

SURVIVOR

by

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In the early sixties Esquire Magazine commissioned several experts, in and out of the social sciences, to write ‘On the Possibility and Desirability of a Permanent Peace.’ Without exception the essays were exceedingly pessimistic for those who might welcome such a state. Yet the desirability of permanent peace is a given in today’s presumption of improvement, in a world free of habitual strife.

The thinking has become so routine that the distinction between force and violence is blurred. The very idea of a feasibly just war, except perhaps against unrepentant men and the legacy of DWEMS (Dead White European Males), is now a veritable oxymoron in the social justice arena. Any skirmish must be chastely fair (egregious cost, loss and embarrassment on all sides) — think of the opprobrium heaped on Israel for combating those countries that urge its extermination. Such detached scruple invites stalemate and acrimony. What state, race, nationality, individual doesn’t harbour a festering *idée fixe*, the entail of at least one galvanizing grievance? We can now add the female sex to the major protagonists of state and race because modern women have decided they too are in a state of siege. A now famous report from a Common’s Health and Welfare subcommittee was entitled, The War Against Women. Who’s actually waging the war is the obtuse question. If you have to ask you’ll never know.

Still the social justice champion has difficulty assigning blame — except to heartless white men (a dwindling minority) — because that would require a limit to tolerance and the imposition of a circumscribed morality that discourages *creativity* — the great indexed lyric! When up

against efficiency, improvisation becomes the humane excursion. It is hardly surprising the concordant of consensus seems so elusive. The irony is that the more people are solicited to effusively sound off to an extensive media watch — the more things in life become intolerable. Once begun the entire globe can look inhospitable. All buggerishly moving of course, both the drama and the climatic pity of it all. What balladeer can resist such heady pathos? What actor the chance to convincingly wring her hands? What indentured radical the wish to do some serious house cleaning? Yes, the self-dramatic role the least among us can aspire to. If you haven't something to complain about, or are reticent about doing so, you miss out on about ninety percent of the conversation!