

# **REVOLUTION WITHOUT VIOLENCE**

Dedicated to my wife Maggie, my true  
and enduring soulmate.

# **REVOLUTION WITHOUT VIOLENCE**

**AN ORDINARY MAN'S GUIDE TO PEACE AND  
PROSPERITY IN A DANGEROUS WORLD**

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**Rob Noyes-Smith**



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P U B L I C A T I O N S

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*Revolution Without Violence: An Ordinary Man's Guide to  
Peace and Prosperity in a Dangerous World*

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*Rob Noyes-Smith*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Rob Noyes-Smith** has lived and worked in eight different countries on four continents. His careers span from army officer, owning five businesses to executive coach. He lives with his wife Maggie in Albuquerque New Mexico. They have three sons.

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*Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius—and a lot of courage—to move in the opposite direction.*

Attributed to Albert Einstein.

## PROLOGUE

**T**his book emerged as the result of attending a funeral with my son. The emotions that flooded in around the loss of such a precious life and all those that had gone before caused an ache that had to be resolved. Therefore, I introduce the book with the funeral in order to set the context, in order to ask, are we doomed to repeat our history of war after war after war? Do we have the capacity as humans to change our future from more death and destruction to a more peaceful, happier world?

### The Funeral

On June 28, 2005, a four-man Navy SEALs reconnaissance unit, high in the Afghanistan mountains bordering Pakistan, was attacked by a large force of Taliban insurgents. The unit called in the rapid deployment group—eight SEALs and an eight-man Night Stalker crew—aboard a large, twin-blade helicopter. While the ship was trying to land at 10,000 feet in the rugged mountain terrain, the insurgents fired a rocket-propelled grenade, striking the helicopter and killing everyone inside.

The original four remaining SEALs on the ground fought a running battle. Three died: Matt Axelson, Danny Dietz and Michael Murphy. The fourth, Marcus Luttrell, though wounded, managed to evade his attackers and escape. Eventually, with the help of a local sheepherder, he found his way to safety.<sup>1</sup>

The battle resulted in the biggest single-day loss of life in the history of the Navy SEALs, that is, until August 8th 2011 when twenty two SEALs were among the 30 American forces, seven Afghan commandoes and one interpreter, killed when their helicopter was shot down in Afghanistan.

My son Dave is a Navy SEAL.

It was early July, a Wednesday night, when I spoke to Dave by phone. He had just attended his third funeral in five days. He told me, his voice trembling, how moving this last one had been. It seemed as though the whole of Long Island had closed down.

The route was lined with police, and at regular intervals local fire departments had parked their fire engines with their ladders extended above the road, forming an arch. Crowds of silent people lined the route at every turn.

Dave said it was a life-changing experience. This wasn't the time, on the telephone, to explore what he meant by that, so I asked him if I could visit him soon. He told me that the next day he had to drive to Dover, Delaware, to escort the body of Matt Axelson, the last SEAL recovered from the battle, back to his hometown of Chico, California.

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1. See the book "Lone Survivor" by Marcus Luttrell.

Dave arrived in California with the casket on Friday, and was again struck by the courtesy and respect afforded him and the deceased by the airlines and the public. Matt's family held a memorial service in Cupertino on Sunday, and the funeral was to be held in his hometown of Chico on the following Thursday.

I flew to Sacramento on Tuesday evening, and after Dave and I booked into the hotel, we found a quiet Italian restaurant downtown and relaxed over a beer. It was rare to find ourselves just one-on-one with no distractions. Our mood was light but there was the undercurrent sense of why we were here together.

I let Dave talk, with just the occasional question for clarification. It had been a tough ten days for him. The first funeral had been in Boulder City, Nevada. Being there to comfort the parents, seeing to many of the military details necessary to coordinate such an event, and meeting SEALs flying in from different places at different times took a lot of arranging. Then he was off to Hawaii, New York, and now, California to repeat the process.

Most people do their best to understand this kind of situation, but unless you've been there, committed to your buddies *beyond anything else, above anything else*, you can't really know. We shared a common background. I had been in Special Forces myself, and thus this shared knowledge that needed no explanation existed. This was not father-son intimacy; this was Special Forces intimacy.

"What was life-changing?" I eventually asked Dave.

“Normally you don’t think of the military as getting much respect,” he said. “But this support, this genuine outpouring, not just in the streets but at the reception afterwards, was so stunning, so moving. Well, I feel a renewed commitment to the cause, as a way to honor my fallen friends.”

“Any revenge motives?” I gently probed.

“Any thinking person knows it has nothing to do with revenge. It’s about doing the job.”

For me, hearing my son’s words was a double-edged sword. On the one hand, I felt very proud of him and on the other I felt very parental: that tightening of the throat and around the heart, that fear that every parent has for the safety of his or her children. I had almost hoped that he felt the opposite, that he now opposed the war, thought it was a bloody waste and didn’t agree with how it is being conducted.

I decided to postpone any internal debate and just be with Dave, just live in his world for the three days we had together. Be sad, be happy, be open to it all.

The next day we drove the two hours to Chico, stopping for lunch on the way. It was marvelous listening to his ideas, being on his timetable, not mine, suddenly being the junior partner, not the dad who had all the answers. It was a passage of life, the realization that I’d raised a child who was now fully independent, with whom I could relate, man-to-man, not father-to-son, and that I’d done a good job.

We got to the hotel mid-afternoon, and by this time, Dave's phone was ringing constantly with calls from other SEALs checking in from around the country regarding the arrangements.

The next morning we were up early for breakfast, and the dining room was filling with SEALs of every rank, all of them in dress blues. After breakfast we left in convoy to the funeral site where the SEALs rehearsed for the ceremony. Fortunately, the day was cloudy and not going to be the usual 100 degrees, making the outdoor ceremony a lot more tolerable.

People started to arrive, old and young, relatives and friends, and many couples with small children and babies. It was the first Navy funeral I had ever attended and the familiar pride in our country, in our men and women, surged through my chest. I held it together until the folding and presentation of the flag. Then the tears flowed uncontrollably. At the end of the ceremony, everyone filed up one by one to pay their last respects. I again felt the flood of emotion over the loss of such a wonderful man's life and the loss of so much potential. But for a few weeks—Dave's deployment had finished just three weeks before the battle—this could have been my own son.

Everyone drove slowly to a country club for the reception. Matt's best friend from high school and college struggled through his speech, followed by others, including the SEAL admiral. Afterward, lunch was served and people mingled. Dave introduced me to Matt's parents, Donna and Corky, and to Cindy, his wife, and her parents. I had thought to not impose and just stay in the background, but because of Dave's speech at the memorial service for Matt on the

previous Sunday, his family had expressed a wish to meet me.

At that previous Sunday's memorial service, Donna had asked Dave, somewhat belatedly, to say something about Matt. With only a couple of minutes to prepare, he decided to tell a funny story about when Matt had just joined the team and Dave decided to mess with the rookie on a training swim around Ford Island.

The story took the somber assembly by surprise and sent them into gales of laughter, which many now say was what they needed. Thus came the request for an introduction when they learned that I was coming to the funeral. It wasn't me they needed to meet, but they needed someone, some place, to repose their gratitude for Dave, because he had helped them feel so much better.

I can only assume that this outpouring of gratitude for Dave was a way of honoring Matt and his chosen profession, a physical outlet for their thoughts and feelings and a way to begin the process of closure, which is the purpose of a funeral. For me, it was easy to bask in such kudos. No doubt our similar looks made it easy for anyone to discern we were father and son, and after a while I stopped being surprised at people approaching me to tell me how wonderful he was. I heard this from many of the SEALs who had flown in for the occasion, telling me of Dave's professionalism and leadership, and it added to the glow I felt.

Gradually the crowd started to thin out. I was standing at the buffet table with a half-prepared plate, talking to a guest. As he moved on and I resumed my selection, I

realized that I may have been holding up someone on my right.

“Excuse me, would you like to go ahead?” I asked a woman I had not met before.

“No,” she said. “I would like to talk to you about your son and what a marvelous job he did at the memorial service. We, as a family, would like to adopt him and put him in our prayers. Could you send me a photo of him so the children know what he looks like?”

During this request, I had been looking into her eyes. I didn't know who she was, but perhaps because we were both so emotionally vulnerable, we allowed the look to go deep, to our very souls.

Not breaking eye contact, I quietly asked her, “Where do you get such peace and tranquility so deep inside?”

She replied, “The Lord.”

And I knew it to be true.

She was Matt's aunt, married to a pastor, with three children, two teenagers and a ten-year-old. Neither her husband nor the children were at the funeral, which is why she wanted the photo of Dave, so that she could show it to her family. At that point Dave joined us and I explained the request. He seemed genuinely pleased.

It was time to leave. Emotionally drained, we went back to the hotel for an afternoon nap. I tossed and turned, unable to sleep. I realized that it was probably because of me that all three of my sons had joined the military.

## Fathers and Sons

I was born in Coventry, England. For the first three years of my life, I didn't see my father. He was away, fighting in World War II in North Africa. When he finally came home, my mother told me, I didn't stop holding his hand for three days. All I'd had was a picture of him in uniform, prominently displayed in our two-room flat, and my mother's explanation of why he wasn't there. He was away doing important business, fighting the bad guys. This was necessary, of course, in case he didn't make it home, a possibility that nearly came true on several occasions. When my father did return, he rarely spoke of the war. I, along with my schoolboy friends in similar circumstances, embellished what little we knew.

I remember him taking me to see a war film. I must have been six years old, and it involved a battle fought against the Germans over a particular farmhouse. After the movie, he told me that was what he had to do. Of course he was my hero. Not only had he come home, but he had won the war.

At around ten years old, I began reading books that had come out describing different men's adventures fighting in World War II. *Reach for the Sky* was one, the story of Douglas Bader, who had lost his legs in a plane crash before the war, but who convinced the Royal Air Force to let him fly Spitfires again until he was shot down and ended up in a German prisoner-of-war camp. *The Great Escape*, *The Colditz Story*, *The Battle of the River Plate*, and the many stories of the Battle of Britain followed. All I wanted to be was a Spitfire pilot.



All these stories fed a young boy's desire to be adventurous, tough, and of course, a hero. My father was still in the Territorial Army (the reserves), and my mother was secretary to the major who ran the unit. I remember listening to the stories that Major Brooks told of his service in Kenya, living in tents in hot, dry, desert conditions. It was all so romantic, and I willingly put that picture in my brain as an adventure I wanted to experience.

And where did I end up? By age eighteen I was in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now three independent countries, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi) doing precisely that as an officer in the King's African Rifles.

So there are two points here: first, the need for adventure and to prove myself to other men as being courageous and tough. Second, that what you plant in your subconscious will take you kicking and screaming toward it.

Regarding our sons, I'm sure that as they were growing up in Canada and the United States, the stories of Africa that my wife Maggie and I told of close encounters with elephant, lion, and hippo caught their own imaginations. This was no doubt supplemented when two of my dearest friends, old Special Forces mates, came to live near us in Toronto and related their experiences. These stories, just like those Major Brooks told me, probably stuck in my sons' subconscious minds and subsequently influenced them to join up. Do we, therefore, fathers and sons, help perpetuate war through our own personal history, or is it much deeper than that?

The evening after the funeral, Dave and I were invited by Cindy, Matt's wife, to join her and friends for drinks in Matt's favorite Irish pub in Chico. There were about 35 people, between the ages of 25 and 35, some single, some the parents of the little babies I had noticed at the funeral. Of course, we were not allowed to buy a drink, and with many rounds and toasts to Matt, the party got loose and raucous quickly. There were moments when I viewed the scene uninterrupted from a quiet corner. I observed the energy, that irrepressibility of young people in charge of their own lives, searching and striving to make their mark. Their sense of being immortal, impregnable, undaunted, which had just been momentarily shattered, was eagerly clawing its way back through booze and laughter. I could remember having done the same thing myself, many times.

### **Introduction**

I left the funeral and my time with Dave to return to my own world. I have had a number of different careers, from army officer, stockbroker, and insurance broker to working for an American company in Hong Kong. These experiences, along with owning four different businesses in energy, food, printing, and consulting in three different countries, have brought me to my current occupation of management consulting and executive coaching with clients in different parts of the United States while living in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with my wife Maggie, the three boys all grown and gone.

It became obvious to me, as an ordinary citizen with no affiliation with some think tank or the ideologies of

the right or the left, that while we look for some elected person or candidate to solve our problems, there is no one person who knows all the answers or who can even deliver on their promises.

Despite many good intentions by many candidates, the current political swamp called Washington will suck any elected leader into the thickly entangled web of intrigue, influence and money. The primary legitimate power for the ordinary citizen is the ballot box, yet we are constantly disappointed with the lack of results. All the while, the news from around the world becomes worse. Horrible killings and bombings that seem out of our control threaten our very existence.

This situation led me to the fundamental question: *How do we, the people, without resorting to violence, exert power so that those in power (the government and the shadowy money influencers who control the politicians), cannot ignore us, dismiss us, or crush us?*

If there is no one out there, no knight on a white horse, then I must rely upon myself and find the answers within myself. Over the years, when in difficult situations, I have been aware of a wise inner voice that has come to my aid. Why can I not call on this voice now? Surely all I need to do is ask and be prepared to listen.

Once I started to write, the conversation between my day-to-day conscious ego mind and the previously secluded, subconscious part of me blossomed into a very fruitful animated dialogue. It seems that this previously untapped part of me has been patiently waiting for the opportunity to come forth and be listened to. It seems that this is

where all my past experiences accumulate with their lessons and wisdom. Further, it seems that through my prayers and meditation, this is the pathway for tapping into the metaphysical, the spiritual, my higher self. But I am also highly circumspect in this regard. There are too many people who claim to talk to God and thus claim to be justified in committing heinous crimes. All discussions and solutions must therefore ultimately bear the mantle of personal responsibility, not of some decree that eludes accountability.

In order to distinguish the two parts of the conversation, I have named the day-to-day part of me E for ego and the wise part of me WO for Wise One.





## APPENDIX A

# FURTHER POSSIBLE OUT-OF- THE-BOX IDEAS FOR HELPING THE ECONOMY

E:

### *Issue*

The Federal Reserve is a privately-owned bank and we the public do not know who the owners are. This bank steps in and out of the market when it deems necessary, with no public oversight. In whose interest is it operating?

### *Possible Solution*

The Federal Reserve Bank must belong to the people, not to some unknown private interest. And, the Federal Reserve must be run by a separate group, totally disconnected from the political process so that it does its job without political influence.

WO:

### *Issue*

The housing market is part of the bedrock of the American economy. It is in disarray due to many factors, but it is necessary to stabilize it not just for economic factors, but also for social reasons. People need a place to live.

### *Possible Solution*

Make a one-time, across-the-board mortgage rate offer of 3% to every homeowner in the country. If the government and Federal Reserve can make interest rate adjustments,

why can't "We the People?" After all is said and done, it's our money.

Approximately 60% of all mortgages are held by Fannie and Freddie, which are owned by the Government, which means it's owned by "We the People."

Mortgages held in the private sector can do the same.

The difference between the 3% and existing mortgage rate can be repaid at the time of sale of the house or refinanced at any time between five and 30 years from implementation of the 3% mortgage. This gives everyone breathing room.

The economy is barely breathing and it will continue to just survive with minimal job growth for many years, maybe decades, unless we jumpstart it without creating more debt.

E:

*Issue*

Dependence on foreign oil.

*Possible Solution:*

Combine a weight-reduction measure with an exercise stimulus measure. Fix the price of gasoline at a constant \$1 above the day-to-day market price. Take this extra dollar and split it: half to pay off the national debt and half for new renewable energy production that must be produced in this country. This will slow demand for oil; price is the best method for obtaining frugality, decreasing the threat to our national security from unstable oil



regimes, increasing demand for more efficient alternative transportation, and showing that we are serious about paying down the national debt.

If people think this is too much to pay, make it 50 cents above the market price, but this little extra now will seem like nothing, absolutely nothing, in the face of default, loss of our reserve currency status, or hyperinflation, which can and will result if we don't take bold steps. This way everyone will know that each time they fill up their tank, they are helping the patient (the economy) get back on its feet.

WO:

#### *Issue*

Foreign aid. The real issue is not so much the foreign aid but the lack of results that the aid has achieved. Giving aid without education, particularly of women, without reversing land degradation, and without ensuring entrepreneurial sustainability merely creates unsustainable dependency.

#### *Possible Solution*

A cap on all foreign aid. Set up a special commission to look at all aid programs to ensure they meet the criteria:

- Education on the reversal of desertification.
- Education, with special emphasis on educating and empowering women, which has been shown to reduce family size.
- Education on entrepreneurialism together with microlending.

E:

*Issue*

Private capital needed to help pay the national debt.

*Possible Solution*

During World War II we had War Bonds. Let us institute a Peace Bond. All legal residents of the United States can buy up to one million dollars per individual, and the same for corporations. This money is for the sole purpose of paying down our foreign national debt. Instead of being owned by foreign governments, a national security issue, we will be owned by Americans. We will be showing the world that we are serious about paying off our debt, which will boost confidence in the long term viability of America and the global financial system.

If 100 million people/corporations invested \$10,000 each, that would bring in one trillion dollars. This special bond would pay 2% above the prime rate and would be non-taxable.

Even if the foreign debt is owed at a lower rate than the Peace Bond rate, at least it is paying off the foreign creditor while paying interest to the people of America who will put that money to work. Don't listen to the howls from Wall Street. It's our country, our government, and our money.





## APPENDIX B

# FURTHER IDEAS FOR CONSIDERATION REGARDING POLITICIANS

WO:

### *Issue*

Everyone knows that without money, you can't get elected. Therefore, those who contribute the most have bigger hold over that candidate than the ordinary person with his or her one vote in the crowd.

Democracy becomes a sham when big money rules the day. Unless we make structural changes, versus superficial platonic platitudes, we are doomed.

### *Possible Solution*

Therefore, we need publicly funded elections so that there is a level playing ground for all candidates, with no influence peddling.

Members of the public can give up to a suitable amount, say \$100, in donations to their particular candidate.

E:

### *Issue*

Elected politicians still need money for re-election (under the current system) and are therefore beholden to lobbyist who give them money for the lobbyist's pet cause.

This further dilutes the ordinary citizen's voice, as the money comes from special interests, e.g., Wall Street, big banks, the auto industry, the health care industry, and the insurance industry.

*Possible Solution*

Not allowing lobbyist to lobby could be seen as an impediment to freedom of speech. Therefore, a special large room is set aside for lobbyists and elected officials to meet to discuss the proposals put forth by the lobbyist in full public view, recorded on C-Span for total transparency.

No elected official is allowed to take any money whatsoever from anyone, other than the allowed amount from private citizens' campaign contributions.

WO:

*Issue*

Politicians gain favor with their constituents by bringing home the bacon. This leads to unmitigated adding on of earmarks, inserts, and amendments onto bills that have nothing to do with the original bill.

*Possible Solution*

Nothing can be added that is not absolutely germane to the bill in question.

E:

*Issue*

Incumbents. They have failed; there are no excuses.

### *Answer*

Vote out the incumbents in both parties, no exceptions, to send a message that we are serious about taking back power from the politicians, special interests, and money influencers. Vote in the new breed of politicians from both parties who vow to fulfill the manifesto, the will of the people, who will be known as "For the Country Politicians."

### **Wrap Up**

E: What happens if we don't pay heed and we continue down the profligate path?

WO: No one knows when the shifting sands of the financial foundation will wash away. No one knows what financial lunacy will trip the wire or burst the dam. One only knows that all illusions shatter and painful lessons are learned.

Just as war teaches there are no winners,  
Only the shattered, wounded and dead,  
No land obtained, no people conquered,  
'Cept groans of those on whom we tread.

When all the Universe relies on balance  
To keep its steady path,  
What possible other outcome can there be,  
But reckoning of the math.

When the lords of money create phantom wealth  
And greed becomes their god,  
All manner of imbalance thus applies,  
The stricken ledger we plod.

Imagine a global tsunami wave  
Traveling the financial seas,  
Its size and shape foreboding,  
The bringing to our knees.

We have seen the wave in motion,  
Gathering height and speed,  
But all waves crest,  
And rage the rocks indeed.

This visionary wave portrays,  
The mountainous debt therein,  
Held up by pure momentum,  
Its substance merely skin.

By diligent honest work and thoughtful action now, we  
can repay our debts and change the future. It's up to us.

All outstanding debts must be wiped from the slate, until  
the ocean is calm and gentle once more.

Quote from: ***The Message of the Divine Iliad, by Walter Russell.***

*THE LAW OF BALANCE is the Law of Love upon which the Universe is founded. This law is given to man for his coming renaissance of greater comprehension. It is of all laws, the most inclusive, and the most simple. It consists of but three words. These three words are the very foundation of all our material existence, all phenomena of matter or interchange between humans, economically, socially and spiritually.*

The three words are:



RHYTHMIC BALANCED INTERCHANGE