

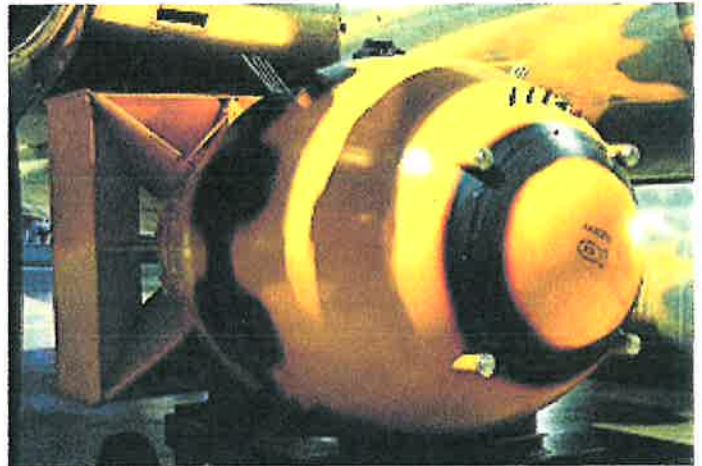
LET JUSTICE ROLL!

An Occasional Newsletter Produced & Distributed
by the "Social Justice & Action Group" (SJAG) of
St. John the Divine Anglican Church - Victoria, B.C.

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"Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, more violent. It takes a touch of genius, and a lot of courage, to move in the opposite direction. The splitting of the atom has changed everything, except the way we think. Thus, we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe! We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humanity is to survive."

- Albert Einstein



**A - Bomb "Fat Man" - Dropped on
Nagasaki, Japan (August 9, 1945) ***

"LET JUSTICE ROLL!" is intended to educate, inform and challenge readers regarding important issues and ideas at the intersection of faith and justice. For the most part, the themes offered here are viewed through a Christian lens. The topics chosen focus on social concerns that many of our parishioners currently share. The short articles selected cover a diversity of issues -- FROM poverty/economic inequality, peace and human/LGBTQ rights, First Nations reconciliation -- TO environmental stewardship, refugees, racism, food security and community/international development. The political is never far away from the topics we choose to present. As Cornel West reminds us: *"Justice is what love looks like in public!"*

***"But let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness
like a never failing stream." Amos 5:24 (NIV)***

The ideas and opinions expressed, and or positions articulated, in the newsletter may not officially be those of the Parish or the Diocese. Your feedback is encouraged! Please address your comments to either Murray Luft (Editor) murrayrae@yahoo.com or John McLaren (Interim SJAG Chair) jpsmamclaren@gmail.com. We also invite you to submit provocative articles (already published or original) for inclusion in future ***"Let Justice Roll!"*** newsletters. SJAG's intention is to produce this newsletter four times per year. During Covid 19, LJR is only available in an on-line format (via the St. John's web-site). M.L. Editor

LET JUSTICE ROLL #11

In August, St. John's SJAG joined forces with the Victoria peace community to organize ***"Bells for Peace"***, a remembrance of the 75th Anniversary of the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan. In addition to ringing Church bells throughout Victoria, we hosted a special liturgy on Sunday, Aug. 9, and co-sponsored a Webinar and on-line film showing. In this our third electronic version of *Let Justice Roll*, we continue our focus on the contentious topic of ***"War, Peace, Disarmament and Non-Violence"***. In addition, two of our SJAG members – John McLaren and Sara Chu – have written incisive personal articles on two current social issues -- **St. John's Court** and **Racism in Victoria**.

Sun., Sept. 21, has been declared **"International Day of Peace"** by the UN. This is an ideal time for us to recommit ourselves to work for permanent peace in the world. It is especially important for Churches and people of faith to deepen their understanding of the moral and ethical consequences of nuclear weapons. The macabre replica of ***"Fat Man"*** on our cover page is a stark reminder that the original 20 Kiloton atomic bomb, dropped on Nagasaki in 1945, resulted in the instantaneous loss of over 50,000 human lives. The recent approval of a **\$740 Billion** Defence Bill by the U.S. House of Representatives is further proof that a peaceful, secure world for all humans is still an illusive goal. Victorians would do well to remember that the nearby US submarine/naval base in **Puget Sound** (Bangor, WA), boasts the largest arsenal of nuclear warheads in the world.

Our discussion of peace in the context of **disarmament** in this issue has also been broadened to include thoughts on peace activism and non-violent resistance. Why? Part of the answer is found in the new book *Commanding Hope*, by local Professor Thomas Homer-Dixon of Royal Roads U., who notes:

"Nations have abjectly failed to rid the world of nuclear weapons once and for all. The great powers (and a few smaller ones, too) still deploy these hideous machines by the thousands, many on high alert, despite countless mass protests down through the years, as well as advocacy campaigns, desperate pleas by scientists and earnest commitments by statesmen. Worse, after several decades when treaties and detente did genuinely reduce the risk of nuclear war, it's now escalating again, as the US pulls out of arms-control treaties, while leaders of the US, Russia, North Korea, India and Pakistan brag about using nukes to annihilate their enemies."

LJR #11 is available to our parishioners on the Church Web-Site thanks to the excellent research, editing and media/technical skills of Sara Chu, Karyn Lehmann, Karen Coverett & Carol-Ann Zenger!

Here's the Complete Line-Up for LJR #11:

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Being Peaceful Change – John Dear *

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.” – Gandhi

In his search for God and truth, Mohandas Gandhi [1869–1948] concluded that he could never hurt or kill anyone, much less remain passive in the face of injustice, imperialism, and war. Instead, Gandhi dedicated himself to the practice and promotion of nonviolence. He concluded that nonviolence is not only the most powerful force there is; it is the spiritual practice most neglected and most needed throughout the world.

“Nonviolence means avoiding injury to anything on earth, in thought, word, or deed,” Gandhi told an interviewer in 1935. But for Gandhi, nonviolence meant not just refraining from physical violence inter-personally and nationally, but refraining from the inner violence of the heart as well. It meant the practice of active love toward one’s oppressors and enemies in the pursuit of justice, truth, and peace. *“Nonviolence cannot be preached,”* he insisted. *“It has to be practiced.”* For fifty years, Gandhi sought to practice nonviolence at every level in life, in his own heart, among his family and friends, and publicly in his struggle for equality in South Africa and freedom for India. It was the means by which he sought the ends of truth; in fact, he later concluded that the ends were in the means, or perhaps they were even the same. In other words, the practice of nonviolence is not just the way to peace; it is the way to God.

Gandhi’s nonviolence was a religious duty. It stood at the center of his spirituality, all his spiritual teachings, and his daily spiritual practice. *Gandhi concluded that God is nonviolent, and that God’s reign is the reign of nonviolence. “Nonviolence assumes entire reliance upon God,”* Gandhi taught. *“When the practice of nonviolence becomes universal, God will reign on earth as God reigns in heaven.”* After years of studying the various religions, Gandhi concluded too that nonviolence is at the heart of every religion. It is the common ground of all the world’s religions, the hidden ground of peace and love underlying every religion. . . .

Gandhi thought that the force of nonviolence was more powerful than all nuclear weapons combined and that if we all practiced perfect active nonviolence, we could unleash a spiritual explosion more powerful than the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. *“I am certain that if we want to bring about peace in the world,”* Gandhi told a group of visitors a few months before his death, *“there is no other way except that of nonviolence.”*

“Nonviolence is the greatest and most active force in the world,” Gandhi wrote. . . . *“My optimism rests on my belief in the infinite possibilities of the individual to develop non-violence. The more you develop it in your own being, the more infectious it becomes till it overwhelms your surroundings and by and by might over-sweep the world.”*

*** From: Fr. Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations (CAC) - July 28/20. John Dear is an American Catholic priest, Christian pacifist, author and lecturer. He has been arrested over 75 times in acts of nonviolent civil disobedience against war, injustice and nuclear weapons as part of what he terms: “a ... consistent ethic of non-violence”.**

"The Trials of St. John's Court" - By John McLaren *

A major issue of recent discussion and debate within the Parish, and not least for the residents of St. John's Court, as well as its Board, has been the status of the garden between the Court, and the Church/Parish House. The issue has centred on the use and abuse of that area, in particular during the night-time hours. The evidence from the residents of the Court, the security company retained by St. John's and the Court, and from police complaint reports indicate that at night the garden area has been and is being used variously by people without accommodation for drug deals, drug use, and for meeting, cooking, and toilet use (for themselves and their dogs). For the residents of the Court, these visits have created unwanted noise, a fear of interference with personal safety, and engendered feelings of insecurity. These problems have intensified during the lock-downs of various shelter facilities in the city because of Covid-19, and a resulting increase in those without a roof over their heads in a city with a serious housing crisis. The unanswered question has been how the Parish and Court board should deal with the very real concerns of the residents, while remaining sensitive as a faith community to our belief in helping the vulnerable amongst us and responding to the lack of adequate services for housing and health and addiction challenges that the visitors often share. What follows is one parishioner's struggle to come to terms with this troubling problem, and the challenge that it presents to our beliefs as a faith community.

At St. John's, we are all well aware of the changing nature of the area in which the church stands, as the North Park neighbourhood, and by extension the City of Victoria, have tried to grapple with the combined and worsening effects of homelessness, shortfalls in temporary shelter, and inadequate mental health and addiction facilities or treatment opportunities. We also understand that our Parish, over many years, has sought to reach out to those in our neighbourhood and city who are vulnerable in various ways -- by advocating for affordable housing, establishing a Food Bank; offering a night shelter (when the parish hall was still in our possession); and providing shelter/support for transient youth through the "*Out of the Rain*" program. These initiatives will have been complemented by individual examples of clergy, staff and parishioner interventions.

We also know that there has been costs to ensuring the security and welfare of those using the church and its facilities. In particular, because of this changing urban landscape, St. John's has had to readjust over the years to address security issues that have occurred or could be anticipated. The church is not open to outsiders or visitors (other than for scheduled services or meetings). There is a security entrance door and protocol for getting into the Parish House, limited to those with a legitimate need to consult with the general office and staff, or use the building for scheduled events. A fence was erected around the Mason Street stairwell to prevent loitering and ensure the safety of those using the entrance to the crypt. During these changes, the garden courtyard has been welcoming space for clergy, staff, parishioners, residents of St. John's Court, and indeed, anyone else choosing to drop by. The question is: should access to this space be limited (at least during the evening and night time) to help preserve the security and well-being of residents of the Court, who in theory at least, have full access to the court over each 24 hour period?

The purely pragmatic question is: Should the protective steps already taken for the safety of the Church building and its non-resident denizens and users be extended to St. John's Court and its denizens? The answer would seem abundantly clear. It is difficult to think of any more troubling situation for folks in their later years living in a designated and zoned apartment residence. They should undoubtedly be able to live in relative peace, without fearing for their safety, and to indulge their crucial need for a good night's sleep. There is no doubt that those of us who live in the relative

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safety of “*garden suburbs*” would have difficulty accepting these conditions on our individual and communal turf. We might easily be driven to complain to the authorities, and would expect action to relieve similar threatening situations.

Further, the Court community are not a group of well-heeled *nimbies*, but people who, for a variety of perfectly understandable reasons, including modest means, have chosen this location and its amenities, including a close-to-downtown ambience with familiar rhythms and soundscapes. It is doubtful, however, that these residents expected to be living with the anxieties that unruly behavior in the garden at night induces, and over which they seemingly have no control. Although the needs for security of the two groups differ, it is interesting to note that the new refuge for Indigenous women (the former Girl Guide Hall) has a very high and substantial fence around the property, presumably to assist in protecting its residents.

Alongside these pragmatic questions, further questions arise from our faith beliefs which imply that we have an obligation to reach out to and even welcome our neighbour, including the most vulnerable and rejected in our society. This is what Christ not only preached, but also practised in his own life. We have attempted to be faithful to this calling, both in the realm of ideas and practice, both through membership in coalitions working for social justice (such as GVAT), and robust advocacy for affordable housing. We have advocated for solutions to the homelessness problem, improvements in mental health and addiction services, and greater understanding of the complex challenges facing those without a roof over their heads.

In the situation that faces us, we are presented with a clash of concerns and needs that deserve our consideration. The rights of residents to an acceptable level of peace and quiet, especially at night, needs to be “*held in tension*” with the ongoing search for facilities and services that provide highly vulnerable people with safety and security. We need to balance these needs, even when they seem conflicting. In some ways, our Church is an integral part of our “*own backyard*”, the place where our souls grow and we develop a spirituality for life, based on love of neighbour and empathy for “*the other*”.

We know that failure to “*do justice*” -- both for the residents of the Court and for the dispossessed on our streets -- can be expected to continue causing heartache and conflict, if not resolved. For one thing, it is easier to identify with those whose faces we *know* and whose lifestyle we *respect*, (even if we cannot claim to be their friends), than with people whose faces are unknown to most of us, and whose reality seems far removed from ours. I believe that what we are witnessing is a microcosm of a broader problem in society of “*doing justice*” in a world of wealth inequality, porous and ill-funded social security nets, *market-philia*, and discrimination, whether based on race, class, gender, sexual preference, etc. Through the good efforts of Parish Council and St. John’s Court Society various solutions have been laid out for us and voted upon. It behooves us to prayerfully consider these, carefully taking into account a balance of interests, as well as the broader social and faith contexts outlined above.

What we individually conclude may differ. Solutions that in one way or another preserve the *status quo* would be tantamount to saying to the Court residents -- “*your concerns may be valid, but we are bound to treat the Garden as public space at all times!*” This position is difficult to sustain when we have already, with justification, taken steps to ensure our own (and the Church’s) security, both during the day time and after hours. Patrolling the premises on a regular basis to deter its use as a living or resting place seems impractical, especially given resource and financial implications.

Full disclosure: From a practical vantage point, the options that appeal *to me* are those that treat the Garden as having a *public persona* during the daytime, but *not* during the night when it would be locked up to anyone not authorized to be there. To reserve half the garden to the use of St. John's Court residents exclusively, and the remainder open at all hours to an inner-city population seems impractical. So that there is no dissembling here, after a long process of discernment and wavering, I have opted to support fencing the garden at both ends, with closure during the evening or night-time hours, however determined. The garden space would be public during the day, but with *no* unauthorized access at night. I am aware that fences could be straddled, although they also serve to deter. The argument that there is no long-term solution given that the neighbourhood has changed beyond recognition and that the Court is just "*unlucky*" that is now out of fashion falls flat, in my opinion. Things are already changing. The city has announced the purchase of a block on Mason and Pandora, (between Vancouver and Quadra) for a variety of social housing, and, as I understand it, First Met will develop the space presently occupied by their hall for an affordable housing project. It is wrong, in my mind, to imagine that we are destined to be in the midst of an *urban wasteland* indefinitely.

Finally, if we do severely limit access to the Garden, that in my mind comes at a price -- we are bound to advocate publicly and vigorously for the development of policies by the City of Victoria and neighbouring municipalities, and by both Federal and Provincial governments, for serious and well-conceived action to resolve the social problems that induce and exacerbate homelessness. In the short term, we can create opportunities for stable housing that is more distributed across the region, even if transitional. A "*tweed curtain*" should not become "*an iron curtain*"! Other communities (Seattle and Portland, for example) are doing this. Our association with GVAT is, I would argue, crucial in a call to greater advocacy and action on this issue. Furthermore, in the future (when the Covid-19 concerns are behind us), we will be called to imagine new ways to design and implement interactions between St. John's (its people and facilities) with "*the other*" -- those people who find themselves marginalized and on the street, including First Nations people. This would not resemble a traditional mission project, but rather an innovative, cooperative joint venture to provide a safe space for dialogue and companionship. This has been done elsewhere by Anglican faith communities (for example in cafe settings), and has met with success in building understanding and trust between diverse communities. "*Fencing ourselves in*" is not a comprehensive solution to social dysfunctions in our midst. It may help us to deal with the current, particular issue at St. John's Court, but our longer-term strategy must be to develop a vision of "*doing social justice*" that we can commit to and carry forward as a dynamic congregation.

* John McLaren is interim chair of the Social Justice and Action Group (SJAG) at St. John's. He is a retired Law Professor, a long-time social change proponent/activist and a Morris Dancer.

People like us read the Bible from the vantage point of our privilege and comfort and screen out those parts that threaten us. People who have been marginalized tell us that the basic viewpoint of the biblical writers is that of victims, those who have been cruelly used by society, the poor and oppressed. . . . Consequently, when they hear the Bible offering hope and liberation to the oppressed of the ancient world, they hear hope and liberation being offered to them as the oppressed of the contemporary world. If God sided with the oppressed back then, they believe God continues to side with the oppressed here and now.

William Sloan Coffin

Life As A Banana: My Experiences of Racism - By Sara Chu *

Racism has many faces. It can be subtle or overt. Right now black Canadians and First Nations people suffer overt systemic racism. Chinese Canadians suffered similarly in the past, especially when most of them were connected to people brought here to build the railroads. But in more recent times Chinese people in Canada have come from more varied parts of China, have often been well educated, and are often economically better off. Their financial status has inspired resentment and envy. There are still episodes of overt violence against Asians in Canada but very often the racism is more subtle. I'd like to tell you about what I've experienced.

First a bit about my family. My father came to the United States in the 1930s because he worked for the Nationalist Chinese embassy in Washington DC. In the 1940s he was posted to Ottawa. The Nationalists were the ones fighting the Communists in China. So I was born in Ottawa in 1947. In 1949 the Communist takeover happened and the embassy closed and my father lost his job. Lester Pearson invited my parents to stay in Canada and they did so because they felt Canada was a better place to raise children. My father had two PhDs (one in philosophy and one in international law) and was an expert in Chinese classical literature and calligraphy. He applied for a job in the Oriental Studies Dept at U of Toronto but was turned down. They hired a white person. The only job ever offered to him in Canada was as an agent for Indian Affairs. He would have had to travel up north. I can't imagine anyone less suited for the job. He turned it down. The situation was an insult both to him and to the First Nations people with whom he would have worked.

We moved to Toronto when I was three. I came to BC in my late twenties. For most of my life I have encountered groups of children who taunted me with fake "Chinese" sounds. It happened once in Beacon Hill Park. The last time it happened was on Roseberry Avenue in Victoria where I lived, when some kids on the next block taunted me as I walked by. Usually I give the kids a loud lecture in good plain English and that tends to stop them.

Before I left Toronto a friend invited me to a party in Rosedale, which is like the Oak Bay of Toronto. The hostess tried to be friendly and engage me in conversation. But she seemed unable to understand anything I said. I had to keep repeating myself. After a few minutes of this it seemed to dawn on her that I was speaking English and she stopped asking me to repeat myself. I'm sure she meant no harm. She just made an assumption. We all do. I do. So we do all need to examine our assumptions from time to time. I still occasionally run into store clerks who don't seem to understand anything I say. It's disconcerting but probably well-intentioned.

When I worked at Victoria Hospice, friendly family members would sometimes ask me where I was from. I would say "Toronto". They would say, "No where are you really from?" Then I'd say, "Ottawa." They would again say, "No where are you really from?" They meant no harm.

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All my adult life I have experienced being yelled at by someone on the street who tells me to "Go back to where you came from." Sometimes I give them an earful. Sometimes, for example, when they lean into the opening of a bus shelter where I am sitting, I feel the situation could get dangerous and I say nothing. This happens about twice a year in Victoria.

Most recently, while I had an experience here just before Canada Day. I was walking in Fairfield and passed a man who was draping Canadian flags on his fence. I called out to him and asked if he knew who had designed the flag. There was silence. He kept his back to me. So I spoke louder, thinking he might be hard of hearing. No response. So I started to walk away. Moments later I realized there was a woman walking behind me and she was now calling out to him and saying things like, "Hello" and "Nice day." He responded to her. So when she walked by I went back and asked him my question again. He turned his back and went on working. I tried once more and then gave up. Did he think I wasn't worthy to discuss Canada's flag?

All of this is ironic because I am the world's worst Chinese person—I don't speak the language and have never been to China. When I was a child my parents made an effort to speak English (which they had learned in university) to us so we would do well in school. They did not send us to the Chinese school because it taught only Cantonese, which they did not speak. Eventually my mother gave us Mandarin lessons after school and in the summer. We hated them. And no one wanted to be Chinese in those days. The only Chinese people on TV were Hop Sing and Hey Boy. As an adult I have made several attempts to take courses but always ended up stopping. I don't have people to practise with and it's not an easy language to learn. Once I was promoted from the children's class to an adult class. The other students were Cantonese ladies who were learning Mandarin. So they had vocabulary and knew the written language. I had very little vocabulary and when I asked questions they openly mocked me. The teacher did nothing to stop them. I quit. I didn't need weekly doses of their hooting and hollering. I have never wanted to go to China because I've always felt it to be a totalitarian regime, even though ever since Richard Nixon's time, China has put on a veneer of Westernism to attract trade and tourists. Recent events such as the imprisonment of two Canadians and the takeover of Hong Kong have revealed the totalitarianism behind this veneer. My lack of ability in speaking Chinese would also make me a target for ridicule. So I am stuck being a "banana".

** Sara Chu is a long-time member of St. John the Divine. She was editor of the former parish newspaper "Aspire" and is a current member of the SJAG.*

Vote. Raise your voice. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Stay home if you can. Support people who can't stay home. Call someone you love and tell them that you love them. Feed those who are hungry and love each other. Rest, for the fight for justice is a marathon. Truly: love, love, love.
Rev. Dr. Donna Schaper, The Resistance Prays <theresistanceprays@gmail.com

MAD WORLD: A SHORT GUIDE TO NUCLEAR DIPLOMACY – MURRAY LUFT

- ◆ **A Nuclear “Near Miss”** - In 1957, A U.S. Air Force B-36 bomber accidentally dropped a hydrogen bomb in New Mexico. It was, it turned out, the most powerful nuclear bomb ever built. At 10 megatons, it was bigger than anything in today's nuclear arsenal, and about 625 times more powerful than the bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima. Although the 42,000 pound bomb did not detonate, it left a crater 3.5 meters deep. This was the year of the Asian flu, and most people didn't even notice this frightening incident. (Source: Jeff Rubin, Globe & Mail, Aug. 22/20)
- ◆ **The UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (“Ban Treaty” - 2017)** outlaws building, possessing, testing and threatening the use of Nuclear weapons. Predictably, all nuclear-armed nations and their allies voted against the adoption of the “Ban Treaty”. **The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons** won the 2017 Nobel Prize for helping to establish the Ban Treaty. The treaty requires 50 governments to ratify it before it can come into force. On July 15, Botswana became the 40th state to sign. The nuclear-armed countries have vowed never to join! (Source: R. Gibbons & S. Herzog - Washington Post, Aug. 6/20).
- ◆ **Canada & the “Ban Treaty”** - Virtually every nuclear disarmament stakeholder in Canada welcomes the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons – *in principle*! But *in reality* this objective will only be achieved through concrete action that truly reflects the gravity of the nuclear weapons threat and the urgency of concrete steps towards abolition ... the complete and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons is not an eventual, ethereal objective, but an urgent and achievable one. Regrettably, while a growing majority (of the 122 adoptees) have embraced the historic “Ban Treaty”, **Canada** continue to favour NATO's overt nuclear deterrence policy as a legitimate security doctrine, effectively validating the weapons held by its nuclear-armed allies. (Source: Project Plowshares/Peace Quest, 2019)
- ◆ **The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NTP)** – In 1970, the NPT came into force, allowing nuclear weapons' holders to maintain their weapons if they move towards eventual nuclear disarmament. The US, Britain, China, France and Russia have signed the NPT. India, Israel and Pakistan have not signed onto the treaty. North Korea withdrew from the treaty and began developing its own nuclear weapons. (Source: Washington Post, Aug. 6/20).
- ◆ **Nuclear Weapons' Count** - In 2020, there are approximately **13,410** nuclear weapons around the world. Over 90% belong to the former Cold War rivals, the U.S.A. and Russia. The NPT's non-nuclear members usually meet every 5 years to review the accord. They have long criticized the nuclear powers for maintaining and modernizing their weapons. (Source: Washington Post, Aug. 6/20).
- ◆ **The Trump/US Government** – In 2018, the US withdrew from the **Iran Nuclear Deal** and in 2019 from the **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty**, both designed to reduce global nuclear dangers. Arms-control advocates fear Trump will not extend the **New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (NSART)** if reelected, unless China agrees to join. (China presently refuses to participate in any arms-control talks.) The Trump administration has also floated the idea of conducting the first U.S. nuclear test explosions since 1992. This would violate the 1996 **Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty** which the US signed, but did not ratify. (Source: Washington Post, Aug. 6/20).

A reporter once asked A.J. Muste, a Dutch-born American clergyman and pacifist who protested against the Vietnam War: *"Do you really think you are going to change the policies of this country by standing out here alone at night in front of the White House with a candle?"* A.J. Muste replied: *"Oh, I don't do this to change the country. I do this so the country won't change me."*

Poems for Not-So Ordinary Peace Makers

Crimes of Chess & War

By: Butch Gerbrandt, Mar. 2020 *

In war, as in chess,
Pawns initiate contact and make the
ultimate sacrifice.
What-trash boys who failed to pay
attention in Geometry.
Dark-skinned girls escaping the Projects
With promises of valuable skills and
exotic posts.
The reality of the game,
Fort Bragg boredom for the lucky,
Vaporizing militants and civilians alike
In squalid desert villages for the less
fortunate.
The inept king marshals the troops from
castled safety
While the fianchettoed bishop
Calls down God's wrath from the
missilesque spires
Of the Air Force Cadet Chapel.
Freedom rider Carol Ruth Silver
Moldering in Parchman Prison
For high desegregation crimes
Shapes a chess set from musty bread
and spit,
Colouring the dark side from her veins.
She shouts moves to an unseen jail
mate three cells down,
"Pawn to King four,
Queen captures White's Knight."
Maybe Yoko Ono had it right.
Designed her set of all-white pieces
On a board of all-white squares.
No, she is not a supremacist.
Think about it.
Is that your adversary's peon
Or your own valiant foot soldier?
Who's to hate and who's to protect?
Should you decapitate that lovely queen
or caress her? Banish the hand-
some knight or flirt unabashedly?
Does the middle game begin to point
out misconceptions
When you can no longer distinguish
between friend or foe,
And the game disintegrates into a love fest?

* Butch Gerbrandt is a carpenter, poet and chess player from Butte, Montana. He greets the good folks up North and begs asylum if the U.S. Moron in Chief gets re-elected.

Dreams and Nightmares

By Walter Brueggemann *

(On reading 1 Kings 3:5-9; 9:2-9)

Last night as I lay sleeping,
I had a dream so fair . . . I dreamed
of the Holy City, well ordered and just.
I dreamed of a garden of paradise,
well-being all around and a good
water supply.
I dreamed of disarmament and forgiveness
and caring embrace for all those in need.
I dreamed of a coming time when death
is no more.
Last night as I lay sleeping . . .
I had a nightmare of sins unforgiven.
I had a nightmare of land mines still
exploding and maimed children.
I had a nightmare of the poor left unloved,
of the homeless left unnoticed,
of the dead left ungrieved.
I had a nightmare of quarrels and rages
and wars great and small.
When I awoke, I found you still to be God,
presiding over the day and night
with serene sovereignty,
for dark and light are both alike to you.
At the break of day we submit to you
our best dreams
and our worst nightmares,
asking that your healing mercy should
override threats, that your goodness will
make our nightmares less toxic and our
dreams more real.
Thank you for visiting us with newness
that overrides what is old and deathly
among us.
Come among us this day; dream us
toward health and peace,
we pray in the real name of Jesus
who exposes our fantasies.

* Walter Brueggemann (b.1933) is an Old Testament scholar who has authored 70 books. This poem is taken from Prayers for a Privileged People (1999).

Billions for Military Should Be Spent on Climate Change and COVID-19 Recovery

Op Ed By Saul Arbess -- Toronto Star - July 13, 2020 *

As Canada contemplates the post-Covid-19 world and citizens everywhere are considering the issue of defunding militarized police, we must also focus on Canada's military budgets, which have increased from \$18.9 billion in 2016-17, to \$32.7 billion in 2019-20. Under Canada's 2017 defence policy, the federal government will be spending \$553 billion on national defence over the next 20 years. Major procurement costs are for: 88 F-35 combat jets; the Canadian Surface Combatant Project and Joint Support Ship Project; two supply ships, now under design review; and missiles and associated costs for its CF-118 fighter jets. These estimates do not include military missions — for example, the more than \$18B spent in the futile combat mission in Afghanistan, where we did not even move the dial toward removing the Taliban.

It should be noted that the new naval frigate design includes the ability to participate in ballistic missile defence, which begins to commit Canada to this endlessly costly, unproven strategy. In June 2019, the Parliamentary Budget Office compiled a revised cost estimate for the new ships, predicting the program will cost close to \$70 billion over the next quarter-century — \$8 billion more than its previous estimate. Internal government documents, in 2016, estimated the total operating costs, over the life of the program, at more than \$104 billion. All of these investments are for high-end war fighting. We have to ask: who is the enemy we are aggressively arming against with these massive costs?

On June 11, The Canadian Press reported that Defence Department Deputy Minister Jody Thomas stated that she has received no indication from the federal government that it intends to reduce its much-increased military spending, despite the soaring federal deficit and the critical need to prepare for the **post-COVID-19 recovery** in Canada. In fact, she indicated that: “... *officials are continuing to work on the planned purchase of new warships, fighter jets and other equipment.*”

Contrast this with the nearly flat-lined government investment in **climate change mitigation and environment**, at around \$1.8 billion annually. This is pitifully small, when we consider the crises we face, assuming there will be only one wave of the current pandemic. Canada needs a conversion to a green economy, away from fossil fuel production, to include a fair transition and retraining of displaced workers. There is a need for extraordinary investment in the new economy to enable a move toward climate change mitigation, environmental sustainability and social justice, which will benefit all Canadians. We do not need increased investment in things that have no redeeming social value by endlessly preparing for war.

Where will the funds for that investment come from? By converting the military's vast projected expenditures to these essential tasks. Canada's military should be reduced to a level sufficient to protect our sovereignty, but incapable of acting as a belligerent abroad, such as questionable NATO missions around the world. Rather, Canada should lead in support of the proposed **UN Emergency Peace Service (UNEPS)**, a standing UN formation of 14,000-15,000 dedicated personnel designed to prevent armed conflict and protect civilians. The Canadian Forces should also considerably increase its participation in **UN peace keeping operations** that have dwindled close to zero personnel.

UNEPS could radically reduce our need for a national force beyond self-defence. Rather, our role should be as a non-belligerent middle power seeking negotiated nonviolent resolution of conflict. We can have either a bloated military with an increased combat-ready stance against undetermined enemies, or a successful post-COVID-19 recovery that enhances the quality of life and sustainable practices for our people. We cannot afford both.

* **Dr. Saul Arbess** is co-founder and board member of the Canadian Peace Initiative. He lives in Victoria, B.C.

**“When scientific power outruns spiritual power,
we end up with guided missiles and misguided men!”
M.L. King**

*75 Years after Hiroshima, I Wonder if the Goal of Abolishing
Nuclear Weapons Is Just a Dream*

*By Douglas Roche – The Globe & Mail (Aug. 1/2020) **

At 8:15 on the fateful morning of Aug. 6, 1945, as the Second World War was drawing to a close in the Pacific, an American atomic bomb exploded 580 metres above the heart of Hiroshima, Japan. Thermal rays emanating from a gigantic fireball charred every human being in a two-kilometre circle.

Old and young, male and female, soldier and civilian – the killing was utterly indiscriminate and, in the end, 140,000 people were dead. Three days later, similar atomic carnage obliterated Nagasaki.

That was the beginning of the nuclear age, 75 years ago.

I was 16 at the time and I remember sitting at the kitchen table, listening to the radio news about “a new kind of bomb.” The destruction was so massive that government officials were predicting the war in the Pacific would be over in a matter of days. My parents sighed with relief: I would be spared having to go to war.

There’s a dwindling number now of *hibakusha* – the name for Japanese people who survived the attacks – which means there are few left with direct memory of the horror of mass destruction. Soon Hiroshima and Nagasaki will be but history.

But they are not history for me. With 13,400 nuclear weapons possessed today by nine countries, they are a living reality. The United Nations’ top official on disarmament affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, visited Ottawa recently and said that the risk of use of nuclear weapons deliberately, by accident or through miscalculation, “*is higher than it has been in decades.*”

The contrast between nuclear realities and aspirations is stunning. Arms control and disarmament treaties, painstakingly constructed over many years, are crumbling. All the nuclear weapons states are modernizing their arsenals. The three major states on the UN Security Council – the United States, Russia and China – are the very ones ratcheting up tensions.

On the other hand, the International Court of Justice has ruled that states have an obligation to conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament. Pope Francis and many other spiritual leaders have condemned the possession of nuclear weapons. A new prohibition treaty, signed by 122 states, outlaws them.

Yet the nuclear states spent US\$72.9-billion last year on nuclear weapons (the U.S. spent more than the next eight states combined). Not even the ravages of COVID-19, painfully illustrating the need for huge sums of money to be redirected to health needs, has deterred the nuclear planners. And the political leaders appear impotent against the demands of the military-industrial complex for more weapons of mass destruction.

Seventy-five years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we have to ask ourselves: Is the long-sought goal of the abolition of nuclear weapons but a dream? This is a question that haunts me.

12.

In the early years of my life, I never thought about nuclear weapons, except perhaps around the time of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. But as a young parliamentarian in the 1970s, I visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki and talked to the *hibakusha* and saw the horrors depicted so vividly in the museums. It hit me forcibly that continued spending on these instruments of death was directly stealing from the poor of the world whose security depends not on weaponry but food, health, housing and education.

I started campaigning for nuclear disarmament in order to expedite the development processes. The UN became a second home for me as I struggled with the political machinations that have contorted security to mean that I am safer if I am able to bomb you out of existence.

I have approached the problem of abolition as a parliamentarian, diplomat and civil society activist. Why can there not be a time-bound program of mutual and verifiable nuclear disarmament? The models exist. Secretaries-general of the UN have repeatedly called for progress. Is not the logic of abolition overpowering?

The answer to the elusive question of abolition lies in the power nuclear weapons give their possessors. Abolition can only be achieved by slowly convincing the powerful that their security will be enhanced as they gradually reduce their stocks to zero.

Obviously, international confidence must be built at every successive step along the way. This is an area where Canada could shine in fostering a new international dialogue. But to do this, we would have to care enough about Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The *hibakusha* have never given up their call for abolition. And neither will I.

** Former senator Douglas Roche was Canada's ambassador for disarmament from 1984 to 1989. Previously, he was a Conservative member of Parliament for Edmonton Strathcona. In 2010, Roche was made an honorary citizen of Hiroshima for his work on nuclear disarmament. This op ed piece appeared in The Globe & Mail on Aug. 1, 2020.*

Lucifer, To the "Enola Gay" - By Michael R. Burch *

**Go then, and give them my meaning so that their teeming streets become my city.
Bring back a pretty flower—a chrysanthemum, perhaps, to bloom if but an hour,
within a certain room of mine where the sun does not rise or fall, and the moon,
although it is content to shine, helps nothing at all. There, if I hear the wistful call
of their voices regretting choices made or perhaps not made in time, I can look
back upon it and recall, in all its pale forms sublime,
still, death will never be holy again.**

** Published by Romantics Quarterly, Penny Dreadful and Poetry Life & Times*

"Enola Gay" is the name of the US Navy Bomber that dropped the first Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima, Japan.

Canada Must Acknowledge Our Key Role in Developing the Deadly Atomic Bomb

*By Setuko Thurlow – Globe & Mail (Aug. 1/2020) **

On Aug. 6 and Aug. 9, the largest bell in the Peace Tower at the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa will ring 75 times to mark the dropping of the two atom bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The arrangement was made by the Green Party's Elizabeth May and Canada's Speaker of the House, Liberal MP Anthony Rota. The bell ringing by the Dominion carillonneur Andrea McCrady will be live-streamed by the Peace Tower Carillon website so that it may be heard across Canada and around the world.

As someone who witnessed and experienced the consequences of nuclear war, I very often have brutal images in my mind of the atomic bombing. As a 13-year-old schoolgirl, I witnessed my city of Hiroshima blinded by the flash, flattened by the hurricane-like blast, incinerated in the heat of 4,000 degrees and contaminated by the radiation of one atomic bomb. A bright summer morning turned to dark twilight with smoke and dust rising in the mushroom cloud, dead and injured covering the ground, begging desperately for water and receiving no medical care. The spreading firestorm and the foul stench of burnt flesh filled the air.

As a *hibakusha*, a survivor of the atomic bombing, I was honoured to jointly accept the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). To mark the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings, I have written to all the heads of state and governments across the world on behalf of ICAN, asking them to ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This included a special letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

My brief to Mr. Trudeau pointed to the Mackenzie King government takeover of Eldorado Gold Mines Ltd. in 1942 and the nationalization of its uranium mine at Great Bear Lake in the Northwest Territories by the government in January, 1944. Eldorado's refinery in Port Hope, Ont., refined all the uranium ore from Canada and the Belgian Congo used by the Manhattan Project to produce the first nuclear weapons for the U.S. Army.

At the direction of C.D. Howe, King's minister of munitions and supply, the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Co. in Trail, B.C., also signed contracts with the Manhattan Project in November, 1942, to produce heavy water for nuclear reactors to produce plutonium.

In August of 1943, King hosted president Franklin D. Roosevelt and British prime minister Winston Churchill in Quebec City, where they signed the Quebec Agreement to jointly develop the atom bomb. Howe, King's most powerful minister, represented Canada on a Combined Policy Committee that co-ordinated the joint research by the United States, Britain and Canada on creating atomic weapons. King affirmed in his diary that the Quebec Agreement "*made Canada also a party to the development.*"

The National Research Council of Canada was heavily involved in the Manhattan Project and in the research by British scientists to develop the atom bomb. In April of 1944, King's Cabinet War Committee approved expenditures for the National Research Council to design and operate nuclear reactors in Montreal and at Chalk River, Ont., whose discoveries about the production of plutonium would be shared with those involved in the Manhattan Project.

Yet Canada's extensive role in the Manhattan Project and the development of the atom bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki has been completely wiped from the collective Canadian consciousness and memory.

The Canadian government has never publicly acknowledged its participation in the Manhattan Project after gloating about it when the bombs were first dropped in 1945. There is little published about Canada's contribution in the creation of atomic weapons and the subject is not taught in schools. Canadians of all ages believe Canada had nothing to do with the American atom bomb.

In my **appeal** to Mr. Trudeau, I asked that the government acknowledge Canada's participation in the Manhattan Project and that the Prime Minister issue a statement of regret for the deaths and immense suffering inflicted on the inhabitants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

I am praying that the bell ringing in the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill will occur at the same time that Mr. Trudeau issues a public expression of regret for Canada's role and announces that Canada will ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

It would be terribly ironic to have an **acknowledgement** of the bombings of the two cities from the Peace Tower if inside the Parliament buildings the Prime Minister refused to acknowledge Canada's role. By the end of 1945, more than 140,000 people had perished in the nuclear strike against Hiroshima. Another 70,000 died in the atomic bombing of Nagasaki.

When Mr. Trudeau hears the bell in the Peace Tower strike 75 times on Aug. 6 and 9, I hope he will not wonder why. As John Donne wrote in his famous poem, "*Any man's death diminishes me ... never send to know **for** whom the bell tolls, it tolls for **thee!***"

* Ms. Setsuko Thurlow is a Canadian nuclear disarmament campaigner who survived the bombing of Hiroshima. Her op ed article appeared in the Globe and Mail on Aug. 1/2020.

War cannot be humanized.

It can only be abolished.

—Einstein

WorldBEYONDWar.org WomenAgainstWar.org

“Beyond Vietnam: What King Taught Us” – By Chris Rice *



Dr. King delivering “Beyond Vietnam” speech, Riverside Church, New York City, 1967.

On Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday this year [Jan. XX 2020], I found myself in a worship service at Riverside Church in New York City, my skin tingling as I gazed at the pulpit where King delivered his controversial and groundbreaking **“Beyond Vietnam”** speech in 1967.

Vincent Harding, an African-American Mennonite, was a major influence in what King said that day. While King’s *“I Have a Dream”* speech and *“Letter from a Birmingham Jail”* are more famous, **“Beyond Vietnam”** belongs beside them for what it teaches about the call of Christian witness to national governments — its content, character, context and cost.

First, content. **“Beyond Vietnam”** was a paradigm shift for King to speak to an international issue. Many supporters begged him not to oppose the war, saying, in his words, *“Peace and civil rights don’t mix.”* *“They do not know the world in which they live,”* answered King, removing blinders through careful analysis that was historical, moral and political. He connected the poor of the U.S. to the poor of Vietnam and examined the cost of the war to both. He described how the war revealed the nation’s soul as *“poisoned”* by the **“giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism.”** Four years after *“I Have a Dream,”* King’s understanding of the U.S. had matured from dream to nightmare.

Second, the speech shows how witness to governments is grounded in a transformed character. To speak with courage on behalf of those who suffer outside our borders requires a new identity in Christ, **“who loved his enemies so fully he died for them.”** Christ’s disciples, said King, are given **“loyalties which . . . go beyond our nation’s self-defined goals and positions.”** Politics matters, because politics

is a matter of ultimate loyalty and ultimate power, which lie with no nation.

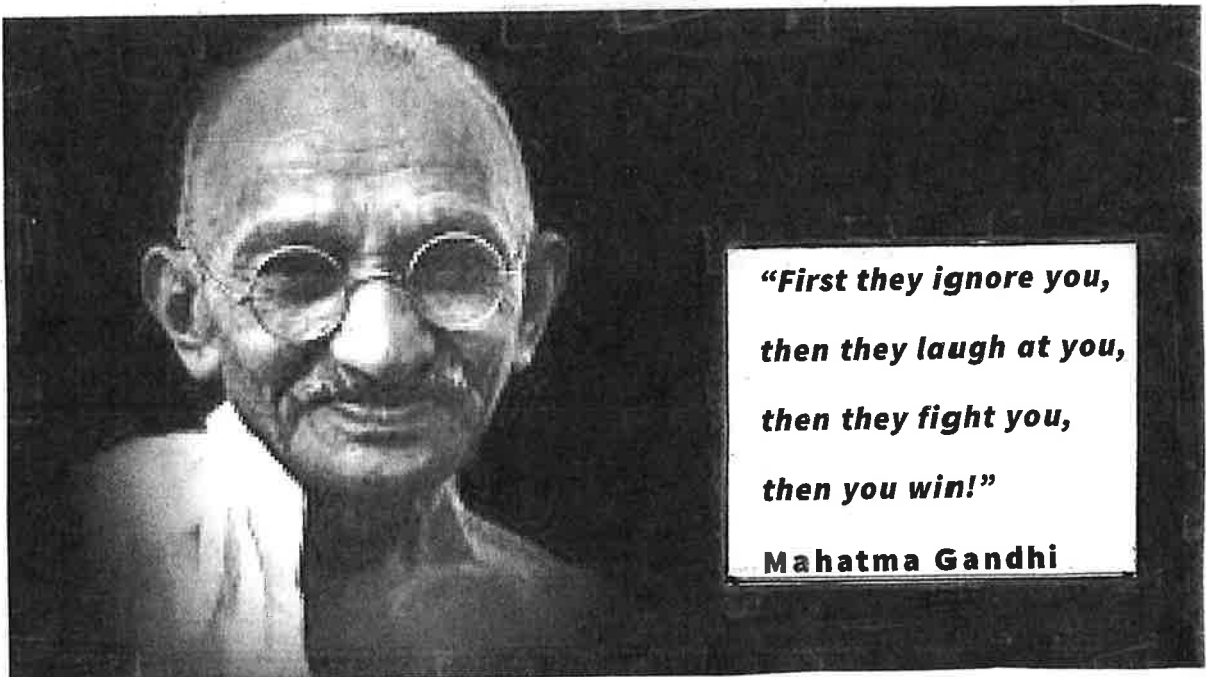
Third, King's speech teaches us Christian witness to government requires a context. King chose a major public platform in New York City to break silence. Anabaptists** may, quite rightly, never be fully at ease putting themselves near places of power. Yet too much distance is dangerous when it comes to political issues with critical moral consequences. Elie Wiesel once said, *"Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."* King's speech teaches us how prophetic distance and prophetic presence must be balanced.

Harding's imprint on **"Beyond Vietnam"** is of great importance for Anabaptists. At King's invitation, Harding and his wife, Rosemary, moved to Atlanta in 1960 to set up Mennonite House and join the freedom struggle. King relied on Harding for counsel as the Vietnam War escalated, eventually asking him to draft **"Beyond Vietnam."** Here we see how courageous Anabaptists can bring a unique moral power to governments by advocating for the social policies of nonviolence — as King put it, the choice nations face between ***"nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation."***

Finally, King's speech reveals the cost of bearing witness to governments. Exactly one year to the day after delivering **"Beyond Vietnam,"** on April 4, 1968, King was murdered. **"Beyond Vietnam"** teaches us what it means for the church to open our minds to examine, and mouths to speak, to places of power.

* Chris Rice directs the Mennonite Central Committee United Nations Office in New York City. This column was published February 10, 2020 in *Mennonite World Review*, "an independent ministry of Christian journalism serving Mennonites and the global Anabaptist movement." It also appeared in Chris' Rice's blog entitled: "Reconcilers".

**Editor's Note: The term "Anabaptist" refers to the historical peace (pacifist) Churches (eg. Mennonite, Amish Hutterites and Brethren in Christ). These Churches have practised the re-baptism of adult Church members since their origins in Reformation Europe (1500's). This led to their persecution by both the Catholic and Protestant (state) Churches. As "Anabaptists", Mennonites have generally taken a prophetic stance against "violence, militarism and empire" by focusing on "pacifism and social justice". Although Quakers are close cousins, because of their pacifist stance, they do not identify as Anabaptists.



On the Enduring Significance of Hiroshima after 75 Years

A message from the Canadian Peace Congress – Aug. 6/2020

Seventy-five years ago, an act of international criminality and infamy took place, the consequences of which have posed an existential threat to humanity ever since. For the first time ever, a species had created the capacity to not only bring about its own extinction, but also to potentially threaten all life on our planet.

On August 6 and 9, 1945, the U.S. military bombed the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with nuclear weapons. Over 200,000 people, mostly civilians, died instantly or later succumbed from burns, malnutrition, and radiation-related illnesses, and their cities levelled to the ground. Many of their descendants carry the affected genes and pass them onto their children. Those notorious acts will forever be remembered as the first time the devastating impact of nuclear warfare was unleashed.

There was absolutely no justification for this wanton attack – the worst *crime against humanity* in history (paralleled only by the Holocaust). Unclassified documents have since confirmed that there was no truth to the constructed ‘myth’ that the atomic attack was necessary to spare the lives of U.S. servicemen and end the war. In fact, Imperial Japan was already on the verge of collapse and surrender by early August 1945, its industries and war-making capacities destroyed or exhausted by repeated conventional air raids.

We now know that the U.S. Truman Administration proceeded with the nuclear attack anyway because it was anxious to unveil its awesome new weaponry while it still could, thus ‘show-casing’ U.S. global military superiority in the post-war period. It is now known, for instance, that the Targeting Committee of the U.S. military’s “Manhattan Project” specifically chose the two cities – Hiroshima and Nagasaki – not because they were important military centres, but rather because these two cities had been scarcely bombed by conventional air raids, so it would be easier to document the full destructive power of the atomic blasts, and to monitor the number of ‘kills’ among the largely civilian populations of those urban centres. The callousness and racially-tinged inhumanity of such calculations is undeniable.

More specifically, the U.S. nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were intended to send an unmistakable message to the Soviet Union – its erstwhile ally during WWII – that U.S. imperialism, with its monopoly on nuclear weaponry, would be top dog and ‘world policeman’ in the post-war era. Most history books claim the opening salvo of the “cold war” which was to dominate international politics and spur the nuclear arms race for the next half-century was launched by Winston Churchill in his “Iron Curtain” speech in Fulton, Missouri in March 1946. But there is every reason to conclude that it actually came seven months earlier, in Hiroshima.

75 years later, those nuclear weapons arsenals remain the principle threat – a sword of Damocles – hanging over the heads of all humanity and our global environment. Despite the hopes and demands of the world’s people for the complete elimination of *all* nuclear stock-piles, disarmament talks remain stalled and important treaties, such as the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) and the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) treaties, and the Iranian nuclear deal (JCPOA) have been unilaterally cancelled by Washington, setting the stage for another devastating round of the arms race.

Instead the leading nuclear states – in the first place, U.S. imperialism – are pressing forward with plans to modernize nuclear arsenals and extend the arms race into outer space (in the form of the Ballistic Missile Defence system and Trump’s “Space Command”). For this reason, the anniversary of

Hiroshima and Nagasaki assumes even greater significance and urgency this year.

This is especially so because we can all see another ‘cold war’ – this time directed against the People’s Republic of China – looming on the horizon. Actually, it is already here, and is being ratcheted up daily by the U.S. Administration and its Western allies, including Canada. The last ‘cold war’ had devastating effects. Not only did it bring humanity to the brink of mutually assured destruction, and consume trillions of dollars (in today’s currency) on arms spending instead of peaceful development and the elimination of poverty, homelessness, illiteracy and social inequality. It also led to witch-hunts, fostered xenophobia and racism, and suppressed academic freedom and the right to dissent.

For the sake of the future of humanity and our environment, we must not allow fear-mongering and McCarthyism to gain the upper hand again. We are not powerless in the face of this alarming drift toward nuclear calamity and environmental devastation. We need to take mass action to demand Canada take a firm stand promoting peace, disarmament, mutual respect and understanding, rejecting militarism, aggression and war.

For starters, we must demand that Canada sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). And we must call for a massive cut in arms spending, for Canada’s withdrawal from the aggressive NATO military alliance, and for full respect for – and compliance with – the principles of the UN Charter and international law

The real challenge is to re-build a grassroots peace constituency in this country made up of working people, women, youth, indigenous peoples, those living below the poverty line, the homeless and disenfranchised, environmental and social activists and all who cherish peace. One that is powerful and united around a “*Peace Alternative*” that would take our country in a fundamentally different direction, and win a truly independent Canadian foreign policy based on disarmament and peace.

That is the best way to remember and pay tribute to the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and to all victims of economic and military aggression, occupation and war!



A Tribute to All the Civilian Victims of War

By Jim Edmondson -- Common Ground -- 1 Nov., 2018 *

I clearly recall the conversation I had with my Mom and Dad this past July about the laying of wreaths for civilian victims of war at an upcoming event on Remembrance Day. My Dad had an incisive mind and although his stroke robbed him of the majority of his speech, his receptive language soldiered on for 20 years. I picture him now sitting up in bed in their flat in London, England, at 7AM that July morning, sipping his Earl Grey tea and 'participating' in the discussion. His eyes were glued on mine and his brain was working hard to formulate the verbal response he knew would never come. But his lopsided smile and sparkling eyes told me he had a lot to say about the civilian victims of war.

As the July sun streamed in through the windows, that morning's Bible reading – our morning ritual – was about peace. Me, an avowed atheist. Them, strong believers. My Dad nodded and grinned as my Mom and I talked about the Sermon on the Mount. *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the Children of God."* I told them about the upcoming event, Let Peace Be Their Memorial, which I would be singing at. It would take place 7,600 kilometres away in Vancouver on November 11.

Both of my parents are survivors of the Second World War and I know it's important for them to still bow their heads for two minutes on Remembrance Day and remember good friends in the British Navy and the Wrens who were blown up or drowned at sea. But they were intrigued by this new angle about the overlooked civilian victims of war.

I shared that a group of women would lay wreaths to honour those like Anja, raped by soldiers in wars around the world. Anja was forced to bear her assailant's child, then was shunned by her own community. My Dad was an intensely kind and moral man and I could see tears coming to his eyes. When he left the navy, he was a Commander and he could have gone into a successful career in administration, as many of his friends did. But he went into the Church, and as a lowly vicar in a small parish, he understood loss and the subsequent overwhelming grief.

The rest of the day as we moved in and out of the conversation, I was amazed by how much the topic of the civilian victims of war resonated with articles I was reading to my Dad from the *Times*; and how it resonated with an letter from an old naval friend who was with my Dad escorting convoys to Russia over the North Sea avoiding the deadly U-boats coming out of the Norwegian ports.

Later, my mom asked me to tell them more about the other groups who would be laying wreaths at the Let Peace Be Their Memorial event. While my parents could no longer effect much change for the better in the world, they were eager to hear that somebody was doing something, anything, positive. So I read to them from a piece of writing I was working on to promote the event and I reminded my Dad about one of his more impressive sermons. *"Ban the Bomb!"* he had admonished from the pulpit 40 years ago. *"Keep Britain Great! My question for you today is does the Church give a lead?"* He liked to tackle the important issues of the day and embrace dichotomies.

And so I shared the following:

"We'll talk about the wreaths that have been laid here in past years for so many civilians, adults and children damaged in some way or killed by war. Sachi is older now, but like many Hiroshima children, she was playing in her schoolyard when the bomb fell. She survived the blinding flash and black rain, but watched her father die a slow death from radiation poisoning.

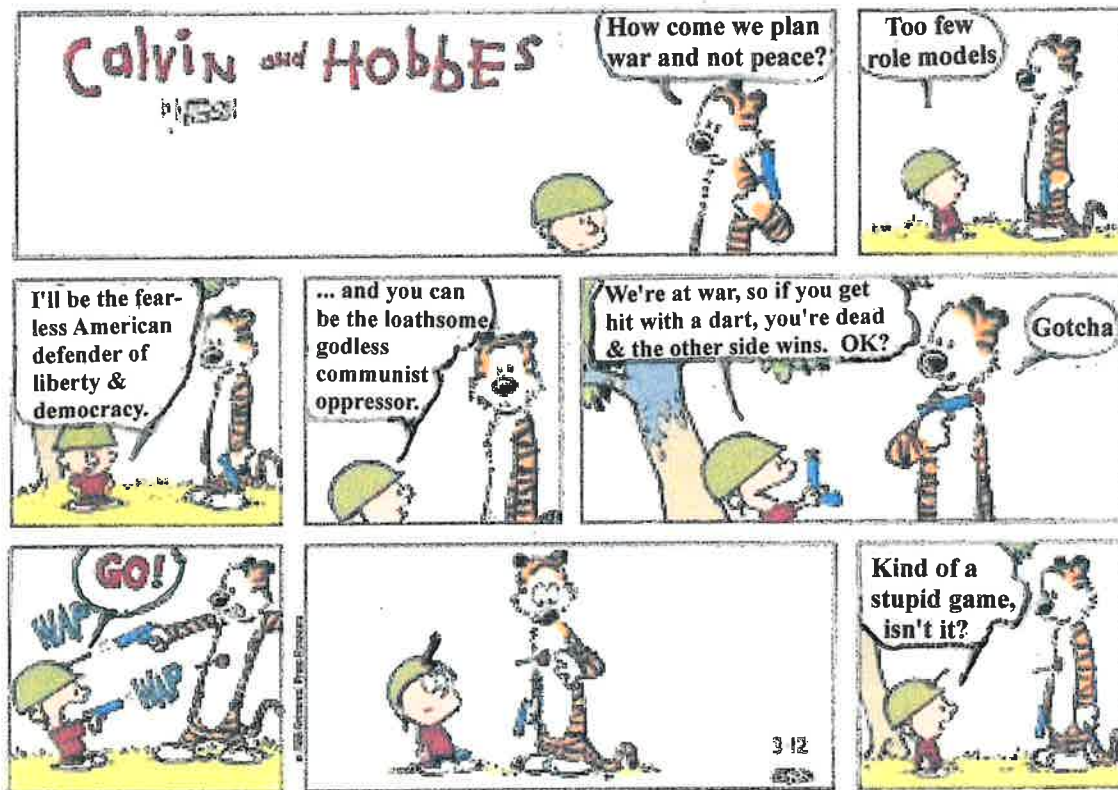
"At 12, Fazineh was abducted in a rebel raid, indoctrinated and forced to join an army of child soldiers. He speaks now of the trauma of killing and seeing firsthand others being killed. Tima's

beloved sister-in-law and two nephews were drowned when their overloaded refugee boat capsized. We all have seen the picture of the little boy on the beach at the water's edge. Rasim, a seven-year old war refugee and Darren a 36-year-old war veteran both lie awake nightly, shaking and terrified from the effects of PTSD. At 16, Halima was a promising student who planned to be a physicist; a war and eight years as a refugee ended her schooling and dashed her future hopes. A past president of our BC Teachers Federation will lay a wreath for children who have lost their education because of war."

I distinctly recall the expression on my Dad's face when I looked up. I didn't need his approval, but I had it. If my Dad's response was anything to go by, attitudes are broadening on the focus of Remembrance Day. The message of peace is gaining acceptance in Vancouver and elsewhere. Our soldiers aren't the only ones killed and damaged by war.

I didn't read my parents the whole article, but I did read them the ending -- a poem called "*Ali Ismail Abbas*" by Daniel Amoss, winner of a U.K poetry contest for children under 12:

I saw his picture. War is a twelve-year-old boy. With no arms, brown eyes.



"Prayer is meaningless unless it is subversive, unless it seeks to overthrow and ruin the pyramids of callousness, hatred, opportunism, falsehoods. A liturgical movement must become a revolutionary movement seeking to overthrow the forces that destroy the promise, the hope, the vision."

Abraham Joshua Heschel

6 Principles of Non-Violent Resistance -- By Jeremy Myers *

When faced with the question of how to deal with violence, most people think there are only two options: either be violent in return, OR lay down and die as a pacifist. There is, however, a third way, which is called “**Non-Violent Resistance**.” It is what was practiced by Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., and so many other people throughout history. It is also the way of Jesus.

I have been doing a lot of reading and thinking about this over the past six years or so. Here is a post about non-violent resistance, and some of the principles involved for living this way. Though I do not have the time or space to fully explain non-violent resistance, let me present a few of the guiding principles of this practice, and also suggest a few books so you can do further reading and research on your own.

1. Non-Violent Resistance Takes Courage: The first principle of non-violence is that it is only for courageous people who are willing to embrace it 100%. As long as there is the possibility in your heart of engaging in violence toward others, non-violence is not recommended. It takes great spiritual, mental, and emotional strength to engage in non-violent resistance, and must not be entered into lightly.

2. Non-Violent Resistance Seeks Friendship with Enemies: This leads to the second principle of non-violent resistance: Non-violence seeks to win friendship and understanding from enemies. It does not seek to shame or humiliate enemies, but to redeem and reconcile them to us, and to each other.

3. Non-Violent Resistance Is About Defeating Injustice: This is important because of the third principle of non-violent resistance, which is that we are not seeking to defeat people, but to defeat injustice. Non-violence recognizes that those who perpetrate violence are victims of violence as well.

4. Non-Violent Resistance Believes That Suffering Can Educate: Non-violence holds that suffering can educate and transform individuals and societies if those who engage in non-violent resistance accept violence toward them without retaliating violently toward others. Countless examples throughout history reveal that unearned suffering is redemptive and has tremendous educational and transformative possibilities.

5. Non-Violent Resistance Chooses Love over Hate: Non-violent resistance always chooses love instead of hate. Since love is unmotivated, unselfish, creative, and always seeks the good of others, those who practice non-violence will return good for evil and forgiveness for hate.

6. Non-Violent Resistance Recognizes God Is On The Side Of All: Finally, those who practice non-violent resistance recognize that despite the rhetoric of war, God is on the side of justice, not just for one party or another, but for all. Though it may take time, justice will always win.

What are your thoughts on non-violent resistance? Have you heard of it? Does it “work”? Does it even matter if it “works”? Do you think you have the courage to resist evil and violence in this way? (*I do not think I do!* - J.M.)

* Jeremy Myers is a popular author and blogger who writes at RedeemingGod.com. He says that his goal is “... to liberate Scripture and Theology from the shackles of religion”. His books have helped new and young Christians learn to follow Jesus in a more relational way.

Towards a New Theology of Peace

By Terrence J. Rynne (Sojourners) *

In 2016, the Vatican hosted a historic convocation focused on what Pope Francis called “the active witness of nonviolence as a ‘weapon’ to achieve peace.” Eighty participants from around the world told striking, at times heroic, stories of nonviolent peacemaking at the Rome gathering, convened by the Catholic peace movement Pax Christi International and the Vatican’s justice and peace office.

Many of them arrived directly from situations where they are mediating between violent factions using pragmatic non-violence fueled by Christian faith—as in Uganda, Iraq, Colombia, and Mexico. Others are engaged in nonviolent peace-building in regions recovering from traumatic violence—as in Sri Lanka, Kenya, and the Philippines. Some are active in unarmed civilian accompaniment, shielding people under threat of violence—as in Palestine, Syria, and South Sudan. Theologians, ethicists, and international policy negotiators contributed broader context to the situational experiences.

The conversation focused on four key questions:

- (1) What can we learn from experiences of non-violence as a spiritual commitment of faith and a practical strategy in violent situations across cultural contexts?
- (2) How do recent experiences of active nonviolence help illuminate Jesus’ way of nonviolence and engaging conflict?
- (3) What are the theological developments on just peace and how do they build on the scriptures and the trajectory of Catholic social thought?
- (4) What are key elements of an ethical framework for engaging acute conflict and addressing the “*responsibility to protect*” rooted in the theology and practices of non-violent conflict transformation, nonviolent intervention, and just peace?

The call of Jesus to be pro-active makers of peace has been strangled in the church. The convocation concluded with an astonishing document, presented to Pope Francis, titled: “An appeal to the Catholic Church to Recommit to the Centrality of Gospel Non-Violence.” Recommendations included a request for a papal encyclical calling Christians to return to their fundamental vocation of non-violent peacemaking. That means rejecting just war theory as the “settled teaching” of the church and replacing it with Jesus’ life and teaching as the foremost guide.

What compelled the group to make these recommendations?

First: Confidence that the life and teaching of Jesus provide a much more appropriate guide for responding to violence and making peace than current just war teaching. The call of Jesus to be proactive makers of peace has been strangled in the church because just war theory was made the center-piece of church teaching on war. The focus on war has diverted Christians from the real challenges of building cultures of *peace*—preventing war, solving conflicts before they fester, building community, and reconciling peoples. Recent scripture scholarship makes it clear that Jesus took nonviolent action to resist oppressive structures of violence. He was nonviolent himself, and he used nonviolent action to resist the oppression of his time. In his life and his teaching, especially in the Sermon on the Mount, he showed an alternative to “*fight, flight, or accommodate*”:

“Weaponless Resistance” -- Love your enemies; do good to those who persecute you. Turn enemies into friends by the way you live.

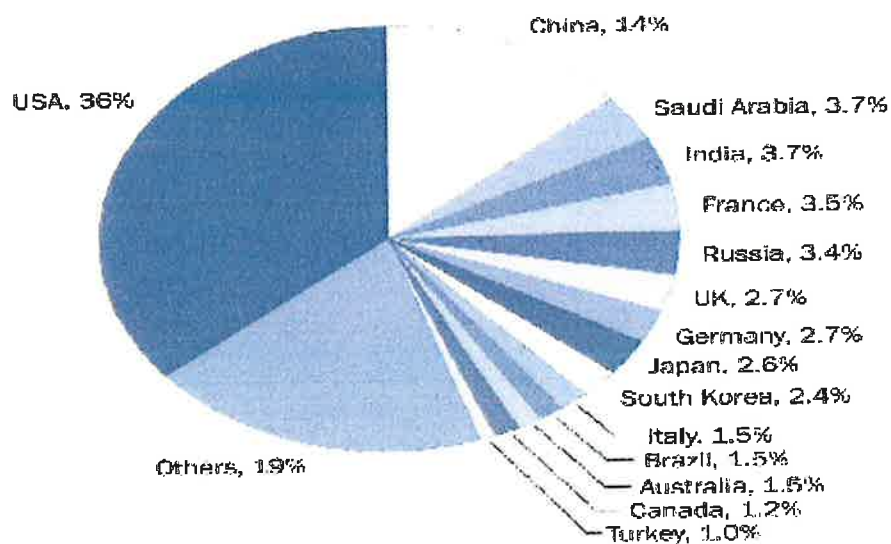
Second: The early church consistently followed the Sermon on the Mount, and they took great pride in doing so. They refused to join the revolt against Rome. They returned love for hate as they endured Roman persecution. They so demonstrated Jesus’ call to peacemaking that, as Thomas Merton said: “Christianity overcame pagan Rome by non-violence.”

Third: Active nonviolence is both faithful and effective. Those who gathered in Rome had all witnessed the dead-ends of violence and surprising successes using nonviolent strategy. Policy analyst Maria Stephan shared the ground-breaking research she has done with Erica Chenoweth scrutinizing more than 300 resistance campaigns. Their data found that *“between 1900 and 2006, campaigns of non-violent resistance were more than twice as effective as their violent counterparts.”*

Some of those who have criticized the Vatican conference invoked the tired old debate between just war and pacifism—missing the point altogether. The topic at issue here is *“proactive, positive, nonviolent strategic peacemaking”*, an emerging body of data, theology, and praxis that goes well beyond the false choices of justifying war or refusing to confront it.

* Terrence J. Rynne, author of *Jesus Christ, Peacemaker*, is founder of the Marquette University Center for Peacemaking. His article appeared in the July 2016 issue of *Sojourners Magazine*.

The share of world military expenditure of the 15 states with the highest spending in 2018



Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database
(29 Apr. 2019)

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WHAT WORLD IS POSSIBLE AFTER THE PANDEMIC?

THE CORONAVIRUS HAS FORCED A GLOBAL SABBATH ... WILL IT ALSO LEAD TO A GLOBAL JUBILEE? - BY ROSE MARIE BERGER / SOJOURNERS (June 2020)*

WE DON'T KNOW the full extent of the coronavirus pandemic. We know of the many who have died as a direct result of infection. We know that whole countries have turned on a dime to shield themselves from the shadow of death as it passes over. We don't know where it will lead.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Rebecca Solnit wrote, *"Horrible in itself, disaster is sometimes a door back into paradise, that paradise at least in which we are who we hope to be, do the work we desire, and are each our sister's and brother's keeper."* Solnit reminds us that disasters and plagues sometimes signal liberation.

COVID-19 has forced the human community into mourning. In our retreat from the work-a-day world, it has imposed a global sabbath and Jubilee. Staring into this *"cruel scourge"* as John of Ephesus described the Justinian plague in the year 545 C.E., can we also see that another world is possible?

The Jubilee legislation found in Leviticus 25 lays out a vision for *"social and economic reform unsurpassed in the ancient Near East,"* according to Robert K. Gnuse. The Jubilee laws declared that Yahweh was the rightful owner of all the earth, and therefore all Israelites—rich and poor—have an equal right to its abundance, within limits. In an economic system based on land and its produce, this was a radical transformation. The legislation undercut wealth disparities by preventing land speculation and by mandating debt forgiveness and interest-free loans. Finally, it ordered the release of the enslaved and those in debtors' prison.

God created the world with abundance, but also with perimeter alerts. Pandemics are just one alarm bell the earth is sounding. Rising sea levels, melting polar ice, and disrupted seasons are all part of the earth's complex warning system alerting us that humans are living beyond our limits.

In March, traffic levels in New York City were down 35 percent and carbon monoxide dropped by 50 percent. Notably, scientists say that we may see carbon dioxide emissions as low as during the last financial crisis in 2008. When extractive global economic activity is reduced, greenhouse gases plummet. Wealth disparities are not a given, they are a choice. Proponents of an unfettered free market have become socialists overnight—demanding direct payments to most U.S. taxpayers, increases and expansion of unemployment benefits, industry bailouts at levels that essentially nationalize whole sectors, the underwriting of struggling hospitals and health care systems, and the launching of a newly trained American workforce into production of COVID-19 protective equipment and testing supplies. We can choose to distribute wealth more equitably.

In a crisis, CEOs (or magazine editors) are not *"essential workers."* Instead, we rely on grocery clerks, physician's assistants, truck drivers, plumbers, first responders, farm workers, IT administrators, and short-order cooks. Is it time to pay essential workers a salary and benefits package that matches Boeing's CEO? Essential workers should be feeling their political power and leveraging it. This spring, we saw local governments across the U.S. release thousands of inmates to prevent virus outbreaks. Prosecutors demanded the release of nonviolent offenders, the elderly and sick, those within six months of completing their sentences, and those who cannot afford cash bail. What about forgiving their prison debt too? An important component of Jubilee is the release of slaves and prisoners, forgiveness of debts, and the manifestation of the mercies of God.

"If paradise now arises in hell," wrote Solnit, *"it's because in the suspension of the usual order and failure of most systems, we are free to live and act another way."* This liberation, forged in exhaustion and personal grief, must build power for the world that God intends—one where earth is sacred, mutual aid brings pleasure, labour is fairly compensated, economic inequity is diminished, priority is given to family and kinship, and praise of God is commonplace. It is ours to choose.

* Rose Marie Berger is senior editor of *Sojourners* magazine, a contributor to the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative (a project of Pax Christi International), and author of *Bending the Arch: Poems* (2019).