's Rights of which we are all signatories, to allow the voice of children to be heard on matters that affect them. Clearly the matter of the future political configuration of the Middle East does and will affect them profoundly. Thus, we have set aside a moment in this morning's session to listen to their ideas. I present to you – the Children. (He leads polite applause and EXIT)

The children come on from either side, meeting center stage and turning to face the audience. They carry some of the sheets from the audience:

Kid 1) Excellencies, Presidents, leaders: For centuries, the people of this region have lived with violence and conflict. The decisions that you make in this room will determine whether the conflict continues, or whether we shall have peace. We, the children, will have to live with the consequences of your decisions – whether we live in America, Europe, Israel, or an Arab state. There has to be Peace – there has to be love, respect, trust and cooperation between our peoples and our nations. To achieve that we have talked to children and have come up with the following proposals:

[PROPOSALS: These are the results of your audience canvass, plus Mike & Becky's proposal:]

Kid (reads a proposal and gives the results of the canvass)

Kid (reads the most popular proposal – the kids cheer!)

Kid (reads the best proposal from the audience - all applaud)

Mike: Dear Leaders, Becky and I just came from visiting the head of security for your conference here. We wanted him to let us help guard your conference!

Becky: He wasn't very friendly -

Mike He said: "Why can't you children leave us in peace?!" -

Becky: - which, we told him, is exactly how we would like you to leave us after this conference!

Mike: I am an Arab -

Becky: I am an American Jew!

Mike/Becky: We know you can succeed!

Mike: So, with your permission, we're gonna stay here until you achieve agreement !

Becky: We cannot afford to let you fail.

The lights fade and the kids sit down where they are in the aisles. Some of the cast kids wander over to the central stage. They wait, bored, sad.

SCENE TWELVE

Time / Place: The same

The lights rise to give a blue nighttime glow. Kid 8) comes on:

Kid 2) Any news ?

Kid 8) Another delegation just walked out ! There's only about 10 left!

Kid 1) I don't know how much longer we can keep this up: we've been here four months; parents are getting antsy - I mean: what's all this got to do with America ?

Becky: After all America put into the war, don't you want to win the Peace?

Kid 9) We're really missing a lot of school -

Mike: What's more important? School or Peace ?

Kid 9) School, I'd say!

Mike: Look – you guys have been great!! The eyes of the world's media are on us! Delegations have left the conference, but none of us have! Thousands of kids around the world support us: we are the success story! We cannot give up.

Kid 10) It's not giving up, Mike: I'm so sick watching them, I want it all to stop Now! It's a farce, what's going on in there.

Becky: I've come to think they can't agree: their heads are so set in stone, it's physically impossible for them to do what we want them to do.

Kid 1) So why do we stay?

Kid 11) You know what: I don't want to live in a world where people can't love each other like we do. I'd rather not grow up: I wish they'd just drop the nuclear bomb right now and get rid of us – let the world create some other kind of animal that's more loving of each other

Kid 12) I've thought that too –

Kid 13) I haven't eaten for three days. I can't ...

Kid 2) I'm going to stop eating – maybe that'll make them pay attention.

Kid 1) They won't care –

Mike: They might if kids all over the world joined us – if kids refused to eat, refused to go to school, refused to go anywhere or do anything parents told us until this conference reaches agreement!

Becky: A world-wide strike for Peace!

Kid 2) Hunger strike, Becky – we're putting our lives on the line here.

Kid 8) Fine! I'm ready

All: (one by one they sit down) So am I, me too –
etc. (MUSIC starts)

SONG SEVEN

Child for a Day – reprise

I was a child who ran full of laughter,
I was a child who lived for a day
My eyes full of sunshine
My heart full of smiles,
I was a child for a day –

We were the children who sang in the morning
We were the children who laughed at the sun
Who listened to those,
Who spoke with their wisdom
We were the ones we would say

We're getting older as time goes by
A little older every day
We were the children – of yesterday!

As a child sings the song softly, the children hug. The lights fade, transitioning back to the future.

SCENE THIRTEEN

Time: The Year 2000 – Peace Day
Place: Small Town – Conclusion

One by one, the cast all slip from the stage in the darkness. Lights come back up as the sister from the play's opening runs across the central stage. Her brother follows, catching her. She is clearly upset.

Sister: I don't remember any of that ... Did any kids die ?

Brother: No, no! It never got that far! The papers and TV were full of what the kids were doing and thousand – hundreds of thousands of kids around the world joined them in sympathy.

Sister: So what did happen?

Brother: Parents started sending letters – demonstrating! The leaders realised they had to make peace or be out of a job. So they did.

Sister: So the grown-ups fought a war, and solved nothing; the kids did nothing, just loved each other –

Brother: No!! No – they did much more. They offered

themselves as a sacrifice, just like the soldiers did. They were prepared to sacrifice their future for Peace – but without violence; without harming anyone. Only with love.

Sister: That's why we celebrate Peace Day! – to remember the commitment of those kids!

Brother: Exactly! – we must have the same commitment as they did to keep the peace we now enjoy!

Sister: – and keeping all the people and all the nations as friends – !

Brother: It's tough to do, I tell ya! – with oil and gas and food and money running out everywhere. It's not going to get any easier, is it?

Sister: But if we're friends – like the children were, we can talk it out so that it's fair to everyone, can't we?

Brother: You better believe it, sister! Hey! Happy Peace Day!

MUSIC Starts: the children of the cast return singing:
brother and sister hug and merge in amongst them:

SONG EIGHT
Pavel's Song

Soloist: All the time through the day and through
the night
I think about my life in this world
So many times I've tried to find
A way to live my life – a way to ease my mind
I know this world could die for ever
And people are the reason why
Children and parents lovers and poets
They just can't hear our planet cry –

Chorus: We want this world to survive for ever
And all the people join their hands together
In a bond of love, kindness and friendship
We can make peace with the earth

Soloist 2: Too many people have died in wars
And we want that no one else should suffer
Not again.
Half the world lives in despair
We've got to show them, show them that we care!
We know our World is a wonderful place

And we must help to keep it so
I want to believe that this world will be
A peaceful place for all to grow!

Chorus: We want this world to survive.... etc. (x 3)

Duet : Let's join our hands together
Let's make peace throughout our
world!

All join in on the chorus (The audience should have the words printed on sheets). During the second chorus, the kids process into the aisles, joining hands, and reaching out to create a circle that includes all the children.

Reprise music of "Peace Day" or "Sing".The children of the cast run back on the stage. They wave to the audience and take a bow before coming down amongst them, shaking their hands, embracing them.

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Palestine or Israel
Israel or Palestine
In this land we both must dwell
Palestine or Israel

Allah El or Eloim
Abraham or Ivrahim
In this land where skies are blue
There is room for me and you

Oh why can't we see the truth
This land's for me, this land's for you!
Oh! If we don't see the truth
Then grief there'll be for me for you

Torah gospel or koran
Surah parable or psalm
In the heart of God above
!

All join in on the chorus (The audience should have the words
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impose a permanent and put (Saddam explodes in laughter)
Child 4: (to Saddam) Look – you're going to get thrashed in this war. All you need is something to make you look like a hero to the Arab world and you could get out of Kuwait tomorrow, right ?

Like what Like a solution to the problem of Palestinians
(Silence) Bush: Linkage of the two issues is completely unacceptable ...

More unacceptable than 60,000 dead Americans and two countries destroyed and \$500 billion dollars wasted....

Saddam: She's right, Bush! The child is absolutely right....
(To Bush) There's got to be a way that you can do it without making it look like it is "linkage". surely there's some clever way!

Child 2: Couldn't you find it? – for the sake of the children? For the sake of all the young soldiers who'll have to die (MUSIC starts.)

Bush: I guess we could try again
The children stand back and sing softly:
And (sighing) anything about getting into bed we want our leaders to be friends people don't laugh at us and are a Middle Eastern Economic Committee Common Market are two possible solutions. For his scene, you need at least five. The best ones suggested to an
sat are you going to've changed: you respect Arabs –
I do! Your religion, your poetry, your history – everything!
It's great! And now – talking to your leaders! It's going to be great!

Becky: Why ? Don't you go and get all depressed and moody just when everything's being such a miracle... !

Mike: Look at that, Becky! are – easily jackboots of adults we don't make it have to and back I will (Smiles) o the (goes that it will work – tomorrow, and the next day that day we met – make sure we found a solution at we've gotta do with them! With nd !, plus Mike & Becky's proposal.

* * *
, no! It never got that far! When I started telling what the kids were doing, than nothing!! lives

Sister: Just like Dad – !

Brother: Yeah! Just like Dad! Just like we all must be

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