

# Justified war in recent American Theology

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CHRISTIANS ARE INCLINED to shrug their shoulders when conversation turns to the ethics of war. It is a subject on which the church, for all its tireless discussing, can still reach no conclusion; and although there are always a few who are resolutely decided one way or the other, most feel they can contribute nothing to the discussion except their bewilderment, and so prefer not to commit themselves. But non-committal attitudes are possible only for those who are not immediately involved. The role of the United States in recent world history has forced upon many American Christians serious crises of conscience, and these have given rise to a theological debate which has reviewed rather more carefully than we have had cause to do in Britain the considerations which may lead Christian people to favour pacifism or to oppose it. The debate has not left Christians less divided than they were, yet from it there have re-emerged with a new clarity certain principles which were once fundamental to Christian thinking and may prove the most fruitful source for a new Biblical assessment of modern war and statecraft. These principles, which I shall call 'Augustinian', treat of war and politics in the context of Christian doctrines of the fall and of redemption.

They come sharply into focus in the work of Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971), from whom the modern debate takes its rise. His message broke like a storm upon the American churches in the 1930s; it said that pacifism was a sub-Christian and sentimental illusion, sentimental because it concealed the truth about how politics worked, sub-Christian because it ignored the facts of human nature taught by the Christian doctrine of sin. It had been the great mistake of liberal Christianity to sell its birthright for an illusory notion of human perfectibility. Individuals might in some measure deny themselves and aspire to disinterested justice, but societies could never do so. Niebuhr's stern thesis was stated *in nuce* in the title of his early *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. It owed much to Marx, whose ruthless analysis of societies and

their motivation was turned back upon the Marxist state itself. Less directly it owed much to St. Augustine. As Augustine had taught that all human societies sought peace in their own way, but an *unjust* peace, and that the City of God, *en route* to the only true peace, had to make such use of their transitory and imperfect peace as it could;<sup>1</sup> so Niebuhr held that Moral Man had no option but to live in society, self-seeking as it must be, and to accept that it was the coercion of the weak by the strong which made society cohesive. What was true of pagan societies was true equally of Christian ones. Moral Man could not withdraw from Immoral Society, for he would take it with him wherever he went.

Violent coercion differed from non-violent only as species differ within a single genus. Niebuhr rejected altogether the suggestion that non-violent political action was intrinsically superior to violent action. For coercion was a continuum from the gentlest of social pressures to the most violent acts of war. 'Once we have made the fateful concession of ethics to politics, and accepted coercion as a necessary instrument of social cohesion, we can make no absolute distinctions between non-violent and violent types of coercion or between coercion as used by governments and that which is used by revolutionaries.'<sup>2</sup> Gandhi's non-violent resistance was really doing the same thing to the British as they were doing, except that he had a strong enough hand to allow him to dispense with fighting. The Czarist regime which fell to the revolution had no *de iure* sacrosanctity about its role as government, and yet to be justified the revolution had also to be successful, for the only justification of violence was the greater social cohesiveness which the new regime could achieve. In such judgments Niebuhr sometimes came close to saying that there was no right and wrong in questions which could be arbitrated by force, but he checked himself short of this. Society is *immoral*, not *amoral*. Moral Man is capable of self-criticism not only with respect to his personal actions but also to the collective actions to which he is party. Nations are judged differently from individuals, and yet it is the same moral code which judges them both. True, we can require of ourselves self-sacrifice and love while of society the most we can ask is justice. True, even this demand is doomed to frustration, for no society could achieve stability without coercion which was in a measure unjust. Yet the crusade for justice may make a difference, may introduce a modicum of responsibility into the strife of nations. Moral Man must continually be demanding of Immoral Society what by its nature it cannot give; but it may give small concessions which make his effort worthwhile.<sup>3</sup>

'The fateful concession of ethics to politics' was not, after all, a final concession. Yet although man's sense of justice may control the selfishness of the ends to which politics aspires, Niebuhr does not envisage any limitation upon the means it may adopt to realise those ends. 'If the purpose of a social policy,' he says, 'is morally and

rationally approved, the choice of means in fulfilling the purpose raises pragmatic issues which are more political than they are ethical.'<sup>4</sup> For the single tool of politics is coercion, essentially the same tool whether its form is an industrial strike or a bombing raid. The only control on its means is the purely pragmatic control imposed by the notorious fact that violence has unpredictable consequences. There can be no absolute proscription of war nor of any method of war, for 'Wars are the consequence of the moral attitudes not only of unrighteous but of righteous nations.'<sup>5</sup> A nation too ready to sacrifice its own interests for the sake of peace may in fact be sacrificing other people's interests as well; this is 'the unholy alliance between Christian perfectionism and cowardly counsels of political expediency'.<sup>6</sup> It was thus that Niebuhr prepared American Christendom for the war which ended at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Behind his rather startling political judgments we can discern the old Augustinian tradition reasserting itself against the optimistic philosophies of the nineteenth century. According to this tradition coercive government was a feature of the world since the fall. Cain, the first builder of cities, was father of all earthly communities, and these still have something of their father's character about them. But their very governmental structures, tyrants, princes and magistrates, are God's provision for fallen mankind to protect him from total anarchy. Justice is their ideal, force their weapon. The Christian views the state with a certain ambivalence. On the one hand it is oriented, however inadequately, towards some kind of justice: the magistrate who 'does not bear the sword in vain' is 'not a terror to good conduct but to bad', and his violence, actual or threatened, is justified by the needs of the imperfect social order which he must maintain. And yet it remains true that those who take the sword perish by the sword; the need for government may authorise the use of violence but never hallow it, for force is never an instrument of God's righteousness. Holy Wars had a special place in the salvation-history of the Old Covenant but were ruled out once and for all by our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane. It would be blasphemy to prosecute with bloodshed the cause of that kingdom which God inaugurated by the cross, and so there is a vast gulf between the kingdom of Cain, founded on bloodshed, and the kingdom of heaven. As a citizen of both the Christian will give Caesar what is his own, the right to his assistance as soldier, judge or hangman in the enforcement of that limited order which is Caesar's concern; but to God he owes it that in his own and in the church's affairs he turn the other cheek and resist not one that is evil. Within this tradition, which gave rise among other things to the thirty-seventh article of the Church of England, Niebuhr stands with the Calvinists who developed a doctrine of 'justified revolution' out of the doctrine of 'justified war' by the fiction of assumed magistracy.<sup>8</sup> But even in this form of the tradition the

right to bear the sword is dependent upon the assumption of full responsibility for the administration of justice and the preservation of order.

## II

IN 1960 Niebuhr wrote of *Moral Man*: 'I am inclined to think that all our contemporary experience validates the basic thesis of this volume.' In 'our contemporary experience' he included the policy of deterrence by threat of massive nuclear retaliation which had been developed during the 1950's, a policy which taken simply as a fact could certainly be said to have validated the sombre thesis of thirty years before, but which also indicated a weakness in it. Did the nuclear age not demand a more-than-pragmatic moral restraint upon society's exercise of its demonic power? It fell to Niebuhr's successors to search for a Christian way of limiting nuclear warfare which would not sacrifice whatever truth there was in Niebuhr's critique of pacifism. Some theologians doubted whether such a restraint on the policy of deterrence was possible; others thought that Christian principles could shape foreign policy but that it was impossible with any precision to say how.<sup>9</sup> But we will confine ourselves to three representative attempts actually to spell out a programme for Christian morality in nuclear deterrence.

John C. Bennett at one extreme was prepared to endorse the policy of nuclear deterrence as it stood. He insisted that it must only be an interim policy until bilateral nuclear disarmament could be effected, for Christians could not acquiesce in the open-ended protraction of the deterrence age; but in the mean time it was necessary to pit threat of force against threat of force. To this, however, Bennett added an absolute prohibition of 'pre-emptive' nuclear strikes. It would always be immoral, he said, to *initiate* the nuclear stage of a conflict. This was an idea already germinally present in State-Department doctrine, for America had always promised that she would never 'fire the first shot' in a war, but that she would be perfectly justified in firing the second. Bennett applied this principle, where Dulles had not applied it, to nuclear combat in particular, and readdressed it thus transformed to his government as the imperative word of Christian ethics.<sup>10</sup>

Yet this principle raises problems. By focussing the moral question upon the first shot it seems to suggest that once the nuclear war has actually begun there are no further moral limits to be observed. Further, it implies that the genesis of nuclear war is entirely within the aggressing nation's control, that because starting a nuclear war is *ipso facto* a wrong act it could never be something to which a nation was driven. This is much too convenient for whichever nation happens to be in the stronger position at the start. For nobody starts

a nuclear war unless he is being beaten in a conventional one, and so the nation that is winning the conventional war claims at once the right of moral outrage that the enemy should stave off defeat in this manner and the prerogative of retaliation with no holds barred. In this view the sin is not to fight a nuclear war (for then it would be just as wrong to retaliate), but to let one begin. Bennett has sacrificed Niebuhr's view of undifferentiated coercion without reaping in exchange a solid moral imperative against nuclear war. But the most serious objection of all is this: the Augustinian justification of violence was based on the defence of some relative justice, the need to preserve some imperfect order of peace. This justification Bennett has replaced with a notion of justified *self-defence*, a novelty in Augustinian ethics which always thought *self-defence* prohibited by the Sermon on the Mount. It may seem an over-nice distinction; but in fact it is supremely important that we should ask of any nation that engages in nuclear war whether it does so to defend itself or to defend the peace, simply in order to keep before it the possibility that it may better defend the peace by refusing to defend itself.

A second view was that of Paul Ramsey, who undertook to reinterpret traditional canons of Just War as a basis for moral thinking about nuclear weapons. He differed strongly from Niebuhr about ethics of means: 'Christian ethics,' he wrote, 'may attribute to ordinary men, and to their political leaders, a capacity to know more clearly and certainly the moral limits pertaining to the armed action a man or nation is about to engage in, than they are likely to know enough to compare unerringly the overall justice of regimes and nations.'<sup>11</sup> The medieval doctrine which Ramsey adopted proposed criteria both of means and of ends by which the justification of any armed conflict might be assessed. Under the head of *justification for war* there were three: the cause must be just, the intention of the nation declaring war must be to establish good and rectify evil, and the declaration must be made by the competent authority. Under the head of *justifiable conduct* there were two more: the direct killing of non-combatants was prohibited, and the war must be prosecuted with measures proportionate to the good intended to result; in particular, it must not be continued beyond the point where it was plainly impossible to win. The purpose of this doctrine was to lay down minimal conditions for any war in which a Christian man might contemplate engaging; for although there is a *prima facie* incompatibility between Christian love and slaying a fellow-man, love itself may drive a Christian to fight to secure his fellow-citizen's life against wanton destruction. But the same love which can sorrowfully contemplate such desperate action also imposes absolute moral limits on how the fighting shall be conducted. The enemy too is an object of love; his life must not be sacrificed to a hopeless cause or for a Pyrrhic victory. Furthermore the aim of war is to suppress a threat to justice, but that threat is born by the enemy

combatant alone, not by his wife and children who ought consequently to be immune from direct and deliberate attack. No Christian should contemplate indiscriminate killing, and so whether or not the killing of non-combatants could hasten the end of the war (perhaps by setting a terrible example of determination and breaking the enemy's morale), even if it could reduce the toll in lives, such an assault on those who were not the bearers of unjust force would always be immoral.

Ramsey insisted that modern warfare, for all its increased destructivity, allowed the same distinction of combatant and non-combatant as war had always done. On the one hand there are now more combatants behind the lines, many of them civilians, engaged in military production or administration. On the other hand the category of non-combatant is as real as it ever was, for comparatively few of a country's citizens are engaged in military activity at any one moment. Of course, the proper administration of civilian life does affect the competence with which the war is waged, but that is nothing new to modern war. It is precisely the point of the canon of discrimination that it recognises, and rejects as immoral, the possibility of undermining the enemy's effectiveness by disrupting the civil life which nourishes his military campaign. In support of the principle of discrimination Ramsey seized upon the distinction current in secular theorists between 'countervalue' and 'counterforce' warfare, the one aiming nuclear weapons directly at civilian populations, the other at military installations. If installations are in cities, certainly many non-combatants will die; but these deaths are incidental to the purpose of a counterforce strike, a collateral result which was foreseen but not directly intended. There is all the difference in the world between this kind of war and the deliberate choice of the enemy's centres of population as the object of attack. Even if a counterforce strike with nuclear weapons killed numerically more non-combatants than the bomb at Hiroshima, nevertheless the thinking behind Hiroshima was immoral in a way that this strike would not be.

When in June 1962 the then Secretary of Defence, Mr. Robert Macnamara, announced that American policy was to be refashioned at least partially on counterforce lines, the news was warmly welcomed by Ramsey. Few other Christian moralists shared his enthusiasm. Another group of thinkers, principally Roman Catholics and also indebted to the medieval tradition, doubted whether this could really satisfy the demands of the five canons of Just War. For Walter Stein and Justus George Lawler nothing but unilateral nuclear disarmament could meet the requirement of proportion, for any act of nuclear war would necessarily cause a devastation utterly disproportionate to the good which was intended.<sup>12</sup> Their disagreement with Ramsey was partly a disagreement on matters of fact: they were less inclined than he to credit the possibility of a useful role in discriminate warfare for lower-range nuclear weapons. It was partly a disagreement about the

implications of deterrence, for although both sides agreed that it could never be right to make commitments to use weapons which it would not be right to use Ramsey saw some point in a deterrence policy which took in a range of weapons which were not actually intended for use. It was partly a disagreement about the meaning of 'proportion': the Catholics were inclined to interpret this canon on a strict act-analysis, and to insist that the damage done by any particular strike would have to be outweighed by the good which that strike, taken by itself, accomplished; Ramsey on the other hand was prepared to throw into the balance the expected consequences of the strike in terms of the shift in political power, and to weigh against the unintended and collateral megadeaths of non-combatants not only the immediate gain of putting a missile-system out of action but also the long-term gain of curbing the enemy's aggression before it impinged upon other endangered but yet untouched victims.<sup>13</sup>

It was possible so to develop the 'nuclear pacifist' argument that one came by a back route to a position of pure pacifism. Even before nuclear weapons were available some Catholic theologians had been saying that just war was not a possibility in the twentieth century, and the arrival of the nuclear age now made this position even more attractive. So long as nuclear weapons were to hand, it could be that any use even of conventional weapons would be bound to precipitate an escalating conflict which no-one could restrain, and in that case, when any act of war was out of control, the canon of proportion must rule out war altogether. Here was reached a strange *concordat* of pragmatic pacifism and the cruder claims made for nuclear deterrence, both asserting that the nuclear age had accomplished the outlawry of war. It was this belief, that war could one day be ended by decree, that Niebuhr had thought the most dangerous delusion of liberal Christianity.

### III

'"MODERN war" is not nuclear war. Instead, the possibility of nuclear war has made the world safe for wars of insurgency.'<sup>14</sup> By 1966, when these words were written, the focus of attention had shifted quite suddenly from the contingencies of nuclear war to the actualities of a conflict which has continued to drain American energies ever since. This change had consequences for the moral questioning of war. The argument for a pacifism based solely on pragmatic calculation was proved wrong by events, for in Vietnam it was established that war in the nuclear age, risky though it must be, does not have to escalate into nuclear war. For the Just War theory, dependent on the possibility of controlled war, this was an important vindication. Yet this theory too had new challenges to meet: it began to appear, as the

war progressed, that the only methods of war which could avail against guerilla incursion were demonstrably immoral, and this put fierce pressure on the claim that wars *had* to be fought and *could* be fought morally. Paul Ramsey defended the possibility, without committing himself to a final assessment, that the war in Vietnam might be a just war, but in this opinion he found himself opposing not only those who had been more critical of the American government's nuclear policies than himself, but also those who had been less critical. Even Reinhold Niebuhr, strangely reversing some earlier positions, entered the lists against the Indo-China engagement.

John C. Bennett's opposition to the war was not so strange. All the criteria that he thought important, that would have led him to contemplate the most terrible nuclear retaliation had it proved necessary, were missing or only ambiguously present in South-East Asia. In particular he had insisted that justifiable warfare must be in self-defence. But in Vietnam it was never quite clear who was the justifiably aggrieved party who had been struck first, it was never clear that the regime in Saigon was the real South Vietnam, and it was never clear that American bombing in North Vietnam was not the kind of deliberate escalation which Bennett had ruled out in the case of nuclear weapons. It is of the nature of guerilla warfare that the first shot is unidentifiable. It is also of its nature that nobody can retaliate in kind against it morally, and here was a weakness in Bennett's formulation of justified war: to the nuclear powers he could say, 'Meet aggressing force with equal force,' but to have met the selective terror practised by the Vietcong with equal counter-terror might have been effective but would most certainly have been wrong. The only alternatives were to escalate or not to resist. If escalation is ruled out on conscientious grounds, then guerilla war is something which may not be resisted, in which case it is a matter of purely theoretical interest that there are other forms of war which may licitly be engaged in.

But Bennett did not press his dislike of escalation to this point; he merely claimed that the techniques actually used in Vietnam, including the systematic devastation of whole areas from the air, were indiscriminate. This view Ramsey contested. Counter-insurgency warfare, he said, does not aim at the non-combatant, but at the Vietcong hiding in the villages, one in five or one in ten of the actual victims. To hide soldiers in villages is rather like surrounding your military base with infants' schools; damage to the innocent is your fault rather than your enemy's, to him it is collateral damage which he does not intend as the consequence of his action. If counter-insurgency warfare as practised in Vietnam was immoral, it was so because it offended against the canons of proportion and was paying what was an intolerable price in non-combatant lives even to catch the Vietcong. But proportion is something for the magistrate to decide upon. Who but he can say what it is worth to save all South-East Asia from communist aggression?



Ironically it might be true that American Just War was doing more damage to Vietnamese society than Vietcong Unjust War could do, yet if such strategy prevented years of war in Thailand could anybody say it would not have been worth it? Two issues arise from this argument. First we notice once again the ambiguity in the idea of proportion. Ramsey freely invokes the expected long-range consequences of military inaction to justify military action which on a strict act-analysis must appear disproportionate. He would agree (for it is at the heart of his ethical theory), that there is a limit to the usefulness of consequential calculation in ethics; what we face here is the problem of determining that limit. Secondly, with regard to the principle of discrimination: killing four innocents while shooting at a single dangerous armed killer may count as a discriminating act (and if twenty potential victims are saved, proportionate as well), but to kill five men of whom we know one is a dangerous armed killer *but not which*, is not so obviously discriminate. The American procedure in Vietnam is not to be compared with the frankly indiscriminate bombing practised by the allies in the Second World War; but neither is Ramsey's comparison of the situation of Vietnamese non-combatants with that of Omaha, Nebraska, where an American military base was irresponsibly located, an exact one. The Russians who might 'unintentionally' destroy Omaha would at least know what legitimate target they were intending to hit, but American bombers in Vietnam did not always know that. Killing the innocent had become for them, not a means to a political end, certainly, but an indispensable means to the legitimate military end of killing the guilty. In no sense was it unintended.

The Word of the Lord which came to the prophet Amos told him that wrong could be done *in* warfare as well as *by* warfare.<sup>15</sup> The strength of the Just War doctrine is that it calls attention to this principle, one which, as we judge from public reaction to Lieutenant Calley's conviction, is hard to accept. The details, however, are open to question. The five canons which assume the authority of Christian love in balancing the need of the neighbour attacked against the claim of the neighbour attacking originate in classical philosophy and are no datum of Christian revelation.<sup>16</sup> Can we be sure that they are not overstated or understated? It would be possible to conceive, for example, that love might also proscribe the use of drafted armies;<sup>17</sup> or that the requirement of magisterial declaration might, as in the theory of justified revolution, be loosened. If we hold some things taboo at the cost of losing the war if necessary, why should we not hold more things taboo out of love for the enemy, or fewer things so that love for the beleaguered fellow-citizen might have more efficient expression? This question applies as well to the canons of justification for declaring war as to those of justified conduct. We may observe that there are cases of international injustice in which our neighbour under attack has no claim upon us which could justify our slaying the

neighbour attacking. If, for example, the only concern of the aggressing neighbour is to exchange one kind of government for another, then, although such a *coup* may be an act of political injustice, is there any reason why we should resist it at the cost of bloodshed? There are many injustices in the world and not all of them should be righted by war. It needs more cause than national or political self-defence to spill man's blood, for although by God's ordinance our neighbour has a right to live peaceably and honestly and to have easy access to just courts for the redress of wrongs, he does not have a right, however desirable it may be and however useful as a bulwark for these other rights, to choose the kind of government he will live under. But faced with the kind of attack on society which aims to secure political change by causing a breakdown in government, the Christian President would be bound to defend the right of his citizens to social stability by all proportionate and discriminating means.

If coercion is an unbroken continuum allowing of only relative distinctions, and if the point of the Just War theory is to mark out certain means of coercion, and not coercion itself, as immoral, it might be possible so to modify the doctrine as to proscribe any coercion which involved direct and intentional killing. Thus the notion of non-violent resistance would be re-established, not, as some of its advocates have claimed, as itself an expression of Christian love, but, more realistically, as a limitation which love imposes upon a necessary evil.<sup>18</sup> In fact the doctrine as it now stands would require by the canon of proportion the use of non-lethal methods of warfare just as soon as they should become available. What it should never be made to do, however, is to outlaw coercion by systematically outlawing all its possible forms one by one, for this would be a surrender of its Christian assumptions about man in society. As it is the responsibility of those who urge nuclear disarmament at the same time to urge conventional rearmament, so, if we are to prohibit killing in war, we are bound to show how war can be conducted without it. 'Non-lethal' warfare might include economic sanctions and the use of weapons such as non-lethal gases which, though now forbidden by international convention, might appear more humane as substitutes for killing than they could ever be as accompaniments to it.<sup>19</sup> But we must face the difficulty that these methods are effective only in special circumstances. Rubber bullets and C.S. gas are valuable for crowd-control but no use against snipers. India has never been able to apply Gandhian principles to her conflict with Pakistan. The most generally effective form of non-lethal warfare may appear to be economic sanctions; but, although our recent experiences in Rhodesia have shown that these can be partially effective when there is a consensus among the nations to apply them, they are unwieldy, unpredictable and slow, not to mention the difficulty of applying them discriminately. Negotiation itself, so often recommended as an *alternative* to the killing-war, is in

fact dependent upon it, rather as a game of chess on paper depends on the possibility that it might be played on the board. For when negotiation yields a settlement, it is because one side has convinced the other (or both sides each other) that it is willing and able to exercise effective coercion if forced to do so. All we can say is that if the day ever comes when countries are able to enforce their wills by discriminate means of warfare which do not involve killing, the Christian will demand that they use these means only. Until that day nations will continue to rage lethally, and in their negotiations will threaten to rage lethally.

#### IV

OUR review of some recent American writing must prompt the question whether Augustinian political doctrines have any claim to be rooted in Biblical theology. Twice in the New Testament the disciple of Christ is characterised as 'peacemaker', and the pacifist quite reasonably asks on the basis of such expressions whether the Augustinian theologian's willingness to accept war as a given fact of human nature is not a premature capitulation to a state of affairs in which the Christian should have no part.<sup>20</sup> A reply would have to include a careful analysis of the concept of 'peace' in the Bible. What follows is simply a rough sketch of how that analysis might be developed.

Peace is a twin of righteousness. It is often associated either with the conquest of the enemies of righteousness in war or their submission to a display of God's might. This state of peace is sometimes explicitly identified with the triumph of Israel, who is enabled by God's power to hold her enemies at bay. Thus at Ps. 46:8f. God's action in making wars to cease is treated as a work of desolation, breaking the bow, shattering the spear and burning chariots. And the abundance of peace which is to bless the king's reign at Ps. 72:7ff. is linked with a dominion which brings foes to bow before him and lick the dust.<sup>21</sup> This association is particularly clear in the context of the conquest of Canaan. The peace which Israel is promised in her new homeland includes the ability to rout her enemies decisively. Peaceful coexistence, where it is allowed, implies dominating her rivals to the point of enslaving them. The peace of Canaan is achieved only after a Holy War in which the enemy is destroyed and dispossessed, and it was Israel's failure to observe all the ruthless provisions of Holy War that led to the inadequacy of her peace when finally she was settled.<sup>22</sup>

Throughout the Old Testament there remains the hope that God will give that peace which was not fully won at the time of conquest, a hope renewed by God's promises to the house and city of David. In the prophets, both pre- and post-exilic, these promises are taken to apply to the triumph of the latter days, effected once again by Holy War,

when Jerusalem will be the legislative centre of the world and war will end.<sup>23</sup> Later it was said that the name Salem meant 'peace', *šālôm*, and, philological considerations aside, this was a correct understanding of what the name of the city suggested to a Jew who believed God's promises.<sup>24</sup> In the meantime, however, there was the harsh reality of exile which made the peace of Jerusalem a rather distant prospect. The exiled Jews were instructed to seek the peace of their exile community, which meant to apply the principles of communal order and harmony in circumstances where they were only partially and temporarily realisable. The Jew did not abandon his hope for the latter end, but pending his triumphant return to Jerusalem he set himself, as an interim-ethic, to seek the good of the Babylonian community. Even in his exile in (literal or metaphorical) Meshech and Kedar, he was a lover of peace, a designation which no more there than in Canaan allowed him simply to coexist with the forces of disruption and evil, but rather required him to curse them roundly.<sup>25</sup>

In the New Testament we find a sharp qualitative differentiation between the interim peace of the temporary exile and the ultimate peace of the city of God. This is because the apostles, in hailing Jesus as the Messianic king, learned to understand his kingship in a new way. The Holy War by which the kingdom is established is not fought with swords, as Peter was taught in the garden, but by suffering and submission. The Jerusalem to which God's promises apply is not the city which will be torn down, stone from stone, but the fellowship of those who confess Jesus as Messiah. Jesus' kingdom is not simply greater or more durable than the kingdoms of the world but completely different from them; and from this sharp differentiation arises the characteristic double commitment of the Christian, to Caesar for the limited purposes of earthly community and to Christ for his citizenship in heaven. The earthly peace is still maintained, for as long as it lasts, by the threat of the sword, but the heavenly peace which must transcend and replace it is won by the Cross.<sup>26</sup> This is the basis for excluding pacifism on the one hand and Holy War on the other. According to the Augustinian critique the pacifist acts as though he believed, like Hymenaeus and Philetus, that the resurrection is past already, that the kingdoms of the world have already become the kingdom of Christ.<sup>27</sup> But the Christian who would presume to defend the cause of God's righteousness with earthly weapons is equally misguided; he lives in a world before Calvary and does not know how spiritual battles are fought. Both have ironed out what is in the New Testament an essential ambivalence towards earthly government and its violent methods into either straightforward rejection or straightforward acceptance.

A young American wrote to his draft board last year: 'I believe that war is the result of man's sin on earth and that sin is the result of men not trying to seek God's help and strength . . . I feel that by joining

the military I would be disregarding Christ's teaching and compromising my faith in Christ . . . I would only be increasing the proportions of the conflict which has resulted from man's sin . . . I believe that the non-violent way of Jesus Christ is the most powerful force on earth . . . the Christian social movement has the backing of the ultimate power of God.' It is interesting that as the non-Christian youth of America turns more and more to uncritical acceptance of violence, Christian youth turns to uncritical acceptance of pacifism. Thus they both agree, in different ways, that they are citizens of one community and not two. Pacifism and bellicism, violence and non-violence, often appear to be just two sides of the same new penny, both staking everything on the here-and-now. But if a Christian belongs to two communities, then there arises the possibility of controlled violence. It is a matter of urgent pastoral and theological concern that we should be able to say in which direction the logic of a Biblical faith points us.

- <sup>1</sup> *City of God* XIX, xii (everything seeks some kind of peace), xvii (the Heavenly City makes use of earthly peace), xxi (there never was a Roman Republic, because there could be no justice in an earthly state).
- <sup>2</sup> *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (Scribner, 1960) pp. 179f.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 108.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ib.* pp. 237f. Cf. *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics* (SCM, 1936) p. 205, 'Every moral action takes place in a whole field of moral values and possibilities in which no absolute distinction between means and ends is possible.'
- <sup>5</sup> *An Interpretation*, p. 126.
- <sup>6</sup> *The Nature and Destiny of Man* Vol. 11 (Nisbet, 1943), p. 92.
- <sup>7</sup> Rom. 13: 4.
- <sup>8</sup> *Man's Nature and His Communities* (Scribner, 1965) pp. 25f. Cf. Paul Ramsey, *War and the Christian Conscience* (Duke, 1961) pp. 114ff.
- <sup>9</sup> I take these to be the views of Kenneth W. Thompson (in John C. Bennett (ed.), *Nuclear Weapons and the Conflict of Conscience*, Lutterworth 1962, pp. 69ff.) and Donald Evans (*Peace, Power, Protest*, Toronto, 1967, p. 1ff.).
- <sup>10</sup> John C. Bennett, *Christian Faith and Political Choice* (Toronto, 1963) pp. 42ff. Cf. Robert W. Tucker, *The Just War* (Johns Hopkins, 1960) pp. 1ff.
- <sup>11</sup> Ramsey, *op. cit.* p. 32.
- <sup>12</sup> James Finn (ed.), *Peace, the Churches and the Bomb* (Council on Religion and International Affairs, New York, 1965), pp. 20ff., 73ff. (Stein), 32ff., 85ff. (Lawler).
- <sup>13</sup> Lawler, *loc. cit.* p. 90; Ramsey, *The Just War* (Scribner, 1968) pp. 281ff.
- <sup>14</sup> Ramsey, *The Just War*, p. 437.
- <sup>15</sup> Amos 1: 1-2: 3. Cf. Deut. 20: 19f which forbids the destruction of fruit trees in the course of a siege.
- <sup>16</sup> Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes towards War and Peace* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1961), pp. 38-42.
- <sup>17</sup> Cf. Bennett, *loc. cit.*, p. 54.
- <sup>18</sup> The former, more idealistic interpretation of non-violent resistance was influentially propounded in America by a disciple of Gandhi, Richard B. Gregg. Cf. *The Power of Non-Violence* (James Clarke, 1960) p. 131: 'Loving action is never dissipated or lost . . . Gentle loving-kindness thus absorbs and counter-balances the extra energy of aggression. By comparison with a struggle of mutual violence non-violent resistance enables the forces of the whole to reduce greatly the destruction.'
- <sup>19</sup> Cf. Ramsey, *The Just War*, pp. 465ff. on incapacitating gases.
- <sup>20</sup> Matt. 5: 9; Jas. 3: 18.
- <sup>21</sup> Cf. Ps. 68: 30: the nations which delight in war are to be 'scattered', presumably by some violent intervention.
- <sup>22</sup> Lev. 26: 6ff.; Deut. 20: 10ff.; 11: 23ff.; Judg. 2: 1ff.

- <sup>23</sup> Isa. 2: 2ff.; Mic. 4: 1ff.; Isa. 26: 3ff., 11ff.; 32: 17ff. Of the temple: Hag. 2: 6ff. Of the Messianic king: Isa. 9: 2-7; Mic. 5: 5f.; Zech. 9: 10.
- <sup>24</sup> Heb. 7: 2. Cf. Ps. 122: 6ff., especially the assonance, *ša'elû šelôm yrûšälām*.
- <sup>25</sup> Jer. 29: 7, 11; Ps. 120: 5ff., 3ff.
- <sup>26</sup> Matt. 26: 52ff.; John 19: 36; Mark 12: 13ff.; Phil. 3: 20; 1 Tim. 2: 2 (cf. Jer. 29: 7); Rom. 13: 2; 1 Pet. 2: 13f.
- <sup>27</sup> Cf. 2 Tim. 2: 17f. Pacifism does not have to be optimistic, cf. Bainton, *op. cit.* pp. 266f; but a pessimistic pacifism must either assume that it will never persuade enough people to put a nation at risk, or else cling to an act-analysis morality and disavow responsibility for the consequences.