



The ANGLICAN PACIFIST of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Newsletter of the New Zealand Branch of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

Christmas Message from the Chairman

NIE WIEDER KREIG! DAS WALTE GOTT!

The initiatives for one of the most extraordinary episodes in that horrendous [1914-18] war came from the German invaders, but was quickly reciprocated by the trench soldiers opposing them.

It began with intermittent 'live and let live' cessations of fire. Then, where the trenches were close enough, good-natured jeers were swapped. Most exchanges were in English, as many Germans had worked in Britain before the war. By early December there was so much talking between the sides that a British Chief of Staff issued the directive '...for it discourages initiative in commanders, and destroys the offensive spirit in all ranks...' The opposing German command agreed, and their troops were warned that cases of fraternisation 'would be investigated by superiors and discouraged most energetically.'

On Christmas Eve, the Kaiser sent thousands of Christmas trees to the front. His cousin George, sent 216,608 Princess Mary tins containing mostly tobacco, with a short message from the King. There were a few non-smoker tins of sweets and some special ones for Indian troops. More substantial gifts went to the behind-the-lines officers from their respective 'monarchs'.

It was the Christmas trees that began that amazing day of peace. On Christmas Eve they were lit up and placed along the trench parapets, while the soldiers sang carols, most frequently 'Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht'. Fortunately Christmas Eve was very cold, so the wet bloody sludge froze over and the ground became hard. Men from both sides walked into 'no man's land' and exchanged greetings and cigarettes. A singer from the Berlin Opera sang and the Frenchmen opposite applauded until he gave an encore. Elsewhere a French opera star sang Silent Night from 'no man's land' leaving both sides in awe and silent wonder. For many, Christmas Day began with burying the dead of the last few days. Later the troops exchanged wine, cigarettes, cigars, and various momentos. A pig was roasted in one sector. There were football matches and Christmas services in 'no man's land'.

Not every sector fraternised, nor did everyone at or near the front agree with this behaviour. Corporal Hitler, behind the lines at the time, was strongly against both fraternisation and the observance of Christmas. There was consternation at higher levels on both sides...

In December 1915, to inhibit any 'Christmas slackness' in discipline, the British High Command ordered a slow artillery barrage throughout daylight hours as well as trench raids. However, there were a few 'Christmas lapses' with singing and some banter between the trenches. On Christmas Day, two captains in the Scots Guards agreed to a ceasefire to bury the dead, and the two sides mingled for half an hour. There was no shooting for the rest of the day. One of the captains was court-martialled



APF Study Saturday Early Next Year!

In March/April 2012 an interdenominational study day will be held in Auckland. Speakers will include the Very Revd Dr Paul Oestreicher and Dr Richard Jackson (Deputy Director, NZ Peace & Conflict Studies). Emails will be sent to APF members as soon as the date and place are finalised.

but he was only reprimanded. It could have been a capital offence. On both sides In 1915 there would be more dead on any single day than metres gained in the entire year, and the war was to continue for another three years without truce. 'Silent night' was all too soon drowned by the noise of war.

In every age the angels' song has been hard to discern above the clamouring ambitions of people. But the song is there for those with ears to hear, and a desire to sing their song.

So this Christmas let us remember the words that Carl Muhlegg shouted across 'no man's land' on Christmas Eve 1914, 'Nie Wieder Kreig! Das Walte Gott!' No More War! It's What God wants!

Jonathan

*References from 'Silent Night' by Stanley Weintraub 2002, published by the Penguin Group.
Film worth seeing 'Joyeux Noel', directed by Christian Carion 2005.*

DOROTHY FAY BROWN

Eulogy by Kevin P Clements, Director National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Otago (abridged).

All Saints Church, Ponsonby, Auckland; 2 December 2011

Dear Friends, we are here today to celebrate the life of a most remarkable woman, Dorothy Brown. Dorothy had a very profound effect on everyone who knew her or was taught by her. She was a forceful person whose presence always created positive waves. It says something about Dorothy that it is taking three priests and a Bishop to preside at her funeral! I hear Dorothy now telling me from her coffin that I should make this speech short, make it simple and ask for a donation for the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Otago, which is her last legacy to Aotearoa New Zealand and which I have the privilege of leading.

I was privileged to be able to visit Dorothy last Sunday while she was still conscious. I sat beside her bed and she gave me her final checklist for the Centre. Dorothy has been giving me such checklists for the last seven years!!! It always amazes me how enthusiastically I have complied with these requests. In fact I have been astonished at how many grown up adults have willingly accepted such lists from Dorothy over the years and worked their way through them.

This widespread obedience to Dorothy's authority is a mark of the woman she was. She was quite simply one of the most intelligent women I have known: an excellent judge of character, determined, driven, passionate about her causes and the most formidable networker I have met. When we returned to New Zealand in 2008 she asked us to stay at her house for a few days so that we could have a quiet transition to Godzone... This quiet transition had Valerie and me meeting something like 59 people in two days – at breakfasts, morning teas, lunches, afternoon teas and dinner!!! She made sure that politicians, academics,



activists, church leaders, NGO leaders all came to meet me. While it was exhausting it was absolutely the right thing to do. Most of the people she introduced me to were key players in the peace and justice field and were important for me to get to know or to reconnect with.

Dorothy understood the importance of hospitality. Having a cup of tea with her, however, was normally a precursor to a lifetime's commitment to one of Dorothy's causes! When she was forming the Aotearoa-

New Zealand Peace and Conflict Studies Trust she invited its current members to tea or lunch – and the rest as they say is history. Each was given a role, each was invited back to meeting after meeting as Dorothy and the Trust gave shape to her dream for a New Zealand Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies.

It says something about Dorothy that some of her last moments were spent worrying about the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. It was typical of her, however, that not only did she get an idea that could become a concrete reality she also put her own material resources into the Centre. She was not able to speak easily last Sunday but when she could she told me that Andrew Carnegie had said “It is a sin to die rich”. Dorothy had taken this injunction to heart and given generously to the Centre and to many other causes that she believed in. On Sunday, those Trust Members who were at her side were able to thank her for her vision, philanthropy and dedication and reassure her that the Trust and Centre were in different but good hands. We were her last project, her last gift to this country.

For seven years the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies has been Dorothy’s primary project. If you want a recipe for living with a life-threatening disease like cancer then get a big project and dedicate many of your waking hours to it! Her reason for making this Centre her final project was a lifelong concern about violence and violent behaviour. She considered violence of any kind to be one of the most important problems facing the world. In order to deal with this problem, she wanted to understand its origins and dynamics, but more importantly how to ensure that the future was non violent and peaceful. She brought together her concern for education and learning with this concern for peace and justice. She believed in the transformative power of education and of the central importance of peace education. Her lifelong Christian faith, which she honed in endless discussions in the Student Christian Movement as a student and in different Anglican churches around the world, generated her lifelong commitment to justice and peace and provided the motivation for this project.

She, and the group that coalesced around her in the Aotearoa-New Zealand Peace and Conflict Studies Trust, knew that peace and justice would not come about just because people were advocating it (They have been doing this for years]. She also

knew that it was not enough just to be members of advocacy groups like Amnesty International or local Peace and Justice Groups. Dorothy understood that passion without reason would not change the world. So she set about developing a Centre where passion could be combined with the best intelligence in the world in order to diagnose and understand the sources of violence and the short, medium and long term prescriptions for a non violent future. She wanted our Centre to bring together the best teachers, researchers and students in Aotearoa-New Zealand, to focus on tikanga Maori, the Treaty and all the things that make this country such a peaceful place. But she also wanted to ensure that the centre was firmly cosmopolitan as well, linking New Zealand peace researchers with scholars and activists from all over the world. Although a firm and convinced Kiwi, Dorothy wanted New Zealanders to be firmly committed to the world outside. Our Centre is testimony to many of her core values.

What can I say about such a woman? The National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies would not exist without her vision, philanthropy and the formidable team that she gathered around her to help her will us into existence.

She was a woman of extraordinary intelligence, wisdom, humour, passion, compassion and enthusiasm. Once she had an idea she breathed life into it and mobilised exactly the right people around it. She promoted her causes assiduously and sometimes subliminally. I always left conversations with Dorothy enlightened, enthused and challenged to think more deeply about my own taken-for-granted world views, preoccupations and assumptions.

I cannot think of anyone with as wide a range of networks and friendships as Dorothy. The hundreds of you who have turned up at this service are testimony to that.

I am going to miss her for the person she was. She was a great role model for students, Faculty and friends alike. She was someone who loved life and lived it abundantly until the very last day.

She will be missed by all of us but especially by her family and friends – so my heart goes out to her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She will be missed by all who had the privilege of calling her friend.

Editor’s note: The APF remembers Dorothy for all of the above, but also for hosting all the committee meetings at her home through the 1990s.

'THE PACIFIST CONSCIENCE'

The closing paragraphs of a talk given by Jonathan Hartfield to the NCCD, Wellington, 6.12.11

The last part of my brief is to mention its influence internationally. In line with the positiveness of the pacifist position, how are we, for example, to measure all the contributions towards justice and a healthy society made by monks and nuns, Quakers and Mennonites, and other pacifists? ... There are some objective public facts that we can point to that give cause for hope, despite the increasing build-up of ever more destructive armaments.

First, there was the phenomenal growth and spread of the early pacifist church, for nearly 400 years. Although much persecuted it grew as it applied its 'love your neighbour and enemy' wherever it went, transforming local societies.

Second, in our contemporary world, there has been a change in attitude over the last 60 years. All those Ministries of War have become Ministries of Defence. New Zealand has a Defence Force.

Third, the Centre for Peace and Conflict Study has been set up in the University of Otago. It owes much to the pacifist conscience of the late Dorothy Brown of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship. There are other centres throughout the world.

Fourth, in the Church most people learn their theology by singing hymns, and hymns express the theology of the church of their time. In New Zealand, Shirley Murray, Colin Gibson and others are writing superb pacifist hymns, which are being incorporated into international hymn-books. Current major hymn-books have many more peace hymns than in previous editions. 'Onward Christian Soldiers' is still in for Just War enthusiasts, much helped by Sullivan's fine tune.

Fifth, the United Nations is still with us and there is a spirit of reform in the air. The International Court of Justice is a source of hope. Neither of these institutions is specifically pacifist, but 'no war' is their intention.

Sixth, to more specific political of non-violent resistance in action – the people of Parihaka, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King are well known. But the liberation of Europe from dictators, somewhat surprisingly beginning in 1974 in Portugal, have shown non-violent action as never before. The Berlin Wall fell without bloodshed. Starting in Poland, where Solidarity was nurtured by the Catholic Church, the movement used the methods of Jesus. In the end 13 nations underwent non-violent revolutions. This involved 1.7 billion people. In China it has so far failed in its objective. The Burmese monk uprising of 2007 was ruthlessly crushed, but we are seeing changes now. In Iran, the Shah was deposed non-violently in 1979, and there are momentous happenings in the Middle East now. Currently there are non-violent street protests against the greed of bankers and their like throughout the world.

Cell phones and other networks can make these protests more controlled and therefore more effective, for non-violent action requires better organisation than a violent response.

Seventh, let me finish with the example of two long-term non-violent groups that have achieved much. This year Amnesty International celebrates 50 years of shaming tyrants and liberating prisoners, mostly by post. Greenpeace, officially named in 1972, has been particularly creative, adventurous and courageous in its non-violent methods, which are directly in line with Jesus' cleansing of the Temple, his donkey-ride into Jerusalem, and turning the left cheek.

The pacifist conscience has a long history, it even has its successes, but as your continued presence here affirms, it still has a long way to go before we reach the peaceable kingdom. That should not stop us from trying, and the outlook is hopeful.

Anglican Pacifist Fellowship New Zealand Branch

www.converge.org.nz/pma/apf or www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

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