

THE Anglican PEACEMAKER

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Politics, like religion, is at its best when founded on extraordinary hope; the utopian impulse that things will get better. The aspiration is to make the world a better place today and for future generations.



Martin Jennings' statue of George Orwell outside the BBC

But, after an alarming year in politics, it does not feel so enchanted as liberal democracies descend into colourless, humdrum language and authoritarian states become more repressive and controlling, with militarism on the rise. At the same time, as populism surges, inspirational truths are rare and appealing lies become common currency.

The theme of this issue is truth and freedom, and how peacemakers are called to reaffirm the wisdom of democracy as a utopian belief in the face of lies and abuse. This is important because the debasement of the truth we now see in political life can so easily be the harbinger of repression and military conflict.

Some observers are suggesting that the current trend towards populism poses the greatest challenge to liberal democracy in Europe and the US since WW2.

Now is the time for APF to focus more on these unprecedented events. But our story in this TAP is also concerned with the use of words and images, not only in day-to-day politics but also in the arts. It relates particularly to the views of George Orwell – the great man recently returned to the BBC, not without some chagrin it must be said.

Orwell came to dislike his time at the BBC and it is probable that Room 101, the torture chamber in 1984, was named after a BBC meeting room.



Tell the truth; tell me who has been fooling you?
Tell the truth, who has been fooling who?
There you sit there, looking so cool
While the whole show is passing you by
You better come to terms with your fellow men, because
The whole world is shaking now, can't you feel it?
A new dawn is breaking now, can't you see it?

It does not matter just who you are
Or where you are going or been
Open your eyes and look into your heart
Hear what I say, because every word is true
You know I would tell you no lies

Eric Clapton

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As we think about changing APF for the better following Clive's Barrett's consultancy report and strategic plan (see TAP 17.1 for background), here are a few appropriate quotes.

Saul Bellow in the *Adventures of Middle March* wrote 'Boredom is the conviction you cannot change ... the shriek of unused capacities. The shriek is all around if anyone is bothered to hear it.'

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* gives us this quote, now inscribed on the wall behind his statue at the BBC. 'If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they don't want to hear.'

Rowan Williams in a recent review of Stephen Greenbelt's (2017) book on Adam and Eve wrote this caution. 'To say that all things depend unilaterally on the eternal action of God is not the same as saying that specific steps in the universe's history must be the result of divine intervention.'

RECLAIMING UTOPIA, FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND PEACE

A full version of this article by Tony Kempster is on the APF website

The article draws some ideas from 'How liberals can reclaim Utopia' by Philip Collins in *New Statesman* (27 October 2017)

Cicero argued that there can be no freedom except in a republic, and the citizen of the free republic is the man engaged in politics. This is the society of

Thomas More's *Utopia*, and the vision of a society that influenced the founders of the American republic. The opinion occurs in the speeches of Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and John F Kennedy. Barack Obama echoed it with

his demand for an active citizenship and a pattern of behaviour that is a framework of constitutional laws.

Politics today doesn't seem to owe much to this noble tradition and democracy is in retreat. Liberal democracies have faced

several threats at a time when economic confidence has been in decline. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq collapsed into military disaster. Successive problems in Ukraine and Syria appear to have passed power from the hands of democrats to those of eager tyrants. In Russia and China the press is muzzled and political opponents increasingly imprisoned, and these countries set their own rules for the world diplomatic order. And Donald Trump is creating turmoil and confusion by giving absolute priority to America's interests disregarding long-standing international agreements.

Concern about the state of Western civilisation is spawning quite a number of scientific and historical studies to explain what is happening. Laura Spinney has reviewed the evidence in *New Scientist* (NS) (20 January 2018). The front-page headline of this NS issue declares: 'The writing is on the wall.'

And the trend spreads to Turkey, Bangladesh, Thailand, Cambodia, Hungary and Poland to mention just a few of the countries now regarded as 'illiberal democracies' verging on authoritarianism.

Populist leaders say politics is simple and there is no need for complicating checks and balances or firm constitutional safeguards. They have all the answers, endorsed by their followers (the people). Trump chose Gettysburg, the site of the

Lincoln's greatest speech to ask citizens not to trust their own government: 'We will drain the swamp in

Washington and replace it with a new government of, by and for the people. Believe me.'

But successful politics in a complex world is anything but 'simple' and demands a sense of humility.

DEMOCRACY'S WEAKNESSES

In such times it is easy to forget that the 'western' model remains the best way to organise people into peaceful prosperous societies. The benefits of liberal democracy are routinely taken for granted by people who live in one, but not, it must be said, by the refugees and asylum seekers who don't.

Further, liberalism doesn't have a good

record of winning by argument alone as some advocates like to imagine. Fascism, its deadliest enemy in the 1930s, wasn't debated into submission or outrun in an economic race: it was beaten by military force in a fight to the death. And the Cold War was won by capitalism. So liberal politics alone is unlikely to defeat today's populism, as the hard Left and alt-Right ride on its back. The generation that occupies most positions of power in most liberal societies has a definite sense of national history and what it means to be 'the west', but it is a more nebulous concept for their children. This is why truth presented in words and images is so important and the education of young people a crucial concern (hence the emphasis made further on).

George Orwell's lesson that populism is Utopia's dark shadow needs to be understood. It is a doctrine of easy answers, where all desires will be satisfied in a land of no scarcity and abundant happiness. In William Morris's *News from nowhere* politics has been cancelled because of the fantasy that all good things can be had at once.

The far Right of Europe and America is on the march – and it won't go away without a fight. Anyone who thinks so is displaying an irrational appetite for political risk. This is why I have done what many pacifists will say is inexcusable, and referred favourably to Winston Churchill's character in Book Look and Film Look. As, you will see, he has strong similarities with Orwell in character if not in deeds.

When Orwell and Churchill were confronted by a crucial moment in history, they responded first by seeking the facts of the matter. Then they acted on their beliefs. They faced a genuinely apocalyptic situation, in which their way of life was threatened with extinction. Many people around them expected evil to triumph and sought to make peace whatever the cost. These two men did not.

FAKE NEWS AND DECEIT POLITICS

Populism has benefitted massively from the media revolution. It is well suited to the promotion of a cause where the truth is mutable, and to nurturing a binary political world.

The giant social networks have fostered the polarisation. Facebook encourages you to like or not like what you see in your news feed. Twitter allows you to retweet or like other people's tweets or

block users who offend your sensibilities. The filter bubble is a paradise for fake news particularly since there are major technical problems in deciding what online material is true or false. It is also a seedbed for the growth of extreme views.

Twitter and Facebook are not doing enough to counter it and a House of Commons inquiry has warned them they could face sanctions if they continue to stonewall parliament on major issues particular Russian interference in elections.

Fake news circulated with intent by trolls potentially threatens every democracy by skewing elections, and also can be an incitement to civil violence or an adjunct to military violence. Hostile states are being creative in how they exploit the seams between peace and war and there is real concern about cyber-security in UK military circles. With Europe's populist wave still pounding the continent, it is high time for us, too, to find solutions. After all, if Russian troll farms can impersonate Black Lives Matter activists and white supremacists in the US, what can they be up to here?

In the meantime, one must hope that groups who believe in spreading the values of human rights and accurate information become as good at acting online as the far Right, the Kremlin or Daesh. That will require that public-service media and well-meaning NGOs (including APF and other anti-war organisations) step into the battles of this digital age, understand how their opponents co-ordinate across borders on-line, and learn to disrupt and counter them with better messages and ideas of their own.

Returning now to considerations of Orwell's *1984*, what makes organisations like Facebook uniquely dangerous is their unprecedented intimate personal knowledge of billions of people. No organisation can be entrusted with such data, which should properly be viewed as a potential weapon of control and exploitation. There must be stringent regulation of social media without, of course, imposing improper restrictions on free speech.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Freedom of speech can be a tricky issue as seen, for example, by recent events at



SHIFTING THE BALANCE FROM WAR TO PEACE

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON – SUE CLAYDON

'I have spent too much time living among people who hate peace. I am in favour of peace, but when I speak of it, all they want is war.' (Psalm 120 verses 6-7).

These verses were brought to my attention not long ago. I do not feel that the first verse applies to my situation. I think the people I live among – and all people – actually want peace. The main problem I see is that most people do not actually think much about 'peace', however much we hear the word over the Christmas period. They also do not see that there is much they can do to make the world a more peaceful place. The second verse is sadly too true for many in power. Again, they may 'speak peace', but while money is to be made from war, they will 'want' it.

Giving a figure of one in five people living today in areas affected by conflict, the Global Peace Index estimates that only about \$10 billion (US) was spent on peace building in 2016. On first reading that seems a good effort, but this is about half a percent of the \$1.72 trillion spent on the military in the same period and less than one percent of the \$1.04 trillion of lost economic growth caused by war. Yet, every \$1 invested in peace building reduces the costs of conflict by \$16, and there is increasing evidence that peace-building works, provided it is sustained and done at an appropriate scale.

So, how can we individually and collectively as APF use 2018 to shift that balance?

I have decided to let someone far better versed than me answer that question in an address he sent to our AGM (as he was unable to attend because of ill health). These words from Canon Paul Oestricher set us the challenge that if we are not dreamers but actors, what should we be doing?

'The fact that we are and remain a minority in society and in the Church should not daunt us. With all those who recognise the evil of war and are prepared to act on it, we will persevere. To those who put their faith in armed might, we will continue to be a threat. We must show that our dream of a world without war is realistic. If the world is to be saved, the power of non-violence will help to save it. We are not dreamers but actors. Amazingly President Kennedy said, before

he was killed: 'War will exist until that day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige the warrior does today.' We have a long, long way to go on that road. If the Church does not tread that path, who will?'

The upcoming year brings opportunities to work with others in many areas, including the UN Treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons. To support peace education work, especially in our local schools. The new 'Faith and Peace' exhibition will be on display in a number of areas and members can organise activities around that. With others remembering the Armistice and the 'War that did not end wars' we will bring to people's attention the on-going tragedy of armed violence and the innocent lives it destroys.

It is important that we support one another and I hope many of you will be able to join us at Leeds for our joint conference and at other times throughout the year (see Diary of Events on page 8).

As I am writing this, we are a few days away from Christmas. For millions this is a time of year that thoughts move to Bethlehem 2,000 years ago. For me, however, my thoughts move further away geographically, as today four years ago I was evacuated from South Sudan. No one then imagined four years on that war would still be going on and people's lives so devastated. Many of my friends and colleagues are spending yet another Christmas as refugees in Northern Uganda. I would ask you to remember in your prayers the Ugandans who have been so supportive – the largest refugee camp is now there, but no mention in the media.

When interviewed recently for the Church Times, one of the questions asked was, 'What gives you most hope for the future? (If you do have hope for the future...)' My reply was 'Yes I do have hope, do you know any Grandparent who does not?' I see many positive things and want to work to extend those. Decades ago, I was a volunteer in Lesotho. At that time no one spoke of 'if' only 'when' the bloodbath would come to end Apartheid. While South Africa still has many problems, the fact that the 'bloodbath' never happened gives me

hope for those parts of the world where peace seems so elusive.

Let us welcome in the New Year with all its challenges and new chances, and see how individually and collectively (as APF) we can now work towards a more peaceful world for everyone.

CONVERSATION AT COVENTRY CATHEDRAL



Sue with Sarah Hills, Canon for Reconciliation Ministry, Coventry Cathedral and Geoff Withers.

In January, Sue took part in a workshop at the Cathedral, organised by the Community of the Cross of Nails. It involved a discussion with an air-force chaplain, The Revd (Wg Cdr) Geoff Withers.

She says: "We were each asked to speak for about 10 minutes. Since the title was 'War and Pacifism', I decided to take time to look at the word 'pacifism', a bit of history, the fact it can mean different things to different people then a bit about APF and finally as it was to be a 'conversation' a bit about who they were talking with – me. This went down well. Geoff then spoke about the present situation with Daesh and why that term not IS was used."

Cerys Smith, who organised the event said: 'This first SMH conversation on war and pacifism was an example of disagreeing well and a true conversation. Participants were engaged and questioning with the curiosity to learn and grapple with the ideas expressed. We're happy that this conversation could take place, as conversation plays an important role in reconciliation.'

AWARDS, ANNIVERSARY AND COMMUNICATIONS

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE AND THE WILSON / HINKES PEACE AWARD



Sue Gale, Methodist Peace Fellowship, Dr. Mike Bowker of the Wycombe Refugee Partnership and Rev. Dr. Inderjit Bhogal of the Sheffield City of Sanctuary. With Sue Claydon

APF continues its involvement with the Week of Prayer for World Peace; and again it sponsored the Wilson / Hinkes Peace Award. This recognises significant contributions by individuals, organisations or projects in furthering peace, justice and reconciliation.

This year's award has been made to two projects working with refugees and asylum seekers. The first is Wycombe Refugee Partnership (WRP), a multicultural group of concerned people who seek to support refugee families when they are reunited in the UK. www.wycombe-refugees.org/wrp The second goes to Dr Inderjit Bhogal, President of the Methodist Peace Fellowship and former leader of Corrymeela, for his pioneering work in initiating the City of Sanctuary movement. www.sheffield.cityofsanctuary.org

The Award was presented at the National Week of Prayer for World Peace Service, at the Hinde Street Methodist Church in London, on Sunday, 8th October. Both winners received a cheque for £500 to further the work of the projects.

Sue Claydon, APF chairperson commented on the importance of supporting work with refugees:

'Governments are often unwilling to accept responsibility for the millions of refugees their military actions create. And the world easily forgets the suffering

of those displaced by war and conflict. There is a strong case for these refugee crises to be accounted in the cost of war and adequate reparations made by those responsible. It is also important to acknowledge and praise all the volunteers and aid organisations who stand in the breach and do what they can to relieve the suffering.'

JUSTICE AND PEACE – CAN WE HAVE BOTH?

The Lord Mayor of Coventry's, Annual Peace Lecture this year was given by our counsellor, Paul Oestreicher.

For those of you that don't know, Paul is an Anglican canon and Quaker. He is the Vice President of CND and former Director of Coventry Cathedral's Centre for International Reconciliation. A lifelong pacifist, Paul was co-founder of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship in New Zealand.

Here follows a summary of his lecture by Lucy Barbour. The full text of the lecture is available on the APF website.

A cry for justice

Paul opened his lecture by explaining that the human cry for justice can be seen all over the world, as a natural expression of 'God within us'. Throughout history the world has cried out for change in a 'struggle to right the many, many wrongs.' But he asked, do we 'struggle' in the right way? Arguing that: 'Maybe it's the whole system that needs to change, a peaceful revolution':

'Together, we are called to join this struggle for a radically changed world. Are we passionate enough? Do we love enough to join the struggle for what the Bible calls righteousness, to embrace the politics of change? To swim against the tide, to speak truth to power.'

So, is the fight for justice at odds with peace? This is a dilemma for peacemakers, and one not easily resolved. However, Paul explained that our longing for justice is actually dependent on our survival as humans, which in the face of violence and climate change, is in no way secure. Accordingly, he argued, that our priority must first be peace:

'Justice and peace, the psalmist says, will ultimately embrace, but not yet. They are often at odds, and we may have to choose one, or the other.'

Moreover, when a violent conflict is waged to resolve an injustice, it can never truly succeed. The idea that we need violence to end injustice is 'blasphemy', with the opposite actually being true; conflicts always create further injustice. It is a cycle that can never be repaired using violence.

To explain this point, Paul focused on the corruption that weapons of mass destruction have and do bring, comparing the evil of nuclear proliferation to the Sorcerer's Apprentice:

'The apprentice thought he could master his master's magic power. Instead, it mastered him. It all ended in disaster.'

The Challenge

Paul noted that the silence of the Church and the nation on this issue is deafening. Why? When 'the very notion of using



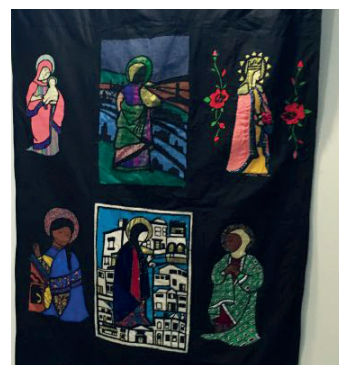
Lucy Barbour, Paul Oestreicher and Sue Claydon

Trident's, missiles is an indication of the moral decay of our nation.'

It is true that we as individuals and as a Church are not afraid to challenge injustice, so why are we so afraid to criticise the bomb? After all, Paul argues: 'It is inconceivable that Jesus would bless the bomb. In his words: 'They that take the sword shall die by the sword''.

Paul ended his lecture by challenging the Church to focus on **peace** and do what is right:

'I challenge them to do what their office requires: to firmly and unequivocally condemn our Trident submarine fleet and to challenge others of every religion and of none to do the same. This is not a matter of opinion, but moral imperative.'



Art piece from the touring exhibition (see next page)

APF'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY DAY AND AGM



John Bond speaking in Beirut on the Lebanon reconciliation

This event was held at St Mary's Church, Oxford in October.

John Bond, who has had a long association with Initiatives of Change, showed an outstanding video about the powerful work of

peacemaking in Lebanon following the conflict of Christians and Moslems during which 18,000 disappeared during the conflict. There was no outside agency for the conflict and the video is a testimony to the process of peace and reconciliation by the people involved. The video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2JWOn1-9eU>.

After a Eucharist in the Church, at the AGM, Clive Barrett shared some preliminary thoughts on his strategic review of APF's activities and Lucy Barbour talked about the future role of APF particularly from a young people's perspective (see below).

Delegates at the anniversary day also visited Oxford Cathedral to view the Faith and peace touring exhibition (see below).

What can APF bring to the Church?

Lucy's talk was based on a discussion group meeting but also includes some of her own thoughts.

APF member Lucy Barbour is a mum of two beautiful children. Before having children she studied a master's degree in Peace and Reconciliation at Coventry University and is passionate about finding ways for the Anglican Church to focus more on Jesus' message of Peace and non-violence.

1. Although they get lots of criticism, I do believe my generation care deeply about issues of war and peace. However, I also think they are saturated by so many other issues that they are encouraged to care about. I think this tends to overwhelm people.

2. The nature of war has changed. The definition is much more complex now. For example the wars by and against terrorists, and, of course, the threat of nuclear war hangs over us.

3. News and social media overwhelms us with knowledge about the violence in our world, and yet at the same time we are comfortable in the UK. This has desensitised and disempowered us. People tend to believe they can avoid playing an 'active' role in war and peace and I believe they struggle to see what having a non-violent commitment today would even look like, even if they care about these issues internally.

4. Bring these two issues together and you find that pacifism both seems irrelevant to many people today or perhaps too extreme and dogmatic. How does one actually relate to wars and practise non-violence?

5. In addition the Church is by definition a place where many views can come together, which can end up comfortable but quite woolly – and being linked to the state and steeped in historical links to violence doesn't help. Because of that I don't think many people look to Church for guidance and involvement on issues of Peace.

6. Here are some results from a survey of 48 friends asked whether they think the CofE helps to promote peace in the UK today. 55% were not sure, 33% yes and 12% no. And nearly 70% were unaware of peace making in our Church

7. APF has a role to engage with many people in the Church who care about the world, its people and bringing peace, but don't have the confidence in it, in themselves or any experience of how they could make a difference. We need to offer people, and young people in particular, a piece of ground to stand on. We need to demonstrate similarities with these people, celebrating the good that's is happening on local levels in Churches. It's a lesson for me running the blog to have more uplifting stories of simple peace making.

8. We could develop a Peacemakers Movement within APF that attempts to bring all these thoughts together. It could be branded as something like 'The Anglican Peacemakers'. In that way we will be promoting ourselves as the peace-making organisation within the Anglican Communion, stressing our place and influence on the Church. In some ways we are doing this already, our blog is called 'The Peacemaker' and there is TAP, but we think it might be time to formalise these ideas into a structure that specially focuses us on engaging and developing peacemakers from within the Church.

9. Practically our aim for the movement would be to both seek out peacemakers and then equip and educate them. It is very important to actively seek out people who have this interest and help them express their identity. We can't expect people to easily come across APF. We need to decide to engage directly with people and emphasise communication with students at universities, chaplaincies etc.

10. Much of this is about developing relationships with people and helping them flourish in what God has or could put on their heart. Most people are very relational. I know from years of experience as a fundraiser that engaging in a genuine way with people, helping to appeal to their identity and building relationships is the best way to gain support and develop a commitment to a cause.

FAITH AND PEACE TOURING EXHIBITION

APF is funding a Faith and Peace project for three years at the Peace Museum in Bradford. The opportunity arose as part of this to create an exhibition to be hosted at Oxford Cathedral during the first year. With support from Clive Barrett an exhibition incorporating three art pieces was created and displayed at Oxford for a month from mid-October onwards. It explores perspectives on peace from three Abrahamic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

This exhibition looks at the way in which the three faiths promote peace – in their teaching, and in the lives of their people. It tells stories of their peacemakers and shows how each faith stresses hospitality and welcome for the stranger, including the stranger from other faiths. The exhibition includes original artwork from mixed-faith women's groups in Bradford, and by images from the collection of the Peace Museum, Bradford. The exhibition encourages people of faith to work creatively, side by side with people of other faiths, to learn the things that make for peace.

The exhibition is now on tour around the country and currently in Ely Cathedral (See Diary page 8).

If anyone has any ideas about venues or would like to assist with the tour please contact tilly@apf.org.uk

INTERNATIONAL PAGE

CELEBRATING AWARDS AND A CALL FOR ACTION

A positive I can!

This year's Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to The International Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons (Ican). The citation was for its efforts to give new momentum to the process of abolishing nuclear weapons. The prize was presented by the Nobel Committee chairperson, Berit Reiss-Andersen to Ican chief, Beatrice Fihn (R) and Setsuko Thurlow (C), a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima. They receive a medal and a diploma at an awarding ceremony in Oslo, Norway in December.



Ms Finn delivered the Nobel lecture together with Setsuko Thurlow, an 85-year-old survivor of the Hiroshima atomic bombing who recalled her rescue on 6 August 1945. 'Processions of ghostly figures shuffled by. Grotesquely wounded people, they were bleeding, burnt, blackened and swollen' she said.

Choosing the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize is fraught

with difficulties as its history shows. History does not flatter the committee that makes the award: from Aung San Suu Kyi to Henry Kissinger, the list of previous laureates ranges from the disappointing to the astonishing.

This year's war is a departure from general tradition: not an individual, nor an official organisation but a global civil society movement set up only a decade ago, which just last month succeeded in getting the UN to ratify a treaty banning nuclear weapons. Ican is a coalition of 468 grass-roots non-governmental groups.

It's nearest parallel is the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which in the year of the triumph, 1997, had also secured the passage of a treaty. But the committee rarely engages with nuclear; only once before, in 1995, has the prize been awarded to an explicitly anti-nuclear campaign: the Pugwash Conferences, the organisation set up in 1957 by Bertrand Russell and Joseph Rotblat to promote Einstein's deathbed warning against the bomb. But it is a platform where scientists and other intellectuals engage with policymakers. Ican is a bottom up, grassroots advocacy organisation. Safer than an individual, and maybe – in an age of political disengagement – more likely to change the terms of the debate too.

Jeremy Corbyn among the winners of the International Peace Bureau's McBride Peace Prize

This year the IPB Board has chosen three winners for the prize: All Okinawa Council Against Henoko

New Base, Noam Chomsky and Jeremy Corbyn. The prize ceremony was in Barcelona in November

The awards were given for the following reasons:

All Okinawa Council Against Henoko New Base – for its unflagging commitment to win the closure of the Futenma Marine Air Base, which is widely seen as one of the world's most dangerous military bases, and for its unremitting nonviolent opposition to the construction of a massive new air, land and sea base in Henoko.

Noam Chomsky – for his tireless commitment to peace, his strong critiques to U.S. foreign policy, and his anti-imperialism. Professor Chomsky has been properly described as 'a genuine people's hero, an inspiration for struggles all over the world for that basic decency known as freedom', as 'one of the greatest and most radical public thinkers of our time'.

Jeremy Corbyn – for his sustained and powerful political work for disarmament and peace. As an active member, vice-chair and now vice-president of CND he has for many years worked to further the political message of nuclear disarmament. As the past chair of the Stop the War Coalition in the UK he has worked for peace and alternatives to war. As a member of parliament in the UK he has, for 34 years continually taken that work for justice, peace and disarmament to the political arena both in and outside of Parliament.

FEMALE EX-COMBATANTS OF THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY CONTINUE TO SUFFER



ARLPI with Bishop Ocholla (centre)

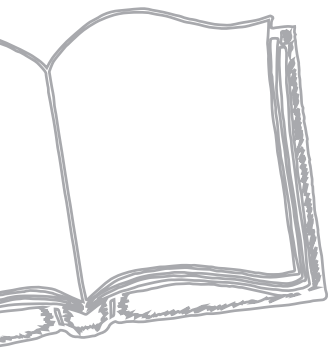
APF has maintained a continuing interest in several military conflicts in Africa including the activities of the rebel group, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) led by Joseph Kony, and operating in Uganda and neighbouring countries. Special reference should be made to the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI) and the role of Bishop Nelson Onono-Onweg (APF member) and Bishop Macleod Baker Ocholla (APF counsellor) in peace negotiations and campaigning.

Both the US and Uganda have now called off the search for the LRA's leader, saying the rebel group's active membership had dropped below 100. But the suffering does not end for many of the children abducted into the rebel group and forced to fight for it.

Writing in The Guardian (9 January 2018), Samuel Okiror (from Gulu) points out that many of Uganda's female ex-combatants are now stuck in a cycle of poverty, as a result of the failure of the government's demobilisation, resettlement and reintegration programme. Critics say the programme is biased against women because they are not considered to have been co-opted into the army, like men, and so miss out on any army payments.

Justice Peter Onega, the chair of Uganda's amnesty commission,

BOOK LOOK



THOMAS E. RICKS (2017)

Churchill and Orwell

Duckworth Overlook

Today as liberty and truth are increasingly challenged, the figures of Churchill and Orwell loom large. Exemplars of Britishness, they preserve individual freedom and democracy for the world through their far-sighted vision and inspired action, and cast a long shadow across culture and politics.

Churchill and Orwell stood in political opposition to each other; but were both committed to the preservation of freedom. However, in the late 1930s they occupied a lonely position: democracy was much discredited, and authoritarian rulers, fascist and communist, were everywhere in the ascent. Unlike others, they had the wisdom to see that the most salient issue was human liberty – and that any government that denies its people that is a totalitarian menace to be resisted.

Thomas Ricks tells how they rose from a precarious position to triumph over the enemies of freedom. Churchill may have played the larger role in Hitler's defeat, but Orwell's reckoning with the threat of authoritarian rule in *1984* and *Animal farm* defined the stakes of the Cold War and continues to inspire us to this day. Their lives are an eloquent testament to power, and to the courage it takes to stay true to it, through thick and thin.

If Churchill spent his early years in the pursuit of power and prominence, Orwell spent his own in pursuit of a core theme. Ultimately, he would find it: the abuse of power. It is the thread that runs through all his writings, from his early works to the very end.

Both men responded with courage and clear-sightedness. If there is anything we can take away from them, it is the wisdom of employing this two-step

process, especially in times of mind-bending crisis. Work diligently to discern the facts of the matter, and then use your principles to respond.

STEVEN LEVITSKY AND DANIEL ZIBLATT (2017)

How democracies die:

what history tells us about our future

Viking

Based on years of research, the authors present a deep understanding of how and why democracies die; an alarming analysis of how democracy is being subverted in the US and beyond; and a guide for maintaining and repairing a threatened democracy. History doesn't repeat itself. But we can protect our democracy by learning its lessons, before it's too late.

Democracies can die in a coup d'état – or they can die slowly. This happens most deceptively when in piecemeal fashion, with the election of an authoritarian leader, the abuse of governmental power and the complete repression of opposition. All three steps are being taken around the world – not least with the election of Donald Trump. In other words, dictators do not always arrive at the head of columns of troops. When they seize the television stations, they do not send in soldiers but party loyalists who promise to end 'fake news'. They do not need to imprison judges, just pack their courts and rewrite the constitution to make opposition impossible. They win democratic elections, then dismantle democracy.

Elected dictators have traits we should have learnt all this time to recognise in advance. They reject conventions of democratic life. They will do anything to gain power and tell any lie to retain it. They do not want just to beat their opponents but destroy them

and with them the possibility of change. To justify their assaults, they use the language of civil war. When their supporters turn to violence, they approve with winks and nods. When their opponents criticise, they are not citizens exercising their democratic rights but criminals spreading libel or treason – 'enemies of the people' – to coin a phrase.

The greatest of the merits of this book is that the authors' contribution to what will doubtless be the ballooning discipline of democracy death studies is their rejection of western exceptionalism. There are no vaccines in American (or, I would add in British) culture that protects us: just ways of doing business that now seem decrepit.. The main point made by the authors is that populists and demagogues rise to power when the party grandes neglect their gatekeeper function and fail to keep them in check. Franz von Papen, one of the supposed puppet masters in Hitler's rise, bragged in 1933: 'We've engaged him ourselves ... within two months we will have pushed him so far in a corner that he'll squeak.'

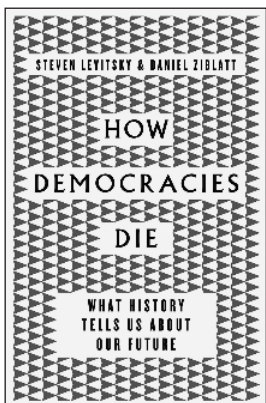
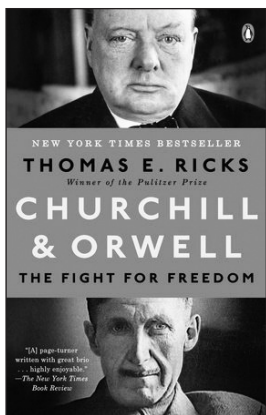
The authors draw up the warning signs of a leader who may tip towards authoritarianism. There are four: a weak commitment to democratic rules, denying the legitimacy of the opponent: the toleration of violence, and a willingness to curb civil liberties. It could be argued that Trump breached all of these during the election campaign.

LUKE HARDING (2017)

Collusion: how Russia helped Trump win the White House

Allen Lane

An intriguing book that tries to disentangle the truth and journalistic hype.



DIARY OF EVENTS, AND NOTICES

LOCAL AND NATIONAL EVENTS

2018

Ely exhibition

1-28 February Faith and peace: perspectives from three religions': An exhibition organised by APF. The Lady Chapel, Ely Cathedral (see also below)

15 February Special exhibition event 6.30 at Ely Cathedral: 'Subversive peacemakers'. An illustrated talk by Clive Barrett, with music lead by Sue Gilmurray. Free admission by ticket available from box office: www.elycathedral.org or 01353 660349.

3 March As a follow up to the 2017 Perth conference, Christianity and war: *reclaiming Gospel Nonviolence*, an Anglican-led day conference to consider the theology of nonviolence. Threshold Centre, St John the Baptist, Princes Street, Perth PH2 8LJ. To register or find out more: email dmumford@phonecoop.coop.

20-22 April 'Letting in the light: positive steps for peace in a turbulent world': a joint conference with APF and other Christian peace organisations including APF (FoR, MPF supported by URCP and BPF) at Hinsley Hall, Leeds. For booking information and the latest in contributor announcements, visit www.for.org.uk.

15 May International Conscientious Objectors' Day. Commemoration event, 12 noon, Tavistock Square, London. For details contact www.ppu.org.uk/coday.

24 May International Women's Day for Disarmament. Worldwide, but for British events contact: www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org.

In addition to the chairperson, treasurer and secretary, the following are elected as trustees: Jan Bevie, Ray Gaston, Sue Gilmurray, Tony Kempster, Jenny Nicholson, Meriel Pipkin and Nat Reuss (Australia). Co-opted trustees are: Lucy Barbour, Nat Pierce (USA) and Cloud Mabaudi (Zimbabwe).

6 August Hiroshima Commemoration Day
London. 12 noon, Tavistock Square.
londonregioncnd@gmail.com, 0207 607 2302.

21 September International Day of Peace.

14-21 October Week of Prayer for World Peace,
weekofprayerforworldpeace.com

3 November NCPO Act of Remembering
Innocent Victims of War 4:30pm
at West Door, Westminster Abbey.
Contact Tilly at the office below

APF WEBSITE

We have upgraded our website and become more involved with communication generally on the web through Facebook and other channels. Keep in touch with what we are doing at www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk. By using the following links in your browser the following is now available:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/anglicanpeacemaker

You can access the Facebook Page via the APF website or via Google.

If anyone has something that they would like to share and have posted, simply email it to tilly@apf.org.uk

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/angpacifists>

Twitter and Facebook can also be accessed through the website (www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk/) by clicking on the icon links at the top and bottom right of the website. And the website can found on the Facebook page.

OFFICERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Chairperson:

Mrs Sue Claydon
Bridge House, Whittlesey Road,
March, Cambridgeshire,
PE15 0AH 013546 54214
vicechair@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

Honorary Treasurer:

Mr Roger Payne
33 Glynswood, Chinnor,
Oxfordshire, OX39 4JE
01844 351959
apfpayne@btinternet.com

Honorary Secretary:

The Revd David Mumford
10 Temple Mains Steading
Innerwick, Dunbar
East Lothian EH42 1EF
01368 840361
dmumford@phonecoop.coop

Honorary Membership Secretary

Mrs Sue Gilmurray
13 Danesway, Pinhoe, Exeter
EX4 9ES
01392 464982
suegilmurray@icloud.com

Editor of TAP:

Dr Tony Kempster
11, Weavers End,
Hanslope, Milton Keynes,
MK19 7PA
01908 510642
ajkempster@aol.com

Administrator:

Tilly Martin
Peace House,
19 Paradise Street, Oxford,
OX1 1LD
07494 272595
tilly@apf.org.uk

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

**'We believe that as Christians we are called to follow the way of Jesus in loving our enemies and becoming peacemakers.
We work to transform our Anglican Communion and the world to overcome those factors that lead to war within and between nations.'**

Members must be 18 or over and members of the Anglican Communion or Christians in communion with it. 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, 13 Danesway, Pinhoe, Exeter EX4 9ES.**

☐ **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

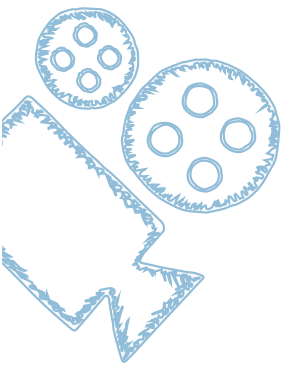
Signed

Date

APPLICATION FOR
MEMBERSHIP

FILM LOOK

RECENT FILMS REVIEWED



THE POST (2017)

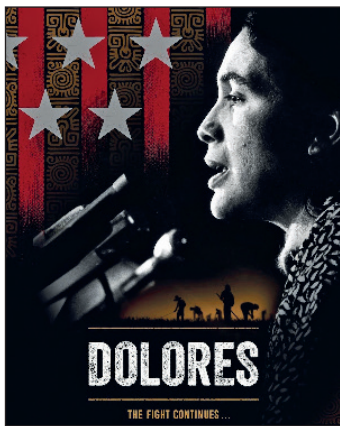
Directed by Steven Spielberg

In this, his latest movie, Steven Spielberg uses the story of the Pentagon Papers to address this era of fake news. The question at the film's heart is answered before it is posed, yet it still feels vital: should we protect state security or free speech?

The film was made in nine months, in a rush. Spielberg said: 'The level of urgency to make the movie was because of the current climate of the Trump administration, bombarding the press and labeling the truth as fake, if it suited them,' he says, recalling the sense of offence being branded fake news. 'I deeply resented the hash tag 'alternative facts', because I'm a believer in only the truth, which is the objective truth.'

In 1971, a mass of documents – they came to be known as the Pentagon Papers – were leaked to the *New York Times*. They revealed lies and cover-up about the military's assessment that America was losing the Vietnam War. Nixon's lawyers gagged the NYT, but then the Washington Post got hold of the papers, and published them, as, subsequently, did most of the press in the land. The papers won. And, of course, the news people at the *Washington Press* went on to steer the paper through the greatest scoop of the era, Watergate, which led to the resignation of President Nixon. Spielberg said: If *The Post* inspired people to watch *All the President's Men* it would make me happy.

In America, critics and newspaper executives have warmly welcomed the film's contribution. Len Downie, a former executive editor at the *Washington Post*, has judged: 'This movie means a lot at this time in history.'



DOLORES (2017)

Directed by Peter Bratt

This film is relevant because it concerns a response to white supremacism. It received its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival on the afternoon of January 20—the day Donald Trump was inaugurated and caused much press coverage since it came just a few days after white supremacists created mayhem in Charlottesville.

Ardent, direct, down-to-earth, Dolores Huerta was a pioneer organizer of Latino agricultural workers in California in the 1960s. She coined the motto *Si se puede* – 'Yes we can' – that 40 years later expressed massive hope for change in the US. From small beginnings as a community activist, encouraged by the civil rights movement, opposition to the Vietnam War, and the stirrings of the feminist movement, she had a vision and a path.

Neighborhood improvements and voter registration mattered, but the biggest change in the lot of Latinos – 'the worst-paid workers on the planet' – would come through large-scale organisation to enforce collective bargaining on agribusiness. With fellow activist Cesar Chavez, in 1962, she set up the National Farmworkers Association (NFA) with the aim of a California-wide strike within five years. They did not have to wait that long. In 1965 Filipino grape worker in Delano, California, members of another independent union, struck for better wages and the NFA joined them.

Within a year the two unions had become the United Farm Workers. It took five years of marches, boycotts, non-violent resistance to police attacks and killings, for the strikers to win. The documentary's footage of the strike is graphic, as is the

assassination of Robert Kennedy in June 1968 after Huerta has spoken alongside him at his California primary victory speech. This is stirring and inspiring portrait of a woman – now sprightly and winning 87-year-old – who didn't accept what was expected of her.

DARKEST HOUR

Directed by Joe Wright

(Based on a review by Anthony Quinn in *The Tablet* (13 January 2018).)

If pacifists are to comment sensibly on current affairs it is important to understand the art and literature that people read and see – and the facts also about how Britain decided not to capitulate to Hitler after the fall of France.

No sooner have the echoes of 'Dunkirk' faded than we are right back in May 1940. *Darkest hour* makes a good companion piece, offering history from the top down where 'Dunkirk' does from the bottom up. Both are intensely dramatic and both suffer from overegging of effect: too much thud and bluster. Yet, they also share a sense of nerves stretched to the limit; aimed to stir the audience.

'Darkest hour' charts the crucial period between Churchill's appointment as prime minister – an emergency compromise – and the fall of France. The impending danger from across the Channel would force upon the war cabinet the most momentous decision it would ever face: to prepare for a negotiated peace with Hitler, or to fight on.

As the film reminds us, Churchill was up against it from all sides. His own party regards him as unreliable operator, and even his first speech to the Commons as PM gets a lukewarm reception.

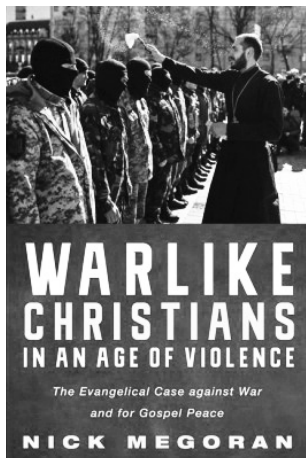
BOOK REVIEW

Nick Megoran

Warlike Christians in an Age of Violence
Cascade Books
2017

A review by Clive Barrett

Nick is a Reader in Political Geography at Newcastle University and APF member



Evangelicals of a certain age will remember a hugely influential 1977 volume by Ronald Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*. From Biblical arguments, it showed why the Christian faith could not be simply a personal matter, that an imperative for

justice was at the heart of Scripture, and that rich Christians were undermining the Gospel. In *Warlike Christians in an Age of Violence*, Nick Megoran proclaims Gospel Peace in the same way that Sider promoted Gospel justice. In a superbly written exposition, he shows how and why an imperative for peace is at the heart of Scripture, and that Christians at war are denying and devaluing faith in Jesus.

Megoran writes powerfully from a *sola scriptura* (by scripture alone) Reformed perspective, with a strong emphasis on awareness of sin: "Until we grasp God's view of ourselves as sinners, we have no chance of understanding why Jesus tells us to love our enemies and be peacemakers and why that makes us children of God" (15). Sometimes that grates on more Catholic, Anglican ears, especially in occasional conservative asides, but the primary intended readership is the growing and flourishing evangelical constituency of any denomination. If this is you, or anyone you know, then this book is a must-read. Structurally, the book has a positive top and tail, opening with a discussion of Gospel Peace, and ending with a strong exhortation to live that as Christ's disciples. In between is a combative core in which Megoran takes on and

demolishes any concept of just war, or any war, whilst also being highly critical of liberal 1930s' pacifism which he sees as a political stance sitting too lightly to sin. Gospel Peace is neither just war nor pacifism, though anyone committed to nonviolence in Christ would recognise much as familiar.

There are two chapters devoted to the deconstruction of just war, with the Catholic Church coming in for severe criticism for having abandoned Gospel Peace: "just war theory is both fundamentally unchristian and damaging to the cause of the gospel". A further two chapters are devoted to addressing the perennial challenge, "What about Hitler?" This is answered in terms of the historic imperialism of western nations, but especially with reference to George Bell's response when asked what the Church should do in wartime: "It is the function of the Church at all costs to remain the Church" (205). And that means to preach the Gospel, and in worship, prayer, communion and song to advocate and live out Gospel Peace, faithfully, at whatever short-term cost.

Gospel Peace is not about international strategies or politics; it is about being true to the teaching of Jesus and living that out as his followers. Gospel Peace is about discipleship not diplomacy, nor even demonstrations. Megoran ends with this call to passionate discipleship. It is positive and powerful, and hopefully for many, it will prove persuasive.

Arguably, this is the most important publication on Christianity and peace for many years. Liberal pacifists and just war advocates alike will find this book challenging. Megoran asks the questions we all need to address.

REQUEST FOR REMEMBRANCE RESOURCES

'Remembrance' time often presents parish priests with a dilemma as to how they should handle services. We know too that, APF members have developed relevant worship resources over the years. This year the profile of Remembrance will be higher with the WW1 Centenary. APF would like to draw on the work members have done in the past to pull together a resource that will be

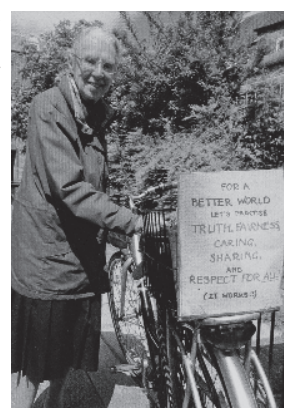
appropriate, especially for this November. If you have materials or ideas or specific needs can you please send them to Tilly. We would hope to have this available in early September. This is an opportunity for members to support each other.

JOYCE PICKARD: Appealing for a better world

Joyce Pickard, Quaker and lifelong peace campaigner died recently at the age of 96. She will be greatly missed together with her bicycle and its placards. Joyce came to a number of APF events and protested with us at the Molesworth military base. Her placards are being sent to the Peace Museum, Bradford.

Another of her placards reads:

YOU SAY 'HONESTY IS SCARCE'?
THEN YOURS AND MINE MATTERS
EVEN MORE



appreciates the women's plight. He says that we don't have the necessary financial resources for proper resettlement and reintegration of these people into the communities.

Following our previous interest in this issue, should our fellowship consider how it might help to encourage the Ugandan government or other agencies to provide the necessary support. Bishop Ochola has said he would support such an initiative. He confirms that:

"The government of Uganda has not put in place any Resettlement, Reintegration, and Reconstruction, Programmes, for some of these most unfortunate children. Thus, it is not surprising since both the US and Uganda have called off the search for the missing children, not only of Northern Uganda, but also of DRC, CAR, and South Sudan. All the same, both US and Uganda must know that God, who, holds every leader in the world accountable, resents perfunctory behavior where vision and values do not match at all. This is the greatest challenge for our modern world of the 21st Century, where, the world does not have God's perspective to see one another, as a human being at all."

Oxford University. Nigel Biggar, professor of moral and pastoral theology, was denounced by dozens of fellow academics and some students because he dared take an even-handed approach to the British Empire by calling it 'morally mixed'. Not only is his argument reasoned and moderate, but also those trying to shout him down display the very intolerance they profess to despise.

The instinct to suppress ideas sooner than debate with them rails against the ethos of the university. The principal objection to Holocaust denial, to take one example, is not that it is racist and offensive (though it is certainly both) but that it is downright wrong. Scholarship is the right way to confront bad ideas such as xenophobic fakery; suppression of speech is not.

A healthy media organisation, like a healthy university, should admit a diversity of opinion. Thus, it is important that the newspapers to keep publishing views with which one might fiercely disagree. But they and we should also examine opposing views in our publications, however uncomfortable this might be. This is why honest journalists are important. Democracies rely on them to arm citizens with the knowledge they need to make decisions and also to

connect them with each other as a civil society. 'The Post', a new film by Steven Spielberg exemplifies this well. Reviewed in Film Look (page 9).



HOLD ONTO THE SPIRITED IDEALISM OF THE YOUNG

The political involvement of young people must be encouraged and cherished. Amid the gloom that has hung over politics and society since Brexit and Trump, young people have represented the most notable countervailing force. We saw it at the last general election, and we have seen it in the waves of young people engaged in the anti-Trump movement, the #MeToo campaign and much more.

Yes, I know that some people think that there are a lot of little Marxist snowflakes using Momentum to take over the Labour Party, but this is largely a product of poor governance by leaders rather than

a fundamental problem. Most young people I encounter in advocacy and campaigning are hard working, idealistic and genuinely concerned for others.

Take Lucy Barbour, a young member of APF who writes a lot for our website and is bringing new ideas to the fellowship, especially how we can engage with young people within the Church. Lucy was a breath of fresh air at our 80th anniversary day in Oxford, and I have included a few key points from her address on page 5/6. Her full address is on our website.

The significance of the young lies not only in them being a set of people demanding progressive things, but a set of people with a new demands, unencumbered by the past and driven by the circumstances of today. It behoves APF to leave its obsession with WW1 and conscientious objectors – remember them but not dwell on their actions – and respond to the pressing issues underlying military conflict today. People born after the fall of the Berlin Wall, for many of whom LGBT + rights, a new wave of feminism, the fight for climate change and an openness to radicalism are part of their generational DNA, see the world very differently.

The young's involvement in politics will also help us focus more on intergenerational justice. Thinking about the destruction of the environment as an act of what climate active Naomi Klein calls intergenerational theft helps frame it from the perspective of those who will have to deal with the consequence – one of which is future war. It also lays blame with those in power who fail to act.

There are many examples of young people's powerful commitment, particularly in campaigning against the arms trade and their advocacy for nuclear disarmament (see article on Ican, page 7). But one that comes to mind when we contemplate the theme of this TAP and Fascism in the 1930s and 40s is Sophie Scholl. 2017 is the 75th anniversary of Sophie's trial execution along with her brother Hans after they had been tried for distributing anti-Hitler leaflets, thousands of them.

FINAL REMARKS AND CONCLUSION

Confronted by the surge in populism, we must summon defiance and reassert that democracy is the great philosophical success in modern times. We need to make again Cicero's case for liberty and

justice in the republic, remembering all the great leaders and politics that followed in his footprints. And we have to remember from Obama that hope must connect to power. They are the voices of Utopia.

The openness of the West is its core strength. It has to be defended by stronger, more intelligent, more cyber-aware armies but also by the power of frank speech. Civil rights groups (and Christian peacemakers) should be key players in the development of progressive strategies. They should speak up for persecuted bloggers in the Middle East, for arrested editors in Turkey. Small victories along these lines open up chinks in the armour.

The survival of Western civilisation will depend on the strength of its intellectual fortifications. But it is not good enough to rely of the great thinkers of the past: we must build on their foundations but with a bold new architecture that can inspire the young to emulate the aspirations of our ancestors.

And in all this, it is essential that they also understand the dangers of extremism, the experience and writing of George Orwell where both the hard Right and hard Left harbour those who would take control. Orwell was probably not the only writer on the left to be attracted by socialism, yet he was the only one to commit this dichotomy to the page. His aim wasn't to convert non-believers; it was to defend democratic socialism against attacks from left and win back fellow travellers with Communism.

Rather interestingly, Trump's spokeswoman Kellyanne Conway channelled Orwell's literature when she described a comment by the president as 'an alternative fact' rather than a lie. The concept of 'fake news' could have come from the Ingsoc regime in the super-state of Oceania. These developments demonstrate that the battle to defend objective truth is as important as ever.

But the key is that if politicians do not treat themselves and the system that supports them with rigour and respect, nobody else is likely to do so. Fair regulation of the Internet is perhaps the most important task now facing politicians around the world. The Internet has its uses. A quick Google search confirms that Churchill really did say in the Commons: 'Democracy is the worst form of government except all other forms'. The literature of Orwell reaffirms this.

THE ART OF PEACE

MINEFIELD

Devised by Argentinian artist and writer, Lola Arias

Royal Court, London SW1

It is 35 years since the conflict in the South Atlantic that cost hundreds of British and Argentinian lives. Now six veterans of that war have been brought together in a documentary play to explore the traumatic impact it had on them.

The war was famously summarised by the great Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges as ‘two bald men fighting over a comb’. But ‘Minefield’ is not a play that explores the rights and wrongs of the conflict or, indeed, any other. What it does is look at the human experience of war and in particular what happens to those who go through it when they return to ‘normal’ life. Afterwards survival became a mental issue, and one made more difficult for the British soldiers by



how obscure and absurd the war seemed to many of their fellow citizens. And for the Argentinian soldiers by the fact that, although it meant a lot to the Argentinians, they were defeated.

Co-created by Lola Arias and six Falkland veterans, ‘Minefield’ blows you away – its buried surprise like in how quietly and unassumingly it does so. First seen in 2016, it brings together three Argentinians, two Brits and one Gurkha to recall and sometimes reconstruct their experiences. We hear how these still spry fifty-somethings became soldiers, their scrabbles to stay alive during trench and naval warfare in 1982, and their post-conflict trauma.

An uplifting aspect of the performance is the use of music, particularly that of a Beatles tribute band (the veterans band), the drummer Otero was on the General Belgrano when it was sunk, an act that made it certain there would be no last-minute peace agreement.

Minefield is touring the UK. For details, visit liftfestival.com/minefield-tour.

REVOLT AND REVOLUTION

Yorkshire Sculpture Park until 15 April

Revolution is once again a buzzword among the young. The late-noughties economic crash, the climate of uncertainty created by Brexit and the rise of unlikely leaders from Trump to Corbyn has given young people a taste for radicalism across a whole range of fields.

If you’re not as aware of this as you might be, it is perhaps because where the youthful idealism of the past – and the art that went with it – tended to cohere around massive, era-defining causes such as the Spanish Civil War or Ban the Bomb, today everybody (and not just the young) seems to be protesting about everything from national anthems and university statutory to modes of gender address, but often with little clear focus for this dissent.

That, at least, is the impression created by this small but intriguing exhibition of “world-changing” art from the Arts Council Collection, brought together in the unlikely setting of Yorkshire Sculpture Park’s green and pleasant acres. Peter Kennard’s classic CD photomontages of the 1980s and a raw, intimate recording of the Internationale by Susan Philipsz are among the political artworks in a survey of how art is inspired by dissent, resistance and rebellion.

An eclectic array of historical works highlight the political imperatives of today. Local genius Henry Moore’s lifelong socialism and support for the anti-nuclear movement feels a good reason to include his semi-abstract bronze *Helmet* from 1960, powerful though it is.

A wide range of songs sets the tone for an exhibition that indicates art’s capacity to ‘make a difference’ – suggesting ways we may “contribute to change on an individual, community and even global level” – while giving the impression that political art today is so diffuse and subject to individual taste and whim that it’s often difficult to work out what the “cause” is.

A strong point is 2011 Turner Prize-winner Martin Boyce’s *Souvenir Placards*,



a tableau of oversized placards, bearing classic slogans of recent decades – ‘Coal Not Dole’, ‘Free South Africa’, ‘Can’t Pay, Won’t Pay’ – leaning against the walls as though discarded at the end of the demo.

A SONG FOR VERA BY SUE GILMURRAY

Some years ago Shirley Williams had arranged to give a lecture for Movement for the Abolition of War, and I was aware that her mother was Vera Brittain, author of *Testament of Youth* and other books, and a strong anti-war campaigner. I read *Testament of Youth* and it inspired the song ‘Vera’, which I later sang at the lecture in the Imperial War Museum.

Vera volunteered as a nurse during WW1, saw many of its horrors for herself, and experienced the deaths of her fiancé, her brother and two of her best friends. Thereafter she campaigned against war consistently, even when it was unpopular. In her later years she was a counsellor for APE.

It seems a good idea to use the song again this year, as it marks the centenary of the Armistice, and is also a year in which women are insisting on having their voices heard and taken seriously. The score of the choral arrangement is available on the website www.abolishwar.org.uk and the audio is going up on www.soundcloud.com/songsfor2014-2018.

I do hope choirs wishing to commemorate the centenary of 1918 will use the song.

