



The ANGLICAN PACIFIST of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Newsletter of the New Zealand Branch of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

Chairman's Easter Letter



PALM SUNDAY ?

Coronation Day 1953 – and my most enduring memory of that day is of Queen Salote of Tonga in her open horse-drawn carriage. It rained heavily that day but she had insisted on keeping her carriage open where every other carriage had been closed. The procession stopped for a few minutes near to my Trafalgar Square position. There she was, just a few metres away, smiling, waving, excited and no doubt very wet. Although the rest of the procession has gone from my memory I can still see her clearly in my mind. That open carriage made her famous in London; it spoke for her.

Within the limits of budget a car expresses quite a lot about its owner. And if it is outside sensible budgeting that says a lot also. When we were in Nigeria the man who had 'made it' inevitably bought a Mercedes and was never again seen in anything else. Pope Francis' vehicles convey a very different message. I imagine that price and comfort are not the only considerations when choosing a car for a Prime Minister. For a Kiwi PM it must be a bit grand but not too flashy. I find it an interesting exercise to fit vehicles to people, especially famous ones. A posse of gold plated Mercedes for the King of Saudi Arabia, of course, but what for Presidents Trump and Putin ? – what for Prince Charles or Jesus?

These reflections are of course engendered by the approach of Palm Sunday. This is the only time that Jesus is recorded as riding an animal. We presume he rode prenatally to Bethlehem and somewhat later to Egypt, but his mode of transport on these occasions is not recorded for us. This makes his careful decision to ride a donkey into Jerusalem especially meaningful.

The day stirred up powerful emotions in the crowd, palm branches had been cut to welcome Judas Maccabeus and his army into Jerusalem after his great victory nearly 200 years previously. The donkey represented a King coming to a town in peace, so palm and donkey evoked opposing memories and a clash of ideas. Pontius Pilate had just ridden into Jerusalem on a horse, an animal closer to the symbolic association of palm branches.

This carefully documented ride is unique in the Gospels yet we call it Palm Sunday which recalls belligerence, rather than calling it Donkey Sunday, which recalls peace. The name and custom of waving palm branches goes back to the 8th century so it would take many synods to officially change the name now. But a pity the church of the time leaned more towards horse than donkey power. Would the second century church have named the day differently?

One of the functions of our little Society is to encourage people to put peace first and remember previous battles last. Naming the Sunday before Easter Donkey Sunday would be a tiny step in the right direction.

Blessings, Jonathan.

JUST WAR? STUDY DAY

HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL, AUCKLAND, NOVEMBER 18 AND 19. 2016

Re-Examining the Just War Theory

Father Claude Mostowik MSC

Chair of Pax Christi Australia; represented Australia and New Zealand at the Vatican Conference called by Pope Francis in April 2016

[It is a]privilege to be here with you in remembering Dorothy Brown, a teacher not only in terms of schools but a teacher in the broad sense by bringing together in her life and relationships a passionate concerns for love, peace, justice and compassion. I am aware that there are many people who are often unnoticed who give great emphasis on peace with justice as we move into listening to the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth. To not do so, to not listen to the 'grasshoppers' then we cannot build the relationships that make for peace that is lasting,

enduring and transforming.

War is obsolete.

We are not here to fight something or tear something down;

We are here to be the example of what is possible. Any sane individual will tell you that violence is ... not the way..

Buckminster Fuller (Richard Buckminster 'Bucky' Fuller, American architect, systems theorist, author, designer and inventor. 1895-1983)



From our parent body

The Anglican Pacifist Fellowship (UK)

which is celebrating its 80th anniversary

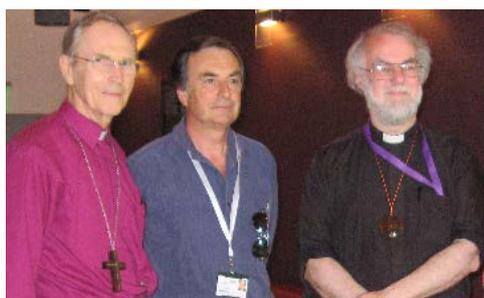


Inaugural Colin Scott Memorial Lecture 'A strategy for a war against war'

The Anglican Pacifist Fellowship has initiated an annual memorial lecture for Bishop Colin, a past chairperson of the fellowship and conscientious objector. Bishop Colin was made deacon in 1958 and in 1984 he was consecrated Bishop of Hulme. Colin was a confirmed pacifist. The first evidence of this was at school when he refused to join the cadets and soon after, aged 17 when he had to argue his case for peace in front of a judge and tribunal to be successfully accepted as a conscientious objector.

Dr Alan Storkey, who gave the lecture, placed the responsibility for past wars squarely on the military-industrial complex and said it was also complicit in current wars and the planning for those which may occur in the next few years. He went on to argue that Christians globally should be campaigning in a united way to bring the military-industrial complex to account and reduce its size and influence, releasing defence spending and other resources for social development and environmental issues.

Alan Storkey is an economist, sociologist and artist. He is known for his writing and lectures and for his work on transport and the Arms Trade. During his lecture, Dr Storkey said:



APF at Lambeth 1998: Bishop Colin Scott, past Chairperson, with Tony Kempster, Secretary, and Archbishop Rowan Williams

“War is the world’s biggest failed experiment. The strategy is that you use arms and weapons to defeat the enemy. And once it is won then it is over. In fact, war causes more wars...”

“Wars happen because they are caused, and they are caused by those who need them. We need to attack militarism at its base. The Church offers a worldwide community of more than 2 billion people who could be mobilised to expose the arms trade and to pressure governments to disarm.”

So instead of loving what you think is peace, love other [people] and love God above all. And instead of hating the people you think are war makers, hate the appetites and the disorder in your own soul, which are the causes of war. If you love peace, then hate injustice, hate tyranny, hate greed - but hate these things in yourself, not in another.

Thomas Merton, from *New Seeds of Contemplation*

I am aware that my brief today is to re-examine the Just War Theory that comes out of a tradition going back to St Augustine and developed by St Thomas Aquinas and later the Reformers. This tradition is not limited to the Catholic Church but used by other churches and also political institutions. [In] any conversation the Just War tradition cannot occur in isolation from the emerging thought and action towards Just Peace – as a way of relating to ourselves, one another, Mother Earth and our God. We already have the Earth Charter (<http://earthcharter.org/discover/the-earth-charter/>), The World Council of Churches superb 2012 document Just Peace Companion which was to be used alongside another document called An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, and now Pope Francis' June 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* (http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html).

From 2000-2010 the World Council of Churches studied how to overcome violence from which developed the two documents just mentioned. An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace declared the concept and the mentality of 'just war' to be obsolete. The Just Peace Companion offered extensive direction on implementation of just peace theology and practice through a comprehensive review of scripture, ethics, values, practices, curricula, human stories, and prayer to embody just peace within the Christian tradition and within the reality of our world. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI preaching on Luke 6:27 ('Love your enemies'), said it 'is rightly considered the magna carta of Christian nonviolence'. It does not consist in succumbing to evil, as a false interpretation of 'turning the other cheek' claims, but in responding to evil with good and thereby breaking the chain of injustice.'

For Pope Francis 'faith and violence are incompatible.' In an address to Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas in 2014, he said, 'Peacemaking calls for courage, much more so than warfare. It calls for the courage to say yes to encounter and no to conflict; yes to dialogue and no to violence;

yes to negotiations and no to hostilities.' In 2015, he continued, 'It is not enough to talk about peace, peace must be made. To speak about peace without making it is contradictory, and those who speak about peace while promoting war, for example through the sale of weapons, are hypocrites. It is very simple.'

Having said this, the big difficulty, the monkey on our back is that the legitimization of war in Catholic social teaching remains. It remains as a default or fall-back position.

Jesus' mission was active nonviolence expressed in his engagement with friends and enemies. He models that 'just peace', in care for the outcast whether a sinner or a person in need of healing, love and forgiveness towards the enemies, welcoming of the stranger, as well as challenging domination by religious, political, economic, and military powers. Jesus centred 'shalom' on embodying mercy and compassion. Further, Jesus' 'new commandment' is to 'love as I have loved you,' i.e. the nonviolent love of neighbour, strangers and enemies. With Jesus' focus on healing and reconciliation, even with enemies, we learn that the kind of justice Christ turns us toward is restorative justice, i.e. to focus on the wounds to relationships and how to heal them. A loving regard or attitude should be based on each person bearing the image of God – an image often trashed when we dehumanise or neglect the other whether near or far. The summons of the Vatican Conference, which I have yet to speak about, was that it is by practising love and not dehumanising the other that the transforming power of love and action becomes effective. A 'just peace' offers a vision and praxis where peace is built up as well the prevention, or defusing, and healing the damage of violence. It calls for a commitment to human dignity and thriving relationships.

In Psalm 85:10 we see embodied the vision in God's promise that 'justice and peace shall embrace' as the 'shalom' of God. Justice requires peace-making and peace requires justice-making. Pope Paul VI's 'no peace without justice' was extended by Pope John Paul II to 'no peace without justice and no justice without forgiveness' in his 2002 World Day of Peace Message. Pope Francis has turned our attention to Jesus' focus on mercy being at the heart of 'shalom' and as the alternative to violence. He calls war the 'suicide of humanity,' while calling us to 'give up the way of arms.' Our challenge is to decide what God we believe in, the

Dieu des armées (God of armies) or Dieu désarmé (unarmed God).

The 'just peace' approach is not pacifism but a challenge to become a peaceful and just people/ community that includes compassion, mercy, solidarity, reconciliation. I mentioned earlier that the WCC's Ecumenical Call to just peace declared the concept and the mentality of 'just war' to be obsolete. It has been ineffective in achieving in limiting or preventing war and more often used to 'justify' war by religious (cf George Pell and Tom Frame vis-à-vis the 2003 invasion of Iraq), political and military decision-makers (Iraq). It is not possible for 'Just war' to cultivate the kinds of people that imagine and engage the broad-range of effective nonviolent peacemaking practices. The result has been the creation of a culture that often glorifies violent actors – and turns us away from the modelling of Jesus Christ. One condition of a 'just war' is that 'The probability of success would have to be greater than the damage caused. The violence committed within the conflict must be proportional to the damage inflicted, and civilian populations should as much as possible be distinguished from military aggressors.'

We did not see that in Iraq or Afghanistan and such conditions could never be fulfilled in the context of a nuclear war where the damage would of necessity be disproportionate in relation to any gains achieved as civilian populations would be most affected by such strikes. Thus it is necessary to give pride of place to the Gospel of non-violence in order to declare any recourse to nuclear weapons to be absolutely illegitimate. And one can but regret that the local churches of the nuclear-armed countries should not have had the courage to demand the unilateral nuclear disarmament of countries, but have accommodated themselves to the premeditation of nuclear murder. In itself, such an accommodation is participation in a betrayal.

Our task is to find ways to build a better, more resilient peace. Just peace criteria include participatory process, right relationships, restoration, reconciliation and sustainability. Though wars end, they do not end with the positive peace of right relationships of God's reign. More than 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Cold War ended in a cold peace that continues

and contributing to the problems we now face with nuclear weapons.

Rome Conference

So now to the conference I attended in Rome. In April 2016, this ground-breaking and unprecedented gathering occurred, co-hosted by Pax Christi International the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. I went with objectives: to suggest or call for the end of the Just War tradition and to ask the conference to propose that Pope Francis publish an encyclical on peace and nonviolence. It was not necessary and many participants came with the exact same intention.

Jose Henriquez (previous secretary general of Pax Christi International) said: '*We need to go back to the sources of our faith and rediscover the nonviolence which is at the heart of the Gospel.*' That was our call and our task.

Here, the Church and an NGO (Pax Christi International) worked together for some years to bring together people to openly engage in conversation, not only about the absence of war but about the presence of an alternative – reflected in the appeal the participants issued for the Vatican to '**re-commit to the**



centrality of gospel nonviolence.' It was not something new but a return to our sources. Cardinal Peter Turkson relayed a message from Pope Francis with his enthusiastic backing. It included '*your thoughts on revitalizing the tools of nonviolence, and of active nonviolence in particular, will be a needed and positive contribution*'. He acknowledged the work of various organisations that carry out peacebuilding measures and/ or 'unarmed civilian peacekeeping' as carried out by the *Nonviolent Peaceforce* referred to the 'tools of nonviolence' as a way out of war as demonstrated by such organisations that work to head off local conflicts, rescuing child soldiers, protecting communities, and brokering peace agreements, e.g., the recent one in Mindañao in the Philippines. The gathering did not want to invent something new but of a return to the sources – to the experience of the early church. It agreed on a statement '**An appeal to the Catholic Church to re-commit to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence**' which called for the Catholic Church to commit in **doctrine and practice** to the central

importance of «the Gospel of non-violence ». It was not content to add a paragraph on nonviolence within the doctrine of just war, but called into question a doctrine – some 1700 years old - that has been used to condone war rather than to prevent or restrain it. We called on all ‘not to promote theories of just war’, but to ‘promote nonviolent practices and strategies’.

Pope Francis’ letter to the conference echoed the messages of his predecessors but it went further. He wanted to activate the church of the poor, the church of the people. *‘Humanity needs to refurbish all the best available tools to help the men and women of today to fulfil their aspirations for justice and peace.....Accordingly, your thoughts on revitalizing the tools of nonviolence, and of active nonviolence in particular, will be a needed and positive contribution.’*

The church needs a viable alternative to war... not preaching peace by righteous hand wringing. Francis noted that *‘It would be dangerous to identify the gospel message with this or that political program... (because)... The Christian contribution to peace must take a different path.’* Determining ‘a different path’ is the challenge. The answer lay in recommitting to the centrality of gospel nonviolence and developing practices of Catholic nonviolence and just peace.

I wondered how many people heard about the Vatican conference that took place in April this year. Unfortunately, it was largely ignored except for some mention in selected news services. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference website had no mention of it. But it was exhilarating and inspiring to be with 85 people from 35 countries many of whom are active in peace work and human rights and determined to move our Church forward in its understanding of and commitment to nonviolence and away from the doctrine of Just War. They came from Africa (South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya), Asia (Afghanistan, Philippines), Europe (Croatia, Italy), the Middle East (Palestine, Iraq), Australia and the Americas (USA, Colombia, Mexico) with their broad spectrum of peace-building and active nonviolence experiences. They shared their experiences, analysis and effective actions/strategies. I will make mention of some of these later. These people in my view are the experts on our subject today. They have made the daily choices to live nonviolently in violent situations. They have paid the price

in so many ways. A Dominican Sister from Iraq said that we can dialogue with ISIS. A priest from Colombia declared that there is always scope for dialogue. A Ugandan bishop elaborated on how interreligious leaders had negotiated with the Lord’s Resistance Army. The entry point was trust: identifying who the rebels trusted and making friends with them. Mairead Corrigan Maguire spoke about Northern Ireland, and Katerina Kruhonja from Croatia and others shared how they were *‘catapulted by violence’* into finding a faith-based response. US Foreign Policy specialist Maria Stephan has shown that nonviolence was twice as effective as violence in the 323 conflict situations she analysed, and has a greater likelihood of producing a sustainable democratic society.

Not all present at the Rome gathering were of the same mind when it came to the long overdue consideration of the ‘just war theory’, which has been part of Catholic social teaching for some 1,700 years. Some defended the just war theory; others saw the point of using violent force in policing or peacekeeping; and others were committed to nonviolent resistance to injustice and violence. I must say that those who continued to support ‘just war’ tended to be academics and diplomats particularly from the United States and Western Europe. They maintained that just war criteria are useful for restraining excessive use of military force by a state. But, as I mentioned already, those who came conflict zones brought a different perspective. Their message was clear: Just war theory is not working. Catholic teaching still allows for a morally sanctified use of armed force. We cannot just condemn violence and call for peace. A viable alternative to war is necessary and this is not possible whilst there is a fall-back position to justify war. Nevertheless, the conference was a clear summons to the church to live walk ***in the path of Jesus’ nonviolence and turn to just peace.*** It was a call to take steps to reaffirm:

- *the centrality of active nonviolence to the life of the Church,*
- *to prophetically proclaim another way,*
- *to commit to the long-term vocation of healing and reconciling both people and the planet – according to the vision and message of Jesus.*

Outcome: An Appeal to the Catholic Church to re-commit to the centrality of Gospel Nonviolence. <https://nonviolencejustpeace.net/final-statement-an-appeal-to-the-catholic-church-to-re-commit-to-the-centrality-of-gospel-nonviolence/>.

Answering the Objections to Pacifism

By Professor Richard Jackson

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Introduction

In late 2015, a major public controversy erupted in the United Kingdom over Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn's opposition to the renewal of the Trident nuclear deterrent and his opposition to the bombing of Syria. Despite his assertion that he supported the use of military force under certain conditions, he was publicly labelled a "pacifist" by a great many critics from within the government, the media, and his own party. Moreover, the way that the criticisms were expressed suggested that the label "pacifist" was being used as a term of shame and insult. For example, he was accused of holding to a kind of "diehard pacifism", and some of his own MPs claimed he was a "cheerleader" for an "angry, intolerant pacifism". Another media commentator mockingly called him a "unilateralist 'pacifist'", and quoting George Orwell, referred to his foreign policy views as "squashily pacifist". In other cases, Corbyn's "pacifist" views were discussed as a key part of his "wacky foreign policy ideas".

In addition, Corbyn's "pacifist" views were considered by many to be naïve and unrealistic. One national newspaper referred to "his utopian principles", while another commentator suggested: "Discussion is all very well until someone decides that it isn't; and then pacifism leaves you as a bystander. Welcome to the real world..." Related to this, a former Labour shadow minister, Chuka Umunna, said: "Jeremy Corbyn's pacifist views should disqualify him from office because he cannot keep Britain safe". An article by a Labour activist, referencing the World War II narrative of appeasement, argued that Corbyn's "pacifism" came from a position of "peace at any price", while an article in the Telegraph argued that his position was dangerous because it "encourages our enemies to think us weak, encouraging them to act and makes war more, not less likely". Lord West, a former Labour Minister, said he would "not tolerate a shift to waving the white flag... Because I don't believe that being a pacifist – although it's an admirable thing for an individual – I don't believe it's a way for someone to look after our nation because we are in a very, very dangerous and nasty world".

I have recounted this incident in some detail

because it illustrates the very low regard with which pacifism is held in our culture: the fact that the

term "pacifist" can be used as an insult without any real objections tells us a lot about its abject status. More importantly, it illustrates some of the main objections that are frequently made against pacifism, such as that it is naïve, unrealistic, dangerous, immoral and so on. In this talk, I will address the most common objections to pacifism, and explain how we can answer them and defend the integrity and intelligence of pacifism.

Objections to Pacifism

The most common objections to pacifism, which you will find in the media, in academia, in political discourse, and in the conversation of friends, relatives and people you meet on the street, are as follows:

First, it is commonly argued that pacifism represents *a single absolute moral position* which, because it rejects any and all force and violence, makes it unsuitable for politics and society.

Second, it is not unusual to see pacifism described as *a form of passivity* which entails doing nothing in the face of violent attack: the most common form of this argument involves establishing a stark choice between using military force and "doing nothing". Sometimes, this particular narrative is accompanied by the argument that pacifism is actually dangerous because it signals weakness and thereby encourages aggression, and that it is immoral because it is unwilling to protect endangered others in order to preserve personal principle.

A third analogy used to discredit pacifism is the so-called *individual attacker analogy*, in which a scenario involving a violent personal attack becomes the basis for arguing that pacifists are either immoral (because they would stand by and do nothing to protect themselves or their loved ones from an individual attacker) or inconsistent (because they would not extend an act of

individual self-defence to the level of the nation).

A fourth, and probably the most common objection, is that *pacifism is ineffective*, especially in the face of overwhelming force wielded by an unprincipled foe. Nonviolence, it is argued, only worked in the past because it was employed against democracies. In particular, the historical experience of Hitler and the Nazis proves that nonviolence is hopelessly naïve and unrealistic, and military force is the only way to stop certain kinds of wrongs and threats.

A final objection is that *pacifism is naïve and unrealistic* about the perfectibility of human nature and the nature of evil, and cannot therefore contribute to serious discussions about how to deal with violence and threats in the real world.

So let me try and answer these objections one by one.

Pacifism is a single absolute moral position:

In answer to the objection that pacifism is a single kind of absolutist moral position, it can be argued that even a cursory reading of the existing pacifist literature reveals a continuum of ethical and political positions on force and violence, and, similar to other moral theories like just war theory or cosmopolitanism, there are a variety of different forms of pacifism, including: “absolute pacifism”, “collectivist pacifism”, “technological pacifism”, “nuclear pacifism”, “environmental pacifism”, and “pragmatic pacifism” – among others. Like other kinds of philosophies – realism, feminism, environmentalism, and so on – there are many different types of pacifists and pacifist positions.

Pacifism is a form of passivity:

In answer to the objection that pacifism is a form of passivity – that pacifists would rather “do nothing” in the face of violence – it is obvious that even a cursory reading of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, or Gene Sharp, among others, reveals, far from being a form of passivity, pacifism and nonviolence is rooted in a vigorous, practical opposition to violence, as well as a comprehensive political project aimed at constructing a nonviolent form of politics. As the political philosopher, Duane Cady puts it, “pacifists do not claim that it is wrong to resist violence. On the contrary, they claim that violence should be resisted. They just believe that there are strong moral grounds for preferring to do so nonviolently”. In fact, pacifists insist that, to quote Gandhi, pacifism “does not

mean meek submission... it means pitting one’s whole soul against the will of the tyrant.”

Pacifists also dispute the argument that pacifism is dangerous because it signals weakness and thereby encourages aggression. Although this is difficult to fully evaluate because there are so few truly pacifist states in the world and we don’t know whether such states would be attacked because they are perceived to be weak, it could be argued that unarmed states, posing no offensive threat, may in fact, be subject to less aggression. Certainly, we do know that armed states provoke a condition known as “the security dilemma” in which fears about the intentions of armed states creates suspicion, tensions and arms races.

Pacifists also argue that there are functional alternatives to the use of force for national security or the protection of vulnerable others, and that far from being immoral to employ nonviolence, it is in fact immoral to suggest that we should protect some people by killing others, or to engage in violent actions which will perpetuate the conditions for future acts of violence. In other words, it is not that pacifists reject violence merely in order to preserve personal principle, but rather they reject it as part of an effort to dismantle the conditions which perpetuate violence into the future.

The individual attacker analogy:

The individual attacker analogy in which pacifists are challenged as to what they would do if an armed criminal was trying to kill their loved ones is similarly easily rebutted. Apart from the substantive differences that exist between individuals and large social groups which prevent easy comparison, this analogy misses the obvious point that unlike a contained incident between a small number of individuals, the use of military force is a form of organized violence which requires extensive preparation, major social organisation, the maintenance of a permanent military force, a supporting economic base, the construction of a violence-supporting culture (including the cultivation of enmity sufficient for the mass killing of other human beings), and in practice, the organised and deliberate killing by and of people who have no direct involvement in the dispute itself.

While some forms of pacifism reject any and all forms of violence, including defensive personal violence, most pacifists would accept individual

defensive violence, if necessary, and the use of force by the police to prevent wrong-doing. It is mass organized violence in the form of war that they are opposed to, given that there are viable and more ethical and successful alternatives.

Pacifism is ineffective, especially against groups like the Nazis:

The philosopher Duane Cady suggests that, “[w]hen faced with the objection ‘it won’t work’, the pacifist response must be, simply, that nonviolent action does work and has a history to document the claim.” Specifically, there are a number of bodies of academic literature which speak to the success and potential of nonviolence. For example, there are growing case study and statistical literatures on:

- The success of nonviolent movements in overthrowing authoritarian regimes, changing substantial policies, repelling occupations, and winning independence for subnational groups. This is the ground-breaking research based on Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan’s 2011 study on *Why Civil Resistance Works*, where they examined 100 years of violent and nonviolent campaigns and found that nonviolent campaigns were more than twice as successful as violent campaigns, even under the most severe forms of repression. More importantly, this research clearly demonstrates that nonviolence produces better long-term outcomes than violence – even when it fails. Apart from the well-known cases of Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King in the United States, other examples of successful nonviolent movements include: the solidarity movement in Poland; the people power movement in the Philippines; the Iranian revolution; the singing revolution in the Baltic states; the velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia; the peaceful revolution in East Germany; the bloodless revolution in Bulgaria; the colour revolutions in Ukraine, Serbia and Georgia; the third wave of democracy in Africa; the cedar revolution in Lebanon; the Arab Spring; and many more individual cases. There are even examples of successful nonviolent resistance to the Nazis during WWII.



- There is another important literature on the success of unarmed peacekeeping and nonviolent accompaniment in situations of violent conflict, including in situations like Colombia and South Sudan. This literature includes cases where UN troops chose to be unarmed, as well as nonviolent peace-forces such as Peace Brigades International.
- There is an emerging literature on the success of nonviolent community-led efforts to resist incursion by armed groups and protect communities, including in the midst of violent civil wars such as in Colombia, Somalia, and Syria. There are extraordinary cases of towns and communities successfully resisting ISIS, the Colombian militias, the Mexican narcos, Brazilian death squads, etc. While the cases are often small-scale, not always effective, and nascent, they nonetheless gesture towards potential alternative approaches to the use of violence as a form of security management.
- Related to this, there is a longstanding literature on the possibilities of civilian-based forms of national defence. Rooted in both the realistic recognition that most states in the world would be unable to defend themselves from invasion by the most powerful states using military force (and such resistance would be very costly in terms of life and destruction), and some cases of successful nonviolent resistance to invaders (such as India and Lithuania), such approaches provide strategies for civil non-cooperation, raising the costs of occupation and coercing invaders.

It’s important to note that these literatures do not suggest that nonviolence works every time and in every case; there is no silver bullet for anything in politics; certainly, we know that violence doesn’t work every time and in every case. But, we do know that nonviolence works well in a great many documented cases and in different areas, and these literatures gesture towards the immense possibilities of nonviolent action. In fact, the probability is that we have greatly under-estimated how effective nonviolence is historically, especially if we look closely at local struggles which have so far been undocumented – such as the landless peasant movement in Brazil, environmental activism to stop dams, oil pipelines, the protection of habitats, etc, local efforts to prevent the building

of industries such as smelters, etc etc.

On the other hand, an alternative approach is to admit with the ethical philosopher Robert Holmes that

“we simply do not know whether there is a viable practical alternative to violence, and will not and cannot know unless we are willing to make an effort, comparable to the multibillion-dollar-a-year effort currently made to produce means of destruction and train young people in their use, to explore the potential of nonviolent action.”

Holmes goes on to argue: “No one can foresee what the results might be if a country like the United States were to spend \$300 billion a year in research on techniques of nonviolent resistance and on educating and training people in their use.”

The related objection here that pacifism would not work against an evil, unprincipled opponent, and that movements such as Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King in America only succeeded because their opponents were democracies, is belied by both the evidence of the kind of brutality Gandhi and King’s movements faced, but also the empirical research demonstrating that the success of nonviolent movements is not limited to cases where they opposed democratic states, but holds under situations of severe forms of repression. The successes of these movements can be attributed to the combination of strategic actions, contexts, and attributes of the movements; that is, they cannot be dismissed as outliers.

Crucially, there are a number of possible responses to the Nazi analogy, which argues that some actors are so evil and ruthless that they can only be resisted through the adoption of greater counter-violence. Although this is a very challenging case for pacifists (as well as those who advocate violence), as the philosopher Robert Holmes reminds us, “we should remember that there need be no inconsistency in holding that the war against Nazi Germany was justified but that war today is unjustified” – given modern weaponry, nuclear weapons, the proportion of civilians killed in wars, and the many options to resolving international conflicts that currently exist.

In addition, it is critical to acknowledge the temporal aspects of the argument and the way in which it is most often framed. That is, as Robert Holmes once again puts it:

While nonviolence obviously could not have pushed back German armour on the battlefield once the institutions of militarism had been allowed to mature and the self-propelling mechanism of a military state put into motion, it might have been effective at an earlier stage in preventing the rise to power of those responsible. If the historical fact is that military means stopped Hitler once he began to march, it is also an historical fact that reliance upon such means on the part of the world’s nations did not prevent his rise to power in the first place. ... [and] had military action not been taken, say, until 1943 (or if Germany... [had] perfected the atom bomb first), it is unlikely that Hitler could have been stopped this way either.

In responding to this particular case, it is also important to interrogate what the aims of employing violence against the axis powers were. If they were simply to defend against or repel foreign invasion by destroying the enemy’s will to continue fighting, then the military campaign, after much cost, succeeded. On the other hand, if its purpose was to protect civilians, save European Jews, end future military aggression, defeat the forces of fascism, or create a more peaceful world, then the allied use of force in World War II clearly failed.

Pacifism is naïve and unrealistic about the perfectibility of human nature and the nature of evil:

The philosopher Dustin Howes, reacting to the suggestion that pacifists are naïve and idealistic, and looking at the record of military violence, suggests instead that, “The weight of extensive empirical evidence demonstrates that the practitioners of violence are more often the tragic idealists than are pacifists.” What he is referring to here is this profound failure of military force which is evident in, among others:

- (1) the total failure of more than 15 years of the global war on terror launched after 9/11 which has resulted in 1.4 million deaths, millions of refugees, the spread of torture, AND at the same time, a corresponding increase in the number of terrorist attacks and terrorist groups;
- (2) the history of the post-war period which has seen 300 plus wars, many of them lasting more than 20 years, with 30-40 million deaths; and
- (3) the history of the past century in which “the war system” has resulted in over 100 million dead, tens of millions displaced, truly vast scarce resources spent on the military, the

spread of nuclear weapons – and with little to no directly correlated increase in security, peace, stability or democracy.

Dustin Howes is also referring to growing body of academic research which clearly shows how ineffective military violence is for achieving political and strategic goals. This research includes, among others:

- the studies which show that states with greater material capabilities are no more likely to win wars than those with weaker capabilities, and these days are winning wars less often;
- the studies which show how ineffective air campaigns are in achieving political results;
- the studies which show that violent state repression of popular protest is ineffective;
- the studies which show that the death penalty does not work to deter crime;
- the studies which question the effectiveness of both torture and drone killings to reduce terrorism;
- and the empirical studies which show how ineffective both terrorism and violent forms of counterterrorism are.

The fact is, any objective evaluation of the use of military violence over the past century reveals how seldom large-scale political violence works to achieve its aims, how unpredictable are its long-term consequences, and how the application of increasing force and the achievement of success (both strategic and political) bears little to no direct relation to each other.

So why is violence such a failure? What are the reasons for its abysmal record? I want to suggest four main reasons why violence most often does not work in the real world:

First, it doesn't work because it misunderstands the relationship between violence and coercion, and between violence and power. That is, it misunderstands how actual, real violence functions in the real world, and instead assumes that the application of overwhelming and targeted force will compel people to submit or comply. In the real world, it is not possible to say that this much violence will result in this outcome. In the real world, the effectiveness of violence to deter or compel depends entirely on how people respond to the violence, not the violence itself. That is, the capacity to kill and destroy bears no direct relation to the ability to coerce; in the real world,

the application of violence can provoke either deterrence or retaliation, intimidation or rage, submission or resistance, and the desired response can never be assured. This is why proponents of violence so often mistake the reliability of violence as a political instrument.

Related to this, the sociologist Stellan Vinthagen explains how power and violence are analytically distinct, and as a consequence, “the most extreme result of violence – the killing of a human being – is something that ensures that there will never again be subordination within that relationship. Killing results in an absolute absence of power. In fact, violence is a... failure of power.” In a sense, the use of violence is not a symbol of power and control, but a sign that one has lost all power over one's opponent.

Second, the proponents of violence misunderstand the conditions and processes which make violence possible in the first place – in particular, how it requires an enabling set of beliefs and ideas which make it legitimate and meaningful to its perpetrators and its audience. What this means is that the deliberate use of violence as a political tool constitutes the conditions for its own practice. Thus, when the proponents of humanitarian intervention for example, argue that we should employ violence to protect people, or when politicians say that we should use violence to stop the violence of ISIS, those actions say clearly and loudly that: “it is legitimate to use violence against those who use violence against you or others, and violence is a legitimate tool of politics”. The most predictable consequence of this is to establish violence at the heart of all politics and make it a part of conflict.

A more realistic assessment of the nature of violence clearly shows that while it can achieve immediate things like dead bodies, screams, pain, suffering, and material destruction, and while it can sometimes achieve certain short-term goals like the destruction of an enemy's means to fight, its longer term effects are by virtue of its constitutive and world-shattering nature, unpredictable and virtually always ends-destroying. As Gandhi put it: “I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.”

A **third** related reason why violence fails is because it can never be purely instrumental – it is not, and can never be just a tool of politics. Rather, violence

is productive and constitutive; it makes the world as it is being used. At the very least, we know that military violence is not simply a tool because to even have the tool available to use, you first need to have

- (1) a well-armed, trained and maintained military institution;
- (2) economic processes designed to fund and supply the military;
- (3) a knowledge-producing and scientific system to train the members of the military and invent new weapons systems for them to use;
- (4) a supporting cultural and ideological system to normalize and make acceptable killing and dying for nation and the sacrifice of scarce resources for the military as an institution; and
- (5) a legal and ethical system which defines friends and enemies, worthy and unworthy victims, threats and dangers, and legitimate and illegitimate killing.

The point is that all of these processes leave their mark on society both before, and long after, it has gone to war; they are all part of the building blocks and everyday practices of society – they make a world of violent actors and supporters who all believe that violence is sometimes necessary and justified. In other words, the idea that violence can be employed as a tool “misses the link between violence as doing and violence as being”, especially “when we take into account that our bodies themselves are prime instruments of violence.”

Fourth, and related to the misunderstanding of violence as a kind of tool, it does not work because it misunderstands the relationship between means and ends – which cannot be separated. The military can never be used as the means to a separate end because the outcomes of political actions – actually, of all social action – are

prefigured in the means. That is, “[h]owever hard we try to separate means and ends, the results we achieve are extensions of the policies we live... Means and ends are aspects of one and the same event.” Gandhi argued this point by suggesting that the belief that we can separate means and ends would be the same as thinking “that we can get a rose through planting a noxious weed.” He goes on to say, “The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connexion between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree... We reap exactly what we sow”. Similarly, the philosopher Hannah Arendt argued that “[t]he practice of violence, like all action, changes the world, but the most probable change is to a more violent world.”

From this perspective, it is in fact, implausible that peaceful ends (such as security, or democracy, or the creation of non-warring communities) can be achieved by violent, harmful means – just as it is implausible that trust can be built by deception, that love can be generated by fear, or that equality can be achieved through a system of privilege and domination.

In short, it is not pacifism which is naïve and unrealistic about human nature and the real world, but the believers in violence: it is they who operate with a naïve view of what violence can do. It is for this reason that a growing number of scholars are beginning to articulate a form of political theory which has radical nonviolence – pacifism – at its centre. Based on a realistic appreciation that difference and conflict is inherent to the human condition, and the need for humility and reversibility of action is crucial to politics, proponents of what Karuna Mantena calls “Gandhian realism” argue that only a kind of politics based on complete and total nonviolence can avoid violence in politics and the perpetuation

HYMN FOR GOOD FRIDAY

O dearest Lord who gave your hands
To cruel hammer's fall,
And for your murderers did pray
“Forgive” - forgive us all.
Forgive us for our wounding hands
In wars we think are right,
Forgive us when with hardened hearts
To judge the wrong we fight.
We wound unwounded by your love,
Forgiveness has no place,

We judge and judging shed no tears,
No pity in our face.
They are your children whom we kill,
For them you suffered there,
In wounding them we're wounding you,
Their wounds the wounds you bear.
We'll hear the cries of those we wound
When you will judge our heart;
Did we once guilty guiltless judged
In pity do our part?

O love which loves and is not loved,
O tears that ever flow,
O you who mourn our wounding
hands,
May we your pity know.

Tune: HTC 134:
“O dearest Lord, your sacred head”
Chris Barfoot, Good Friday 2003

of endless war. Or, as Stanley Hauerwas, reflecting on the events of 9/11, expressed it, “nonviolence is the necessary condition for a politics not based on death.”

Conclusion

I want to conclude my talk now by acknowledging what I know many of you are thinking: despite all the reasonable arguments and evidence I have presented in response to the objections here, it is nonetheless incredibly idealistic to think that pacifism and nonviolence could ever gain a wider acceptance and become part of our politics, our foreign policy, and our culture. After all, militaristic thinking (and all the objections to pacifism we have discussed) are embedded in all our institutions, in our common ways of thinking, our entertainment, our universities and our churches, and there are a great vested interests in maintaining the war system. There are too many people and corporations making too much money from war and violence for them to give it up without serious and sustained opposition.

However, I want to end by suggesting that there are reasons for maintaining a sense of optimism about the possibility of making our world more pacifist. The most obvious and profound reason for optimism is that, as the peace scholar Kenneth Boulding put it, “Anything that exists is possible”. Think about that for a second: anything that exists is possible...

We know that peaceful, non-warring societies exist and have existed for thousands of years; anthropologists have documented at least 74 of them. Therefore, peaceful, non-warring societies are possible.

We know that peaceful, non-warring regions of the world exist; therefore, a peaceful, non-warring world is possible.

We know that countries exist which have disbanded their militaries and integrated unarmed civilian resistance into their national defence systems; therefore, getting rid of the military and adopting unarmed forms of defence is possible.

We know that nonviolent movements exist which have overthrown brutal repressive regimes, won independence, and changed unjust laws without the use of violence; therefore, making major political change without violence is possible.

We know that groups and organisations exist which have successfully protected innocent people without violence in the middle of brutal civil wars; therefore, unarmed nonviolent peacekeeping is possible.

We know that communities exist in places like Syria and Colombia which have nonviolently resisted terrorist groups and other armed actors and created zones of relative peace and safety; therefore, it is possible to create security without violence, even in the midst of appalling violent conflict.

I could go on and on. The point is that when you evaluate all the evidence and arguments, it is not at all unrealistic or naïve to think that pacifism could work to provide security, to protect the innocent, to provide national security, to win political concessions, and so on. There is no need for pessimism or defensiveness about pacifism. It is the proponents of violence who ought to be pessimistic and defensive, as all their efforts to create peace and security have failed. If war and military violence really did lead to peace and security, then we would have it already. Now is the time to stand up for pacifism, to take this argument forward, to challenge the war system, and to work hard to make pacifism the basis for our society and our way of life.

Anglican Pacifist Fellowship New Zealand Branch

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