



# The ANGLICAN PACIFIST of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Newsletter of the New Zealand Branch of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

## Christmas Message from the Chairman

It was obviously a planned pregnancy as an obstetrician would put it; but a complete reversal of all the benefits that planning hopes to achieve. No obstetrician involved in planning the events of Jesus' birth could hope to retain his specialist registration once the facts became public.

To begin with the girl was single, and by tradition, young. On both counts this put her in a high risk group. The disapproval of society, even with the miracle of the faithful Joseph, added further fetal and maternal morbidity. Then of course, if the baby is to have the best of chances a second or third pregnancy should have been chosen. First pregnancies, especially in those days, were very hazardous to mother and child. One supposes Joseph thought it too unkind, even too dangerous, to leave Mary at home with an unsympathetic family should labour begin; but, in the third trimester, was a journey of over 200k any less hazardous? Whether Mary walked, or rode a donkey, she increased the risk of pre-eclampsia, growth retardation and premature labour. She would also have been suffering the results of physical exhaustion, and, with no prior booking at an Inn, she must have become increasingly anxious. We are not told Jesus' birthweight.

Then there was no birthing centre, no family support except a new husband, no midwife and a stable teeming with tetanus. Early visitors were allowed and had dirty rural hands. To give a better chance of survival the baby should have been a girl,



but I realize that this would involve too many cultural difficulties in the years ahead. However, he could surely have been exempted from circumcision which has killed so many thriving babies. Later there were more journeys and life as a refugee, both detrimental to Mary's lactation as well as adding to the difficulties of weaning.

By all human criteria God's birth plan maximised the discomforts and dangers for mother and child. Herod's children had a much better deal.

Jesus in His maturity continued the same pattern of vulnerability, obedience and risk.

In the Revelation of John (5:5,6) an elder tells John that Jesus is the mighty and powerful Lion of Judah, but what John actually sees is a sacrificial lamb. Once again it is the paradox of a King born in a grubby stable. God has strange ways, which, in human terms, appear to invite failure.

I think, as pacifists, we can take heart from this strange and dangerous plan. We are not numerous, even though human civilisation, if not human survival, depends upon our unpopular ideas. So we are to be vulnerable, obedient to Jesus, adventurous, persevering, and prepared to suffer. Peacemaking can be like a newborn with only a manger, or like a lamb on the fringe of its herd; but that does seem to fit in well with God's unusual planning.

Happy Christmas.

Jonathan.



# Church, State & War Study Day

28th April 2012 in St Aidan's Church, Auckland

This was an ecumenical event organized jointly by the APF and the New Zealand Christian Network. The Study Day was opened by Bishop Ross Bay and about a hundred people attended. The speakers were Canon Dr Paul Oestreicher, Professor Richard Jackson (National Centre of Peace and Conflict Resolution at Otago University), Stephen Tollestrup (Executive Director of Tear Fund) and Thomas Noakes-Duncan, a Ph.D candidate at Otago University. The talks were of a high standard and represented the beginning of an important dialogue of the role of the Church and its relationship with the State. A follow-up is being planned for early next year.

*Precis of the four talks given at the study day follow. If you would like the full texts of the third and fourth talks, or a DVD of the whole four, please contact the APF secretary.*

## THE REVEREND CANON DR PAUL OESTREICHER

*Formerly parish priest, former Director of Centre for International Reconciliation Coventry Cathedral, former Chair of Amnesty International, former Vice President Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, present Counsellor Anglican Pacifist Fellowship*

### 'WHEN WAR IS ABOLISHED, IS THAT THE END OF THE ARMED FORCES?'

*Notes taken from a spoken address*

I speak here as I did when I addressed the World Council of Churches Peace Assembly in Jamaica last year on the understanding that I am speaking to followers of Jesus of Nazareth. However, if there are some here who are not Christians they are welcome because the message of Jesus refers to a new humanity. I believe that war is not written into the DNA of humanity. Civilisation has reached a point where collective killing is no more acceptable than individual murder. There is a rational case for the abolition of war because it is fundamentally opposed to the interests of humanity. It is not necessary to be a Christian to come to this conclusion. Jesus, however, makes the point that to be truly human is to love those who hate us. The one insight that Christianity could offer but does not is the understanding that the only way to change enemies is not to fight and kill them but to make them friends.

The great majority of Christians do not follow this teaching because they say it is not realistic. Though a pacifist at 18, I too regarded this teaching as an ideal. But the world changed when in August 1945 at Hiroshima one bomb killed a hundred thousand people. Today Jesus' teaching is not idealistic but realistic. If our civilisation continues on the path of Hiroshima, the future of our planet is uncertain. The progression in the art and science of killing – the transition from the bow and arrow to nuclear weapons – has become so rapid that it will be possible in seconds to terminate all life on this earth. Another way has

become a necessity.

Peace does not require a perfect world. It is in the nature of our existence that there will always be degrees of injustice. I disagree with the saying that while there is injustice there is no peace. The struggle for justice is a worthy aspiration of human nature, but it is not necessary to fight injustice by war. I also disagree with the trinity of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Peace is rather the pre-condition of achieving justice or the care of the environment. For example, the resources, physical, intellectual and financial, of the industrial/military complex are so vast that it is impossible to comprehend them. Until the power of this complex is addressed, no justice or care of the creation can be achieved.

Though this argument may appear to be secular and based on self-interest, for me the motivation is my Christian conviction. The cross is the centre of my life and the basis of my pacifism. If I did this just to save my soul, this would be a form of escapism. Desmond Tutu said that we can do nothing with the Bible unless we read the newspaper intelligently. So for me the Bible goes hand in hand with my understanding of the world.

Today I read an article in the NZ Herald about Anzac Day entitled "Just quietly we honour war." The author writes: Some wars have changed



history for the better... have made a good nation stronger and better." The same argument would be used in most nations. Each generation honours a successful war and its conclusion.

My father was 18 and leaving school when World War I started. On the same day with great patriotic fervour he rushed to join the battle for his Fatherland – which was Germany. He finished the war as a Lieutenant in the Kaiser's artillery. He represented a whole generation of Germans and Britons who signed up in a war that killed more people than any other war in history, a war which had no purpose except national aggrandisement on both sides. On the buckle of his belt was a crown and round the crown the words "Gott mit uns" (God is on our side). The British soldiers whom he killed with his guns were just as sure that God was on their side, and on both sides military chaplains made a point by their very existence.

Disillusionment set in after the war and there was a mood for pacifism. But this did not last long before World War II broke out. Again on both sides a whole generation of young Britons and Germans saw this as a war to the death for the principle of national identity.

Father Charles Harrison who prepared me for confirmation in Dunedin was ordained in England in 1936. At the outbreak of World War II in 1939 he was faced with three choices. Would he continue in his priesthood, become a military chaplain or sign up as a pacifist? He did none of these, put his priesthood on hold and became a fighter pilot. He was very successful and finished as a squadron leader. "When I shot German planes down" he told me, "I prayed for those whom I was killing." I replied "I respect what you did as society expected it of you but I cannot square it with following Jesus. You cannot both love your enemies and kill them." Thirty years later I met Charles again when he was close to death. He recalled our conversation and said he wanted to make a confession. "I didn't tell you the whole truth. My love of flying just got the better of me."

In our decision-making we often rationalise what we do by giving our decision a higher purpose. But often the real reasons are more complex. There is no difference in this respect between individuals and groups. In our actions as groups we often identify ourselves as against other groups and believe that our nation has the highest

ideals. This fundamentalist mindset has justified the present huge expenditure on the industrial/military complex and is likely to lead to the total elimination of humankind.

A certain Jewish rabbi in a psycho-analysis of the parties in the Jewish Palestinian conflict showed how each side has built up a convincing case to kill and destroy each other. What healing there could be, he remarks, if only each could see themselves through the eyes of the other.

I quote from two 20th Century prophets. Albert Einstein in 1920, foreseeing the scientific advances including the atom bomb, warned that unless there is a change in the present mindset there will be no civilisation in the future. President Dwight Eisenhower, former commander of the Allied Armies in Europe in World War II, predicted that unless we recognise the power and the danger to humanity of the military/industrial complex we are doomed.

I return to the cross, but even the cross was abused by its use in the Crusades as a symbol of war. Do we in the same way on Anzac Day make this the most holy day of the year, replacing Good Friday? No longer do we turn out to mourn but to salute our national identity which is framed in terms of war. I do not seek conflict but when I wear the white poppy, people see it as challenging the holiness of the red poppy and get angry.

Jesus did not avoid conflict. He provoked the authorities into killing him, then prayed for them.

Has the cross become so stylised that it has lost its meaning? I have replaced the crucifix over my desk with a picture of the Church of St Francis in Nagasaki where the atom bomb melted the stone crucifix. That is our cross in the world today.

"Father forgive us, for we do not know what we are doing."





# DR RICHARD JACKSON

Formerly Professor of International Politics, Aberystwyth University, now Deputy Director at the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Otago, Editor *Critical Studies on Terrorism*.

## AN ETHICAL RESPONSE TO TERRORISM, COUNTER-TERRORISM AND THE WAR ON TERROR

*The following are the PowerPoint headings on which Dr Jackson based his talk.*

### INTRODUCTION

- My interest in terrorism and the war on terror
- Three key questions I will try and answer:
  1. *What is terrorism?*
  2. *What is the war on terrorism?*
  3. *What is the ethical response to terrorism and war on terror?*

### WHAT IS TERRORISM?

- There is no agreement - there are more than 200 legal and academic definitions
- A social fact, not a brute fact - the construction of terrorism through interpretation
- A growing academic consensus definition:

*Terrorism is the use or threat of violence against some victims in order to communicate a political message to another group of people, the audience.*

### WHAT IS THE WAR ON TERRORISM?

- War on terror – a global counter-terrorism enterprise of massive proportions with both international and domestic dimensions
- Five key dimensions: military, legal, intelligence, diplomatic, counter-radicalisation and risk management
- It is a way of speaking and thinking, and acting towards the issue of terrorism and security

### SPEAKING AND THINKING

- The war on terror is based on a number of key narratives, assumptions, metaphors and guiding principles which create 'the counter-terrorist mindset'
- The counter-terrorist mindset has become embedded in governmental agencies and is the basis for action - and is now a widely accepted common sense in the media and academia too

### TERRORISM NARRATIVES AND ASSUMPTIONS

- The threat of terrorism - massive, unpredictable, WMD, omnipresent, and ultimately unknowable and incalculable
- Terrorism as an unprecedented, exceptional phenomenon requiring exceptional, extra-normal responses from the authorities
- Terrorism is caused by hatred, deviance, fanaticism, extremism, and individual pathology, not politics
- Terrorism is irrational and non-negotiable
- A central narrative: 'The enemy within'
- Terrorism is war and war on terror is necessary, legitimate and effective

### METAPHORS AND PRINCIPLES

- Key metaphors: evil, savagery, infection/disease
- The precautionary principle
- Risk society/risk management – the new politics
- Collectively, these assumptions, narratives, metaphors, and principles form the logic and motivation for counter-terrorism action - they construct counter-terrorism practices and policies

### ACTIONS AND POLICIES

- Military: wars, major operations, targeted killing programme, new bases, training programmes, R & D, military expansion
- Intelligence: expanded agencies, global interdiction programme, intelligence sharing, surveillance
- Legal: new international and domestic legal architecture
- Diplomatic: global public diplomacy programme, PR
- Domestic: security measures in all major areas of public life, risk management measures, counter-radicalisation programmes

### A FEW INTERNATIONAL OUTCOMES

- Deaths due to war, military operations, drone attacks, and counter-terrorist raids
- Rendition, torture and preventive detention

- Repression and human rights abuses on a global scale – the return of state terror
- Militarisation - bases, training, arms trade
- Setbacks to peace processes and conflict resolution - the spread and intensification of local conflicts

### A FEW DOMESTIC OUTCOMES

- The security colonisation of social life – immigration, higher education, social media, urban landscape, etc
- Institutionalisation of the state of exception,
- risk management, surveillance and governmentality
- The creation of 'suspect communities', loss of trust, increased racism and the destruction of social capital
- A growing war on dissent and protest
- The politics and culture of fear – the prominence of security in electoral politics
- The rise of the 'Terrorism Industry' – embedded material interests for individuals, institutions and companies
- Opportunity costs - trillions wasted, diverted aid. the lost opportunities of 9/11

### ASSESSMENT

- The centrality of violence and militarism - the self-fulfilling prophecy
- The embrace of fear, distortion and paranoia
- The normalisation of lies, distortion and exaggeration - the 'passion for ignorance'
- The sacrifice of justice and liberty for an illusionary sense of security
- The acceptance of the status quo and its moral hierarchy of victims

### I'M NO THEOLOGIAN, BUT...

- All ethical people ought to oppose the war on terror
- The prophetic tradition:
- Speaking the truth - about terrorism, counter-terrorism, war and human rights abuses
- Holding the powerful to account for their misdeeds
- Standing on the side of the vulnerable and oppressed
- A fundamental concern for justice and structural violence - which helps us understand where terrorism comes from

### I'M NO THEOLOGIAN, BUT...

- The Gospel tradition:
- Planks, specks and first stones - Western violence and oppression
- Loving enemies and outcasts - rejecting dehumanisation, demonisation, and moral hierarchies of victims
- Nonviolence as an alternative to violence- rejecting an eye for an eye and cycles of violence
- Any of these principles should put Christians and the church firmly against the war on terror

### CONCLUSIONS

- NZ is not immune - the Tuhoe Raids
- Principles for evaluating counter-terrorism policies:
- Effectiveness
- Proportionality
- Legitimacy
- The practical basis for an ethical response to terrorism and war on terror:
- Education
- Organising, networking and building coalitions
- Advocacy
- Protest and resistance
- Modelling alternatives



# STEPHEN TOLLESTRUP

*Executive Director of TEAR Fund NZ, Director for the World Evangelical Alliance, Peace and Reconciliation Initiative, Board member of the Integral Alliance, an international coalition of Christian Aid and Relief agencies, Board of Reference member for New Zealand Christian Network.*

## POVERTY AND CONFLICT: MAINSTREAMING PEACE-BUILDING INTO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I am a pacifist and my pacifism is reflected in the way I relate to and work with other people. I see no other alternative if I am following Christ. To be a pacifist is to be a peace-maker in our world holistically, not just in part.

Every generation is called to some great work. Today I believe the fundamental work is to move from a global culture of violence to a culture of a peaceful and reciprocal presence in creation. Personally I have been involved with peace-building in the developing world. In the last six weeks I have in the West Bank working in cooperative advocacy with both Palestinians and Israelis. Latterly I have been in Southern Sudan bringing together tribal groups in disputes over cattle and water. My call is hopefully to transform a situation through empowerment and capacity-building in the local people. The same principles can be used in our own neighbourhood.

As Executive Director for TEAR Fund New Zealand and an aid and development worker I ask the question: how do we mainstream peace-building into community development?

Poverty at its most basic understanding is about lack of access to resources. In other words its origins are human and can be solved. Certain factors exacerbate poverty. Among these are human rights abuse, poor use of the land and gender factors. For example, the undervaluing of women undermines a community by limiting children's education, ignoring reproductive rights and reducing business opportunities. The major driver of poverty in a community I would submit is conflict, whether it is political, sexual or environmental. Hence it is necessary to mainstream peace-building and conflict resolution into community development.

What lens do we take into communities? It is essential in the analysis of a situation to take the community with you rather than to impose a solution. Thus we are engaging in a consciousness-raising or a peace-building exercise. We need to look at the whole context we are working with, its political, social and economic elements. Who is holding power and what is the level of dependency? What are the factors for change or the status quo? What are

the opportunities for peace-building education?

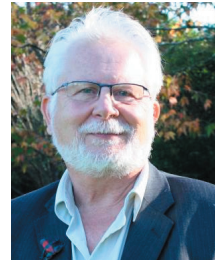
For example, in one case a well was built in a certain area as a solution to poverty but some time later the community life was found to have deteriorated.

It was discovered that the abundance of water had led to excellent grain crops. However, the grain was being distilled into alcohol, resulting in drunkenness and violence against women. In other words, we need to get past good intentions to good analysis and research that is locally involved. That very process of inclusion and participation has the seed of Peace-building education.

To illustrate I will give three case studies of situations in which I have been involved.

The first concerns a tribe in India which is marginalised both in terms of its poor land and its place outside the caste system. Employment is mostly casual and often exploited. Illiteracy is intergenerational. Migration to the cities often leads to further exploitation, for example from brothel contractors. The strategy here has been to strengthen and consolidate local self-government and increased community participation, especially by women. Previously women have been regarded as chattels and labour resources. Men and women are now encouraged to work together, both participating in project survey and planning, including the assessment of previous practices. They are trained in good governance and in peaceful ways of interacting. Better irrigation is considered as well as immunisation, literacy training and small business development. A later stage is to learn how to advocate for themselves.

A second is about a community in Sri Lanka which has been torn by the recent civil war and where the division between Tamil and Sinhalese appears irreparable. How can community development intervention be part of the process of healing? A common problem in marketing produce was identified. Both communities have then worked together to set up a plant for processing and chilling milk and dairy products like curd and yogurt. This cooperative venture has enabled the



villagers to obtain better prices. The output was both economic betterment and social cohesion and reconciliation.

A third situation is in the West Bank where our Palestinian partner the Holy Land Trust has been set with peace-building at the heart of the programme which deals with health care, land rights and property protection. Local villagers have been trained to know their human rights

but also to engage in non-violent confrontation. When faced by Israeli soldiers with guns they do not abuse them or throw stones but ask them what they are doing and establish a challenging but nevertheless non-violent response to the occupation.

All these are examples of peaceful community building, and the example could well be followed on a wider scale in the world today.



## THOMAS NOAKES-DUNCAN

*A member of the Order of Urban Vision as well as being a PhD candidate at Otago University.*

*Acknowledgment for the time and financial investment given to this paper belongs to Victoria University of Wellington and the supervision of Christopher Marshall.*

### “HOW SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND PAUL’S RELATIONSHIP TO THE STATE?”

First, the background to this question is touched on, noting the attitude of the churches,

especially at the start of World War I. Thomas quotes Archbishop Averill who said to his Synod at the time, “God calls us to fight his battle for liberty, justice, mercy and truth,” and Allan Davidson who observes that by using the language of ultimate sacrifice to promote war the church allowed its theology to be corrupted. In Germany the same thing occurred in the church. He quotes Victoria Barnett: “the habit of complicity grew by degrees, its roots in the tangled web of fear, nationalism, political naïvete and traditional subservience to the State.”

Thomas observes that this subservience to the State grew out of Biblical texts, particularly Romans 13:1-7. The traditional understanding deduced from this text was that the State was divine solely by virtue of having authority. Therefore to question the State was to question God. It followed therefore that there was no higher calling than to fight and die in the name of God’s divinely ordained authority. This understanding was undergirded by the just war theory where the main pre-condition of waging war was the just authority of the state. Even a dictator once established could claim such authority. According to this interpretation the church could be viewed as the servant of the state.

Thomas now sketches the thinking on the

traditional theory since World War II.

Immediately following the war there were two challenges, one on the basis of eschatology and the other a scriptural warranty for disobedience to the State.

The first challenge saw the State as belonging to the age before Christ. It could thence be held to pass away when God’s kingdom comes in its fullness. The disciples of Jesus could judge the State on their knowledge of the kingdom. But in the intermediate time the State was recognised to have limited authority. For example, in the question about the tribute money Jesus told his disciples to pay taxes.

The second challenge referred to the case where the State went beyond this limited role and deified itself, seeking worship from its subjects. Here it is held that the principalities and powers take possession of the State for demonic purposes as described in Revelation 13. In this case Romans 13 could advise civil disobedience because the State has exceeded its God-ordained limits.

While these views did much to loosen Christians from traditional subservience to the State, the area for disobedience only if the State compels worship of itself and the lack of involvement in other issues could suggest a kind of dualism where the State is viewed optimistically and Paul’s gospel is “spiritualised”.

In the 1980s and 1990s new understandings arose following revelations about the



Holocaust, the reaction against imperialism and colonialism and the drive towards national independence and liberation. Previously there had been a benign view of Imperial Rome and the Pax Romana had been seen as giving opportunities for the spread of the Gospel. However, now the conquering of foreign lands as the moral duty of a better nation and the subjugation of any rebellions as in the mass crucifixions was brought into more critical focus and even invited comparison by some with present tendencies such as the “pax Americana”. But the more pervasive method of subjugation in the time of Paul was the emperor cult. The civil religion in the Roman colonies dominated the social and economic network and culture.

Was Paul blind to this cult or was he just concerned with spiritual matters? In the first century church religion and politics were inseparable. Consequently, this emphasis on counter-imperialism held that Paul’s church, his Gospel and his peace were a direct challenge to the Pax Romana and its retributive concept of justice. Moreover, Paul’s Gospel was seen as an alternative to Roman imperialism, not presented openly but in codes for fear of persecution.

This view of Paul would not only demolish the traditional view of obedience to the State based on Romans 13:1-7 but would portray Paul’s mission as primarily to oppose the power of Imperial Rome and to create an alternative society which stood in opposition to the society of Caesar. It would see the Gospel in political rather than theological terms. Interestingly too, it would also make no commitment to non-violent enemy love in regard to the Roman oppressors.

But does Paul directly oppose Rome in this way?

Firstly, in spite of his many painful contacts with the authorities he does not mention Rome or Roman power.

Secondly, his record shows that he would not have been afraid to speak out for fear of persecution.

Thirdly, his vision is apocalyptic. The new reality is in deep conflict with the old reality. Paul’s conversion was a paradigm shift. He saw the world not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. God’s strength was seen in weakness. Jesus’ crucifixion was a victory not a defeat. God’s purpose was to put to an end the very dynamic that made some people subservient to the rule of others. But most importantly, God’s invading presence in the world is deeply contested due to

the powers that refuse to give up their dominion. Paul’s overall view sees the world as captive to these powers which are not of human creation and which act on the parts of creation intended for good (for example the Jewish law). Jesus came to disrupt and eventually subject these powers to God’s rule. Paul’s mission is therefore part of the cosmic battle between sin and death and the power of the Spirit. In this battle Paul does not speak of rules because rules and good intentions may be usurped by the powers. He speaks in terms of the new humanity which is God’s agent in this battle. Love for enemies is therefore seen not as a rule but as a consequence of the new humanity, a characteristic of those who are living in Christ and follow his way of the cross..

When Paul speaks of the rulers of this age, power, authority and rulers who belong to the darkness, the Roman Empire is not one of these powers. It is only when the Empire is co-opted by these powers and aligned with a power of much greater influence that the real threat arises. Human authorities such as these are then corrupted into machines of war, turn neighbours against each other and turn father against children. It is well to remember that these powers can act in our individual as well as our corporate lives. There is both an individual and a corporate morality.

In conclusion Thomas holds that Romans 13:1-7 is not in conflict with Paul’s theology. Human authority is not absolute, but when in obedience to God can be honoured and respected. In Paul’s judgment political authorities can be subsumed under divine power. Conversely, when they are subsumed by the power of sin and act according to the wisdom of this world they manifest the present evil age and are doomed to destruction.

Romans 13:1-7 is therefore a treatise neither for the divine right of government nor for opposition to the State on principle. In it can be seen a warning to the modern secular state. Neither its secularity nor even its democratic nature can assure it of immunity from anti-God tendencies.

It is salutary to remember that what Paul says of the State is also true of any human authority, not least of all the church. Paul’s struggle to re-orientate the church to live according to the cross is evident in all his letters and in his own life.

“God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.” (Galatians 6:14).

# PEACE SUNDAY, August 12, 2012.

Jonathan Hartfield

## SERMON ONE. CHRIST CHURCH WHANGANUI.

*Isaiah 2:2-5; Paul's Epistle to the Romans 12:9-21; Matthew's Gospel 5:38-48*

August 6, 1945, was the morning when an atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima, – and the world has remembered that day ever since. It is right to remember for if we forget our history we are likely to repeat its mistakes. The Church calls one Sunday near this horrendous event Peace Sunday; so not only can we evaluate the event itself from a Christian point of view but also we have an opportunity to look at violence and war from a Christian perspective.

Interestingly, and sadly, I find a lot of people do not realize that there is a Christian perspective. I have noticed in books on peace and non-violence that the person asked to write the preface is more likely to be the Dalai Lama than the Archbishop of Canterbury. Although we say the word peace several times in each Church service, we are not known as people of peace. ... We only have one Sunday a year on Peace and that is optional in our Lectionary – yet war and the preparation for it is currently the biggest problem for people on our planet. Jesus once said to a group of Pharisees arguing over minutiae, 'You filter a gnat, but swallow a camel' (Mt. 23:24). Might He say that about us?

But, first to the history. Two bombs were produced, the first, a uranium one, was dropped on Hiroshima. This exploded directly over the main hospital, so 90% of health professionals were wiped out. The second, a plutonium bomb, was potentially more powerful, so the developers were interested in comparing the two in action. This bombing was planned for three days later. The town of Kokura was chosen for the second bomb. It was a fair choice as the town had a large munitions factory and a chemical weapons laboratory, but on the debit side there was a prisoner of war camp containing about 400 American prisoners. After some debate it was decided to go ahead with Kokura. So three days after Hiroshima, Bock's Car, named after the pilot, was circling over Kokura with its bomb bays open. Three times it circled, but the town was spared, not by compassion or fellow-feeling for the Americans below, but by the weather. There

was thick cloud over Kokura, and the crew's orders were for a visual drop, not a radar one. So the B 29, now getting a little short on fuel, flew on to Plan B, Nagasaki. This was a town with shipyards. The weather was not so kind to those townspeople, although cloudy there were gaps in the cloud and summer sunshine below. Choosing a gap, the crew dropped 'Fat Boy' directly onto the cathedral. A 1.5k. area was destroyed and double our Wanganui population died instantly. As at Hiroshima it was total destruction, men women children, unborn babies, rats, mice, pets, insects, birds combusted mid-air, grass and trees, everything living gone in an instant. 30% of the town was destroyed. Most of the casualties were civilians.

Although the immediate deaths were fewer than the nightly toll in the fire bomb raids of the preceding months there was a new devilment afoot – radiation. This continued to kill. Many died from acute radiation sickness. Irradiated survivors produced miscarriages and deformed babies and then cancers for the rest of their shortened lives. It also brought social isolation as normal people feared the silent killer.

Not all the Chiefs of Staff were in favour of dropping the bombs. One notable leader, General Eisenhower, later to become President, was against killing so many people, and the idea of a weapon that did not discriminate between civilians and soldiers, women and children. He also knew of the hazardous effects of radiation. The dissenters were out-voted.

The Japanese surrendered six days later. They had been putting out peace-feelers to Moscow for a month or so before the bomb, and one wonders whether the short 3-day space between the bombings, was to get 'Fat Boy' exploded and evaluated before Japan surrendered.

We feel compassion for those people, but of course, if Japan or Germany had developed nuclear weapons first, they would have used them also. By this time in the war, all sides were on an equal moral footing –all had their feet in the gutter.



In our readings from Jesus and Paul today, they are warning us about that outcome. Writing to Christians living in Nero's Rome, Paul says, 'Never repay anyone evil for evil, don't let evil conquer you, rather conquer evil with good.' Romans 12:17-21. If you believe that dropping a nuclear weapon is evil, as I do, then the allied commanders had allowed evil to conquer them.

Jesus said 'Love your enemies.' Of course he meant 'resist evil but do not resist it in kind, do not resist it violently' Matthew 5:39-44. So Jesus is saying that if we resist evil with hate, then we identify with the evil, we buy into the evil, we become part of the evil. The only way to prevent that happening is to resist lovingly; in the case of violence, resist non-violently. Even a good end is sullied if the means to that end is bad. That does not mean that we are passive in the face of evil, and let anything go, but our form of resistance must be loving and non-violent. He said love friends and enemies, which doesn't mean we have to like them or like what they are doing, or agree with them. Love is different. Jesus lived that love, which is so well shown in the parable of the Good Samaritan who had mercy on his Jewish enemy.



Nuclear bombs have not been used since then, although there was testing in our area, which was as far away as possible from the owner nations. New Zealand has an honourable place in finally stopping the big powers testing in our backyard, but not before a number of people were damaged by radiation. Depleted uranium bullets were used in the Iraq war, leaving a legacy of leukaemia amongst the local children. Many Americans are now suffering from Gulf War syndrome, and their use of these bullets may be the cause.

There are at present around 20,000 nuclear weapons in 111 sites, in nine countries. Israel would be the smallest country in size; it has 80 warheads, but most nuclear powers are the big boys, so over half the world's population live in a nuclear armed country. Global military spending was US \$1738 trillion last year. 5% of this would feed every starving person in the world and meet all the UN Millennial Goals. So the money spent and the scientists and technicians used represent resources taken away from farming, health, climate research etc. Israel's 80 warheads cost US \$1.9

billion last year. America has been giving more aid to Israel than to the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, so African children lose out supporting Israel's, hopefully, never-to-be-used nuclear arsenal. Our own NZ\$ 8.5 million a day on conventional weapons seems piffling in comparison, but as a country with no military enemies, we can all think of other uses for that money.

Isaiah had it absolutely right: swords need to be beaten into ploughshares, spears into pruning hooks, otherwise the suffering continues. He realised that to just lay aside a sword was not enough, even if it was never used again. It trapped a rare resource, metal in his day, which needed to be recycled into agricultural machinery. He also knew, only too well, that swords put down are all too easily picked up again. If weapons are easily available, then angry, mad, callous and power-hungry people are going to use them, as we have seen so tragically in the US in the last few weeks.

Isaiah's vision is an ingredient of God's kingdom made real in our time by Jesus, so we see Paul, who was an aggressor before conversion, beating his sword into a ploughshare, and giving us our epistle. He had given up violence and was echoing Jesus' words – resist

evil non-violently – when he wrote, 'Do not pay back evil for evil; overcome evil with good.' How far have we got with Isaiah's vision and Jesus' reality when each year enough bullets are produced to kill every person on the planet twice? Some of these bullets are made in New Zealand. Swords into ploughshares, tanks into tractors, seems an impossible dream when our world has more regulations in place for the trading of bananas than weapons.

Swords to ploughshares retains the valuable metal but gives it a new shape and a new use. My wish for our army for example, is that we retain its valuable discipline, its valuable organisation, and many of its skills. We retain its honourable place in our society, but we give it a new shape and a new motive for its existence. So it becomes a Civil Defence force, an international accident and emergency service, free of lethal weapons, but fully equipped to bring healing to devastated communities. Our army is of course doing fine A and E work and peace-duties, but it is ploughing with swords, and real ploughs would be more

efficient and less threatening to local populations.

The two soldiers so tragically killed in Afghanistan this week were there to help the locals, not to destroy or conquer, and we can be proud of their service. [The congregation prayed at that point].

Jesus was not a meek and mild figure, living on the fringe of a peaceful may-pole dancing society. He was in the thick of it, in contact with zealot freedom-fighters, Herod's cruel private army, and Rome's army of occupation. His society was in recession with Sadducees and others on bankers' salaries. In the midst of this he gathered up the prophecies of Isaiah, fulfilled the Scriptures, and brought God's kingdom to our world. Our Gospel reading today was part of his proclamation and a description of life in the Kingdom of God. Was it also a prescription for how we should live now? Wrongly, many people think that when he said do not violently resist evil, he meant us to be utterly passive. His three little stories show how wrong that is, for they all show an active response to an evil.

The result of this we see in our reading from Paul, and this ethic of non-violence and love extended into the early church. These Christians had a respect for life and believed human life to be sacred, and so they refused to kill. In entertainment they did not go the Games to see killing, though sadly many were taken there to be killed. They would not have looked at many of our TV programmes.

In some ways this respect for life, love for all, made life simple. So there was, for Christians, no abortion, no suicide, no murder, no capital punishment, and no fighting to kill. If there had been euthanasia, I'm sure they would be against that also. Soldiers who were converted had to leave the army lest they kill someone. A third century document on Baptism excluded certain people as candidates – 'brothel keepers, gladiators, idol-worshippers, soldiers, and magistrates who used the power of the sword.' (Hornus p.163). Nowadays I am sure that we would still expect our baptismal candidates to have given up brothel-keeping and idol-worshipping, and we might well add tobacco manufacturers and drug-dealers, but soldiers have not been on that list for some 16 centuries.

Mark Kurlansky writes in his book 'Non-violence, the history of a dangerous idea' – "The early Christians are the earliest known group that

renounced warfare in all its forms and rejected all its institutions". That lasted for 300 years and is our earliest position on war and violence and what it meant to live at peace. However, when the Roman Empire became Christian, its armies were considered Christian also, so a new series of problems arose, and the justified war, a justification for killing, needed to be hammered out. Constantine's commanders needed a licence to kill, and the likes of me would say that we have been in bondage ever since. The justified war put restraints on fighting, but it allowed war on certain conditions, and it laid down conditions for fighting, like leaving civilians alone. But such is patriotism, nationalism, greed, the power of tyrants, and sheer stupidity, there have been few wars that have really fitted the conditions. One major condition brings us right back to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which is the condition that civilians should be protected as far as possible and not directly attacked. 90% of casualties in the wars of our lifetime have been civilian; at one time it was only 10%.

From about 400 AD the just war, which allowed killing, rapidly became the norm. But there have always been pacifists who have continued the first church tradition. Benedictines and Franciscans are still with us, and the Quakers are a well-known denomination. In Anglicanism, Archbishop Desmond Tutu would be our best-known pacifist. Jesus' non-violent methods do work. In the recent past, Eastern Europe liberated itself by using non-violent methods, based on our Gospel reading. The Berlin Wall fell without bloodshed. Probably best-known to us would be Greenpeace, which over the last 50 years has been effective and non-violent. Amnesty International, which is also 50 years old, writes letters and sends E-mails, making the pen mightier than the sword.

To sum up, there is a Christian position on war and violence, that is different from President Assad in Syria now, or President Truman in 1945. Admittedly we have two schools of thought and action. The majority group allows killing under certain conditions, an important one being the protection of civilians. It is a pragmatic position, many would say the common-sense one. The other position, and the minority one for the last 16 centuries, takes our 3 readings literally, believing that they state how we should respond to violence and evil. Of course, pacifists realise the complexities and difficulties, not least whether the

Sermon on the Mount should still be valid in a B29 bomber, or even be a life-style that Christians are expected to live. I do not expect non-Christians to live by these principles, though I hope they will acknowledge how life-affirming and effective they can be.

I am old enough to remember that we were told in World War 2 that we were upholding Christian values by fighting the Axis powers. That was certainly the intention of many people, but how ironic that the last major action of that war was a direct hit on a cathedral..... The devil smiled.

## SERMON TWO\*. ST. CHAD'S CHURCH, WANGANUI.

*Ps 33; Isaiah 2:2-5; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 5:38-48.*

In Matthew 5:39 there is a seemingly strange phrase. Many translations say 'do not resist evil' which seems nonsense as of course a Christian resists evil. Jesus, however, makes sense of the phrase with three little examples that many in His audience must have experienced.



On the surface 'do not resist an evil doer' seems a prescription for cowardice. Here is evil, run for it! But the original word used for resist when used elsewhere usually means military, armed or violent resistance or struggle. Bishop Tom Wright's translation 'don't use violence to resist evil' makes better sense. We must all resist evil but there are different ways of doing that, different ways of responding. Jesus is saying, "Resist the violence of evil but not violently, and don't run away either for there is a third way."

He tells three little stories all of which have become part of everyday language but are often used a little incorrectly. Turn the other cheek, give him your shirt and go the second mile. We are indebted to the late Walter Wink for this explanation of the stories (Engaging the Powers 1992). Roman soldiers whose equipment weighed about 85 lbs, could demand any citizen to carry their pack, and of course they often did, and it caused much resentment. A man harvesting would have to leave his work and carry the load if that was demanded. Simon of Cyrene, a casual tourist, was ordered to carry the cross for Jesus. But this forced labour left resentful colonials, so to lessen this there was a strict law that a load should only be carried for one mile by each person. If a soldier demanded more and was caught he could be severely punished. The whole process

was degrading to the civilian population and they ground their teeth and seethed with anger and at times rebelled. So Jesus says, regain your dignity, carry the load the mile and then when the soldier knows you have to put it down, cheerfully say you want to carry it another mile. What is the

soldier to do? He thinks, "If I accept it may be a trick and I will be reported." He may also think, "This Jewish dog is suggesting I am too weak to carry my load." Likely the soldier finds himself ordering, maybe even begging, the civilian to put down the load. It's a nice reversal of roles. An evil custom is resisted non-violently and the soldier will think more carefully about requisitioning civilians, and he is forced to admit the humanity of the conquered. So, going the second mile is not just being industrious and kind, it has an element of righting an evil.

Similarly, turning the other cheek is not being passive or wimpish as is often implied. It is a situation with a boss and employee, master and slave, man and wife or mistress to her house slave. It is a situation where there is a strong person throwing their weight around and humiliating the weaker one. This is often verbal as well as physical. Notice Jesus says having been hit on the right cheek, turn the other. He is specific about which side. It was a right handed society. So the landowner strikes his labourer to humiliate him for some fault, real or imagined. To hit a right cheek with the right hand, comfortably and with some aplomb, one has to hit with the back of the hand. (an insult that survived through the centuries in some societies). It is more insult than hurt but it shows the landowner's contempt for his labourer.

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*\*To avoid repetition the Revd Dr Jonathan Hartfield's second sermon has been pared down to the explanation of the passage from the Beatitudes mentioned in his first sermon. Editor*



The labourer is expected to grovel but in this case that doesn't happen; the weaker party offers the left cheek for another blow. With a right hand the left cheek can only be hit easily with the palm, the open hand. It can be much more hurtful but in that culture the open hand slap was reserved for quarrels between social equals. Once again a quandary for the powerful one: does he refuse the proffered cheek or does he hit out as he would like

but admit his slave is socially equal to him? Again the underdog has taken the initiative, regained some dignity, and made a point about human equality.

Jesus' examples show that a response to violence need not be cowardice or running away, or violence. There can be an effective non-violent response which is neither flight nor fight. In the meaning of the word today, Jesus was a pacifist.

## PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES CENTRE

The Centre, at Otago University, continues to grow and thrive. There are now 54 students in all, including 17 Post Graduate Diploma, 23 Masters by thesis and 14 PhD.

Two new appointments this year have been financed by the Trust. Charles Butcher is a Post Doctoral Fellow in Peace and Economics. The development of a relationship between business and international peacemaking is much needed.

Dorothy Brown's vision for Peace Education in schools has been brought nearer by the appointment of Dr Tejendra Pherali. He comes originally from Nepal and his interest in Peace Education grew out of a conflict situation in Nepal and the education of young people to equip them in the role of reconciliation. We look forward to his contribution in New Zealand.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Rosa Oliver, 1922-2012**

Rosa was an unforgettable presence at APF Conferences over the years. She was a tonic with her dancing, her singing, her laughter and her sheer joy in living, but she was could also be a pain in bringing up uncomfortable subjects and championing causes which other people had given up. But she did it in such a way that no one was offended, and the discussion usually finished in laughter, whether she got her



*Rosa with her well-known Morris Minor*

way or not.

As a teacher by profession at secondary schools in England, Blenheim, and Botswana which she especially loved, she would have kept her classes laughing.

At one APF Conference in Wellington we attended the Cathedral where our presence was very slightly noticed. One of the hymns chosen was "Onward Christian Soldiers". Most of us were silent but Rosa sang enthusiastically – but using different words.

We will miss you, Rosa. May you know more fully the joy which you never failed to communicate to others.

Chris Barfoot

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