

# PERSPECTIVES ON VIOLENCE

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The following are responses of participants in classes and workshops on violence prevention. Participants were asked to complete three sentences: 1) Violence is.... 2) Therefore.... and, 3) I will....

The responses are unedited and are offered to represent the many perspectives related to this complex issue.

## 1) VIOLENCE IS...

an activity that is permeating society today. The gangs use violence as a symbol of strength. They terrorize and intimidate neighborhoods to give themselves a feeling of control. Violence is also a tool that is used to gain status monetarily. People are robbed and killed and beaten so that others can gain notoriety and possessions. Violence is a cancer that must be stopped.

a verbal or physical act of harm with great intensity, frequency and/or duration towards an unknowing/unwilling/innocent victim.

a destructive force that tears and divides our lives, our families and our community to the very core. It will devour you. It will eat at your very soul like a cancerous illness. It will rob you of joy, peace and happiness. Violence affects your very being.

aggressive anti-social behavior against other human beings. The rate of violence is increasing steadily. It is influenced by mass media, the economic situation and the environment.

improper acting-out, aggressive-type behavior inflicting physical punishment on someone or something.

inflicting harm. A person can come out of control if he/she cannot control their emotions and perhaps strike out at another person in a rage. It may also destroy property...in an angry state of mind with no regard for the consequences until it is too late.

something that occurs every day, everywhere, every minute, every second. The ultimate goal for violence is power/control... happens to someone against their will that leads to bodily harm or death.

acting aggressively by using bodily force towards another... inflicting harm on them for some reason you find acceptable.

acting out your frustrations and disappointments. There is a delight in seeing end result for the violator.

too prevalent in our schools

an inappropriate way of displaying emotions. We must learn to control our anger...ways to let someone know that you are upset..

the hurting of another person....the idea of doing harm to others. It is also not caring who or what is hurt. It is letting go of all the anger and frustration of feelings whether negative or positive.

acting out aggression...physical, emotional or mental...the result of anger. Anger comes from being frustrated, disappointed or from not having basic needs met. Violence is destructive for the victim and the victimizer. There are long term results and consequences either way.

committed by those who lack self-esteem, the social morality and skills necessary for one to be a productive unit of our society.

unwarranted physical aggression...can take many shapes and forms and can occur between individuals or groups-those familiar with each other and strangers.

the deliberate intention of physically harming another person or animal.

forced aggression exhibited by a person...anger is the center of violence.

a temporary solution to a permanent problem....individuals who commit violence are searching for something and resort to violence in an attempt to make themselves feel better.

increasing rapidly as a popular end-all dispute solution.. It is all around us and our children along with innocent bystanders who are also victims.

an insensitive, senseless act committed by an angry and calculating individual(s). There is a complete disregard for human life or feelings. It is a senseless expectation that the victim accept outrageous behavior from bullies.

the number 1 cause of destruction of America. Violence prevents one from doing fun activities such as going to the movies, carnivals or school sports events.

a serious problem in our society...overly aggressive behavior that has been modeled on television and even in our schools.

any behavior that is harmful or destructive to oneself, another person, or property which is committed with conscience or unconscience intention of hurting or doing harm.

a harmful act towards another person, animal, property or yourself.

a strong physical force or madness, roughness, used to injure or harm something or someone. Violence is a deep emotional feeling which comes with action and acting out. It can also be a verbal aggression, by using strong words to hurt someone. Violent temper.

causing harm to self and others. Also, destroying property during a misunderstanding. Unable to control actions when angry or upset. Violence is also putting people in fear of being injured because of the way the angry person reacts.

everywhere we look these days. Children see it on TV, at home, at school, on the streets. Parents teach their children violence so that they can survive on the street. Parents teach their children violence by modeling it in the home. Society teaches children to be violent as no other examples for dealing with poverty, frustration, and anger are offered.

anything which harms another living thing either physically or psychologically to the point of causing remorse.

in its most obvious form any action which causes physical damage. But violence more insipid form is any manner or action which inspires fear, dis-ease, or disrupts mental well being-a glare, a style of dress, a manner of speech, a quick movement that does not contact or come near anything...may even serve a "good" and "useful" purpose.

physical, mental, verbal and aggressive acting out. It can be performed in words or examples of beating, pushing and cruel treatment toward another person or even oneself.

arguably the greatest problem to be solved in American society.

the result of harming a person's emotional and physical state of being. Violence can cause a person to go into extreme rage or fear. Violence may cause a person's self-esteem to be lowered.

an infraction on one's rights causing physical harm or detriment to health or welfare.

the will to harm another person or self, either physically, emotionally or spiritually. It is preceded by the desire to do such harm.

putting people in fear of being injured

parents teach their children violence so that they can survive on the streets...by modeling it in the home....society teaches children to be violent as no other examples for dealing with poverty, frustration and anger are offered.

an emotional, physical or verbal rape and/or violation of one's-self or others with total disregard for authority and authority figures, as well as consequences for that aberrant violation and behavior. Extreme aggression and aggressive acts which cause long term, as well as short term consequences to families, peers, and innocent victims. Violence is a cancer spreading like wildfire in our streets and suburbs. An evil like no other that threatens to uproot the very essence of peace of mind and values.

a deep emotional feeling which comes with action and acting out...

the most obvious form of any activity which causes physical damage, but violence more insipid form is any manner or action which inspires fear, dis-ease, or disrupts mutual well-being.

an infraction of one's rights causing physical harm or determent to health and welfare.

an emotional, physical or verbal rape and/or violation of one's self or others with total disregard for authority and authority figures as well as consequences for that aberrant violation and behavior. Extreme aggression...which causes long and short term consequences to families, peers, and innocent victims...a cancer spreading like wild fire in our streets and suburbs...an evil like no other evil that threatens to uproot the very essence of peace of mind and values.

exasperating and exhausting for those who want peace.

...creates fear discomfort, shame or disgust as a result.

the result of harming a person's emotional & physical state of being...can cause a person to go into an extreme rage...cause a person's self-esteem to be lowered.

the inability of individuals to resolve confrontation or social problems in accepted social ways, and/or a means requiring proper coping skills.

physical actions, gestures facial expressions, verbal expressions and body language may all qualify as violent action. There must be intent against another person to commit harm, intimidation or revenge.

does not consider the rights of others...anger may be the overriding factor.

very real in all areas of our society...the first thing some see during the day...family violence...it will travel in attitudes of children to school...seems more prevalent than peace.

perpetuated through media, government, family and life as we know it...continues to occur as America continues down the relative mediocre path of humanism, ignoring the fact that mankind cannot free itself out of this quandary.

perpetuated...leads to more violence.

acting out on someone or something that is not appropriate for the setting.  
an everyday part of life...children see the unnecessary acts of aggression on television, hear it in their music, experience it in their homes...a "given" in their lives.

many people enjoy watching violent act because they can channel their aggression through those acts...television violence gives some people permission to act out.

detrimental to human beings and animals. If done repeatedly without understanding of the emotional consequences...will likely persist or increase as a means to effectively control or change one's environment.

everywhere. It's the topic at schools and on television as well as at my 80 year old mother's afternoon coffee.

the one thing that keeps many people going and prevents the rest of us from ever leaving.

an act of hurting self and others and damaging property.

something I know a lot about, but seldom deal with directly.

a pervasive crisis that is potentially reversible.

a consequence of persons seeking their own satisfactions, using a conditioned response when limited options are available to them.

one of the greatest challenges facing our schools today. Low level aggression is generally disregarded and our focus is mostly with high level aggression.

a threat of an act of harm or actual harm to others or self.

an easy way to solve a problem. You don't have to think of other solutions, spend time on alternatives or even care what happens next. Solve the first problem--done--violence = problem solved.

harm or intended harm inflicted on other(s)--ordinarily by physical means, and is becoming the American way to get what one wants or needs.

an expression of frustration.

the experience of being scared--as a person is to walk the streets of his neighborhood without looking over his shoulder, and as a mother of black boys being scared that they will be victimized.

a reaction to a situation which is done without rational thinking. Violence is a primitive impulse that shows our animalistic ties or roots.

the result of hopelessness. It is the measure of a failed society, one that cannot meet the basic needs of large numbers of its people.

the result of the sin nature of man (humans). It is the acting out of Satan's influence on each individual life through soul ties, blood-line ties and personal sin.

hopelessness--poverty--helplessness--anger--failure of society.

our relative rebellion against authority.

painful--physically and mentally. The use of a weapon or self, to cause trouble for someone or pain or ruin personal property or a person.

is physical aggression toward others. It is a self-fueling engine of destruction that feeds and grows stronger in itself.

the result of society not meeting the needs of families and individuals, demonstrated by acts well documented in text and film.

harm or intended harm inflicted on other(s)--ordinarily by physical means and is becoming the American way to get what one wants or needs.

a form of punishment against objects self, & others. It is seen as both accepted and unaccepted socially.

destructive behaviors against another object or person or oneself.

an act that is harmful or destructive to an object(s) or individual(s).

a reaction to a situation which results in inappropriate social behaviors such as murder, rape, assault, etc. reacting with aggression toward oneself or others.

any unwanted act against another or self that causes physical or emotional harm.

the destruction of persons, things or feelings caused by a person or group. It can happen any time and any place. comes in both genders, all races and all ages...measured by income, occupation, family structure, self-esteem, delinquency, teen pregnancy, unemployment.

highly antisocial behavior that has no place in society

A physical or verbal slashing out at another person or object as a way of displaying the sheer anger the aggressor is feeling. This anger may not necessarily be the result of an action or comment by the receiving person.

A way that someone shows that they are unhappy with a situation or person....He could also be aggressive toward himself, beating up on his own actions, lowering his self-esteem or concept, blame others, taking no responsibility for the acting out

A feeling that person acts out in forms of noncompliance...acting out in overt behaviors that are threatening to others...can also be held within...is learned by modeling or exposure to situations that are beyond the realm of someone coping with the situation, and developed over a period of time

An action portrayed by someone who is showing emotions.

Generally displayed when a person has lost tolerance and feels threatened

Can also be passive as in when the person does not respond to requests

A way of acting out due to the lack of satisfaction in some area (physical, mental, emotional-a deficit in appropriate expression of one's feelings

Is painful. Verbal-the words cut like sharp knives. Physical-the blows bruise and break...destructive and yet with each act of aggression another layer of cement block is laid and the barrier between the aggressor and others is strengthened

The acting out of an inner conflict

Overt attention seeking

## **2) THEREFORE...**

we-government (corrections, social services, courts, education) must look at a different approach than we have been using over the past (?) years. The better utilization and flexibility of can't allow depreciation of service.

people need to realize that it will take time and energy to use other ways to solve problems. These "other ways" to deal with situations need to be taught and practiced until they happen naturally, just as reading, etc.

we must become more proactive with regard to violence. Education and prevention should be priorities.

it would be necessary to re-think and re-direct our priorities and responses

we must: (1) promote the learning of social skills, setting priorities, self respect  
(2) restrict opportunities to observe, enjoy, or promote violence  
(3) recognize those who practice and promote non-violence

I attend sessions like these to prepare for the inevitable, but to act and teach peacefully in hopes I can delay it.

we should protect ourselves from getting hurt and damaged--help ourselves deal with dangers--teach people to control their anger and think about alternatives--consider resolving triggers in society.

provide jobs, early intervention, re-privatize national goals...no single budgeted organization should be exempt from committing time and treasure to cooperative efforts to study and initiate pilot projects to deal with root causes of human violence--from acts leading to conception with little hope of success.

it is not going to go away unless everyone wants it to cease and is willing to put forth effort to calm the Violence Plague.

my life has changed. I have become hypervigilant and, in some ways, have become a prisoner in my community in order to stay relatively safe. It makes me think about moving somewhere safe, but I can't think of where that might be.

the way to stop violence is by willing good to others and self, physically, emotionally and spiritually. It is preceded by the desire to do good. Increasing the desire to will good things and decreasing the desire to harm another or self is an important precursor to eliminating violence.

I (we) will try my (our) best to watch my reaction to things that may make me angry. I will try to monitor the movies or programs my children and students watch and not encourage the making of such. I will try to help others learn to channel anger to non-violent channels after I learn.

let's identify the frustrations, their roots and get a point at which to start reducing the need to act it out.

I will make sure my children and I are street wise and keep away from threatening places, looks and situations. I will continue to smile and reinforce kindness.

violence will remain in the world and become increasingly more accepted. Violence is and will become the main part of our society and will be Satan's main tool to rob, kill and destroy the people God made in his image.

steps need to be taken by schools and parents to teach their kids other ways of dealing with problems. Other peaceful semantics have to be taught to our youth to create a better future (i.e., discussion, compromise, role-playing, positive reactions).

it hurts and destroys life and causes lasting effects

we all must practice kindness, respect, and tolerance of others and situations to negate the effects of violence and remain safe.

we must deal with the reasons for that hopelessness and address them or watch the society collapse.

people need to learn how to appropriately respond to authority, as an expression of violence.

if we believe that human beings are deserving of love, rather than pain, we feel the need to understand the roots of violent behavior and seek to change the anger and frustration that breeds it.

violence is witnessed daily, in the media, at home, in the streets, in the schools, on the job and all other environments. Children commit violent acts after watching cartoons and/or violent programs which display characters hitting, fighting, verbally abusing others, or the willful destruction of property. Children and adults witness commercials which demonstrate lying as means to an end.

should be made extinct in a "perfect society."

no one can escape this aspect of life. It does not necessarily need to be caused by something-sometimes violence just is.

measures or techniques need to be used to prevent acts of violence.

people should use more appropriate ways of dealing with negative reactions to a given situation.

those who exhibit violent behavior should be taught how to react without using violence.

people who commit violent acts do not understand the effects of their actions on other people and the environment.

a set of strategies need to be developed for parents and teachers to implement in their home and schools that model appropriate behavior and give children the tools they need to handle adverse situations in a positive, nonviolent way.

teach children to learn to communicate in a positive manner when they are upset with each other rather than resort to physically hurting someone.

we have to pay attention to our youths and redirect their energies along more socially acceptable avenues.

we have to reassess the family structure.

this act provokes anger, defensive behavior, stress and fear from its victim.

we must find ways to counter-act and control violence, ideally working towards elimination of violence.

a person who has a tendency towards violence can possibly increase their patterns of violent behavior as with possible learned response towards handling situations.

is an ongoing problem in this country and the end is not near. Elimination of firearms and drugs could help. we should pledge to stop violence and harm to one another...join together for the better of all mankind...set the agenda for our youth to become better in society.

we are losing our children too fast too early for no good reason.

violence is seeking out to destroy anyone who gets in the way of the action-pain and suffering does not mean a lot to a violent person.

violence should never be ignored, excused, make one numb and complacent. Violence does not have to be part of life. It is the result of some gap in the life of the person.

don't condone violent actions, but be aware of situations before hand that can bring about violence. Try to diffuse the situation if possible.

teaching has become difficult because of behaviors that disrupt the learning process.

people should be exposed to discipline and structure when they are young. Hopefully parents will teach their children to respect themselves as well as other people. People must be treated in a positive manner throughout each day.

it is important to reach out to all children while they are young...to build self-esteem instead of beat it down. Children need to feel safe, loved and worthwhile.

parents should model non-violent interactions and socially acceptable behavior in the home. Parents set the tone.

teachers should focus attention on the negative consequences for both the aggressor and the victim...demonstrate more positive alternatives.

need to educate parents.

violence doesn't change anything and will only lead to more violence until the permanent problem is addressed.

need to help student channel their emotions...to get control of their emotions.

we have no choice but to address and face it head on...must commit to consistent teaching of principle centered leadership and value systems aligned with good moral ethics...suspensions, expulsions, prisons and other punitive measures are at best .39 cent band-aids which do not address or solve, but rather salve the problem...doctors know that we can't just treat the symptoms.

each and everyone of us needs to take long look at the messages we are giving to children and the garbage we are allowing to come across the air waves on a daily basis. It is the responsibility of each and every adult to put a stop to what is considered "normal" behavior and begin to spend some time with children...turn off the TV.

we must act in an aggressive manner to help these people and educate them on how to be nonviolent...to deal with the stresses.

the person being violated becomes aggressive and violates or regresses to the perpetual victim. violence is not easily remedied...manifestations are not always obvious or detectable...look to the results of violence as the indicator of violence.

violence should be taken more seriously...dealt with in a positive and productive manner by talking out or role playing situations.

violence is often reinforces and the cycle continues.

early intervention could prevent or curtail violent actions...parents and teachers should be involved.

every attempt to defuse the action at its earliest point should be implemented to reduce the action.

violence has so many forms and so many degrees that we don't have enough answers or interventions to stop it...like a disease that has no cure.

this can be eliminated.

the teacher must reconceptualize the source of these feelings and provide proper training of coping skills.

one of the most prevalent concerns in our society...must be an awareness that violence is more than physical aggression...it encompasses the underlying thinking and thought patterns.

important to see the warning signs and act appropriately.

need to think of ways to decrease our participation in aggression and violence...to figure out why violence seems so attractive... how to get ahead to be peaceful and promote peace.

Americans need to get off their lazy butts and quit insanely thinking that things will get better if we just believe.

alternatives to violence must be taught and modeled.

we need to reduce the number of violent acts people watch...not buy the products.

persons being violated learn from an early age violence as a way to cope.

try to work on the environment too.

The job of the adult is to make an attempt to redirect the actions of the aggressor by being a detective and taking note of a trigger that might set off the aggressor.

Steps should be taken to alter this behavior immediately

People with aggression problems need to come up with other ways to displace their anger. They need outside support and they need to learn how to sort through and find out why they are angry and what they can do to solve or relieve aggression

Need to be taught social skills that teach ways of coping with aggression

Need to teach kids to filter their anger and frustration in a more positive way that can be productive

needs to be redirected in a timely fashion

It is essential to be prepared to intervene before the situation reaches the point of harm

The kid does not know how to express anger correctly

It is important to manage this behavior both inside and outside of the classroom for the safety of all

Coping skills must be taught for "survival" in the community

Aggressive children need to be made aware of and accountable for their actions, as well as their responsibility to self and others

### **3) I WILL...**

handle adverse situations in a positive, nonviolent manner and model appropriate non-violent behavior in my home and school...behaviors that show that conflict can be resolved in a positive and peaceful way.

refrain from any aggressive act of violence

do what I can to be an effective positive role model for our youth. I will not give up on them. I will continue to teach that we must all coexist.

attempt to watch the manner in which I respond to a person who approaches me with a tone of negativity.

pursue love not hate, to show compassion to my fellow man regardless of race, creed or color.

try to reduce violence in the class by rigidly adhering to a reward and consequence behavior plan.

try to the best of my ability to intervene in violent acts, more importantly try to locate the possible triggers that cause this type of behavior before it happens.

teach my students how to keep my students how to keep their emotions under control, to think first before reacting.

educate children about violence and what they should do...each person must choose what to do and what not to do.

be kind toward everyone and try to see the good in people. Deal with small problems before they escalate into larger problems.

hold my anger as much as possible, walk away until I can cool down. This is my starting point for a better life.

try to stay out of harm's way...avoid the issues of violence as much as possible.

control my own anger...all I can to help the world be a better place.

model alternative ways of dealing with rejection, anger or frustration.

become an active participant in addressing violence by attending workshops on how to intervene, see my students more as people, and give my best effort as a teacher.

defend a person's right to be respected.

treat each child as an individual and do my best to understand, rather than become impatient with their negative behaviors.

instill in my son and my students that violence is never an option and is not acceptable in school at home or anywhere.

try my best not to resort to violence and have thoughts of violence when I feel someone is doing me wrong.

try to make my student feel like someone...learn ways to help whole families and communities to heal themselves from within.

make an effort to model kind and appropriate behavior on my job, at my school, and especially in my home where people have a tendency to "let down" their best behavior. I will try to educate my child that it is "ok" to be angry, but there are appropriate ways of displaying and dealing with anger.

use peaceful practices and will not tolerate violence within my life scope, model it and actively teach it to my students.

promote peace and exclude violence from my daily life.

explain and model my point of view to students and children whom I meet.

keep working on building peace within myself and others.

commit my influence to try to reverse my current state's efforts to commit more violence on violent youths.

not use violence in my life, nor support groups who do; and I will teach and model violence in every way I can.

do some act of kindness for any person whom I feel the desire to harm. I will try to publicly state more often every time I see an example of violence, that it is not so. I will protest any of the violence against children that is taken for granted:

- physical punishment
- verbal abuse
- deprivation
- abortion

not give up! Nor give in! Continue to be a non-violent model.

work on banning or ignoring or just leaving violence.

attempt every single day to advocate the end of violence.

teach peace by example.

try to understand others' needs and thoughts better.

actively teach, support, and model alternative solutions to violence for problems and issues.

behave peacefully and seek to advocate for change in one operational way each day.

provide time for staff members to write letters to legislators to describe situations of specific kids.

strive to teach others about the consequences of behavior in both positive and negative contexts and try to provide alternative behaviors to better interact with the environment.

attempt to affect the world around me to decrease violence.

work to defend my students, my family and myself from acts of violence and violent issues as much as I can, although the uncontrollable aspect of violence scares me.

avoid reinforcing forms of violent behavior and encourage non-violent forms.

seek ways to heal those who have experienced violence and do what I can to prevent violence.

try to provide a class environmental curriculum that helps prevent violence in our society.

intervene in a situation before violence erupts.

visit homes and get to know parents and see if I can help them to be better parents.

try to reason with the person...learn to be quiet when I can see that talking will not help, but worsen the situation.

model good behavior, respect for others and consideration for the less fortunate. I will teach the children in my classroom and my neighborhood to start listening more to each other...take time to make an effort to try to make society a little kinder, more understanding and less centered on self.

do everything I can to make sure I do not bring anymore stress to an already stressful situation and try to alleviate some of the stress.

go to support group dealing with people who have gone through the same experiences. Also, take a karate class to work off a lot of anger and frustration.

include students on decision making for consequences given for infractions on others as well as the reward system for positive behaviors.

be righteous and hopeful in thought and deed.

do my best to protect my family from it and try to make them aware that it does exist in our world...to intervene and teach students that violence is not the answer.

help students learn to self-govern their actions.

as a sometimes angry, aggressive individual, try to control my actions so that I will not resort to violence. Hopefully through my actions others will see that there is another avenue...I hope to teach my children to think, rethink, react and understand the consequences of violent behavior.

decrease the threat of violence by instilling positive values. I will teach them to be selective in their friendships and to discourage violent behavior in others. I will teach others that although somebody wants to sell us violence...we're not buying.

provide a classroom with as little violence as possible. I will model appropriate behavior by refraining from yelling, throwing things, slamming doors and never striking a child. In conflict it is important that students be forced to verbalize in a reasonable, logical fashion, those stressors that created the situation...to help the students see what they are doing and provide time to calm down.

try to become more sensitive and understanding to the needs of others.

write to the criminal court system and our legislative leaders stating the following, "instead of increasing the police force use that money to increase counseling, wrap-around and community based facilities such as the Better Boy's Foundation, basketball courts, community houses to provide programs for youth which students can access after school. I will urge the mayor and other legislators to embrace opportunities to communicate with gang leader and labor forces. I will work with my minister and school principal to react to these issues."

put myself in and try to react in an appropriate manner.

discourage aggression and violence through any means except violence and aggression. I can attempt to discourage my family and friends from aggression

monitor the watching of violence in my home.

inform others that there is good evidence that there is a God who is there and he is the only one powerful enough to alleviate this mess.

teach my students through personalizing the experiences and giving my students options.

show alternatives to violence by what I watch, what I say and how I act.

teach coping skills.

show the results of violence.

Counsel, defuse and monitor student behavior so as to reduce unnecessary conflicts

Be able to take control of my actions because of the training and knowledge I have about my inner actions

I will do what I can to learn to take the barrier down and take away the pain

Provide kids with prosocial skills they need and give them a better way of dealing with..

Make sure they will not harm themselves, myself, or others, or try to create an environment in which an aggressive situation will not or is less likely to occur

Learn as much as I can about aggression and share my knowledge with aggressive children and their families

Monitor my students, intervene early and provide time to debrief or and alternate to the situation

Learn how to deal with people who are showing aggressive behaviors

Actively engage in a prosocial curriculum within my classroom

Listen and help set up goals

Take the time to be more of a detective

### **OTHER COMMENTS ...**

Peace can only be given to individuals through God. The Holy Spirit brings and keeps peace in this world. Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose the third day to sit at the right hand of God. He, as the part of the Trinity, sent the Holy Spirit to provide the only peace that is here in the world. This peace will one day be taken out of the world for a season.

If the rules of society become more permissive than they already are, I'm afraid that whatever we do, unless there is more support we are fighting a losing battle.

A definition for Peace from the dictionary.

Peaceful: Free from disturbance or disorder.

Peace: To confirm an agreement. Freedom from war, public disturbance, disagreements.

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