

The ANGLICAN PACIFIST

of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Newsletter of the New Zealand Branch of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship



The Revd Dr Jonathan Hartfield

From the Chairman

I am looking forward to working with the APF committee in the coming year, though there is a degree of trepidation as I am not a “chairy” sort of person.

My first very pleasant “task” is to thank my predecessor Margaret Bedggood for her fine work as chairperson over the last three years. It was during her chairmanship that Dorothy Brown’s vision of a University Centre for Peace Studies came to fruition. This must be the most significant achievement in peacemaking in this country since we became nuclear free. I am pleased that Margaret will still have time to be on the APF committee this year.

In 2009 we are thinking of splitting up the open day and the APF retreat. The open day needs to be at a time and place where students will be able to attend. (Last year the general election mucked us up and the changed date meant a lower attendance to hear our three high quality speakers.) The retreat could be at another time and place most convenient for APF members.

I would like to see more members. The word Peace appears at least once in every Anglican Liturgy so one would expect interest in the meaning and ramifications of this word; one of its actualisations is APF membership. Maybe the average Anglican doesn’t know of our existence. In growing our membership I believe we should make more of our associate member option which was introduced for interested people to explore pacifism but who currently cannot sign the ‘no war’ pledge. We have the resources to help them, one example being Chris Barfoot’s excellent study guide “Into 2000: A Christian Reappraisal of War.” Your suggestions on this and other topics will be warmly welcomed.

Shalom, Jonathan.

EDITORIAL: NEW YEAR’S EVE

The year draws to a close tonight. Still we have ringing in our hearts the message of the angels, “Peace on earth, goodwill to men.”

And today’s paper headlines, “ISRAEL VOWS ‘ALL-OUT WAR ON HAMAS.’” War planes pounded Gaza for a fourth day, with the Palestinian death toll rising to at least 360 and hundreds more injured.”

How will it end? God only knows. Retaliation? Almost certainly. But what if a person, like Barack Obama, or Nelson Mandela, or Mother Teresa, were she still alive, could, literally, stand in the gap? Only one person, once alive, then dead, now alive for ever, can bridge that gap with the power of love.

We have the choice of reconciliation or retaliation in any area of conflict. Thank God that there are other ways of reacting to violence – through music for instance, as demonstrated by Daniel Barenboim, with his Arab/Israeli Orchestra ; through books, as described by Steven Galloway in his “The Cellist of

Sarajevo”, where a man plays Albinoni’s Adagio in the bombed Square, in memory of the dead, bringing courage to a broken city, about the temptation to hate, and the refusal to do so.

“Three Cups Of Tea”, by Greg Mortenson & David Oliver Relin, a N.Y. best-seller, tells the story of how Greg, a mountaineer (reminiscent of Ed Hillary), appalled by the conditions in the remote villages of N.Pakistan, sets out to build schools in the forbidding terrain that gave birth to the Taliban. Here is a gentle American, building, where rockets from his homeland pound into the mountainside.

“What is in your hand, Moses?”, the Lord God asked. For him it was a staff. For us it may be a pen, a paintbox, a violin, a garden spade, a hammer and nails, and supremely, a praying heart.

God grant us the inspiration, and the courage, to be peace-makers in the year ahead.

Meg Hartfield

APF Conference 2008

21st to 23rd November 2008, All Saints Church Hall, Ponsonby, Auckland.

PRECIS OF THE OPEN DAY LECTURES

A time to keep laws and a time to disobey them – Civil Disobedience and Civil Resistance in the age of private and government terrorism: Father Peter Murnane OP

“A time to keep laws and a time to disobey them” – a notable omission in Ecclesiastes’ timely writings? Father Peter Murnane reflected on this in his paper. He and two others are awaiting trial for burglary and intentional damage by using a sickle to puncture the Sky Dome covering at Waihopai spy base. Since the arrest the authorities have sent them an invoice for \$946,774 for the dome and another of \$200 for damage to a farm fence. They are unlikely to be able to pay.

After much thought and prayer the three men broke into the base, one of six in the world wide Echelon network. Awaiting arrest they had time for 20 minutes of prayer and reflection before the security guards arrived. They made no attempt to damage the equipment within the dome although that would have been an easy matter. They await trial. Are they justified in contravening the Law against breaking and entering?

Father Murnane set out various principles. First he noted that the world is complex, not least in its moral dimensions. Great evils are being perpetrated by both governments and private organisations, e.g., the London bombings, two wars and interwar sanctions in Iraq and 60 years of Palestinian persecution. Government terrorism provokes private violence. In this setting there are moral dilemmas for the individual.

Secondly, he reminded us that the doer of an evil deed must be separated from the deed itself. People can change their beliefs and behaviour; there is always the possibility of forgiveness and repentance. Non violence means avoiding external physical violence, but also internal violence of spirit. “You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him,” said Martin Luther King.

Thirdly, we can make a choice between truth and power. The powerful claim they are in the right but the abusers, for all their power, are morally wrong.

Fourthly, the power of a ruler, especially an evil one, is not absolute. It depends ultimately on the consent of a significant number of the ruler’s population.

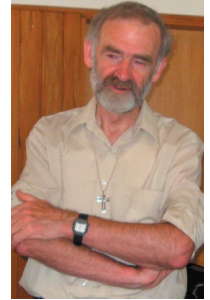
These principles were applied to the Ploughshare action at the Waihopai spy base.

1. The law is always imperfect in that it cannot cover every eventuality, e.g., a passer-by sees someone drowning in a swimming pool and breaks into private property to save a life.
2. Laws can be bad because the law-maker has evil intent. e.g., Nazi laws against Jews, gypsies, homosexuals and the handicapped. In this situation not only does the citizen not need to obey but he/she is bound to disobey, i.e., civil disobedience.
3. Good laws can be in place but the government that made them or inherited them is not following them, e.g. The recent US administration has negated the Geneva convention and Habeas Corpus and allowed the torture of prisoners at Abu Ghraib (recommended book, *The Dark Side* by Janet Mayer 2008). In these circumstances the government in power is breaking the law and thus is criminal. The citizens who resist this law-breaking are civil resisters. To call their actions civil disobedience, as is often done, is to imply their guilt when in fact they are upholding the law.

In practice a large number of citizens in the situations of 2 and 3 obey their discreditable leaders. The leaders and followers who are usurping good law are in fact the criminals whilst the civil resisters are the loyal citizens.

Waihopai has been in place for 20 years, gathering information for the US to use in its domestic and foreign policy. During this time there have been many crimes against humanity including the use of cluster bombs and depleted uranium, torture at Abu Ghraib and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (2). Since 1988 the US administration has accepted, supported and trained people for torture in Guatemala, Iran, El Salvador, Palestine, Chile and Iraq. The 6 Echelon bases have contributed information for these activities.

Whatever the outcome of the forthcoming trial for burglary and intentional damage the three believe their action was lawful (and morally right) as they



were acting against a government that has been acting immorally and breaking a higher law. “Ours was a single action and civil resistance normally describes a sustained campaign. But we hope that our action *is*

in fact part of such a campaign to put an end to the evils caused by espionage and the imaginary “war on terror”, and eventually to war itself”. Father Peter left us with the question, “Where do we stand?”

Biblical Perspectives on Anger: Dr Chris Marshall

An incident may cause anger which is vented in violence but this violence is sometimes justified by beliefs and values, for example, the belief that violence is an acceptable method for controlling others. In the Bible, however, there are two kinds of anger texts: texts about human anger and texts about God’s anger, and these texts must be kept distinct, as for example: “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine. I will repay’, says the Lord.”(Romans 12:19) and “...for the anger of man does not produce God’s righteousness” (James 1:19-20). In other words, from a Biblical perspective, physical and verbal violence are never acceptable.

Anger is a normal human emotion which expresses both our sense of identity and worth as well as our sense of morality. There is a place for “righteous anger”, as in the case of Jesus casting out the money changers from the Temple (Mark 3:1-6). But anger can be dangerous as with Cain when it led to the murder of Abel (Genesis 4: 3-7). It is also deceptive, for persecutors can believe that they are doing God’s will (John 16:1-3).

Anger instead must be mastered (Genesis 4:7). “Why are you angry? ...Sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it” (Genesis 4:7). Angry words can be just as destructive as angry actions. If you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment (Matthew 5:

22). Repentance from angry words or thoughts is a necessary preliminary before worship (Matthew 5:23-24).

God’s Spirit enables us to overcome anger and be transformed. Anger is one of the works of the flesh. In contrast the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:19-26). Our part is “to crucify the flesh with its passions...” (Galatians 5:24).

How are we then as followers of Christ to be angry and not sin? (Ephesians 4:26).

1. Anger happens, but master it. There is a moral limit – “Sin not” – and a time limit: “Do not let the sun go down on your wrath” (Ephesians 4: 26b).
2. Discipline your tongue. “Let no evil talk come out of your mouth, but only what is useful for building up” (Ephesians 4:29).
3. Practise kindness, gentleness and forgiveness. “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32).
4. Live in love. “Live in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us” (Ephesians 5:2).



A Critique of the 1986 Seville Statement: Dr Nicola Hoggard-Creegan

The Seville statement (adopted by UNESCO) on violence asserts that human nature and human biological nature is not conditioned for violence. The document contested the view that violence is natural to humanity making non violence an extraordinary moral feat. So peace is possible because war is not a biological necessity. The Seville group based its case on evidence of human and animal cooperation and caring behaviour. They cited the rarity of species fighting between organized groups of animals and their failure to use tools as weapons. They concluded that warfare is a human behaviour which does not occur in other animals; so violence is not genetically programmed into our nature. Selection is achieved by cooperative behaviour; biology does not condemn

humanity to the bondage of war.

Nicola pointed out some basic weaknesses in the statement. She first reminded us that the argument rested on a false dichotomy, that all is genetics or all is culture. However it was also based on false observation.

Joan Goodall 1986 has a chapter on the territoriality of chimpanzees where there is organized violent behaviour to gain resources. Primate aggression is associated with patriarchal societies; Nicola reminded us that chimps are our nearest relatives in the animal world.

Aggression in itself can be useful and should not be eliminated.



Mary Midgley: "Thus to say that we have a given human nature is not to say that we are determined, nor that we must behave in a certain way. It does not mean we are born with a corrupted imago dei. Rather it refers to a balance, a predilection, a vulnerability. It means that humans are aggressive, among other things."

A comparison was made between war control and disease control.

It was noted that our different political parties were acting out different stories about the origins of violence, e.g., smacking, video games, availability of weapons, the arms industry.

Violence and peace are ultimately spiritual matters. The naming of violence as evil is a theological activity. Restoration and forgiveness is inspired by faith. Jesus shows us how to live in a way that resists evil and the inner predisposition to violence. The Cross brings healing at a deep level.

Peacemaking requires a realistic view of humanity, not an idealistic one. Aggressive tendencies are deep rooted in us all. There needs to be collective compassion for the violent individual. There is a need to devise strategies in society which make societies safe. Motivation will come from a religious world view. Ultimately healing is God-given.



Members at Conference, left-right: Retiring Chairperson Margaret Bedggood; Dorothy Brown; Mary Davies and Margaret Mander; Bill MacCormick and Trish Nicolas; Chris Barfoot and Geoffrey Neilson.

IN MEMORIAM

Mildred Gray-Sullavan, who died late last year, was a member of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship for some years and attended our annual conferences regularly. She continued to do so in spite of failing health and at least once had to be taken to hospital from the Conference.

The suffering of children affected her greatly. At the time of the sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people in the 90s, she got up a petition which was supported by the Bishop of the Bay of Plenty, drawing attention to the plight of the old and the children there.

Mildred's interest in reconciliation extended to the field of science and religion and she was awarded membership of the New York Academy of Sciences.

We are grateful for that part of her life which we shared. As she strove to bring peace to others, may she now enjoy the peace of Christ.

PEACE HAIKU

"Love your enemy"
To meet violence with violence
Is to disobey.

God the Creator
Surely weeps when his children
Destroy, maim and kill.

To build peace on earth
Loving as we have been taught
This our privilege.

Meg Hartfield



OTAGO BOUND via PARIHAKA
Professor Kevin Clements (pictured) spoke at the Paribaka Festival on his way to Dunedin to take up his role as Director of the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. He was accompanied at Paribaka by some of the ANZPCSC trustees.

Anglican Pacifist Fellowship New Zealand Branch

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