

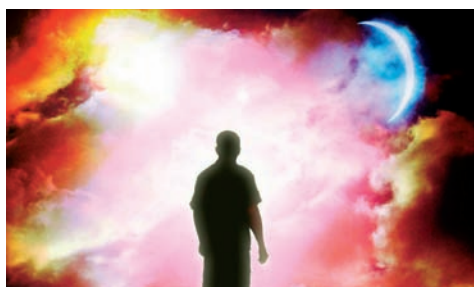
# The Anglican PEACEMAKER



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Looking into the future (drogyn6)

This is the last issue of APF's 75th anniversary year. It focuses on the future and how the increasing turbulence in world affairs may influence the search for peace within and between nations. Human society is also becoming more fragile because of its complexity and the strains placed upon it by population growth, failed economic policies, climate change and dwindling resources – factors likely to fuel conflict and revolution.

There are no silver bullets in the search for ways to prevent wars, and one has to recognise the limits of human knowledge and our ability to predict future events.

The same old questions remain. How does the activist campaign for peace when concerns about security are moving to the forefront of many minds? Listening, understanding and communication with those we wish to influence are critical. What do they think about disarmament and all the other issues that preoccupy us? And we continue our mission to influence matters with the non-violent methods at our disposal.

We begin with thoughts about the nature of uncertainty and the fragility, picking up this theme in articles that follow. We also look at some topical issues including the controversy surrounding the Nobel Peace Prize and the proposed anniversary commemorations for WWI.

Tony Kempster

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Some words from "Fragile", a song by Sting.

If blood will flow,  
when flesh and steel are one,  
drying in the colour  
of the evening sun.  
Tomorrow's rain  
will wash the stains away,  
but something in our minds will always stay.

Perhaps this final act was meant  
to clinch a lifetime's argument,  
that nothing comes from violence,  
and nothing ever could.  
For all those born beneath  
an angry star  
lest we forget how fragile we are.

Sting said that he was reading about a young American in the Peace Corps in Nicaragua who was shot by the Contras: "This guy had gone to Nicaragua to try to help, and ended up being mistaken, deliberately or otherwise, for a Marxist guerrilla. I think there was a lot of that kind of mistake being made. This idea of fragility was a very important one for me. It's very easy to kill people; it's almost a casual thing".

## AN UNPREDICTABLE AND FRAGILE WORLD

### So how have we done so far in this new century?

Developments in the Middle East and North Africa following the Arab Spring have dominated the news. The Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek described 2011 as "the year of dreaming dangerously". Now a year later, every day brings new evidence of how fragile and inconsistent that awakening was, as the signs of exhaustion begin to show: the enthusiasm of the Arab Spring is mired in compromise and religious fundamentalism; and conflict continues. And similar problems occur in other parts of the world.

He says, "It is important to understand that the rage is building and there seems no way out. The ruling elite is losing its ability to rule. Even more obvious is the fact that democracy is not working very well. We need to know what we want. We want coffee but do we want it without milk or without cream. What freedoms are we ready to renounce?"

Žižek is known for his controversial views, but there is sense here in what he says. People are selfish and, given the chance, will expect more than the world can provide in a sustainable way. They need to be jolted out of their complacency.

### Is the world becoming a safer place?

An interesting debating point is whether the world is becoming a safer place; whether the possibility of war is now less likely; and perhaps even whether the effort of peacemakers has borne fruit (see the review of Nordlinger's book on page 7).

APF's anniversary exhibition made special reference to a study by Stephen Pinker which does indicate that over the long span of human history the world is becoming a safer. Proportionately, fewer people are dying violently. There is also more democracy and fewer wars have occurred between nations since 1945. All this is true, but we are talking about an historic trend and not a prediction for the future with its uncertainty.

Yet, there are those who predict that war will become less common. Harvard Hegre, a professor in the department of Political Science at the University of Oslo, is the latest one to do so. His Armed Conflict model, developed in collaboration with the Peace Research Institute Oslo, shows that India, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Uganda and Burma will be at the greatest risk of conflict, while in 40 years time it will be China, Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania. A steady fall in the number of conflicts in the next 40 years, possibly by half is also expected. At its core the study has taken a detailed history



of global conflicts over the past 40 years and added UN predictions for key indicators.

Hegre, like Pinker, argues that “war has become less acceptable, just like duelling, torture and the death penalty”. His model shows that the combination of higher education, lower infant mortality, smaller youth cohorts and lower population growth are a few of the reasons why the world can expect a more peaceful future. The population is expected to grow, but at a slower pace than today, and the proportion of young people will decrease in most countries – with the exception of African ones.

But unfortunately, the model has already had to be tweaked to take account of the Arab Spring and renewed Israeli-Palestinian tensions. The authors admit that since the first findings were published in 2009, conflicts in the Middle East had weakened the clear correlation between socio-economic development and the absence of civil war; while the fighting in Syria and Libya had shown that democratisation processes have to be included in the model. And such models are supposed evolve towards reality!

While statistics and psychology have been well used in the service of optimism, geographers and historians have also been considerable proponents of pessimism. Mike Davis’s widely praised *Planet of slums* takes many of the same indicators fed into Hegre’s model and finds a future in which vast proportions of humanity have been ware-housed in shantytowns and exiled from the formal economy. Far from peaceable, Davis describes a radically unequal and unstable urban world that awaits us.

It seems unlikely that such mixes of futurology and fiction will ever be very accurate, whatever approach is used. The issues are much more volatile and to do with individual national leadership, military spending and the competition for resources – as they always have been. In 2011, some £1 trillion were spent on arms globally. This is lower than 2010 levels for most western countries (which are facing serious budget deficits). But, Russia and China have continued to increase their spending on weapons by 9% and 6% respectively. This is a worrying trend since it reflects a world where the balance of power is changing, adding to future uncertainty. During the Cold War years, we in the West have become accustomed to some stability in international relations under the US umbrella – whether we are willing to admit this or not.

This uncertainty is now fuelling fears that Europe is not spending enough on defence. The US ambassador to NATO, Ivo Daalder said recently that if Europe does not invest in new capabilities, its over reliance on America would continue at a time when Washington had made the far east and China its new priority. He said that if this issue is not addressed, NATO would not be able to undertake a Libya-style campaign in 10 years time. British military chiefs have since said that defence cuts risk UK interests.

And we have the added complication of climate change, the effects of which are equally difficult to predict. Sometimes the future arrives with alarming speed. In the 1990s, and again in 2000, climate scientists warned that – unless urgent action was taken – the Arctic Ocean could be clear blue water in summer by 2050. This August, researchers making a first analysis of data from a European Space Agency observation satellite were startled to find that the loss of sea ice – as measured both by depth and area – was far more dramatic than their forecasts

had predicted. The summer Arctic could be open sea within a decade. And we all know what this means!

### Black swans and “antifragility”

Nassim Nicholas Taleb, an expert on uncertainty and the bestselling author of *The Black Swan*, tells us that such trends can be terribly misleading. (The black swan is a philosophical theory that describes an event that is a surprise (to the observer), has a major effect and, after the fact is often inappropriately rationalised.)

In his latest book, *Antifragile* (see Book Look on page 7), he develops some of these ideas and uses the analogy of a turkey. A turkey is fed for a thousand days by a butcher; every day confirms to its staff of analysts that butchers love turkeys “with increasing statistical confidence”. Then comes the day the turkey has a revision of belief – right when its confidence in the statement that the butcher loves turkeys is maximal it is killed. (This example builds on an adaptation of a metaphor by Bertrand Russell.) The surprise is a Black Swan.

We can also see from the turkey story the mother of all harmful mistakes: mistaking absence of evidence (of harm) for evidence of absence, a mistake that we will see tends to prevail in intellectual circles and one that is grounded in the social sciences.

“Obviously”, Taleb says, “we should avoid being a turkey”. Better still we should become “a turkey in reverse” – what he calls “antifragile” – something that benefits from disorder, volatility and turmoil. The antifragile is beyond the resilient or robust. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same, the antifragile gets better and better when things become difficult.

“Not being a turkey” starts with figuring out the difference between true and manufactured stability as is often found in dictatorship. One can easily imagine what happens when constrained, volatility-choked systems explode. We have a fitting example in the removal of Saddam Hussein and his regime in 2003 which led to the deaths of more than a hundred thousand people. There are also parallels with the present situation in Syria.

Thinking a little more about this, it is obvious that the unpredictability of wars and crises encourages a tendency to look backwards for comparisons rather than forward – although history rarely repeats itself. Politicians seem to have their own blind spot here; they tend to forget before every conflict that war, rather like social engineering, has a troubled history of producing consequences very different to what was originally intended. It is the law of unintended consequences writ large. For example, one could argue that the whole of the so-called “war on terror” was misdirected by the way George W Bush immediately compared the 9/11 attacks to Pearl Harbour. This resurrected the mentality of state-on-state-warfare, when in fact the threat from al Qaida was an international security issue.

### Ends of our own making?

So we should be preparing for unimaginable changes that could be on the way. Call them the modern horsemen of the apocalypse: nuclear war, climate change, doomsday viruses and out-of-control drone-like machines. These are the subjects of the proposed Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (CSER), which attracted much media attention at the end of November: “We’re talking about threats to our very existence stemming from human activity”, says Martin Rees, a cosmologist at the

‘Sometimes the future arrives with alarming speed.’



An article in *New Scientist* (5 January 2013) suggests that our desire for coffee may be the jolt we need to do something about climate change. The coffee plant is inordinately fussy about its growing conditions. It needs a “goldilocks” combination of temperature and rainfall to produce the high quality bean. But the effects of climate change are already upon us with coffee yields at a 35-year low.

Vast numbers of people are hooked on its caffeine – especially in Europe and North America. So coffee has the potential to send a powerful message to the world about the reality of what we are doing to the climate. If you wanted to find a commodity whose escalating price would cause maximum discomfort to complacent westerners, coffee is about as good as it gets.

# THE EUCHARIST IN A FRAGILE WORLD

## ► FROM THE CHAIRPERSON, NAT REUSS

*"People are fragile things, you should know by now.  
Be careful what you put them through."*

'Munich' by the alternative rock group  
'Editors' as written by the John T. Williams

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

Life is fragile. Read through your local paper, listen to the radio or read the trending articles on the internet - fragility, risk and instability are the hallmarks of human life unfolding before your eyes. They shape every context from the fiscal cliff to global warming, water and food scarcity to the 99%, rising fuel prices to pollution, double dip recessions to authoritarian regimes: life is fragile.

One of many stories highlighting this aspect to life has been the arrest and imprisonment of Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, 23, and Maria Alyokhina, 24, from the band "Pussy Riot", on the grounds of "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred," for their part in performing a protest/prayer on the soles of Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, on the 21st of February, 2012. The central thrust of the protest/prayer was a challenge to Vladimir Putin and the complicity of the Russian Orthodox Church in supporting a leader who has gradually become more authoritarian in his leadership style with its gradual erosion of human rights in Russia, including tighter demonstration laws, internet restrictions and the amendment of anti-treason laws. But what is God's response to the fragile nature of our human existence so evidently witnessed in Russia and elsewhere? There are many constants: resurrection, prayer and the Church itself to name a few. Recently I have been reflecting on the Eucharist which is another constant, instituted by Jesus himself and a foretaste of the Heavenly banquet to come. An eschatological meal of hope, when all around is uncertainty and risk. "Pussy Riot" conducted their protest on the soles of Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, the very place the Eucharist is prepared and received. With the highest respect and thanks to the sacrifices made by "Pussy Riot," their challenge to the authoritarian leadership of Putin says little more than what is *already implied and enacted* in the sacramental act of the Eucharist, prepared in every Church week in, week out. That being - Jesus is King and Putin, therefore, is not.

Arundhati Roy correctly points out that, "When a symbol unmoors itself from what it symbolizes, it loses meaning. It becomes ineffective." This, I feel, has happened to the Eucharist. Centuries of Eucharistic theology has tended towards the presence of Christ within the elements of Bread and Wine. This focus has resulted in a loss of the political meaning behind the meal and subsequently its power to redefine the power wielded by authoritarian governments.

Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff are two theologians at Berkeley who have just published a book on the Eucharist entitled, *The Eucharist - bodies, bread and resurrection*. They see a need to move away from the more historical study on the presence of Christ to grounding the Eucharist in the reality of people's lives, revealing the hope that the Bible story offers in a world ruled by injustices and terror. Reflecting on 1 Cor 11:26, they write,

*"Proclaiming the death of the Messiah means telling the truth about human violence and, at the same time, seeing beforehand how it will come to an end. It cannot endure... It is no accident*

*that 1 Cor. 11:26 links the meal, as proclamation of Christ's death, with the expectation of his coming. When the Messiah comes, he will put an end to "every ruler and every authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:24). That is the deathly power of those who crucified him (1 Cor. 2:6). It is the very proclamation of the death of Jesus in the common meal that announces the end of violence that kills and oppresses human beings. The simple fact that people, through their common meal, bring a crucified man into their midst, already meant at that time the naming of that violence as injustice and anticipating its end. The proclamation of that death happens in the action of the meal with its interpretive words relating it to Jesus' death."*

The Eucharist, as in many Christian denominations, is the very centre of the Russian Orthodox religious life. The above emphasis on the Eucharist as a divine protest against corrupt

authority and rule - a 'meal of dissent', poses many questions to the Church faithful. But it also possesses within it the potential for Church renewal - to become a 'Community of dissent' - a dissenting body politic to challenge Vladimir Putin and the complicity of Orthodox Church hierarchy in its silence to the creeping injustices within Russia today, and for that matter, in other countries where it exists.



Looking back to the origins of the Eucharist, we find the themes of stability in the face of uncertainty returning again and again. The Eucharist finds its origins in the Jewish Passover Feast. Every Passover feast retells the story of divine deliverance (stability) of God's people from the tyranny of Pharaoh and the Egyptian Empire (uncertainty). Every time the Passover meal is celebrated, it not only looks back to this first exodus, but enables the Jewish faithful to look forward to future deliverances from tyrannical power and oppression. The Christian meal practice takes on this meaning as central, but through a new trajectory instituted by Jesus, when He curiously and radically "changed the words," during the Last Supper. Thus he used the symbolic significance of the Passover story with its meaning of political liberation and inserted himself as the central liberating figure. Jesus becomes the one true King and ruler over the entire cosmos (stability), the one true victor over sin, torture, violence and death - the weapon of choice for authoritarian regimes and Empires throughout history (uncertainty). Whether or not a particular nation's rule is authoritarian or tyrannical, preparing and sharing the Eucharist opens up a new reality where Jesus is proclaimed King, resulting in a downgrading of leaders such as Vladimir Putin.

The real dissenters therefore (at least in principle if not action) are not the ones now unmasked and locked in isolated penal camps, but are the priests and bishops across Russia, who at every Eucharist proclaim the Risen Jesus as King - triumphant over the principalities and powers of this dark world until Jesus comes again in glory (1 Cor. 11:26). The central meaning of the Eucharist, therefore, offers a direct challenge to tyrannical power through this symbolic proclamation. It is perhaps no wonder, then, that Putin has courted the Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy over the last 12 years of his leadership!

Despite the complicity of these present relationships, life hasn't always been easy for the Russian Orthodox Church. If there is one body politic that has known persecution from State authorities during the 20th century and wouldn't at all be surprised at the disproportionate treatment handed down to "Pussy Riot" members, it would be the Russian Orthodox Church.

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# Prayers, awards and celebrations

► FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY  
TONY KEMPSTER GIVES HIS REPORT

## Week of prayer for world peace

APF has always been committed to furthering interfaith dialogue with shared concern for peace and justice matters. In 1974, while chaired by Gordon Wilson, it initiated the Week of Prayer for World Peace (WPWP). The first WPWP chairman, Dr Edward Carpenter (Dean of Westminster), established the guiding principle in these words: 'The peace of the world must be prayed for by the faiths of the world'. In recent years the main activities of WPWP have been to produce an annual prayer leaflet and hold a national service. The Wilson/Hinkes Peace Prize is also awarded annually to a group or individual judged to be making a significant contribution to peace.

APF was asked to organise the national service in this its 75th anniversary year. This was held at St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace in the City of London on 21 October. It included inputs from each of the faith's represented and music from APF's anniversary CD by Sue Gilmurray. Maggi Brizzi gave an update on the project to establish a Peace Pathway at St Pancras Gardens. The pathway will feature the word for "peace" engraved in 232 languages, around the map at the centre.

*'There is always the need for people or activists on the ground.'*



Young Stars

The Wilson/Hinkes Peace Award was made to Young Stars, a group of people working to prevent gang violence and community conflict in parts of London. The presentation was made by Elsie Hinkes, the wife of the late Sidney Hinkes.

## Report on the International Peace Bureau council meeting in Dublin

APF is a member of IPB and as an IPB vice-president I attended its council meeting in Dublin in November.

There were three related events. The first was the IPB council business event. The second was a conference (The Hedge School) which Action from Ireland (Afri) runs in Dublin every autumn but which this time was co-organised with IPB, using IPB people as speakers and resource people. The conference title was "Joining the dots: Disarmament, Development, Democracy." In addition, there was the annual award of IPB's Sean MacBride Peace Prize, this year to two prominent women involved in the 'Arab Spring'.

The President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins, presented the Sean MacBride Peace Prize – and a happy conjunction is that he was himself the first recipient of the MacBride Prize (named after the distinguished Irish statesman and peace and human rights worker Sean MacBride) twenty years ago, in 1992.



President Michael Higgins presenting the Sean MacBride Prize to Lina Ben Mhenni.

This year's award was shared. Lina Ben Mhenni, a young blogger and activist from Tunisia was one recipient; the second, veteran (over eighty years old) Egyptian feminist and activist Nawal El Sadaawi, was unable to be present but sent a strong and inspiring video. When Lina Ben Mhenni went to photograph bodies of young men killed by the former Tunisian regime she said she was shaking but given strength by the mother of one of the dead who said that she had to show the world what had happened.

Lina Ben Mhenni, in talking about the role of social media in the Tunisian revolution, spoke about its importance but that it began without the use of social media, and there is always the need for people or activists on the ground. She also pointed to the continuation of repression in Tunisia including police brutality under the new regime.

The Hedge School covered a wide range of topics consistent with Afri's interests: climate, resources and war; non-violent struggles from democracy and the role of women in the Arab Spring. I provided some appropriate songs for the event.

The theme of the school was also a discussion theme in the IPB council meeting, specifically whether 'democracy' should be added as a third 'd' to 'disarmament for development' in its main programme. IPB tries to keep a tight focus to maximise effect and prevent dissipation of effort. The general feeling emerging from group discussions was that it should not.

One useful resource, hot off the press in Dublin, was "Opportunity Costs: Military Spending and the UN's Development Agenda – a view from the International Peace Bureau" (52 pages, A4, available on the IPB website [www.ipb.org](http://www.ipb.org)) How can meaningful development happen in poor countries if money is squandered by the ruling elite on weapons? Less money on arms and armies is essential, in both northern and southern hemispheres.

## Holy Innocents' 2012

As usual APF organised the service at St Martin-in-the-Fields and witness outside Westminster Abbey on Holy Innocents' Day, under the auspice of the Network of Christian Peace Organisations. The service was entitled 'A cry from the heart for the children of Africa and the Middle East' and the main address was a letter from APF vice-chair, Sue Claydon reporting her experiences in the run up to Christmas in Southern Sudan where she is working for six months on a VSO project. An abridged version of this is given on our international page (7).

Although no direct reference was made to the situation in Israel, I did perform a song entitled 'Jerusalem' by Steve Earle which does not take sides on issues involved between Israelis and Palestinians. I am disturbed by those who are more

exercised by deaths in Gaza than they are by deaths in, say, Syria. An estimated 800 died under Assad during the same eight days of what Israel called Operation Pillar of Defence. But for some reason, the losses of those lives failed to touch those who so rapidly organised the demos and student sit-ins against Israel. Those who feel anything at all for these peoples need to end this wearying obsession with scoring points and winning righteous vindication and focus on the only question that matters: how might these two peoples live together. The refrain from the song goes: "And I believe that there'll come a day when all the children of Abraham will lay down their swords forever in Jerusalem".

### Report on visit to Northern Ireland

In September, I visited Northern Ireland for the opening of a quilt and arpillera exhibition, entitled "Stitching and unstitching the Troubles" in Coleraine organised by Roberta Bacic. This coincided with Peace Day (21 September). The main guest at the event was the Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Corrigan who spoke about her experiences of peacemaking and reconciliation. I was delighted to be able to sing some peace songs as part of the programme. In addition a new publication "My kind of nonviolence produced" by the Irish Network for Nonviolent Action Training and Education (INNATE) was launched. It is a compendium of small testimonies given by people who been around and linked to INNATE over its 35 years of existence.

### Criticism of the European Union receiving the Nobel Peace Prize

Correlation does not equate to causation, yet we are asked to believe the EU in its various guises has been the cause of peace in Europe over the past 60 years, based on nothing more than the temporal correlation between the two, to justify the award of the Nobel Prize.

Western Europe since 1945 has experienced in living memory the full horror of total war among developed nations, with the ultimate outcome of the long war of 1914-1945 being the complete removal of any ambitions toward continental supremacy or global empire among those nations and indeed any practical possibility of pursuing those ambitions had they continued to exist. Western Europe in the guise of the EU and NATO, has furthermore, spent most of that time as part of one half of a set of alliances every bit as divided and dangerous as those that existed prior to 1914, and we were saved from an even more catastrophic conflict in Europe between 1950 and 1990 only by the prospect of mutually assured destruction. IPB, which is a Nobel Peace Laureate organisation, has examined the issues carefully and submitted a critical letter to the Nobel Committee setting out its concerns about the award to the EU. It is surprised that the award is not to a head of state but to an entire bloc of states, thus making it difficult to identify the real recipient. Is the EU really a "champion of peace", as Nobel conceived it? Or is it a club of states with many contradictory impulses and interests? IPB's views on these questions are set out on its website ([www.ipb.org](http://www.ipb.org)) where it draws attention to the fact that nowhere has the EU declared a political ambition to promote the global peace order that Noble described with unmistakable clarity in his will. Quite to the contrary, the EU has a multitude of programmes for development of arms and armies, a defence agency, battle groups and arms production and trade. The EU includes some of the world's biggest arms trading nations and has two states with nuclear weapons – and there are no signs of serious disarmament.

The IPB website also has an excellent article by its co-president reinforcing these points and referring to some of the deeper political issues involved in selecting recipients for the award. But then there are other criticisms about the actual achievements of Nobel Peace laureates. Jay Nordlinger (see Book Look, page 7), although acknowledging some successes, identifies an embarrassing lack of detectable connection between the theories and work of peace activists and world peace.

### 1914 anniversary celebrations

David Cameron has revealed that he will set aside £50 million for the centenary of the First World War, with national commemorations on specific anniversaries such as the outbreak of the war, Armistice Day and major battles. There will be an upgrade to the Imperial War Museum by 2014 and funds to help secondary schools explore the Great War and its vast consequences.

Sue Gilmurray's letter printed in *The Independent* in October, asks some searching questions.

*It will soon be a hundred years since inept politics, misguided patriotism and widespread ignorance combined to send millions to their deaths in World War I.*

*When the Prime Minister pledges £50 million pounds for the 100th anniversary for events that will be given "the status they deserve," has he the vision and the nerve to look beyond the nationalism and jingoism that started the war in the first place.*

*It has just been announced that the Nobel Peace Prize have been awarded to the EU, for showing Europeans how to live without fighting each other for the last 60 years.*

*David Cameron's "world-class board" to oversee the 2014 centenary programme seems to be exclusively British. Are its members going to collaborate with opposite numbers in Germany, France, Russia and others, to commemorate alike the fallen of all nations, not just ours?*

*And will we manage to achieve what some of us have been working towards for many years: a dignified and respectful salute to those who lost their lives, combined with an explicit acknowledgement that war itself is neither glorious or heroic, but a crime against humanity.*

*So many of those who perished in the trenches hoped, wrongly as it turned out, that this war would end all wars. It is not too late to honour them in the way they would have wished, by renouncing war as a legitimate means of resolving conflicts.*

I think this is an opportunity for peace groups to cooperate across the board in marking the First World War, not just analysing the nationalisms and imperialisms that led to that conflagration, but asking what are the causes of war today, why 'the war to end all wars' was just a staging point in humanity's inhumanity, and what can be done to help us move to a more peaceful future.

### Remembrance, a hymn by Andrew Pratt

Once crimson poppies bloomed  
out in a foreign field,  
each memory reminds  
where brutal death was sealed.  
The crimson petals flutter down,  
still hatred forms a thorny crown.

For in this present time  
we wait in vain for peace,  
each generation cries,  
each longing for release,  
while war still plagues the human race  
and families seek a hiding place.

How long will human life  
suffer for human greed?  
How long must race or pride,  
wealth, nationhood or creed  
be reasons justifying death  
to suffocate a nation's breath.

For everyone who dies  
we share a quiet grief,  
the pain of loss remains,  
time rarely brings relief,  
and so we will remember them  
and heaven sound a loud amen.

© Andrew Pratt 15 October 2012.

'Is the EU really  
a "champion of  
peace".'

# Letter from South Sudan

## Letter from APF vice-chairperson, Sue Claydon

It was read at the Holy Innocents service held at St Martin-in-the-Fields on 28 December. The service entitled 'A cry from the heart for the children of Africa and the Middle East' is a regular event organised by APF on behalf of the Network of Christian Peace Organisations.

Sue is working for six months in South Sudan, as part of a Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) pilot. Her role is with the Institute for Professional Civic Services.

## Letter from a post-conflict country

(an abridged version)

20 December

My brain is full of the news of the day. Yesterday, the City of Wau (second largest in South Sudan) erupted into violence. On the 9th of December the Army there opened fire on demonstrators and 10 were killed and over 30 injured. One of my VSO colleagues got caught up in it as she came out of church. Things have been tense since. But yesterday gangs attacked shops, set buildings on fire and fought one another. Tribalism, fuelled by some local politicians, was part of the problem. Over 5,000 women and children have taken shelter in the UN compound and the UN has secured the airport and petrol stations. Two weeks ago Wau was a bustling city and our colleagues enjoying working there. Tomorrow they will be evacuated by plane.

More news today is that in the past four days over 5,000 refugees have crossed into South Sudan from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They are only about an hour south of here and UNICEF has requested support from our child protection team as many of them are children. What the situation back in the DRC is, I cannot even think about.

I think you can see how I am struggling to see this as the 'season of peace and goodwill to men'. Around me there are daily reminders of what the 27-year long war has meant to the people and land of South Sudan. Some things are physical, like the heavy rain we had three weeks ago that washed a cluster bomb on to the path we had used two days earlier. Or the landmine found in the cemetery just across the street from where I live.



Sue with delegates at the Action Network on Small Arms workshop.

One of the first activities I took part in was a workshop with the South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms. Another remnant of the war is the fact that for every man, woman and child in South Sudan there are 2.5 weapons, making it one of the heaviest armed nations in the world. These are both guns and light weapons. When things get tense there is no shortage of weapons to turn to. In all these issues, women and children suffer first and often greatest.

22 December

This day a big event was planned at the Cathedral. I went over and had a word with the Mothers Union worker. She told me

she had stayed sitting up all night as her husband was away and all the buildings in their compound were thatched. She was afraid for the children. One MU member had reported a relative who had been attacked and was in hospital. Later I found out few of the shops had opened. The gates to our compound were being kept shut. Things were very tense. People were arriving for what was to be a celebration for the children and young people, including them 'carolling'.

The Bishop spoke of the 'evil men' that have done such things here in Yei. He said four houses had been burned and one was a widow's whose husband had been killed in the war. Extra security troops were sent down from Juba and arrived in the afternoon. A Commission had been sent down on Thursday to investigate the early burnings and the Commissioner (top civil authority) had called a meeting of community leaders. I spoke with the Bishop and he assured me I could tell my colleagues they had nothing to fear, but this was the worst incident in many years. Later that evening he spoke to the head of the Commission and then phoned me to say that an announcement had been made to have the shops and market open as usual the next day. No one was to go out at night. By late tonight I had lost the tension I felt easier and all was quiet.

## Christmas Day

I arrived just before the 7:30 main service to find the Cathedral overflowing and in full song. What a way to celebrate the birth of Jesus! The Bishop gave a long (here 40 minutes is the standard length of a sermon!) talk on the importance of peace and reconciliation. He told the mainly young congregation that they must not retaliate and that although most of them were too young to have fought in the bush, they had all suffered through the war with having to move around and have bombs fall on them etc. Now they must live the promise of peace. Towards the end of the service, he said that a member of the Government was with us and he would ask him to say some words. It turned out to be the new Minister of Finance (who has taken a very strong stand on corruption). He told how shocked he was to see on the internet about the earlier burnings (he was out of the country). He said it was imperative that South Sudan should not become a 'failed state' and that everyone had a duty to work for peace. "War is never the answer to anything." Only by maintaining peace could the country prosper. I have to say to hear such comments reminded me that while I believe war is evil, to hear it from those who have experienced it for so long moved me more than these words can express.

I guess I should get back to why I gave this piece the title I did. I wanted to tell you about the problems of having a very young population and the demand that makes on education etc. I wanted to tell you about how sometimes peace can bring unexpected problems. One of these is that with so many people returning and new people coming in, the HIV/AIDS pandemic that swept through the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa has now hit South Sudan in a massive way. To talk about the inadequate health care as the systems are built up from nothing and people trained (one of my colleagues is working on a curriculum for nurse training as none exists). About the lack of infrastructure that means awful roads and the problems of supply of everything.

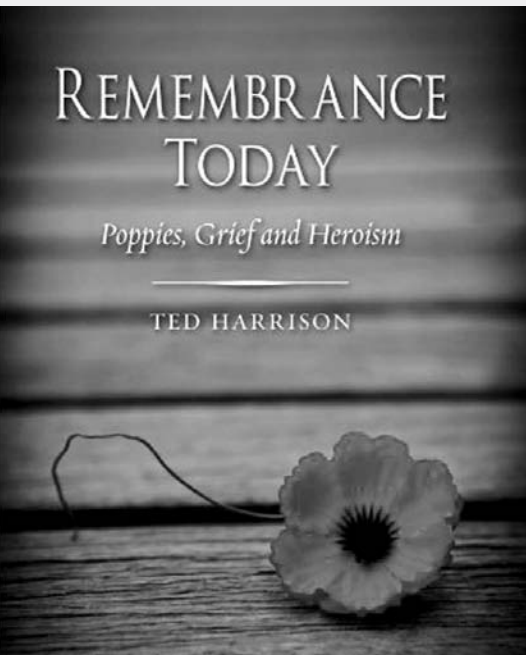
But I also wanted to talk about the hard work so many local people are doing to make this country, that they suffered so long, for succeed. There was a collection yesterday for the victims of the burning and the baskets were full of notes. Last night I was talking with the UNHCR Child Protection officer. She said that of all the countries she has worked in, she finds that South Sudan has the most positive approach to refugees and puts this down to so many having experienced both internal displacement or being refugees themselves.



**Ted Harrison (2012)**

*Remembrance today: poppies, grief and heroism*  
Reaktion Books

Every nation has its own way of remembering those killed in conflict. Each November Remembrance follows a seemingly unchanging pattern. Millions of people wear poppies, and at war memorials around the world a period of silence is observed. Today young people are taught that through Remembrance we thank those who have given their lives to defend liberty and freedom. But when poppy wearing began after WWI, it had rather a different purpose. The flowers of Flanders Field were worn in grief and as an expression of hope that war would never happen again.



*Remembrance today* poses questions that need to be answered. What does it mean to be heroic? What, in the context of military service does glory mean? But most fundamental of all – what is the purpose of Remembrance? If Remembrance does not serve as a warning against conflict, and if it is not a reminder to peoples to rededicate themselves to peace, then Remembrance is futile. This book is an urgent examination of how and why our notions of heroism, of duty and of grief have become confused over time and calls for a refocusing of Remembrance that will return us to its original purpose.

**Nassim Nicholas Taleb (2012)**

*Antifragile: how to live in a world we don't understand*  
Allen Lane

Taleb, the bestselling author of *The black swan* reveals how to thrive in an uncertain world. Just as human bones get stronger when subjected to stress and tension, many things in life benefit from disorder, volatility and turmoil. What he has identified and calls antifragile are things that not only gain from chaos but need it to survive and flourish.

In *The black swan*, Taleb showed us that highly improbable and unpredictable events underlie almost everything about our world. Here he turns it on its head, making it desirable, even necessary. The resilient resists shocks, the antifragile gets better and better.

What's more, the antifragile is immune to prediction errors and protected from adverse events. Why do government responses and social policies protect the strong and hurt the weak? The book spans innovation by trial and error, life decisions, politics, war, medicine, drawing on modern street wisdom and ancient sources.

The core idea behind this book is simple and quite enticing. Taleb divides the world and all that is in it (people, things, institutions, ways of life) into three categories: the fragile, the robust and the anti-fragile. You are fragile if you avoid disorder and disruption for fear of the mess they might make of your life: you think you are keeping safe, but really you are making yourself vulnerable to the shock that will tear everything apart. You are robust if you can stand up to shocks without flinching and without changing who you are. But you are antifragile if shocks and disruptions make you stronger and more creative, better able to adapt to each new challenge you face. Taleb thinks we should all try to be antifragile.

**Lawrence Rees (2012)**

*The dark charisma of Adolf Hitler: leading millions into the abyss*  
BBC publications

Adolf Hitler seemed an unlikely leader – fuelled by hate, incapable of forming normal human relationships, unwilling to debate political issues – and yet he commanded enormous support. So how was it possible that Hitler became such an attractive figure to millions of people? That is the important question at the core of Rees' book.

In this fascinating book to accompany his BBC series, Rees examines the nature of Hitler's appeal, and reveals the role Hitler's supposed 'charisma' played in his success. The book is the culmination of 20 years of writing and research on the Third Reich, and a remarkable examination of the man and the mind at the heart of it all.

He states emphatically that people who accept the 'charisma' of a leader are most definitely not 'hypnotised'. They remain completely responsible for their actions. The fact that someone chooses to follow a charismatic leader cannot subsequently be used as an alibi or excuse. But it is difficult to put oneself into the position of people at the time that were hungry; humiliated after the loss of war; unemployed; frightened of widespread violence on the streets; and with a feeling of being betrayed by broken promises of the democratic system.

Rees also points out that Hitler only discovered what he passionately believed to be his 'mission' in life as a result of the First World War and the manner in which it ended. Without these epic events he would almost certainly have remained

in Munich and be unknown to history. One also has to accept that he had a knack to use these experiences: "his words had the ability to touch each private wound on the raw, liberating the mass unconscious, expressing its innermost aspirations, telling it what it most want to hear". The book is a lesson for today. The desire to be led by a strong personality in a crisis, the craving for our existence to have some kind of purpose, the quasi worship of 'heroes' and 'celebrities', the longing for salvation and redemption: none of this has changed in the world since the death of Hitler in April 1945.

**Jay Nordlinger (2012)**

*Peace they say: a history of the Nobel Peace Prize, the most famous and controversial prize in the world*  
Encounter Books

*Sometimes it is important to examine the effectiveness of peace campaigning and this book does just that. We would be interested in hearing from anyone who has read it or the article by Walter Read and has any comments (which we could perhaps publish in the next TAP).*

Originating two centuries ago following the devastating wars of the Napoleonic era in Europe, hundreds of thousands of well-intentioned people in the peace movement have sought to achieve world peace through the organisation of committees, the signing of petitions, holding rallies and the promotion of international treaties. Some of the most outstanding among them have been honoured by the Nobel Peace Prize.

In *peace they say*, Jay Nordlinger examines the work of all the Nobel Peace laureates which covers a sweep of the 20th century and about a decade beyond. It includes a first world war, a second world war, a cold war, a war on terror and more. His review is critical and identifies an embarrassing lack of detectable connection between the theories and work of peace activists and world peace. Nordlinger makes plain that although those who seek to end war once and for all always fail and sometimes end up looking ridiculous, the cause of peace is genuinely aided by those who try to end particular wars. The awards that have held up best over time are those which either ended specific wars or alleviated the suffering wars cause.

Walter Russell Read in a review essay entitled "Peace out: why civil society cannot save the world" (November/December 2012 issue of Foreign Affairs) draws out the anti-war aspects of Nordlinger's book. He argues that: "The most serious way to critique the Nobel Peace Prize is not to complain about the Nobel committee's biases but to note the historical insignificance of so many of the prize's winners. So many good intentions, so many theories and ideas about how peace can be made – and so little peace"

# DIARY OF EVENTS

## ► LOCAL AND NATIONAL

**20 January.** Peace Sunday. Material available on the Pax Christi website.

**27 January.** Holocaust Memorial Day ([www.hmd.org.uk](http://www.hmd.org.uk)).

**3 February.** London "Walk in peace" – the first Sunday of every month. Contact Clare on 020 8755 0353 or [walkinpeace@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:walkinpeace@hotmail.co.uk).

**9 February.** "Confronting war today": an international conference. Speakers include Tariq Ali, Tony Benn, Lindsey German and Jeremy Corbyn. Organised by the Stop the War Coalition. Call 020 7562 9311 for details and registration fee.

**13 February.** Ash Wednesday annual liturgy and witness of repentance and resistance to nuclear war preparation. It will take place at the Ministry of Defence, London and other military sites. Further information from Pax Christi: 0208 203 4884 or [www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk).

**15 February.** Book launch of Ian Sinclair's new oral history of the 15 February 2003 anti-war march and the movement that made it, to be published on the anniversary of the event. Bloomsbury Suite, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London.

**9 March.** National gathering of the Campaign Against Arms Trade. Conway Hall, Holborn, London. Contact CAAT on 020 7281 0297.

**13-14 April.** Stop Trident: let Scotland lead the way to a nuclear-free world. A weekend of action. Contact <http://notonatoscotland.org.uk>.

**20 April.** Uniting for Peace AGM. Wesley's Chapel, Commercial Road, London. Further details from 020 7377 2111.

### APF's anniversary exhibition and music CD

This is just to report finally on our 75th anniversary year. Our exhibition tells the story of the fellowship with special reference to the work of individual peacemakers. Twelve panels describe the activities carried out in association with other peace organisations in UK and around the world. A special edition of *The Anglican Peacemaker* acted as a catalogue and was available to visitors wherever the exhibition was shown.

The exhibition has been shown at cathedrals and churches around the country and was present in Edinburgh and York at the time of the Scottish Episcopal Church and Church of England synods. We are still looking new locations for this so please contact the secretary if you wish to have a copy for display.

Music has been an important feature of APF's work and an anniversary CD entitled "Songs for the road to peace" has been produced. This and a songbook for the CD is available. We hope that people will enjoy listening to them, but also find some that can be sung in worship. Pacifism is a contentious issue, but the message of peace is common to all Christians, central to the faith and gospel, and exemplified in Jesus himself. For further information visit [www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](http://www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk).

### Website

Remember if you want to keep up with activities, news and actions between your issues of *The Anglican Peacemaker*, go to the APF website: [www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](http://www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk). Here you can also download copies of back issues of TAP.

We are now looking for someone to look after the website. If you are interested or would like further information about what is involved, please contact Roger Payne at [rjpayne@o2.co.uk](mailto:rjpayne@o2.co.uk).

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#### Membership Secretary: Mrs Sue Gilmurray

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If you would like to join the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship and are in agreement with the pledge:

'We communicant members of the Anglican Communion or Christians in communion with it, believing that our membership of the Christian Church involves the complete repudiation of modern war, pledge ourselves to renounce war and all preparation to wage war, and to work for the construction of Christian peace in the world.'

Then please (✓) box **one** in the form below.

If you are sympathetic to the view expressed in the pledge but feel unable to commit yourself to it, you may like to become an associate of the APF and receive the Fellowship's newsletter and notice of our various open events, then please (✓) box **two**.

Send your completed form to the Membership Secretary:- **Sue Gilmurray, 1, Wilford Drive, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 1TL.**

☐ I am in agreement with the pledge and wish to become a member of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

☐ I wish to become an Associate of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

**Name and designation (Revd, Dr, Mr, Mrs etc):**

*please print clearly and give your Christian name first.*

**Address** .....

..... **Year of birth** ..... **Diocese** .....

I enclose a cheque for ..... as my first subscription (*makes cheque payable to the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship*)

Please ✓ if you are a UK-income tax payer and want your donation to be treated as a Gift Aid donation.

APF can then reclaim income tax paid on the donation.

Please ✓ if you want to make a regular monthly or annual subscription using a Standing Order

I heard of APF through ..... **Signed** ..... **Date** .....

Application for  
MEMBERSHIP

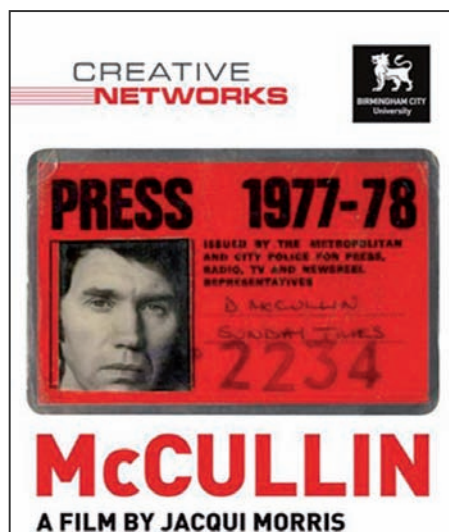


# Film Look

## ► RECENT FILMS REVIEWED

### McCullin (2012)

Directed by Jacqui Morris and David Morris



"McCullin" is a remarkable documentary charting the life and career of one of the twentieth century's most revered war photographers, and witness of man's inhumanity to man.

Don McCullin worked for *The Sunday Times* from 1969 to 1984, at a time where, under the editorship of Harold Evans, the newspaper was widely recognized as being at the cutting-edge of world journalism, with Don as its star photographer. During that period he covered wars and humanitarian disasters on virtually every continent and the prominence given to his photo essays coincided with one of the most remarkable periods in the history of photojournalism.

With extensive input from Sir Harold Evans, the film not only explores Don's life and work, but also how the ethos of journalism changed during his career. Including Sir Harold Evans, editor of the *Sunday Times* from 1967-81, the film also explores how the ethos of journalism changed. The strictly 'hands off' approach of proprietors like Lord Thompson, is compared with how the newspaper's independent character altered once it was taken over by Rupert Murdoch, when the pursuit of advertising revenue became paramount, and with it, the inevitable obsession with fashion, status and celebrity.

McCullin was shooting with a respect for image that is now disappearing from the digital age; the film has been shot on 16mm in order to complement his work. With its inventive use of sound, music, archive and graphics, this is a cinematic experience not to be missed.

He worked on the front line of war photography around the world, capturing haunting images from Lebanon, the civil war in Cyprus and Northern Ireland among many more. He was embedded with US soldiers during the bloodiest battle of Vietnam, he surreptitiously joined a group of mercenaries in the Congo and experienced the very worst of humanity... In his own words, he "swam about with many dead bodies in canals..." One of his most memorable photographs is the shell-shocked soldier in Vietnam.

The documentary interview was filmed at McCullin's house in Somerset, where he talks about his work and the stories behind the images.

### Code name: Geronimo (2012)

Directed by John Stockwell

Using the name of the great Native American hero Geronimo either for the operation that tracked down Osama bin Laden to his hiding place in Pakistan, or for the al-Qaida leader himself, was an insensitive choice of nomenclature for a brilliantly executed task. This competent unauthorised docudrama interweaves the stories of the CIA's trackers and the Navy Seals who carried out the attack on the Bin Laden



compound and also deals with their local Pakistani assistants who got thrown to the lions. Triumphalism is avoided, but the Seal's macho talk and brutal fight between the two competitors for leadership of the assault team strike a false note. It is also obvious that this is a low-budget film which says little about what it was really like to be one of the soldiers taking part in the operation. And, of course, the idea of getting inside the mind of the fugitive terrorist is entirely irrelevant.

Kathryn Bigelow's account of the same operation, "Zero Dark Thirty" promises to be much better and more relevant to some of the ethical issues involved. It has courted controversy especially because of its depiction of the use of torture and there is a suggestion that it was granted "inappropriate access to classified CIA material". Considering again this view that we cannot believe all that we hear, a new book (simply entitled "Geronimo") by Robert Utley, one of the greatest contemporary writers on the American west, points out that Geronimo was hardly a noble hero. He was a wily fighter whose real skill was avoiding battles, running rings around the enemy rather than fighting courageous battles.

### Chasing ice (2012)

Directed by Jeff Orlowski

Thinking again as to how global warming is producing changes much more quickly than predicted, this film should help to convert some of the climate change sceptics.

It is a first-rate documentary which begins with complacently smug anti-global-warming clips from Fox News and from the owner of America's weather channel. It then introduces the

persuasive environmentalist James Balog, a celebrated photographer working for National Geographic who became fascinated with what glaciers can teach us about our changing planet. In 2007 he set up the Extreme Ice Survey (EIS), a well-funded project to monitor glaciers in Greenland, Iceland, Montana, the Alps, Canada and Bolivia, and the results – photographed using state-of-the-art time-lapse cameras are sensational in their beauty, terror and the irrefutable evidence they provide of the rapidity with which age-old ice packs are melting away. It's like watching our world disappear.

The film begins as a straightforward biographical profile, before shifting up into something more urgent, impassioned and compelling. Its subject, James Balog, is a photographer who goes to extremes to prove the existence of global warming. His latest expedition involves descending Arctic cliff faces to fit time-lapse cameras with which to monitor glacial erosion. The cameras look on in vain as massive ice sheets shear off, leaving once mighty glaciers – characterised in the manner of endangered species in Attenborough documentaries – to slump into the sea. Behind them, they leave nothing – save colossal insurance premiums for those areas subsequently flooded by displaced waters. Balog has said "Ice is the place where climate change is made manifest."

### Skyfall

Directed by Sam Mendes

Just a final thought on a 2012 film that has become a massive box office success.

How best to celebrate 50 golden years of the James Bond film franchise? Skyfall thinks it knows how: by laying out the bunting and putting on a show; by booking a delicious villain in Javier Bardem's high camp terrorist and arranging a glorious globe-hopping jaunt for the revellers. All this works well but it was such a shame at the end to see a evident justification for violence to



protect society, or the instruments of violence. Fighting to keep her job before a parliamentary select committee, M refers to Bond as a necessary evil; a creature of the shadows fighting creatures in the shadows. Fine but to cap it all, an attack is made on the committee in session and Bond arrives just in time to save the day justifying his existence and the use of extreme violence so forcibly. It might be far better if he were left in the shadows, with all guns blazing and the lights turned down rather than as an advert for violence.

# NUCLEAR METAPHYSICS

## A logical approach to a difficult problem

By Martin Birdseye

Now here's a sad conundrum – 46% of the UK population still think we should maintain our nuclear deterrent; 37% think we should extend it; and that in some cases we could contemplate first use. These percentages are steadily reducing but now that we are already in the process of renewing our nuclear weapons capability there needs to be a major shift if we are to move towards a safer world.

The conundrum is that, leaving aside the tiny minority who might relish vapourising their fellow human beings, the vast majority of the rest are people of good will (and many of them Christian) capable of ordinary human compassion towards their neighbours.

Stanley Windass, in his brilliant but sadly out-of-print book *Christianity versus violence* (1964), charted the slippery path taken by the Christian church, away from unequivocal pacifism, via the Just War, to the current regretful fudge that many Christians hear from their leaders today.

The militant language of early Christianity was directed exclusively at the spiritual opposition (the devil and his legions) as opposed to the warfare of the Roman legions. 'Stirring up wars was in fact thought to be one of the favourite hobbies of the devil himself. There was an utter abhorrence of bloodshed and the murder of Abel by Cain was the 'archetypal crime'. Further, anger and hatred were regarded as inseparable from killing. Most importantly, no distinction was made between public and private behaviour – the fact that something was done on the authority of the state did not alter its moral quality. Problems arose as the rising tide of conversions swept across those already serving in the Roman army, but theologians were quite clear that the two were incompatible. Christians thought of themselves as 'a new people', and hostile criticism accused them not only of being 'garrulous in corners' but of 'loving each other almost before they are acquainted'!

The inevitable accommodations that occurred once Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire still, remarkably, averred that a Christian has no right to kill in self defence, and Augustine tied himself up in knots reconciling Christian soldiering with 'resist not evil'.

But it was the start of the slippery slope. The 'just war' developed inexorably into the 'holy war'.

Individual Christians, along with many other thinking people, may never have accepted, or may have moved on from, this position. However, combined with the advent of our seemingly fabulous technology, this mindset led us in the twentieth century through carpet bombing civilian populations to nuclear annihilation, practiced on a "small" scale and then developed a million fold.

With thousands of nuclear weapons still held on high-alert status we live every day with the possibility of destroying the planet. That this can still be politically possible probably depends on the fear intrinsic to a so called "balance of terror" and on the pro-nuclear mindset inherited from the World War II generation in the nuclear nations. In this situation we may indeed dismiss the process of applying just war criteria as a dangerous farce, but we need to accept that many of those involved are genuinely searching for a 'moral' way to conduct world affairs. How do we find a way to engage with them and, in particular, to change the pro-nuclear mindset?

As a Christian I have had a long involvement in the peace movement. As an engineer I have used an engineering approach to this problem. The premise is that, where years of to-and-fro debate have proved sterile, the way to enable people to change their views is to allow them to recognise for themselves the implications of those views. They (in fact we, since nobody should be excused from the process), can do this by seeing the whole problem in the light of the moral standards which we personally accept and apply across the rest of our lives.

How then to deal with a complex problem that has to be solved repeatedly for different input data? That is an algorithm, it's an engineering technique. So I have presented this fairly complex issue as a number of questions arranged as a network. Each question tests certain data (the input being from an individual's own considered opinion) and directs to the next appropriate question. The outcome is a decision flowchart – visually accessible, accountable and completely transparent.

The Nuclear Morality Flowchart takes us on a journey through our assumptions and rationalisations. Starting with the simplest question "You shall not kill, ever?" the Yes/No routes are accompanied by comments and clarifications. At every stage users are encouraged to apply their own moral judgement and even, if they so wish, to adjust the logic of the network so that it presents for them the essential elements of the whole moral conundrum. The flowchart has been improved in response to developments of this kind but is currently fairly stable and essentially remains within the scope defined by "the morality of the nuclear deterrent."

Whereas unequivocal pacifists might find themselves moving straightforwardly down the left-hand side of the chart (but try it and see!), and many in previous American administrations (strong Christians all) might stride confidently down the right-hand side, the majority would probably find themselves somewhere in the more complex central part. If in either case your answers seem to be challenged, it is not intended in a judgemental way but as a means of moving forward clearly.

The flowchart was first developed for faith communities but has been re-configured as a secular and internationally applicable document. Available in hard copy or online (at [www.nuclearmorality.com](http://www.nuclearmorality.com)) and in three languages, it has the potential to be global project. For the new interactive version you can go directly to: <http://www.nuclearmorality.com/interactive/interactive.html>. It lets you complete the whole decision process on-screen and then, if you like, submit your solution, anonymously or not, to what will be our global database of opinion.

The chart can thus be used by any individual or a group – e.g. as an exercise for school 6th Form PSHE groups, by faith communities to clarify their corporate position, and even for policy-makers to be completed, overtly in their case, to provide full transparency of their thinking to those who will be affected by their decisions. Try that on your MPI!

Hearts and minds are changed from within. This is a useful tool that could enable and empower that change.

For more information contact:- [martin@nuclearmorality.com](mailto:martin@nuclearmorality.com)

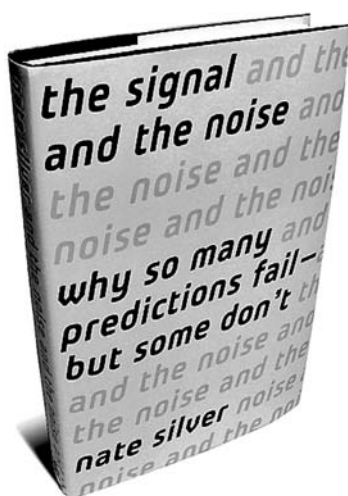
'The Nuclear Morality Flowchart takes us on a journey through our assumptions and rationalisations.'



APF GB member David Mumford, officiating at the annual ecumenical service of witness against Trident at Faslane earlier this year. The Roman Catholic bishop of Argyll is in black next to him, and the Revd David McClachan, convenor of Scottish Clergy against Nuclear Arms, on the right.



‘How would we behave in the face of danger.’



University of Cambridge who wants to found the centre with philosopher Huw Price and Skype inventor Jaan Tallinn. The new horsemen map quite readily onto the portrayals of war, famine, pestilence and death. Perhaps this is because they're only the latest manifestation of age-old anxieties about the fate of the humanity.

Europe is now in a race against climate change. With little hope of a global deal to cut greenhouse gas emissions, temperature rises of 3 or 4c above preindustrial levels are likely before 2100. That means countries have just decades to prepare for something unimaginable. Events that would entirely eradicate humanity are hard to envisage (New Scientist, 3 March, p36), but the 20th century saw the advent of technology that could seriously threaten human life as we know it – nuclear weaponry – and the 21st century might well see the emergence of more. So the end of the world is now more conceivable than ever.

And Rees and others are right to say that we don't pay enough attention to the huge, rare risks that might bring it about – Taleb's black swans. Setting them out and sizing them is worthwhile so that we can take appropriate action. And this is where the main efforts for human survival should lie.

### Making some sense on these issues

In TAP 11.2 we referred to a statement made by Hans Ulrich Gerber, president of IFOR. He said: "We [peace activists] must not fool ourselves into believing that we know what is going on in the world or that any strategies we may propose will be the best. The ability to follow events and to follow endless discussions on the impact and meaning of these events tend to make us believe that we have a pretty good idea of what is happening, or even that we know what is going on. Of course this is an illusion because what we see is only a tiny excerpt of what's happening, and the explanations we hear are mostly speculation and/or guided by some kind of interest, generally of an economic or political nature."

Nate Silver provides a great antidote to this kind of thinking in his new book, *The signal and the noise*, where he writes about the value of prediction. Across a wide range of subjects including war and terrorism, he argues for a sharper recognition of "the difference between what we know and what we think we know" and recommends a strategy for closing that gap. What Silver has to offer is a lucid explanation of how to think probabilistically. He advocates a balance between curiosity and scepticism when it comes to making predictions: the more easily we commit to scrutinising and testing our theories, the more easily we accept that our knowledge of this world is uncertain; the more willingly we acknowledge that perfect prediction is impossible, the less we live in fear of our failures, and the more freedom we will have to let our minds flow freely. By knowing more about what we don't know, we may get a few

more predictions right.

In other words, more modesty and effort, would improve the predictive performance of everyone including political scientists and anti-war activists trying to understand what will happen next. "Just do not expect to stick a prediction on a bumper sticker" he says.

### Europe's long shadow from the Second World War

On Book Look (page 7), we review *The dark charisma of Adolf Hitler* by Lawrence Rees. In many ways it is disquieting because Hitler's single minded commitment to war and genocide seems to override everything, creating a feeling of inevitability about what happened when he was in power. But at the same time, small things can be found which would have derailed this process had they happened differently, particularly in the early 1930s.

The memory of the Second World War hangs over Europe, an

inescapable and irresistible point of reference. Historical parallels are usually misleading and dangerous and the threat of economic collapse that exists today is not the same as the prelude to Nazism and world war. But the current crisis still poses a threat to parliamentary democracy in Europe. It may awaken the nationalist monsters which the European ideal had tried to consign to history.

It is also important to understand the continuing fascination with the Second World War. For most of us, the great unspoken question is how we would have behaved in the face of danger and when forced to make moral choices. But it also fascinates many of the young because we now live in a post-military society: a health and safety environment almost devoid of personal risk and moral decisions. Those brought up in this new civilian age are therefore intrigued by those very personal questions: How would I have measured up? Would I have survived? And even: would I have shot or mistreated civilians and prisoners? History which used to be written in collective terms – the history of a country, an army, a political movement – has itself become more personal, with much greater emphasis on the individual.

This brings us to a view from Gene Sharp who has been an unparalleled advocate of peaceful campaigning. No matter how difficult the circumstances, he always identifies a role for non-violent campaigning to overcome repression and conflict. His teachings, as set out in his major work *From dictatorship to democracy*, are highly relevant today and an inspiration to resistance movements across the world.

Let us consider Sharp's response to the question "What to do about Hitler", and the sceptical view that ordinary people's non-violent political efforts could not have defeated the Nazis. Rather than get bogged down in debate about whether non-violence "might have" beaten the Nazis had more people dared to resist (which demands hypothesis and supposition), he encourages us to consider how the Nazis were opposed non-violently, both in Germany and in the countries that the German's occupied.



His work provides an impressive account of non-violent resistance often overlooked by military historians. The individual examples are not important here. The point is that, if it hadn't been for these setbacks, Hitler's regime might have been even worse than it was. Put another way, if more people had dared to resist, the Nazis worst outrages might have been prevented. To say this is not to pass judgement on people living long ago. It is to challenge ourselves, now. Sharp's litany of examples challenges us to ask whether there is something that we should be doing today, about something that is going on right now. And there are so many ways of resisting non-violently. Perhaps it really is time to wake up and smell the coffee, and do something before it is just a memory!





## Haunting art shows Syria's suffering in fundraising exhibition

A fundraising exhibition of contemporary Syrian art was held at Gallery 8, London in November.

Nour Wali nearly despaired when the pictures arrived for the exhibition. As a Syrian living in Britain, the curator decided to hold an exhibition to support ordinary people suffering during the uprising against Bashar al-Assad's regime. But she had not expected it to be so difficult.

Canvases had to be smuggled out of the country and arrived creased and rolled up. Paintings by Azza Abo Rabieh had to be rescued under fire as fighting raged nearby. Other works were given by Syrian artists who had to flee abroad and have no idea when they will be able to return. Several have lost loved ones among the estimated 60,000 dead over the past 20 months. The most simple and graphic pictures are by Jaber al Azmeh. One entitled Tsunami and the other untitled.

Abo Rabieh's images portray defiant protesters, veiled women, a detainee forced to kneel in a stress position and captors taunting their prisoners with a macabre dance of death – all drawn from everyday experience. She said: "I needed to do something to express my feelings about people's suffering. I do that through art and I was influenced by Goya, but ordinary art was not enough so eventually I started to help deliver humanitarian aid to people in areas that were under siege."

[Azza Abo Rabieh – Our revolution is on the boot of our government.]

Images of the uprising dominate the work of Hamid Sulaiman from Zabadani near the Lebanese border. His canvas entitled

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Daraa

Daraa marks the day the uprising began in the eponymous southern town after schoolchildren who daubed anti-Assad graffiti were detained and tortured by the mukhabrat (secret police) – the kind of routine abuse Syrians were no longer prepared to tolerate.

Based on an article by Ian Black in The Guardian (24 November 2012).



## Standing in line – a story of the Great War

In November, Lester Simpson, the Derbyshire musician and composer made a powerful homage to the fallen of World War I, in memory of his great uncle, who was killed at Passchendaele. Simpson is better known as part of the internationally acclaimed *a capella* trio, Coope, Boyes and Simpson and more recently with the former Children's Laureate, Michael Morpurgo, who wrote the novel *War Horse*.

(A number of their the group's songs have found their way into APF performances and the "Meadowhall carol" was performed in St Martin-in-the-Fields Holy Innocent Service this year.)

Lester brought home to Derbyshire the poignant show "Standing in line", which was originally commissioned in Belgium by arts organisation, Peace Concerts Passendale and presented at several venues there. The show tells the story of the World War I using songs, readings and dramatic archive images, but it also reveals the personal tragedy of his great uncle, Lance Corporal Albert Scrimshaw.

"Standing in line" includes readings from war poets such as Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen and Kipling and archive pictures. Lester has said that he could not look at the images used in the show while he was singing because he would have broken down.

"Standing in line" is being performed by Lester with Mike Bettison, artistic director of Blaize theatre group and Chesterfield

musician Nigel Corbett, who performs with the roots band "Prego". Lester can be contacted on 01629 820256.

In the concert, the cast of three present an unsanitised 'warts and all' look at war; far removed from a simple flag waiving exercise (David Cameron please note). The last words to be spoken are those engraved on Lester's great uncle's gravestone: "So loved, so mourned, so missed". Lester has said: "The show does have a message and to quote Sassoon, "war is a bloody game. We need to be reminded of that."

## Standing in line

*Standing in line, waiting to sign*

*Standing in line to go over*

*And a half-empty washing-line serves to remind  
That you're fallen and always standing in line...*

*You fought and you died in the mud and the rain*

*A mile into hell and a mile back again*

*A pawn in their game, not fallen but pushed*

*And a Portland stone bonnet forever.*

Based on an article by Derbyshire Life (November 2012)

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