

PACIFISM

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I. Introduction

“Violence never solves anything.” I'm sure you've heard this before. It is a common expression in our modern society. Whether coming from Christians or secular liberals, this phrase sums up one of the most popular ideas of our time—nonviolence, pacifism. The effects of pacifism in our society are pervasive: Every politician when justifying military force must contend with it; every lawmaker or enforcer must deal with it when explaining the need for proportional use of force in dealing with criminals; and every historian must force his subject to pass muster before this modern pacifist ideal. Ideologically, pacifism reigns supreme: It wins the debate on every college campus; many parents tutor their children with this ideal; and most preachers and public figures must parrot the rhetoric of pacifism. It is the message of the pop-culture when dealing with issues of conflict: Bono, the singer for the rock band U-2, croons about the “great” figures in our time who acted “In The Name of Love,” and the Black Eyed Peas ask us “Where Is All The Love?” One can muster a universe of facts against this faith, and yet its believers are impervious to any reason or logic that contradicts it. And even though its true-believers are a minority, the majority pays lip-service to its tenets, at least in public, as if its “truths” are self-evidence. While the majority of Westerners frankly are chasing after materialism and self-interest (the American Dream), if they were to get what is now called a “social-conscience,” this secular liberal pacifism is considered the height of piety in the modern era. It is one of the most powerful ideas in history—if by powerful one means popular. And like most popular ideas it's based upon lies, half-truths, and delusions.

Generally the pacifist influences in our society come in two categories. There is the Christian variety, or those who claim to derive their pacifist beliefs from the teachings of Christ. Besides the religiously oriented variety, there is the popular secular liberal kind with its saints Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. The latter variety has an amalgam of influences: liberalism, Christianity, classical humanism, Fabian socialism, Buddhism, and the Enlightenment.

Fundamental Christianity's influence in our society has been on the wane in the last half-century, and has largely been replaced by this latter quasi-religious secular liberalism, a sort of secular spirituality that has a strong pacifist message. It's the kind of message as pushed by Hollywood in their love everybody, feel-good, culturally and religiously neutral movies. Its primary messages are tolerance, equality, diversity, and nonviolence. Current day popular Christianity is largely a reflection of the society in which we live, as most religions are, and this society is overwhelmingly dominated by this secular liberal pacifism. This type of Christianity sounds exactly like the Hollywood message, with the exception that it still uses Jesus and his teachings to support its belief system. The likely consequences of a society dominated by these influences are far reaching and potentially catastrophic.

What I will try to explore in this essay is whether or not pacifism, of whatever variety, is a tenable, consistent philosophy, and whether adherence to pacifism is more harmful than the evils it seeks to curtail. Originally my focus was to be exclusively on whether or not the Judeo-Christian religious tradition teaches an absolute

pacifism. Christianity's supposed pacifism is a common theme argued today, and one I was eager to dispel. But once I was into the essay it seemed impossible to explain how pacifism impacts Christianity without at the same time including many general facts and themes of the secular world. Consequently, even though the focus of the piece is on Christianity and pacifism, an explanation of other topics—war, ideology, law enforcement, society—is necessary to put Christianity and pacifism into the context of society and history.

The first section is meant to lay the groundwork for discussion on pacifism and religion by taking a no-nonsense view of how all societies use force to organize and maintain their existence. It is one thing to hope, as the pacifist does, for a world where force will never be necessary, but the reality is that society is saturated with the use of force. (By force, I am talking about the common definition of force: coercive or violent physical measures used by humans against other humans.) I will argue that the facts of life in our society demonstrate that force is an integral necessary part of our existence. The state first and foremost uses armies to protect the external integrity of the nation, the nation being birthed in warfare and maintaining its existence through the use of armed force. And internally, the state uses force to regulate the conduct of its citizens by enacting, adjudicating, and enforcing laws. Reform them as you may, these two elements (armies and laws) are essential in modern civilization, and no society now or in the past has been able to do without them. Furthermore, any participant in a society organized by force has, by virtue of that participation, at least implicitly consented to the idea of force. It matters not whether one personally uses force.

The second part of this essay is devoted to dispelling the vogue notion that Christianity propounds an absolute pacifist creed. Although it has a pacifist tendency within it, Christianity is not a pacifist religion. Christian pacifism is a product of its early ascetic practices. Almost all philosophies and religions have their ascetic tendencies. In their quest to divorce themselves from the impurities of this world, the ascetics curtail certain conduct seen as holding them back from enlightenment, purity, and Godliness. Three of the most common “worldly” activities ascetics eschew are sex, business activity, and violence. Usually, asceticism is seen in the beginnings of a tradition when it is still in its nascent phase. And usually there is a transition period where the extreme expressions of asceticism are modified and the tradition then turns to embrace and reform the world rather than break from it entirely. Instead of a condemnation of all worldly concerns, a controlling influence is promulgated. Because physical force is such an integral part of society, the new religion sanctifies violent actions under proscribed conditions rather than condemning it outright. Christ's teachings clearly denote a message of moderation and not extreme asceticism. With a complete reading of the Bible cannon, it is hard to escape nay, it is impossible to escape the fact that the Judeo-Christian tradition embraces the use of force in proscribed situations as a necessary part of life on planet earth. And despite the hope in a coming Kingdom of Heaven where the use of force does not exist, the Orthodox Christian must recognize the necessity for physical violence in the upkeep of society while still in the world. Fifteen hundred years of Western Civilization history is a testament to this fact. For without Christian soldiers it is likely that Christianity in its Western form would not have survived.

It is common to hear people make the mistake of ascribing the immediate “cause” of a war to some religions or ideological argument. As if what is being fought for are tenets and principles and so forth. Because it is believed that the war is about ideological causes, the pacifist, and many other people for that matter, argue that armed struggle is often inconsistent with the tenets of the religion or ideology itself. Without a proper understanding of history, it is easy to make this mistake. The third section is designed to try to make clear that armed struggles are generally fought over immediate issues involving existential power clashes. Although it is true that religion and ideology may give rise to the identity of the independent state itself, the immediate causes of a war are likely as not a power disjunction, a clash of power interests that are separate from the religion and identity itself. Because there are many competing independent states with no regulating authority limiting their conduct in the world, clashes with similarly constituted independent states are inevitable. Clashes over territory, economic assets, and anything that affect the security, health, and power of the nation may cause war if the nation's leadership considers those interests vital. Once a clash takes place, the paradigm is victory or defeat, survival or extinction.

In the struggle ideologies and religions serve as weapons in the arsenal of each state as it struggles for power, the power to live as it chooses. If the people of a nation are religious, they will use religion to justify their warlike actions during the power struggle. If they prefer secular ideology to religion, they will use this to justify their armed struggle. They will do this despite any contradiction within the religion or ideology to their actions. In order to win the war nations will ally themselves to nations evincing hostile ideologies or religions. And when their power interests clash, nations will make war on other nations with otherwise friendly ideologies or religions. Although one may make the inference that the religion or ideology may be the origin of the state itself, and that the creation of different states based upon these identity differences makes power clashes and war possible, the immediate cause of war is usually a power clash involving vital interests not religious tenets or ideological principles. Understanding this will help the person sort out why politicians make the decisions during war that are seemingly at odds with their nation's stated religious or ideological beliefs or goals. This does not mean that the religion or ideological beliefs are unimportant in power struggles. No, they are essential in maintaining the identity of the group. The war is generally being fought over whether the group will survive as it wishes or succumb to a group with a hostile identity. In a larger sense this section attempts to scratch the surface on the origins of warfare and how it is inextricably linked to human existence, thus making pacifism an unrealizable dream, for the nature of human freedom itself is the ultimate cause for war. To pacify the planet is to tyrannize against freedom.

Finally, after explaining the incompatibility of principled pacifism with human freedom, I will make a small effort to explain the practice and origins of the current secular pacifism. Gandhi and Martin Luther King are the two figures most commonly seen as the true practitioners of this curious mix of politics and pacifism. I hope to show that both men were practical politicians who used the platitudes of pacifism to further a political agenda that was inherently connected to the idea of force. By taking a look at their lives and actions it is plain to see that these men were not holy men, but rather hardcore, intelligent politicians using a particular tactic to accomplish a specific end. Both attempted to change the laws or the government, knowing full well that the laws and government they wished to take possession of were backed by the use of force. If successful in changing the law or government, neither of the two ever proposed a society where laws would not be enforced or armies would not be used, thus making their claims to pacifism seem less than genuine. Both wanted to take possession of the guns of the state and use them to their liking, but both used a novel tactic to achieve this. The tactic in both cases was to deliberately provoke their opponents to use violent force against their movements in order to build the moral capital that goes with being the victim of aggression. And then they hoped to use this moral capital to elicit sympathy for their causes creating the necessary political power to achieve their objectives. Both used this tactic knowing they were placing their followers in jeopardy, believing that the sacrifices were worth it. Gandhi and King chose not to use armed struggle to further their causes not out of any principled opposition to violence, but rather because the tactic they settled on was more effective in achieving their ends. Looked at closer, no politician, including Gandhi or King, can avoid the association with force and violence; politics and pacifism simply are incompatible.

What is more important is not the tactic use by the likes of Gandhi and King, but rather why are their pacifist platitudes so well received in the Western world today. Why are both revered as the models for political change? It is my contention that they were smart politicians pandering to a toothless society, a society made weak and effete by a comfortable lifestyle. The Western world has become technologically organized to such an extent that most people are not required to struggle in order to stay alive. A huge compartmentalized system has removed them from the necessity of struggle. The battle for life still exists, it has merely been removed from most people's lives, so they take their passive conditions for granted and do not recognize the efforts that technology has made to create their protected condition. The mechanisms that feed, clothe, shelter, and protect the modern citizen are handled by a relatively small minority of the population, thus taking the struggle far from the average person. This is especially true when it comes to the use of force as carried out by cops and soldiers to protect

society. In former times, the average person was closely connected with the battle to survive—hunting, gathering, growing their food, and fighting to protect themselves and their group.

It is a truism that strife is an essential element in producing healthy organisms, not just humans but all organisms. In modern society a huge barrier of protection has been erected around our lives, alleviating the need for hardship and strife. And as a result the individual has become weak, effete, atrophied by a comfortable lifestyle. I believe this explains the prevalence and potency of pacifism in the West. Despite its philosophical pretensions, pacifism in our world is largely a reflection of these enervating conditions. The problem is that when the establishment starts to push the weakening ideals of pacifism, society is made vulnerable to attack by other societies less squeamish about the use of force. If the nation, any nation, is not capable of waging war because its citizens have renounced violence, eventually the nation will become the slave of a nation that has not been infected with pacifist delusions. As Oswald Spengler aptly said, "Pacifism is an ideal, war is a fact. If the Western nations cease to use it, the East will become masters of the globe. History reckons nothing of human logic."

I have written this essay while confined at the Jefferson County Jail. I am allowed a minimum number of books in my cell, which makes referencing names and dates problematical. Many of the references are therefore drawn from memory, so I will beg the reader's pardon if I have cited a name or date incorrectly.

II. Force and Society

Before we look at how Christianity views the use of force, let us look briefly at what role force plays in society. A 18th century rationalist philosopher, Sulzer, once tried to explain to Frederick the Great, king of Prussia, that man's nature was essentially good. He argued that if only society's institutions of "oppression" (jail, courts, military), which he claimed taught men violence, were removed, man would show his natural goodness. Being a ruler confronted with the realities of human nature everyday, Frederick responded to this nonsense, "My dear Sulzer, you know too little this accursed race to which we belong." So in the spirit of Frederick, let us have no illusions about man or the society in which he lives. Let us first see society for what it is rather than what it should be. Aspirations may provide hope and progress for man, but the recognition of reality is necessary for survival.

In this vein of reality thinking, we must acknowledge that force has two essential functions in society. First, force is used to secure the existence of the nation by fighting off or deterring potential competitor nations. Second, enforcement of the laws within this nation is necessary to establish a civil society. Without these two elements organized society would not be possible. An independent nation would not be possible without armies or alliances containing armies, to defend it from potentially predatory nations. And a society of relative peace and order would not be possible without the enforcement of laws. Like Sulzer, one can hope for a Utopia where this basic paradigm of reliance on force is not necessary, but the reality is that every society now in existence is dependent upon this model. Tinker with it as much as the utopians dare, human societies have always functioned that way.

First, the origin of the independent state itself is in usurpation, armed revolution, the overthrow of the hitherto legally constituted government. Trace the history of any nation and you will find the birth of the nation covered in the blood of violent revolution. It is hard to avoid. All political change of this magnitude is usually brought about by force.

Tracing America's political tradition back, one can see some of the violent usurpations that led to the current American system. The British monarchy had its traditional start when William the Conqueror seized control of England after winning the battle of Hastings in 1066. Many more violent usurpations of the crown occurred over the centuries. The Lancasters and the Yorks, for example, fought over the crown for years in the Wars of the Roses (1453-1485). Then, there was the odious Richard III, who seized the throne after having his nephew, Edward V, the proper heir, killed in the Tower of London. Henry Tudor then came to power after defeating Richard at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. Parliament, after many years of struggle, broke with the

monarchy, fighting a bloody civil war (1642-1660). After losing a few battles during this war, Charles I was captured, tried, and beheaded (1649). Oliver Cromwell was then installed by Parliament as Chancellor of the British Commonwealth. Cromwell ruled for ten years, after which Charles II, son of the beheaded Charles I, was restored. From 1660 to 1689, the Stuarts ruled England until Parliament once again rose in revolt, deposing James II in the so-called "Glorious Revolution." Parliament then called upon William of Orange (a realm in Holland) and his wife, Mary, to rule England and take the crown. And finally in the vein of the Glorious Revolution, the colonists of New England revolted against the authority of the mother country in 1776. It is a long and bloody history, but just a drop in the bucket when it comes to the political evolution of all the states in the world.

Once established, every state maintains armies to secure its sovereignty and the integrity of its interests. Because independent states are only limited in their actions by their own power, it is always possible that a state's existence, or its interests, may be threatened by other states. This collision of interests may result in war, depending upon the leadership and how important the interests are that they are contending over. In order to meet this eventuality, states keep diplomats, spies, and armies to secure their vital interests.

Despite popular thinking, most of the major decisions affecting the integrity of the nation are decided upon the battlefield: whether the American people were going to govern themselves was decided by the Revolutionary War; whether America would be divided into two independent states was decided by the Civil War; whether Germany and Japan would be the paramount powers in the world was decided in WWII; whether communism was going to extend itself across the globe was decided by the long conflict of the Cold War. These are just a few salient questions that have affected one state, the United States. Of course, reasonable people agree that diplomacy should be used, and every possibility exhausted short of war; however, all states will use war if their vital interests are threatened. Therefore, while it may be good to promote passive relations among citizens of the same country by pushing the notion that "violence never solves anything," if we are to be honest with ourselves, violence indeed solves most of the important questions in history. Ask Hitler and Tojo if violence ever solved anything.

Along with armies to defend the nation from without, every state must use force internally to maintain a civil society. In order to do this, the state must make, adjudicate, and enforce laws. Laws regulate the relations of citizens. Laws protect the weak from the criminal exploitation of the strong and prevent internal disputes from becoming armed struggles; they keep the internal peace. While it is true that the legitimacy of the state and its laws rests mainly upon the willing and voluntary habit of obedience of its citizens, without the enforcement factor, the laws would remain principles, obeyed at the discretion of the individual. Enforcement implies the use of violent force. If necessary, all laws are carried into effect using deadly force, especially those laws against murder, rape, robbery, and insurrection. There is no government anywhere that will not resort to deadly force in order to procure obedience to its laws. One can argue over the situations and severity of when and how deadly force should be used, but no government can survive if it renounces the use of deadly force in all situations of lawbreaking.

In dealing with internal peace and the usages of law, governments generally function in three divisions: the legislature, which makes the laws; the judicial, which interprets and adjudicates the laws; and the executive, which carries the laws into effect. The crucial part of the three is the executive. Without the executive, the legislature would merely be a debating society, its conclusions carrying no weight except that given by the individual's discretion in choosing whether to obey the laws or not. The judicial would merely be an arbitration hearing, its judgments meaningless without enforcement to see that its judgments are implemented. It is the executive that is the crucial factor in a society of laws. For example, in the U.S. there are three legal jurisdictions: federal, state, and county. The president, governor, and sheriff are the executives in each of these jurisdictions. Without these three entities organized society in America would not be possible. The laws are backed by their guns. Like it or not our society is dependent upon walls, guarded by these men with guns, keeping out uncontrolled human nature.

Societies have evolved variations as to how these three elements—executive, legislative, and judicial—function. In former times, all these functions were intimately connected under the executive authority, the king. The king traditionally made laws, appointed judges, and enforced them to his liking. With the coming of republicanism, the tendency has been to separate these functions within the same government so as to create a system of so called “checks and balances.” This was done to give the people more power and to prevent giving one branch of the government—namely the king—too much consolidated power. Play with this formula as much as they like, any political philosopher knows that the basis to any organized society is the executive authority, which enforces the laws. Please show me the society that does not use force to implement its laws.

If the political system is based upon the enforcement of laws, then it follows that any direct participation in that system is a use of force. One does not have to join the military or police forces to engage in the force of the state, because in a democratic society, such as ours, the citizens are the prime movers, the cops and soldiers are the tools of the citizenry. If one votes, he is using force; if one engages in political activism in order to affect or change the laws, he is using force. And yes, if one pays taxes, he is using force. Soldiers and cops serve the executive, the executive implements the laws of the legislators, and in a democratic society, the legislators and executives serve the electorate. And taxes are used for the upkeep of this system of force.

Despite any claims to non-violent political change, any political activist agitating to change any law is supporting the use of force, for they have every expectation that the laws that they are attempting to change, will, once changed, be enforced. This applies to all activists, despite their claims to passivity. When Gandhi was agitating for Indian independence, he certainly was not calling for the non-enforcement of the laws once that independence was achieved. He wasn't calling for a future Indian state where armed forces would not be necessary. Similarly, when Martin Luther King was agitating to overturn the laws of segregation, he never once said that if he was successful in changing these laws that he would never countenance their enforcement. When did either of these practical politicians call for a society where laws would never be enforced. King knew quite well that if the laws were changed to his liking they would need to be enforced, if necessary with guns and jails. And he knew that in extremis these laws would require deadly force.

Pacifism and politics simply do not mix, except as a propaganda ploy, an image booster. Politics is activity in relation to power, and this power is backed up by force or the threat of force. Is it not inconsistent to participate in a system that is inherently reliant upon force, and, at the same time, condemn the usage of force that is necessary to keep this system afloat? It is also inconsistent and foolish to say that you will use the force of the laws in order to create a society where force will never be necessary. Can a pacifist wage war to create a world where war will not exist? That is absurd. Certainly it is legitimate to use force to limit the occasions of war, to bring about a more peaceful world. The basic idea of the laws is to use a superior amount of force to deter crime, and it is basic foreign policy to deter aggressors by keeping a superior military. But it is not possible to conclude that the superior use of force will ultimately result in a utopian society where wars will never happen. And in a world where crime and war are permanent features, it is a poor leadership which would allow a philosophy of pure pacifism to take hold in their society, knowing that they may need to call upon their citizens to defend themselves or their nation. Of course, there is the occasional politician hiding behind the mask of pacifism. If he actually believes that he can be a pacifist and a politician, you are dealing with a fool, but more often it is a practical politician using the language of pacifism to pander to a toothless constituency. In this case, he is a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Let us then take this argument to its logical conclusion: if a person participates in any society based upon the force of the state—the war-making and law enforcement powers—he is indirectly supporting the use of force. There is probably no activity within society that is not affected in some way by the laws that regulate that society. Please, think of some activity, product, or benefit that is not affected by the regulating and protecting activity of the state. If one lives within the boundaries of an organized state, owns property, lives in a house, buys groceries, receives health-care, drives or walks on the roads, and clothes himself, he is participating in a state system that

requires force to function. It matters not at all whether he personally uses force, it matters not a whit whether he pays taxes, elects politicians, or agitates for changes in the laws—if he lives in and benefits from modern society he is reliant upon force for his survival. He can hypocritically castigate those who do the heavy lifting for him—revolutionaries, soldiers, cops—but he can not find an organized society on this planet that is not dependent upon them.

If he purchases some apples at a grocery store, for example, they are stained in the blood that was necessarily shed to create and maintain the society that allowed them to be grown, delivered, sold, and finally eaten in peace. Even though he may wash the blood off, they would not have made it to his mouth without that blood being shed: The land where they were grown was located within the borders of a nation that was birthed in blood and now requires armies for its protection. Then there are the laws securing the property rights and civil rights of the farmer. Also, there are laws regulating the sale of apples, protecting those who purchase them from being poisoned or cheated, and even the process of traveling to the co-op in a truck on state maintained roads is regulated. There are literally hundreds of laws and regulations that somehow affect those apples as they make their way to his mouth, all of which ultimately depend upon force.

There are few places on this planet that are touched lightly by a state and its laws. To break all contact with a society contaminated by force, one would have to travel to the lawless regions of the Amazon, New Guinea, Sudan, or maybe the Upper Congo. It's only there you will find that the tentacles of state regulations do not grip tightly. But, despite the lack of laws, our immigrant pacifist would not be able to escape the use of force. If he were to live in such conditions of complete anarchy, force would certainly be necessary; however, instead of the state wielding the sword with its cops and soldiers, the pacifist himself would have to use force to defend life and limb. And I do mean limb: New Guineans are still quite fond of taking desiccated body parts as trophies from their enemies. Living in a place where the laws of the state do not extend, would in fact be a textbook lesson in why force is an essential element in the creation of a civilization. Confronted with the daily struggle to survive in such a place, the pacifist would quickly see that his notions of pacifism are truly the luxury of a protected class of people living in an organized society. The pacifist is so well protected that he forgets his protectors, and takes for granted the state of peace created for him by these protectors. He is so far removed from the necessity of struggle that he begins to think that struggle is not necessary. The reality is he does not appreciate that the struggle is being waged for him by others, who fight his wars for him and keep predatory criminal behavior at bay. This ingrate sits around his café sipping on lattes, railing against the “fascist brutality” of the police and military, when it is only because of the efforts of cops and soldiers that he is allowed to sit peacefully breathing out such inanities.

Despite the charming folksy ways of the Amish, there can be no private pacifist in Idaho. The Anabaptist sects of Christianity—Amish, Mennonite, Quakers—have traditionally sought to completely separate themselves from society because of its inherent connection to force. They wanted to set up a society that was not tainted with these “worldly” things. Likewise, modern pacifist believers preach their toothless humanity while they are safe and sound on the campuses of this nation. But whether they are in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, or in Berkeley, California, both types of pacifists are in ideological fantasy land. They take no cognizance of the larger society around them that insures their existence and continued safety. One can personally remove himself from the use of force, but no society, even a society within a society, can do away with the need for force. That is what these pacifist communities are: societies within society. And it is the larger society that does the heavy lifting of force for them. The Amish, for instance, are reliant upon the United States military to secure the sovereignty of the land where they have set up their little community. It is the million or so American war dead that has insured the independence of the nation that provides them sanctuary. Although they may pray and preach pacifism all they wish to, it is the policeman, judge, and jailer who keep them safe at night. The Amish as well as the Berkeley pinko take advantage of a society that is saturated by force. When the Amish drive their buggies to town, they refuse to acknowledge that the roads beneath their wheels were paved in the blood of war and law enforcement.

For if they were not, they certainly would not be on these roads, nor would they be able to reach their destination without the forceful regulation of these roads. The same goes for virtually every aspect of society they take advantage of. Rather than being the paragon of virtue, the pacifist is actually an ingrate, relying upon the labors of others to survive, and yet cursing those labors. He curses the mechanisms of society, yet he eats at the table erected by these mechanisms.

In short, force is inextricably linked to human society. It surrounds us in everything we do. Renounce it as you might, you cannot survive without it. All societies are dependent upon governments that were birthed in revolution and require armies, cops, judges and jails to function. All of these functionaries must and will use deadly force to maintain the security of society. It does not matter whether you personally participate in the use of force, every person who takes advantage of society, including a pacifist, is giving his implied consent to the use of force on his behalf. You may stand upon your hypocritical high horse and say that you do not approve of killing. You may get others to do your killing for you—revolutionaries, soldiers, cops. But, like it or not, your existence in society depends upon taking human life.

Given enough time and serious thought, all philosophies, religions, and belief systems come to the conclusion that force is inextricably linked to society, and if they wish to function as a part of that society, they must come to terms with its use. Many religions deal with the demons of extreme asceticism, and with asceticism the complete renunciation of violence; however, most exorcise the demons of asceticism and come to embrace society rather than run from it. Christianity is no exception to this maturing process. With this in mind, the Amish are an aberration and not the reflection of the true faith. The fact that they are still riding around in horse and buggy is an excellent example of how their asceticism is an abject failure to come to terms with the reality of the world.

III. Pacifism and Christianity

I recently read an editorial in relation to my case, in which the writer made the assertion that no Christian could have done these bombings, that the idea of violence runs counter to Christian values. It's a common assertion, one that I've heard more often than I can remember. It has always struck me as a contradiction every time I hear such language. And the contradiction is this: Calvados—I mean the cemetery at Normandy, France, which contains 9,500 Americans killed in the battles there in the summer of 1944. Looking at the monuments that stretch into the distance, I'm reminded of this contradiction. There are thousands of stones, each one marking the burial place of one American soldier, a warrior, someone that died in battle—men of violence. White and stark, the monuments are set in perfect alignment; in the abstract the cemetery is a beautiful sight of geometric application. But the reality is that there beneath the stones lie the remains of lives cut short—cut short by wounds received in battle, war dead. And what is the shape of the white stones set atop of their graves? The cross, the symbol of Christianity, placed by the thousands upon these warriors' graves. Assuming that the assertions of the pacifist editor are correct, I have always been curious about the seeming contradiction of these warriors buried beneath the symbol of a supposedly pacifist religion. Were these apostate Christians who died in disobedience to their creed? It's not a small question, because from Charlemagne to General Patton, many millions of warriors in the Western world have been buried under the cross. Were they all apostates living a sinful life, spitting upon the very monuments that rest upon their bones?

Many people have also asked in relation to this case and this situation: “What would Jesus have done?” meaning what, if anything, would Jesus have done if confronted by the horrors of abortion? Would he have used force, or approved of the use of force to stop it? Or would he have stood idly by praying for the victims as well as the perpetrators? And in a larger sense, if it is the duty of Christians to follow the example of Christ, should Christians ever participate in the use of force under any circumstances? Is Christianity a pacifist religion? These are questions that are often asked in modern life by Christians, theologians, and preachers when situations of force come up, such as self-defense, the defense of others, and also the justification for the organized use of

force: law enforcement, war, and even revolution. Where does Christianity stand on these questions? Bear with me as I attempt to answer these and many other related questions.

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The character of a people's belief-system is often shaped by the social-political-cultural environment in which it exists and the instinct or response that the people who believe in it develop as a result of this environment. Christianity's early character was largely a response to the environment in which it was practiced. In the early days of Christianity, Christians were an unloved minority living in a world hostile toward their faith. And as a result of this hostility they often ran into conflict with the majority. Persecution was a hallmark of the early Church. The question arose as to how Christians should respond to this continual persecution. Because they were a weak minority made up of primarily the urban poor, the Apostles decided to adopt a low-profile and take a passive stance to the provocations of the majority. This passive attitude taken by Christians had less to do with something inherent in the faith than to the contingencies of the situation they lived in that necessitated them taking a passive stance in order to survive in a hostile environment. The overwhelming hostility that Christians had to live with cannot be overstated. Practically all of the early church fathers were killed as a result of their beliefs; Paul was beheaded at Rome after being forced before the Roman courts by the Jewish authorities; Stephen was stoned for preaching the Gospel; James was martyred, and countless other believers met premature deaths at the hands of Jews, Greeks, Romans, Ephesians, etc. The New Testament books were written during this period and this is the chief reason why Christianity handed down a strong pacifist bent and an over-concern with trying to avoid conflicts.

It was only later when Christianity became the establishment religion under the emperor Constantine in the early 300s A.D. that its theology had to come to terms with things like how to carry-out the necessary functions of the state, such as the waging of wars and the enforcement of the laws. These things were written about by most of the church fathers—St. Augustine, St. Anselm, St. Aquinas—contemporary with Christianity's becoming an establishment religion. All had to deal with these new problems that Peter and Paul never dreamed would ever become issues.

With this in mind, understanding verses like Eph. 6:12 becomes less difficult: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” This verse is part of a response by Paul to the Church in Ephesus as to how to deal with their latest conflict with the Greek majority. His advice in this case was to suck it up and take it, for in his view the end of the world was at hand, and essentially the real conflict is between the powers of the spirit not the flesh. This approach to a momentary crisis by Paul has since been used by many Christian preachers and teachers to neutralize physical conflicts and spin Christianity as an essentially pacifist religion. The real interpretation of this verse is, of course, within the context of the conflict which gave rise to it.

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Besides responding to their hostile environment, another reason why Paul and the Apostles thought that issues of politics and force were not very relevant was because of Christ's teaching concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. Christ came in the form of the prophet, not a politician. There are many issues that he, as a prophet, didn't opine upon. He came to heal, preach, and exhort, not fight or engage in political debate or social activism. Contrary to present day myth, Christ was not an ancient day version of Gandhi and Martin Luther King. He did not agitate to change any laws. What was important to him was the next world, not this one. Because of this he spoke to the individual's relationship with God in preparation for the next world. Such political questions as concerned the secular Roman world in which he lived were not necessarily relevant to him, but rather secondary to the individual soul's relationship to God in preparation for His coming Kingdom of Heaven.

The Kingdom of Heaven is both an ethic and an actual otherworldly place, which is characterized by the complete practice of this ethic. Christians believe that they have a duty to their fellow man, and that by service to others they find the true meaning of life in this world and the key to entering the next. This is based upon Christ's Kingdom of Heaven message that he preached to the multitudes on dusty hills and in back-alley synagogues throughout Palestine. Christ taught that the end of the world was near and that he would usher in the next, which he called the Kingdom of Heaven. The fundamental difference between this coming kingdom and the kingdoms of this world, is that in the otherworldly kingdom each soul lives for the interest of others and not for itself. Self-interest, on the other hand, is the ethos of this world of the flesh. Christ delivered this message in simple yet powerful parables (Matt. 13), which have this ethic as their central message: that a man/woman should live in service to something other than one's self. And if one places this law into their hearts, the key to the next world will be theirs. Christians believe that when Christ returns with his kingdom the dead will be raised, and alongside the living, both will be judged according to the deeds they've done in this world (Rev. 20:12). These deeds are recorded in a great Book of Life. In Christ's scales of justice, he will place those works done in compliance with the ethic of the Kingdom of Heaven, and in the other, will be placed sins and works done in service to self. Those found wanting will be thrown into the lake of fire.

This message of the coming kingdom is central to Christ's teaching. He taught that he would usher in this kingdom shortly after his crucifixion and resurrection; however, he was not exact as to when this would occur: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." (Matt. 24:34-36). Uncertain as to his teachings on the coming kingdom, his disciples expected the kingdom to come "shortly" (Rev. 1:1). And because of this expectation, their concerns about day-to-day issues were strictly secondary to this coming kingdom. They believed that the paradigm of the Kingdom of Heaven was different from the kingdom of the world: in heaven, such things as marriage, children, business, war, politics, crime and punishment, pain, and death did not exist; it was a utopia ruled by God where nothing bad ever happened. Christians have ever since the crucifixion been waiting for this kingdom as explicated in Revelations. One cannot understand early Christian thinking without the realization that they believed that this world would "shortly" pass away, and all power here on earth would be "put down." Because early Christians thought that the end of the world was just around the corner, they taught that the concerns of this life and the issues of contention in this world were largely irrelevant and secondary. "Therefore take no thought, say what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewith shall we be clothed ... But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:31-33).

Needless to say the Kingdom of Heaven message affected early Christian teachings with respect to social relations and political-military issues. There developed a sort of dual teaching about the essential belief in the coming Kingdom of Heaven, where on the one hand the issues and paradigms of this world didn't apply, and then on the other, the need for Christians to function within a world that still existed and where the paradigms of the flesh were applicable. With time the Church became more grounded so to speak, and had to issue teachings—bulls, rules, encyclicals—with respect to how the faithful should behave while still on planet earth: Wars had to be fought; laws had to be made and enforced; business had to be engaged in; and marriages had to be consummated for the production of children. Life had to go on, albeit with the hope in the coming kingdom, where all these things didn't exist. It was not that Christians necessarily opposed the things of the world—war, business, marriage, politics—but rather because the core belief was that another world would "shortly come to pass," all of these things were taken with a grain of salt. This is one of the chief reasons why Christian teachings in the Gospels are largely indifferent or ambivalent about the concerns of this world. And this is true when it comes to the necessary use of force.

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To understand Jesus' teachings and how he saw his mission, one needs to look at John 18, Christ's trial before Pilate, in particular verse 36. The Jews try, convict, and sentence him to death for his claims to be God (Mark 14:61-62). Then they conspire to have the Roman authorities execute him by bringing him before Pilate on the false charge of treason, for his supposed claim to be a secular king (John 18:28-30). Pilate asks Jesus if he is a king, and Jesus responds: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." Jesus is a spiritual teacher and has never considered Himself to be a social political activist, or a threat to Roman rule. He has come to earth not to engage in politics, but rather to "bear witness to the truth" (verse 37). His conflicts are therefore rhetorical, spiritual, and intellectual, not physical. In other words, Christianity speaks to the individual soul and its relation to the Kingdom of Heaven—the next world. It didn't have a political agenda per se. But this certainly doesn't mean that Christians can't have a political agenda or involve themselves in politics.

Christ was illuminating one of the fundamental divides within the human experience: the division between the Spirit and the Flesh; thought and action; the universal and the particular; reason and instinct; soul and body; and symbol and reality. This seeming dichotomy has been dealt with by all the great thinkers, holy men, philosophers, and theologians. It's probably the most thought about problem in human history—the invisible world as opposed to the visible world.

The realm of spirit, thought, reason, and symbol is that part of ourselves which is invisible, abstract, pure, and deals with things that are metaphysical and intuitive (nonmaterial). It is that aspect to humanity that uses reason, abstract thinking, intuition and imagination to perceive or build artificial constructs, to develop ideas and establish truths and principles—absolutes. Using these absolutes the acolytes of the invisible divide the world into true and false, good and bad, righteous and evil. In this world all things are made sensible and are logically or intuitively explainable according to the established paradigm. Here, safe from the world of flux, two and two always equals four. In this realm absolute truth is possible, and therefore a perfect world is possible. Here is where utopias are built, heavens are explained, Nirvana is attainable. In these utopias life is perfect, peace is constant, people are reasonable, so wars are unnecessary. Some of its acolytes like Plato and Aristotle use pure reason and logic to "discover" these metaphysical absolutes (Plato's so-called "Ideas": Good, Beauty, Love, Justice), others—Christ, Moses, St. John the Devine—depend upon a revelation from an otherworldly source: God. Both are cousins, related in their dependence upon the metaphysical and invisible. St. Thomas Aquinas and the early Church Fathers realized this and used the non-Christian Plato to help explain Christian theological concepts. This aspect to humanity is the only thing that separates us from the animals, for without self-consciousness, which comes from the ability to imagine or think abstractly, the world would not exist. The world truly exists only for a consciousness with the ability to see itself in relation to the world around it. Of all the creatures on planet earth, humans alone have this ability. On the other hand, the animals, lacking self-consciousness, are not aware of their own existence and the world around them.

Then there's the world of the flesh—material, physical, the world of action. And there is that aspect to our organic physical natures rooted in this world: the desires, emotions, and instincts for self-preservation, sex, and the ever present will to power. Every creature is endowed with this will to be oneself, to impress upon the world its individual mark, to force the world to march to its tune. This will impels all individual creatures forward in pursuit of their own self-interest. Without these instincts we would be unable to feed, reproduce, and defend ourselves. Without them we would not survive on planet earth. As groups are formed—tribes, nations, cultures—they develop a singular will to power as well. All these separate wills chasing their own self-interests inevitably clash; thus producing a world of conflict. It is a world of competition where generally the strong prevail in this war of all against all. This is the world of politics where principles are often secondary to outcome—the end justifying the means. Here one is faced with random facts and not self-evident truths. Often, two plus two equals five, or six, depending upon what the will to power wishes it to be. Things don't make sense in a rational manner; organic will rules the day in this irrational world of flux ruled by time. It is a ruthless ploughing under, where there

is nothing permanent except impermanence. Utopias are not possible in this world, only expediencies based upon continually changing contingencies. Wars, murder, rape, theft and lies are permanent features of this world, and death is the ultimate expression of its impermanence. Here truth is relative to power. Force, not principles, is what rules this world, and in higher civilizations the state is the instrument which actualizes this rule; i.e., the state is organized force. This is the veil of tears that we are all chained to Welcome to planet earth.

Every higher culture produces a class of people who devote themselves to religion, philosophy, and the life of the mind and spirit. At their most extreme they are called ascetics. These wise ones who see deeper, further than the average man, constitute a distinct class within society. They see the dichotomy between the physical and the metaphysical, or religiously expressed, the flesh and the spirit. All priesthoods and schools of philosophy are made up of these sensitive souls. Normal existence is not good enough for these people. While most people accept life as non-problematical, these wise ones see problems everywhere and question why: "Why do we die?" "Is there life after death?" "When and how did the world begin?" "Is there a supernatural power?" "Why is there suffering, desire, pain, crime, war, problems?" "What is the purpose of life?" Most people wonder about these seemingly unanswerable questions, but this class of humanity considers it their life's mission to answer or at least satisfy their curiosity about these questions.

In their quest for answers they almost always develop codes, ethics, rules, and practices which seek to concentrate their energies upon their quest. Toward this they purify, enlighten, make wise, and keep out of their lives all of the evils and problems that they see in the world that are holding them from the truth, enlightenment and purity. This is often called the "ascetic ideal." Asceticism means to deliberately abstain from those activities which are seen as subtracting from their enlightenment, salvation, purity. Among the most common activities ascetics abstain from are sex, business, and violence. (Like most religions and philosophical traditions, Christianity has its ascetic tendencies. It is essential in understanding Christian asceticism to compare it to the ascetic practices of other traditions. But even though I compare various ascetic practices from different traditions, this comparison should not be taken as an argument against the truth of the tradition that I personally ascribe to—Christianity. However, it is helpful in understanding Christian asceticism, and with it pacifism, to compare it to, say Buddhist asceticism. When it comes to asceticism whether Christian, Buddhist, or Platonic, they all approach their ascetic practices in a similar way, and this is the only reason for making comparisons between Christian and Buddhist practices. Similarly, in a discussion on prayer, if one were to use comparisons between Hindu, Muslim, and Christian methods of praying, this should not impact upon whether the god they are praying to is the true one or not. Historical comparison is merely a method of trying to understand the subject of comparison. In this case, it is pacifism and asceticism, not the truth or falsehood of the traditions themselves.)

Sex and domesticity are often seen as detracting from the spiritual quest, and so ascetics often do not marry, have children, or engage in sex. Sex is rooted in the instincts. Marriage and family ground one in this world and the cares and concerns of this world; it is the supreme act of connection with this planet. Life needs to reproduce itself, and marriage and family pays homage to life's demand. Christ and Paul never married. Christ taught that some men, like Him, were made "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (Matt. 19:12). This is the derivation of celibacy within the Christian tradition. Paul followed this practice and hoped that "all men were as myself," i.e., celibate, "but every man has his gift of God, one man after this manner, another after that." Paul counseled unmarried men and women to remain celibate, but if they could not "contain" their desires they should marry (I Cor. 7:7-8). Likewise, Buddha left his wife and son in his quest for enlightenment. He felt that marriage and domesticity would only lead to more suffering (dukkha) as a result of the hated desires, and this would require another reincarnation before one could reach Nirvana (nothingness, nonexistence). Nirvana is the goal of the Buddhist; to not be reincarnated and returned to earth is the object. Life is thought to be a lit candle, and Nirvana is to be the "blowing out" of the flame. Sex connected the Buddha to life and so was avoided. (Mind you, I'm not detracting from my belief in Christ's divinity by comparing his and Buddha's common ascetic practices). Like most philosophers, Plato also had problems with traditional sexual relations. In his Republic, procreation was

a social duty among appropriately matched members of the same class. There was to be no monogamous, separate marriages. And children were to be raised by the state in boarding schools. This was designed to prevent the kind of family politics and infighting that were so destructive in Plato's day. All, in keeping with the ascetic ideal, had a problem with normal sexual relations.

Another activity that ascetics commonly eschew is business or at least aggressive money making. Money making concentrates a person's energies on the acquisition of material things and the need to maintain these things. This ever chasing after material comforts has the tendency to create an insatiable appetite for more and more wealth, what the ascetics call "greed." In every society there are those who are less adept in the competition for wealth; thus creating the division between rich and poor, and the inevitable inequities involved in this disposition. Being concerned with issues of social injustice, ascetics often decry this system of inequality where some have comfort at the expense of those who can't even feed themselves. The pursuit of wealth has the tendency to place things before people. It draws one away from the attempt to transcend the world and devote oneself to principle, truth, and purity. In keeping with this, Christ and his disciples left their professions and lived off the charity of those they preached to. Christ preached against greed, and claimed that one "cannot serve [both] God and mammon [money]" at the same time. (Matt. 6:24) A rich man came to Christ (Matt. 19:16-24) and asked how he can "have eternal life." Christ told him to "keep the commandments," and finally told him to "sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor." Being a rich man, he walked away in "sorrow" at hearing this. Christ then opined to his disciples, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." A very hard doctrine, for the rich anyway. Similarly, St. Francis of Assisi (1200s), the son of a rich merchant, renounced the world and his inheritance to found his Order (Franciscans). As a symbol of his renunciation, he striped off his expensive clothing and walked naked through the streets. The monks of St. Francis' Order were known as the "begging friars," and were often seen in the streets of medieval towns disheveled and starving with a cup in hand. Buddha likewise was the son of a rich Kshatriya (the warrior caste), but left his wealth and privilege behind him, and in the tradition of the Ganges ascetics adopted a life of voluntary poverty. Like Christ, Buddha and his disciples lived off the generous donations of laymen. Indians have always prided themselves upon the charity given to the mendicant monks. In the Classical World, Diogenes the Cynic was famous for his begging in the streets. He was often depicted living in a large earthen jar (the cardboard box of his era).

And then there's the common ascetic prohibition against physical violence. For Christ, it was the ideal of loving one's enemies and turning the other cheek. This is part of the Old Testament tradition to give food and drink to one's enemies, for in doing so one "heaps coals of fire upon their heads." (Proverbs). (This humane treatment was thought to make them mad by giving them unexpected treatment). Christ believed in a policy of compassion and love toward everyone "if at all possible." (Rom. 12:18). He expected the early advent of the Kingdom of Heaven, wherein war, pain, and death would be done away with. Buddha believed violence against humans and animals produced bad karma, thus detracting from Enlightenment and eventual Nirvana.

Violence is irrational and a product of the will to power; It is an activity rooted in the struggles of this world. Almost all ascetics work toward nonviolent solutions, believing in reason, compassion, and perfection. The extreme elements of this ascetic tendency counseled abstinence from all violence. In the Western tradition this was the teachings of the so-called "Anabaptists" sects (re-baptizers)—Amish, Mennonites, Quakers, Shakers—who not only broke with the mainstream of the Protestant Reformation, but also broke from society entirely, setting up their own little version of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. They believed that to be a Christian one had to completely break with society and wall one's self off from the contamination of such things as the state, with its use of force in war and law enforcement. Some of the more extreme, like the Shakers, even had rules on absolute celibacy, as well as nonviolence; hence their sect became extinct within a few generations for lack of procreating and converts. Earlier in Christian history many thousands of young men and women shut themselves up into monasteries so they could follow the ascetic ideal (monasticism). In the Indian world there are sects of extreme

ascetics such as the Jains who mortify the flesh with incredible punishment. They often fast for dangerous periods of time, expose themselves naked to extreme hot and cold weather, and avoid causing harm to any organism. They not only don't eat meat and engage in violence, but they often sit immobile for days, and when they walk, do it slowly lest they kill a hapless bug that wanders into their path. The Jains are an excellent example of the ascetic's attempt to divorce themselves from this world. There are other aspects to existence that the ascetic attempts to curtail and mortify, but sex, business, and violence are the three big ones.

As time goes by these ascetics and their teachings matured beyond a complete renunciation of the world and came to a compromise with the demands of the flesh. This is the point where the fires of self-abnegation are quenched with wisdom that life is the sum of many things, and all these things have a purpose in their right context. With Christ it was symbolized perfectly by his paying taxes to Caesar. "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's," said Jesus. Likewise, in the Classical world, the Greek and Roman philosophers counseled moderation; this was eloquently articulated in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. And after many years of starving himself, looking for Enlightenment, Buddha came to understand the so-called "Middle Way."

The story of Buddha's discovery of the Middle Way is a perfect example of an ascetic's reconciliation with the world. Buddha is sitting on the bank of a river meditating when he sees a fisherman floating by in a boat who is giving lessons to his son on how to handle the fishing-line effectively. The fisherman says to his son, "If you keep it too tight, the line will break, but if you keep it too loose it will not play." At that moment Buddha realizes that pursuing harsh asceticism ("keeping it too tight") will lead to a collapse of the body without any benefit—that the path he is following is only starving himself to death to no good purpose. But on the other hand, if one is "too loose" with one's life, following after every whim of desire and instinct, a disciplined life leading to Enlightenment and eventually Nirvana is not possible. Wisdom is found in between—the Middle Way. This means controlling and not destroying one's physical desires and instincts, of finding what is useful toward Enlightenment in the world instead of denying all flesh. This has broad implications: instead of condemning all sex, finding what is the best situation for sex and marriage for procreation; instead of avoiding all business, dealing equitably with others; and instead of condemning all violence, recognizing that there is a need for force to create a just society here on earth. This hard man had decided to reform the world rather than damn it.

The Gospels don't give us the same sort of transitional story as Buddha's Middle Way; however, it's clear from Jesus' teachings that he believed in moderation and not complete condemnation of the world. In his early days, fasting in the desert, his poverty and celibacy, and his denunciation of Tyre and Sodom, one sees the ascetic. But his sermon on the Mount, his teachings on taxation for Caesar, and his preaching to the publicans and sinners, shows a mature message that has set about to reform ("save") humanity not damn it to hell. His recognition of the appropriate role that the secular authorities play—"give unto Caesar what is Caesar's"—in the world, is a recognition that there is a time and a purpose for the use of force in organizing society, for the power of the state and its laws rest upon force. If he was an absolute pacifist, he would not have given the talent to Caesar.

This recognition of the State was later included in Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 13), where he wrote that the secular authorities "were ordained by God." That the state "beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil ... For this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing." And ever since, orthodox Christianity has always taught that there is an appropriate use for every purpose in the world, including force; in time of war, law enforcement, self-defense, the defense of others, and even the overthrow of unjust regimes have always been approved of by Christians under the proper circumstances. The absolute renunciation of force has never been the traditional view of Christianity, and all pacifist tendencies within Christianity have been based upon a partial reading and interpretation of the scriptures. If one reads the entire Bible and acquaints himself with traditional Christian and Hebrew practices based upon the scriptures, one is confronted with the wisdom in Ecclesiastes 3 when dealing with most situations in the human experience.

The wisdom of moderation is perfectly and profoundly expressed in this third chapter of Ecclesiastes. This chapter explains that life is multifaceted and involves many necessary activities. The wisdom the Bible is supposed to import is to put these various activities into their proper context. The rock-and-roll band, The Byrds, wrote a song based upon this verse—"Turn, Turn, Turn." However simplistic, I believe it contains the best wisdom found in the Bible:

To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which was planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Read through with honesty and intelligence, this is what the Bible teaches: to approach all situations and issues and do the best with what you are given, realizing that there are a "time and a purpose for everything under the heavens." The scriptures as an aggregate impart this wisdom all the way through the Old Testament to the teachings of Christ and Paul. Asceticism is not the basis of Christianity. It's a tendency within the tradition.

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Even though most philosophies and religions do not go as far as the Jains in their asceticism, almost all have these tendencies to self-denial, abstinence, and privations. It is endemic to these acolytes of the spirit and mind, a symbol of their break with the world. As a result of this directing away from the temporal concerns of the world, many cultures set aside a certain class, with certain expectations for these seekers. Usually as a part of this separate vocation, many of the traditional practices of the ascetic are attached to this calling as being symbolic of this segregated elite. And these practices are recognized by the rest of society as setting this particular class apart.

In our Western Culture this caste was first represented by the Roman Catholic Priesthood. The priesthood represented the spiritual-religious aspect to the culture and was clearly differentiated from the secular world, which was represented by the nobility. From the earliest days they were separated fields of endeavor in the West. They had well-defined spheres of activity with different objectives; however, they were not enemies but were meant to be complementary. After the French Revolution this separation was carried even further, and now there is such a gulf between church and state that reconciliation hardly seems possible. What originally was a complementary relationship has now become two armed camps. Originally they were meant to represent the same culture and administer to the two sides of humanity: the spiritual eternal soul and the temporal historical body. But just because the priests, for example, personally abstained from violence, didn't signify that those who did use force were doing wrong. They both recognized a separation of spheres of activity.

The conscientious objector (CO) of today is similar to the priest of old in that they both personally abstain from violence. In time of war, COs are made to function in the medical corps and other non-combat related tasks. But like the priesthood, the CO recognizes the need for the functionaries who do use force in society. Even though the CO does not engage directly in armed combat, by his participation in the war effort he acknowledges the necessity for war and those who fight it. If he did not, then he would not participate and support the war effort in any way. To remain consistent with a complete renunciation of force, he would take the prison sentence and refuse to work toward the war effort at all. The Western world has found a place for the CO as well as the priest, both of whom cannot bring themselves personally to kill. Like the CO the priest also acknowledges the necessity of war when he ministers to the soldiers, providing absolution for participation in justified warfare, even though he cannot bring himself to kill personally. The CO does the same when he tends to the wounded, many of whom will be back at the front fighting because of his care.

Even though the present interpretation of the separation of church and state is incorrect, there was a definite separation of tasks from the early days in Western history. The church's job was to minister to the individual's spiritual needs in society. Its concerns were primarily with the individual's relationship to God. Only secondarily was it interested in the collective operation of society. The temporal concerns, the execution of the laws, the waging of wars, and the maintenance of the public welfare was the portion of the temporal authorities. This did not mean that the secular authorities opposed the purposes of the Church to minister to its citizens. On the contrary, secular rulers tried to work into their laws the absolute truths found in the teachings of the Church. But where they had to separate was when it came to enforcing the laws and looking out for the self-interest of the nation.

If self-interest is the basic instinct of all organisms on this planet, including individual humans and groupings of humans, then all political groupings must operate upon this instinct in order to survive. Because we live in a world encompassing many separate political groups, a collision of interests is inevitable. All states live in a continual state of readiness for violent conflict with competing states. Whether the bullets are flying or not, all states must operate as if they are. At any moment those states whose interests collide can be at war. This is the law of the jungle. Despite the saccharine sweet propaganda coming from the politicians about peace and love, if they are capable leaders, they are more prepared for war than peace. Consequently, in this world words are weapons, there being no such thing as lies when dealing with potential enemies of your country.

But the Church is supposed to represent what men ought to be rather than what they are. The Church teaches the ethic of selflessness, instead of self-interest. It teaches "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Human nature, on the other hand, says to do unto others before they get a chance to do to you—look after self before others. And here is why the Church should not engage directly in politics: because politics, out of necessity, must engage in "selfish" actions. Therefore the Church's role should be as a moral cheerleader to the individual and society, but should not betray its principles by having to govern using less than moral means.

The State on the other hand must in the last analysis govern based first upon expediency, and only secondarily on principle. But despite the fact that the state is a chain-mailed fist, operating on the instinct of self-preservation, it ought to base its power upon some notion of right and wrong, good and bad, moral and immoral. Even from the perspective of expediency, moral citizens are obedient to the laws, good taxpayer, and patriotic soldiers. But if the citizens believe that the laws and power of the state are based solely upon the expediency of naked force, and that the leaders are immoral selfish men, the citizenry will be reluctant taxpayers, indifferent soldiers, and will see the law as naked tyranny. A government's legitimacy is based upon the habit of obedience, and people will only obey willingly if they believe their government is right, good, and on the whole moral. No government wants its citizens to obey the laws against murder, rape, robbery, and perjury, solely because they fear the state will retaliate with force. No, force should be the last resort, reserved for those recalcitrant souls who have defied the publicly accepted moral condemnation of those acts. The majority should be held in check by the promotion of values which attach immorality to those acts, and cause the individual educated on these values to police their own actions. If the state is successful in allowing the widespread dissemination of these values, the more likely they will have a law-abiding citizenry. The place where the state receives this moral backing from is those acolytes of the mind and spirit—from the Church. The Church's role is to give moral authority to the state and its laws. Without it, there is nothing but expediency and force. For thousands of years, the Church placed a policeman in everybody's mind. Once that role was diminished, such as in present day America, the policeman was removed from the people's minds thus creating the demand for an exponential number of actual policemen on the streets.

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The Church reformed many abuses within Western Civilization: business practices, sexual relations, and violence all came in for repair. The Church had long since come to terms with the necessity for all of these

activities within society, but it sought to control them for the good, to bring moderation. With business practices it sought to curb usury and sharp dealings, always it preached against the “love of money” usurping the duties Christians had toward their fellow man. Because it is a necessary function in reproducing ourselves, sex was sanctified within the framework of a loving, committed, monogamous marriage. The turbulent aspects to polygamy were thought to be a divisive factor within the family and it was therefore outlawed. This ran counter to the natural instincts of humans, for in most societies polygamy is the common practice. There was wisdom in this break with polygamy, for many of the conflicts that have plagued humanity since the dawn of time have been over women, and then the ever present infighting over power and authority within large extended families. So even though men had to settle for the affections of one woman, and infidelity would become a common problem in society, overall monogamy was an improvement in human relations, as it brought men and women closer together and lowered the birthrate in society where life expectancy was continually increasing.

The Church also preached against unrestrained violence. From the beginning of its ascendancy in Rome with the conversion of Constantine, the Church had to work out a set of rules with respect to the justifiable use of force. It knew that pacifism was an unrealistic proposition, so instead of making an enemy of society, it sought to curb the abuses of violence. It preached against revenge killings, but supported the use of force to defend against unjustified assault, and it approved of the defense of others who were the victims of assault. This latter was considered the most appropriate use of force in the Christian tradition. The Christian knight of medieval Europe, coming to the defense of the defenseless, was the archetype of the Church's ideal when it came to the use of force. The knight errant looking for adventures in the defense of the oppressed was an essential stereotype of the Western world. The enforcement of the laws is another necessary function that the church has always recognized (Rom. 13). Obviously Christians would participate in government service, and would have to make and enforce laws. The Church saw this, as did Christ (Matt. 22:21) and approved. Finally, there was the ever present activity of war, and inherent in this idea of warfare was the fact of usurpation (the overthrow of the legally constituted government). All of these actions have, under the right conditions, always been justified by the Church. However, no culture anywhere has ever put so many exceptions, restrictions, and restraints upon the use of force than the Western Christian civilization.

The Church placed many restrictions on the practice of warfare. First, St. Augustine drew heavily on the Roman notion of *justum bellum* (just war), as well as references to warfare in the Old Testament, in order to develop his idea of limited warfare. He provided the basis for the idea of chivalry, and the ideal of the Christian soldier fighting in defense of the innocent. St. Aquinas later provided three criteria for a just war: (1) Normally it should be declared by the rightful authority, the king. (2) The cause must be just. (3) Those going to war must have rightful intentions—the advancement of good and avoidance of evil. These conditions were later expanded upon by moral theologians like F. deVitoria (d. 1546). Even the liberal Vatican II Council offered its case of a just war: “... [G]overnments cannot be denied the right of lawful self-defense, once all peace efforts have failed ...”

Western Christianity has brought about major changes in the practices of warfare. Warfare had always been a bloody affair, usually involving the wholesale use of force against both combatants and noncombatants. Among the primitives of the jungle and the ancients, the killing of both men-in-arms as well as the civilian population that supported them—women, children, the old—had always been a common practice. Then in the Middle Ages under the influence of Christianity, the practice called “chivalry” became the expected ideal of the Christian warrior. Under chivalry only those carrying arms were to be considered legitimate targets. And once the enemy had been appropriately neutralized—surrendered—humane treatment of the prisoner was expected. Often if the prisoners were of noble blood, they would be ransomed; an amount of money was demanded of their family, and when paid, the prisoner was released unharmed. Good treatment for POWs was expected and received, often the prisoner dined at their captor's table and slept in their bed. For example, during the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) this practice was very common. After the great English victory at Poitiers (1356), the “Black Prince” (son of Edward III of England) captured King John of France and treated him famously until a ransom of three million

crowns was paid, then he was released. Later the practice of prisoner exchanges became common among Christian nations. Then there were the so-called "Peace of God" and the "Truce of God." These were prohibitions enacted by the Church against combat on Sundays and during holidays: Easter, Christmas, and Lent. There was even an attempt to outlaw the use of the crossbow in warfare between Christians. Of course, hatred and avarice have often had the upper hand, and chivalry was not always obeyed when dealing with downed opponents, especially if the enemies were of a different religion or denomination: The wars against the Muslims were often no-holds-barred, and later during the religious wars between Catholics and Protestants, no quarter fighting was common. Until the nineteenth century, chivalry had been an unwritten code; then at the Hague and Geneva Conventions these practices were finally encoded into law. It was a revolutionary concept to have intentionally agreed upon laws of warfare. Even though this concept owes a little to the Roman idea of Natural Law, Rome never had anything like the Geneva Convention which is decidedly of Christian origins.

No other culture has developed anything like the Western world's laws for warfare. This was one of the major problems America faced during WWII when fighting the Japanese who did not recognize the Geneva Convention, nor did they have any respect for the values which were in back of these laws of warfare. The Japanese warrior code of Bushido considered surrender under any circumstances to be dishonorable. Consequently, the fighting in the Pacific was often to the death, with very, very few Japanese POWs taken. On the island of Iwo Jima almost all of the 21,000 Japanese troops fought to the bitter end rather than surrender; many of these chose to jump off cliffs in the final assault, less than a few hundred surrendered, and most of these were wounded. More than 6,000 Marines died trying to dig these fanatical warriors out of their foxholes with hand grenades and flamethrowers. Because they believed that surrender was dishonorable, they believed that those who would surrender themselves should be treated like dogs worthy of no respect or humane treatment. As a consequence of this attitude, the Japanese treatment of Allied POWs was horrendous. One of the most notorious episodes of the war was one of its earliest. After Bataan and Corregidor fell to the Japanese early in 1942, many thousands of American and Philippino troops fell into Japanese hands. These POWs were force-marched up the Bataan peninsula to jungle camps in the Philippine interior. They marched more than one hundred miles through the jungle heat, the prisoners being given no food or water, and those who fell out due to exhaustion were beaten with clubs or shot. More than 1,000 were killed on the march, and later, most of these POWs would die in the camps, the victims of brutal conditions forced upon them by their Japanese captors. Our experience with the Japanese provides an excellent example of how Christianity has affected the practice of warfare in the West. Of the American, British, and Australian troops who were taken prisoner by the Japanese, almost 40% never came back, all who did reported incredibly brutal treatment. On the other hand, the Germans, who came from a Christian heritage, and were signatories to the Geneva Convention, treated our POWs with adequate care. Of the hundreds of thousands of American, British, and Australian POWs, only two percent died during German captivity, a number far lower even than those German troops who died in Allied captivity. The difference is significant and culturally based.

Of course, with the war in Iraq we've heard a great deal from the media about how the Koran and Islam condemn the ill-treatment of POWs and is overall much more humane than the "evil" Western civilization. But this has more to do with the overwhelming hatred that the media has for all things Western (except liberalism), than it does to any objective historical facts. The beheading of hostages, the mutilation of American soldiers, and the dancing crowds in the streets of most Muslim capitals after 9/11 are incontrovertible proof that the brutal treatment of the weak and vulnerable has always been the rule in Islam. The sweet, lovely words in the Koran about treating POWs kindly and avoiding civilian casualties during war are something exceptional in Muslim history. This holds true for conflicts between Muslims as well as wars against the "infidels." Long before Muhammad fell into a trance and received his Koranic revelations from Gabriel, the Arab tribes waged tribal war and blood feuds that used collective targeting of the enemy as a tactic. There were no individuals, only members of the group. If one member of the tribe was killed by an opposing tribe, revenge was taken against the culpable

tribe not the individual who actually did the killing. Killing any member of the enemy tribe in retaliation would satisfy the need for revenge—whether these victims were men, women, or even children was irrelevant. The Koran's teachings were never able to change this practice, and the failure of Westerners to understand this is why we are perplexed by the widespread support in the Arab world for such actions as 9/11 or suicide bombers that blow themselves up in crowded discos. In their world there is no moral stigma attached to the killing of women, children, or the old, as long as they are members of the enemy group.

Many other forms of behavior have undergone reformation at the hands of Christianity. In no other culture do you find a battle to end slavery quite like that waged in the Western world. The spectacle of members of the same culture fighting each other, among other things, over the moral issue of slavery is unheard of in the annals of human history (American Civil war 1861-1865). Slavery was one of the issues which led to the war. Six hundred thousand Christian Americans died fighting each other to free Africans from slavery—never been done before. History is full of examples of a people resisting enslavement, or fighting to liberate themselves from enslavement, but never have members of a free people fought their fellow countrymen to free a culturally alien class of slaves. Then there are the social justice issues of the 19th and 20th centuries which were largely informed by the Christian doctrine of charity and compassion. Without Christianity these efforts would have looked completely different. Much has been said about the influence of the humanistic ideas derived from our Classical tradition (Greece and Rome). But these influences never played anything like the role Christianity did in producing reform. Slavery, for example, was deeply embedded in the Classical world (far deeper than it ever was in the Western), and there was never anything like the Western version of Abolitionism. Classes in Rome and Greece were inherent in their societies despite their pretensions of democracy, and there was nothing resembling true egalitarianism. And it was only Christianity which brought an end to the horrors of the Coliseum. The talk about Greco-Roman humanism providing the foundational values of the West, has more to do with the current vogue hatred for all things Christian than it does with objective facts. These same “progressives” would have been horrified by the sight of the ancient Coliseum, or the slave-market at Ostia; they would bow down (I'm being facetious) and say the Ave Maria if they witnessed the horrors of a triumph, like the one where Vercingorix (46 B.C.) was strangled.

Sure, Christianity has presided over many of the cruelties that go with human society; they instituted the Inquisition, they preached the crusade against the Albigensians (1200s), and burned Hus (1415) and Bruno (1600) at the stake. But the difference is, there has never been a culture that has done so much soul-searching about these things (the modern liberal, wringing his hands about the latest inhumanity, is a product of this ethos). There has never been the same pursuit of reformatory or social justice measures as there has been under the cross, all of which are derived from the little carpenter's sermon on that hill a couple of thousand years ago and not from the philosophy of Plato or the ruminations of Buddha.

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There are several verses that pacifists focus on to support their beliefs. A favorite verse that pacifists love to use when suggesting that Christ was against all forms of physical force, even the use of self-defense, is the famous Matt 26:52: “Put up again thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Most of the so-called Anabaptist—Amish, Mennonites, Quaker, Shakers—sects rely upon this verse to support their extreme forms of pacifist Christianity. The modern liberal pacifist also uses this verse whenever he is in a debate against Conservative Christians as to just what Christianity says about the usage of force. Like most doctrines based upon a portion of the Bible, the interpretation of this verse by the Anabaptist and liberal pacifist is a distortion of its actual meaning. When placed within the context of the verses coming before and after it, the correct interpretation is clear to any reader. To go even further, all four Gospel—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—should be read together in order to get a well-rounded picture of the events these verses describe. All of the Gospels tell the same story, some adding details, others subtracting. Once a person has read all four Gospels in

relation to this verse, it's impossible to interpret it as a general condemnation of all forms of violence, as it has been by most pacifists. On the contrary, this verse has Jesus warning Peter and the disciples to refrain from resistance in this particular situation, but it is not a universal call to pacifism.

Using all four Gospels (Matt. 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, John 18) will give a correct interpretation. Jesus' mission is to preach the Gospel to "the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt. 10). Once he feels he has initiated this process, he prophesies that he will be betrayed by his own, delivered unto the chief priests, crucified, and then finally resurrected on the third day. He tries to tell his disciples this, but they refuse to accept this as his fate (Matt 16:20). Peter vows that he will never betray his master, and would defend him to the last (Matt. 26:33-35). But Jesus prophesies that he (Peter) will betray him before the famous "cock crows thrice." What Jesus tries unsuccessfully to explain to Peter and the disciples, is that his betrayal and crucifixion are a part of an unchangeable prophecy that included his eventual resurrection and return to earth. The betrayal and crucifixion are an integral part of the larger prophecy. His disciples, being ordinary men, are incapable of seeing the future, and are incapable of accepting the necessity of his death, so it is likely that if attacked they will resist.

Before this final confrontation, Jesus gathers his disciples together to eat the Passover in what is commonly called the "last Supper." He teaches them to remember him through the practice of Communion—the taking of bread and wine as representation of his body and blood. He then predicts that Judas will betray him, whereupon Judas leaves to fulfill his dismal destiny. At this point (Luke 22:35-38) Jesus asks the disciples to remember the earlier mission Christ sent them on (Matt. 10:10), where he commanded them not to take "scrip for your journey neither two coats, neither shoes, nor ye staves [weapons]; for the workman is worthy of his meat." All of these things were to be provided for them, Jesus said. He told them the Holy Ghost was to work many miracles on this particular journey, and the normal material considerations that a traveler would need on a journey such as this, would not be necessary. But now in Luke (22: 35-38), Jesus has different commands for his disciples:

"When I sent you without purse, scrip, and shoes, lacked you anything? And they said, nothing. Then he said unto them, but now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that thus that is written must yet be accomplished in me, and he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, it is enough."

What he is telling his disciples here is that his time is up, his mission is fulfilled, and unlike the earlier mission in Matt. 10, where Jesus was able to shield his disciples with many protections, now after his crucifixion and return to heaven, the disciples will be required to look after many of the normal worldly things themselves. The conditions were to change. Certainly the Holy Ghost is to come, and at times offer protection for Christians (John 16: 7; Acts 10), but now many of the worldly things will have to be handled by the disciples, and by extension all Christians, themselves. This includes, as he makes perfectly clear with his instructions to purchase swords, matters of self-defense. Like the old West circuit-riding preachers who carried a Bible, and a Colt six-gun just in case turning the other cheek was not sufficient, or the Plymouth Pilgrims who prayed piously, but could drill a hostile Indian at one hundred yards with solid shot—just as these future missionaries were going to have to defend themselves in extremis, the disciples are now required to carry swords for self-defense. These are not "spiritual swords" but are made of actual cold steel as the narrative will soon demonstrate.

After the Last Supper, and his last instructions to his disciples, Jesus leads them up the Mount of Olives into the Garden of Gethsemane. It is dark, the disciples are tired, and as Jesus prays his disciples fall asleep. Jesus prays to his Father in heaven to "take this cup" from him, to halt the prophecy that will end in his brutal crucifixion, for "the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." But if it is God's will that he die on the cross, Jesus is willing to accept his fate. Meanwhile the sleeping disciples are unaware of the inexorable nature of the prophecy, so as they sleep, with the swords that he told them to bring, they have no idea that Jesus' destiny is on the way up the mountain.

Being led by the traitor Judas, a throng of temple guards sent by the chief priests enters the garden with “swords and staves” ready to take Jesus. Because it is dark, the guards require that Judas single Jesus out by giving him a greeting kiss, “Judas thou betrayst me with a kiss.” Meanwhile, the aroused disciples are preparing to fight in defense of their master. After Judas' kiss, Peter asks, “Lord shall we smite with the sword? And one of them [Peter] smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.” Then Jesus says, “Suffer ye thus far,” and he heals the servant's ear (Luke 22: 49-51). Then he tells his disciples to sheath their swords, that there is no use in resisting the will of God: “Put up again thy sword into its place: for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me twelve legions of angels? But how shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be.” (Matt. 26: 52-54). Mark 14 is different, and has Jesus giving no response to Peter's swordsmanship. It is in John that we learn the identity of the swordsman and his victim (Peter and Malcus). Then John gives an excellent description of Jesus' response to Peter's actions: “Put up thy sword into its sheath: the cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” (John 18: 10-11). It is essential to follow along with a Bible and you will see exactly what I am getting at.

The important part to remember when interpreting these verses is the latter portion (John 18: 11; Matt. 26: 54). The latter portion gives the reasoning behind Christ's admonition to “put up thy sword”; that is his capture and crucifixion are a “cup that my Father hath given me,” but if he and Peter resisted, “how shall the scriptures be fulfilled?” This was a specific command (for Peter to cease resisting his capture), given for this particular circumstance (to keep Peter from interfering in the prophecy and thereby placing himself and the disciples in jeopardy). This was not a general condemnation of all forms of violence. Also, how can they say that Jesus was against the use of swords for all circumstances, when it was his suggestion in Luke 22: 36 which caused the swords to be purchased? How is it that they can claim that he was a pacifist, when here was his chief disciple, the one who was given the “keys to the Kingdom,” running around the countryside with a couple of swords, chopping off ears. They make Christ confused and fallible; they suggest that after telling his disciples to buy swords, he later changed his mind and became, within hours, a complete pacifist. This is nonsense, but because people are not inclined to seek out the facts for themselves, they become susceptible to unscrupulous doctrinaires willing to distort the scriptures toward their own ends.

The other portion of the Bible that pacifists love to focus on is the Sermon on the Mount. This was Jesus' first major sermon (Matt. 5, 6, 7). It focuses mainly upon the Christian's relation to God and to fellow Christians; it is Christ's extreme expression of the ethos of the Kingdom of Heaven. The sermon gives the ultimate ideals that Christians should try to follow. But what is not understood is that in many situations it's not possible to follow these ultimate ideals, and Christ certainly didn't mean to suggest that we would be able to obey every jot and tittle. He knew that in most situations, humans would “fall short of the glory of God.” If we were angels living in heaven, the Sermon on the Mount would provide the model for how we would behave. We need to keep this in mind when we read “blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth,” or “whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.” (Matt. 5: 39). And then there is the favorite of pacifists: “Love your enemies, bless them that persecute you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matt. 5: 44). These were ultimate ideals that Christians should work towards. Jesus knew quite well that total obedience to these ideals on this earth was impossible, and he instead offered them as goals for Christians to aspire toward, knowing full well that it would be impossible to fulfill them completely.

The Sermon on the Mount ethic is the same one as found in the Old Testament, and doesn't constitute a radical break with the Law and the Prophets as many “New Testament only Christians” like to suggest: Isaiah and Hosea sermonized about the mistreatment of the weak and the poor; Jeremiah railed against the sins of Israel; and Elijah condemned the sinful Ahab and his heathen wife Jezebel, calling fire down from heaven to prove his point. Like the prophets before him, Christ preached the ideals for which all believers should strive.

The fact is that the meek have never ruled this earth, the last have never been first, and until Christ returns, they never will. Aggressive, ambitious humans have always ruled this world, and if one wants this worldly rule to

look anything like the ethical picture painted in the Sermon on the Mount, then aggressive Christian believers will have to secure that rule in the face of aggressive nonbelievers. Furthermore, there has never been a society of laws on this planet that has been capable of operating on the principle of absolute forgiveness for all aggressive violent assaults, as suggested in the “turn the other cheek” scenario. Organized society, whether Christian or other, would be impossible without the principle of retaliation, punishment, and self-defense in answer to unprovoked aggression and criminal actions. And in this world “loving your enemies” is just fine, as long as you realize that they are still enemies until such time as their ability to damage or threaten your interests or power is neutralized. These are the facts. How close one comes to fulfilling the ideals found in Christ's Sermon on the Mount, while living in this world of facts, is the true measure of a person's Christian faith. It's an aspiration, not an expectation. That's what the Sermon on the Mount is about. It is quite clear Christ understood the limitations that the facts of life place upon the aspirations of faith, for we have just examined how Christ himself counseled his disciples to arm themselves against the violent eventualities that may occur if turning the other cheek is not sufficient. Likewise, his rendering unto Caesar demonstrated his understanding and support for the necessary functions that the rulers of the sword play in this world.

Another verse pacifists use is Exodus 20:13, the Fifth Commandment—“Thou shalt not kill.” The pacifist takes this commandment as a blanket prohibition against the taking of all life. Not only is it a mistranslation, it is completely out of context with the rest of the scriptures. This is especially true given the fact that the man who copied these laws down, Moses, was a great warrior and leader who killed many men, and issued laws which demanded the death penalty for a whole host of offenses, including the Fifth Commandment—“He that smiteth a man so that he die, shall surely be put to death” (Ex. 21: 12). This verse comes just one chapter away from the Ten Commandments, and is sandwiched in between a list of other offenses that Moses is demanding the death penalty for. On down a little further, Moses gives his famous formula: “Eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot” (Ex. 21: 24). It is ludicrous to suggest that the man who wrote a blanket commandment against the taking of all life would turn right around and write the exact opposite. So what gives?

The fact is that Ex. 20: 13 “Thou shalt not kill” is an incorrect translation. The original Hebrew would more appropriately be translated as “Thou shalt do no murder.” The difference between the two is great, the former seemingly a pacifist condemnation of all forms of violence, the latter implying a differentiation between justifiable homicide and murder. The derivation of this discrepancy is based on a mistranslation of the Hebrew original into the English King James Bible back in the early 1600s. In the original Hebrew, the word for “kill” where it appears in Ex. 20: 13, actually carried the connotation of unjustifiable homicide. The correct meaning for this commandment can be found in Matthew, where Jesus himself gives his rendition of five of the Ten Commandments.

In Matthew 19: 16-24, Jesus is questioned by a young rich man about how one is to acquire “eternal life.” Jesus responds, “If you want to enter into eternal life: keep the commandments,” meaning the core of the Law found in Ex. 20. Jesus then enumerates the last five commandments for the young man: “Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not bear false witness ... Honor thy father and thy mother” The meaning is quite clear, but despite these facts the pacifists continue to use the mistranslation found in the Old Testament to push their agenda. This is a perfect example of people believing what they want to believe, a demonstration that beliefs have always been stronger than facts in the course of history.

Obviously there are grey areas between murder and justifiable homicide. A good example is Moses' call to execute tardy churchgoers (Ex 31: 12-13). Certainly, today we would take issue with these types of killings, even though God approved of them then. But in most cases the difference is obvious. The defense of his abused countryman by Moses (Ex. 2: 11-15), and the killing of Goliath by David (I Sam. 17), were clearly cases of justifiable homicide: the defense of others in one case, and the defense of the country in the other.

This argument about Jesus' consistency with regard to Peter's sword handling lies at the heart of the issue. The pacifist Christian now argues that the Jesus of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5, 6, 7), the loving, compassionate God is the only God they recognize in the Bible. They say the "God of war" found in the Old Testament who destroyed the Egyptians (Exodus 15: 3), that praised David's military prowess—this God was an atavistic projection of an "unevolved" "primitive" people, not deserving of worship or obedience. This Christianity's Bible has become a sort of cafeteria, where the "modern," "evolved" Christian picks and chooses what he likes best, and leaves the rest like unwanted chopped-liver. But if the Bible and Christ are to be taken seriously, some consistency must be found between the God of Exodus and the God of Matthew or else the whole is merely a collection of ancient fairytales, myths, and the ruminations of holy men, but there certainly can't be a consistent God in back of the scriptures.

Orthodox theologians thus needed a consistent, Omnipotent God. This means that God is consistent in all of his actions (Hebrews 13: 8), even though to the human eye inconsistencies are seen: the God of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount had to be the Deity that destroyed Pharaoh's army and commanded the Israelites to conquer the land of Canaan. Without this consistency, Christ's claim to divinity is naught, he becomes a mere holy man, an historic figure. This is what he claimed at his trial (Mark 14: 61-62); his claim to divinity was the reason why he was convicted of blasphemy. John 1: 1-3 tells us that Jesus was the God who created the world: "All things were made by him, without him was not anything made that was made." And this was the meaning in John 8, where in verse 58 he claims that "before Abraham was, I am." Also, in John 10: 30 he states quite frankly, "I and my Father are one." Without getting into a Christological debate about the Trinity, or what exactly Christ meant by being "one" with his Father, it is a fact that most Christians have accepted Christ's divinity and his identity as the Father of the Old Testament come in the flesh, the Trinity doctrine. All of these orthodox doctrines have come under assault by the new theology, but despite this "higher criticism," for thousands of years the accepted doctrine has been the Trinity—that God is three in one, one in three, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Everything about this God, the doctrine says, was consistent, meaning He was not changeable and evolving over time but consistent throughout. Arguing from this foundation, let us take a look at this consistent God as He travels through the Old and New Testaments' revelations, and see what exactly He has to say or do when it comes to the use of force.

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During the history of Israel many wars were fought, first in order to conquer the nations occupying "the land of milk and honey," and then to defend it. A good portion of the Bible is devoted to historical narrative, and these wars play a major part in the story—a part in the fulfillment of the promise. And what was this promise? It was that God would make of Israel a great nation, its people would number as the "sands of the sea." He would take this nomadic people, who would first be enslaved in Egypt, and make them a powerful nation. And how was this to be accomplished? First He had to give them land to erect this nation upon. Well it just so happened that the "land of milk and honey" God had promised to the nomadic Israelites was already inhabited by several nations: Moabites, Canaanites, Philistines, Midianites, Amelikes, and Hittites. The way that God encouraged them to "come into the promised land" was through naked conquest:

"And the Lord spoke unto Moses in the plain of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jericho into the land of Canaan, Then ye shall drive out all of the inhabitants of the land before you and destroy them . . . And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it."

But Yahweh gives them a warning if they do not comply:

“But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be a prick in your eyes, and thorns in your sides . . . Moreover it shall come to pass, that I shall do unto you as I thought to do unto them.” (Num. 33: 55-56)

Not only were they to dispossess them of their traditional homes, they were to completely remove them from the land, or if they did not, Yahweh knew that the Israelites would have ongoing problems with these non-Israelite people, and especially their heathen gods Baal, Moloch and Asherah. As it turned out, Israel did not obey this latter part of the commandment, and thus had to contend for the next few hundred years with the infighting between the worshipers of Yahweh and those remaining Canaanites, Moabites, and Midianites, who worshiped foreign gods, drawing many of the Israelites a “whoring after their strange gods.” Deuteronomy 20 gives a more extensive set of instructions as to how God wants His people to wage war against the nations. In verses 16, 17, and 18, He gives the same admonitions to the Israelites about assimilating or excluding the foreign peoples and their gods.

However, before Israel can come into the Promised Land, they had to first be released from slavery in Egypt. And here, a dynamic Yahweh, the God of war, makes a dramatic entry in Exodus as He takes His people out of the clutches of Pharaoh. Pharaoh refuses to listen to Moses' demands to release his people, so Yahweh brings plagues upon Egypt, forcing Pharaoh to finally relent. However, after setting the Israelites free, Pharaoh organizes an army to hunt down the freed Israelite slaves and kill them all. In the meantime, the Israelites cross the Red Sea, which has been miraculously parted by Yahweh. And as they stand on the east bank, Pharaoh's army gathers on the western side of the sea and prepares to cross through the parted way. Fear and doubt grips the defenseless Israelites as they stand watching their potential demise. Moses says, “Fear you not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.” (Ex. 14: 13). And as Pharaoh's army is crossing, God causes the waters to collapse upon the hapless soldiery, drowning the entire army. In celebration of their deliverance, the Israelites sing the Song of Moses, praising God's greatness, saying of Him, “The Lord is a man of war: Yahweh is His name.” (Ex. 15: 3).

God continues to support His people as they conquered their Promised Land. Before crossing the river Jordan into the Promised Land, Israel fights a bloody take-no-prisoners war with the Midianites. God commands them to “avenge the children of Israel upon the Midianites,” and they “slew all of the males,” taking the “women and children alive for themselves” (Numbers 31). Moses then dies leaving the great warrior Joshua to lead his people over the Jordan river. The first conquest is the famous siege of Jericho, where only the family of Rahab the harlot is saved. She is spared because of her help in secreting the spies of Israel, who came to reconnoiter the city before the assault (Joshua 6).

Thereafter the tide of the Israelites rolls on, unstoppable. They crush the kings of Canaan, and take possession of their lands. (Joshua 12). After this initial series of victories, they settle in and survive over the next decades fighting under what they call “Judges.” These are chieftains, clan-leaders, great warriors. There are Gideon, Barak, Deborah, and Ehud. The Israelites do not exactly drive out the warrior tribes living in the region (contrary to God's command), and as a result, they are one of the many groups in this area, contending for territory. Later Israel unites under a king, Saul, which centralizes their power, thus giving them the power necessary to carve out a significant kingdom. (The kings Saul, David, and Solomon are the first leaders of Israel that are called the “anointed ones,” which in Hebrew is “Messiah.” Later, after the destruction of Israel's kingdom, the Jews wished for a return of the anointed ones; i.e., the return of the Messiah.) We're all familiar with David's famous rise to prominence: he kills Goliath the Philistine, saying theatrically to Goliath, “This day will the Lord deliver you into my hand: and I will smite thee, and take your head from you.” (I Sam. 17: 46). This is not symbolic language; this is an actual duel. And David wins it by sinking a rock into Goliath's head. Then he stands atop the prostrate giant, and using Goliath's own sword, removes his head, taking it back to Jerusalem as a trophy. David then wages a little civil war with Saul, who is jealous of David's fame. Saul later dies fighting the Philistines, thus ushering in the greatest episode in Israel's history.

No other figure is more revered in the scriptures than David. He was a man “after God's own heart,” the man who killed Goliath, who raised Israel from a minor power, to being one of the greatest empires in the ancient world. He was a warrior, statesman, poet, lover, and a deeply pious man. He was the hero of the Hebrews, the man all Israelites, religious or secular, would point to as an all-around Godly man. This was why Jesus referred to himself as the “son of David,” meaning the character of David was something Jesus would like people to see in himself. Jesus saw himself as fulfilling Israelite's yearnings for the return of the Messiah, the anointed one, David. And essential to David's life was his calling to be king and leader of Israel's armies. From the slaying of Goliath, to his death, David was continually engaged in war after war; first he fought to expand his empire, and then to defend it. In all of this fighting, God was with him, having given him strength and battlefield prowess: “Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight.” (Psalms 144: 1). And after his victories, David gave the credit to God: “Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies: that I might destroy them that hate me” (Psalms 18: 20). God watched over His servant, David, in peace, and in war. Even though David's life as a warrior-king was a necessary facet to his life, the reason why God loved him, and the Hebrews revered him as a great hero of their people, was that he was a sincere follower of God's Laws. He followed God's laws, putting them into his own heart, correcting himself when his mistakes and his human nature got in the way of this quest to please God. Translated into David's particular calling, he was an honorable warrior, a just king, a good, faithful, loyal husband, and in whatever he did, he attempted to always do the moral, just thing; to follow God's laws whether in peace and in war. This was why Christ revered him. He was a model man.

All of this reverence for David is despite his having committed some horrible sins. It is David's return to Godliness, his sincere self-correction, that Christ finds so admirable about him. A good example is David's treatment of Uriah the Hittite. David is having an affair with Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, while Uriah is at the front with Israel's armies, fighting as a mercenary. When she becomes pregnant with David's child, he decides to get rid of Uriah. David commands his general, Joab, to place Uriah at the center of the fighting, where he will be killed. After this horrible sin is accomplished, Nathan, the prophet, condemns David to his face; and being convicted in his heart of his sin, David begs God's forgiveness. It was this genuine heartfelt sincerity that made David a man after God's own heart. He had the faults of humanity but aspired sincerely after Godliness. It was this roller coaster ride of sin, then forgiveness, and finally correction, which is the very model for the human striving after God's own heart—the sincere attempt to live according to the laws of God, the ethos of the Kingdom of Heaven. This was why Jesus and most Israelites held David up as the best example of how a human should come nearest to God. Christian faith is supposed to be a battle that is never completely winnable, but it is the effort, like David's, that counts. Because David was human, he more than any other figure in the Bible is the chief exemplar for the faithful.

But what you will not find in all of the Bible is condemnation for David's overall militant role as conqueror and king. From the killing of Goliath, to the conquest of the seven nations, David lived the life of a warrior. David was never condemned for these actions. All were considered by the people and prophets of Israel as deserving of the highest praise. As we have seen with the murder of Uriah and adultery with Bathsheba, David committed some horrible sins. Uriah was a good soldier, serving in David's command; he was so disciplined that he refused to take leave with his wife (Bathsheba) while the armies were still in the field. Because of his lust for Bathsheba, David deliberately betrayed Uriah's trust and loyalty, murdering him in order to steal his wife. This was a clear violation of the Laws of God, the ethic of the Book, and later Jesus' Kingdom of Heaven message. But no one, including Jesus, ever thought to castigate David's conquests, and his wars against the nations, nor did Jesus condemn David's enforcement of Israel's laws. Even David's own son, Absalom, was killed for treason. This lack of condemnation is because they clearly saw the need for the justifiable use of force in an organized society.

But many people say these were actions involving the use of force in service to the legally constituted authorities during war. The Bible, they say, does not support individuals using force based upon their own decisions of conscience. For the most part this is true—the Bible and Judeo-Christian tradition have placed limits

upon when the individual can use force outside of the legal oversight of the legitimate authorities. But even with those limitations, many examples can be found in the Bible of Godly men using force based on individual conscience.

First, Moses came to the defense of his fellow Hebrew by killing the Egyptian (Ex. 2: 11-15). As we all know, Moses was born a Hebrew. But his mother, wanting to save him from the monstrous decree of Pharaoh, who wanted all firstborn Hebrew children killed, bundles him into an ark and floats him down the Nile river, hoping that someone will find the unlucky child and care for him. Pharaoh's daughter, who is bathing in the river, finds the child and decides to raise him as her own. However, despite having been raised around the luxury and power of Pharaoh's court, Moses yearns for the company of his native people. The Israelites were treated as slaves in those years, and when Moses went down among the Hebrews, he spied an Egyptian taskmaster "smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren." Moses then looked around furtively, and when "he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him [his corpse] in the sand." Pharaoh was pissed. When he finds out about the deed, Moses is forced to flee into the land of Midian, where he later marries, sees the burning bush, and receives the mission to lead his people out of Egypt. Here was Moses, one man, acting upon an individual choice to defy the authority of the legally constituted government. A government that he was a citizen of. He had even lived in the luxury at the court of Pharaoh, a member of the royal family, and yet he used force to avenge his fellow Hebrew in defiance of Pharaoh's laws. The Hebrew slave he defended was not even appreciative of his efforts, saying to Moses, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over me? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killest the Egyptian?" This guy was an ingrate! What we will not find anywhere in the Bible is a condemnation for Moses' actions. No, instead his actions were considered heroic, a good example of the righteous defense of the innocent. Even in the New Testament Moses is praised for his defense of the ungrateful slave. In Stephen's speech to the Jews, just before they stoned him to death, he praised Moses' actions: "And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he [Moses] defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not." (Acts 7: 24-25).

And then there was Ehud. He was another great warrior who acts individually to carry out a political assassination, killing the evil Moabite king, Eglon (Judges 3). Eglon was a corpulent tyrant who had lorded it over the Israelites for 18 years, until God sent a "deliverer, Ehud the son of Sera." Ehud fashioned a dagger a "cubit long," and secreted it under his garment. He then went to deliver a "gift" to the ample Eglon. A private interview was requested with the king, and once inside, he moved up close and whispered into Eglon's ear, "I have a message from God for you." These were the last words Eglon heard as Ehud rammed the foot long dagger deep into his large belly. So much force was used that the knife disappeared in the folds of Eglon's flesh, his entrails spilling out on the floor. Satisfied that no one had heard anything in the closed chambers, Ehud made his escape through the royal toilet room. Once back among the Israelites, he rallied them to action with the news that Eglon, their oppressor, was dead. They organized an assault and defeated the Moabites, "killing about ten-thousand."

Many more warriors grace the pages of the Bible. There are Barak and Deborah, great warriors and Judges (Judges 5). And Gideon, who with his selected three-hundred took on an entire army of Midianites and Amalekites. They moved into the enemy camp at night and blew trumpets, causing such a frenzy among the enemy that they began to kill one another in the confusion. The horde was finally driven from the land, Gideon captured and beheaded two of their kings, Oreb and Zeeb (Judges 7).

The Israelite hero, Samson, later laid waste to the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, according to legend killing one thousand men. He was so devastating to the Philistines that they hired a prostitute, Delilah, to "discover his strength." Finding it in the length of his hair, Delilah shaved his head while Samson slept. After waking to find himself shorn, Samson was taken to the Philistines, who gouged out his eyes and put him to work in the "prison house," grinding corn. Overcome with elation at the capture of their great adversary, the Philistines decided to hold a feast with their captured enemy Samson as the center of attention. Meanwhile, Samson's hair had begun to grow. Samson was then chained between the pillars in the palace, as the Philistines gloated over his

miserable condition. As the lords and ladies danced and ate, Samson had the “serving lad” place his hands on the pillars, which held up the ceiling of the place. Finding purchase with his hands, he cried out to God to give him the “strength” to literally bring the house down, “that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.” Knowing that he would not escape, he said, “Let me die with the Philistines,” as he brought the palace down upon himself and the Philistine aristocrats. (Judges 16).

Even the prophets and religious men of Israel had to pick up the sword every now and then. You may remember the prophet Elijah, who preached against the sins of Ahab, the king of Israel. Ahab has taken up with the heathen Jezebel, a woman who promoted the worship of Baal in the land of Yahweh. Baal is the fertility god of the Canaanites. The sinful queen surrounds herself with priests to the pagan deity. Ahab will not listen to Elijah's demands to get rid of this abominable woman and her gods, so he has the bright idea of challenging the Baal priests to a contest in order to discern which is the true god, Yahweh or Baal. Elijah and the Baal priests will square off on Mount Carmel. Two altars are set up, and sacrificial beasts placed on them. Whoever—Elijah or the Baal priests—can call fire down from heaven to consume the sacrifice will win. The Baal priests then dance round-and-round the altar, lacerating themselves with knives, but after a few hours they fail to do anything but wear themselves out with blood loss and exhaustion. Then Elijah steps forward and calls, “Hear me O Lord, Hear me that this people might know that thou art God,” and immediately “the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt offering.” Unfortunately for the 450 blood drained, exhausted Baal priests, back in those days one did not go to Disneyland after losing a fire calling contest. Elijah leads the defeated priests down to the “Valley of Kishon and slew them there” (I Kings 18: 40). This is one of the prophets Jesus most often referred to as a model for his preaching.

Moses and the Levites, which were the priestly tribe, also had to do some sword work in the days when Israel wandered in the wilderness. The Israelites are chafing under Moses' leadership, and after he went up on Mount Sinai to receive the Laws, the angry Israelites force Aaron to build the golden calf so that they might worship it. Needless to say, Moses is miffed when he comes down from the mountain and sees the people worshiping this “false idol.” He orders the children of Levi to “gather themselves together.” And he says to them, “Thus saith the Lord ... Put every man his sword by his side, and go in ... and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor” who has bowed down to worship the calf. Over three thousand die in this purge (Ex. 32: 17-28). This is not the kind of thing you will hear from your typical milk-toast, hand-wringing preacher. You won't hear this in one of Reverend “Crystal Cathedral” Shuler's sermons, nor will you hear this from Bishop “find me some homosexuals I can marry” Spong.

* * *

You might say that the above describes a very different god than the passive, loving Christ; that this warlike tribal god found in Exodus who kills Egyptian newborns, and drowns their fathers in the Red Sea—this deity is atavistic, backward, and was overthrown by the lamb-like Christ. Could it be true that the warrior God of Exodus is the same deity as the one who preached the Beatitudes? (Matt. 5). Are these two sides of the same god? Is the God who commanded the Israelites to destroy the Midianites in Numbers 31, the same God that offered forgiveness to the Roman soldiers who spat on him and pierced his hands with spikes? (Luke 23: 34). Then again, what if it is just that we ourselves refuse to look at the realities within our own hearts and experiences, and we try to project our wish-picture onto God? In other words, do we create God in our own image?

Well, if one is looking for this perfectly passive god in the New Testament, to the exclusion of the one in the Old, would not it be helpful to find out just what the writers and actors of the New Testament thought about the God of the Old Testament and whether or not they thought of themselves as creating a new, passive God, as the pacifist Christians suggest? Christ, the Apostles, and the writers of the New Testament were steeped in the Old Testament, which they called the “Law and the Prophets.” The Law was their whole existence, and if they were able to read, the only thing they were ever likely to have read would have been the Law and the Prophets. This

went doubly so for religious men like Jesus and Paul. The illiterate were taught orally. This would take place in the Synagogues. And what is it that they were taught? The Law and the Prophets. There was no written New Testament until the second century A.D., more than 150 years after Christ's death. So when Christ refers to his mission according to the prophecies, he is basing this on the Law and the Prophets, most of his references coming from Psalms. All of his heroes are taken from the Book he learned to read as a child. Moses, David, Elijah, Isaiah--these were the heroes he grew up with.

Later when Christ started preaching his Gospel, he made sure that his audience knew that his teachings were not a break with the Law, but rather a fulfillment of them. This is what he taught in the Sermon on the Mount: "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill... Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least commandments, and shall teach men so shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matt. 5: 17-19). Like the prophets before him, he came to preach a return to the true meaning of the Law. And in this sense, he held up the men of old who "lived the Law"--Moses, David, Elias. Everything he preached concerning ethics and morals can be found in the Old Testament; he offered nothing new here. What he offered that was new, was the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of Heaven, and he preached the radical extension of the Covenant before the advent of this coming kingdom. As part of this extension of the Covenant, Christians were still expected to keep the law of Moses. (Matt. 19: 17-19; Rom 13: 9). What Jesus preached against was the hollow obedience to the ceremonial, customary laws that were written around and on top of the original Ten Commandments. This was called the Mishnah. There were over 600 laws that had been tacked onto the original core laws. This had taken place long after Moses was dead. Many of these were laws on sacrifice, prayer, bathing, worship, clothing, and eating. Jews had begun to see obedience to these ornamental laws as the sole road to righteousness. When at the same time, the moral laws of Moses, the Ten Commandments, were being skirted, shunted aside and not followed in good faith. It had become more important to the Jews to have the right formula of prayers, than it was to practice true honesty. The right dress and associating with the right people became more important to them than real charity. They had become hypocrites who had no sense of true morality. It was this that Jesus broke with. And on top of this castigation of hypocrisy, he claimed to be the Son of God. This was not a new god; this was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This was David's God, and Gideon's too. We have already dealt with his claims to divinity earlier, so I will not belabor you with the many verses that reference his claim of descent from Yahweh. It is quite clear though, in his mind anyway, he believed that he was the Son of the Old Testament God come in the flesh. (John 1: 1-5). And the message he preached, he believed came from the God of the Law and the Prophets, the idea of reforming God or creating new gods would have been repugnant to him, or Paul for that matter. They considered what they were doing as continuing the Old Testament tradition, not creating a completely new one. During that period Jews were fierce monotheists, and changing God in anyway would have struck Jesus and Paul as heathen idolatry. Jesus makes this perfectly clear in Matthew 5. No, the only reformers creating new gods are people like Bishop Spong and the so-called "higher criticism.

The new biblical scholarship, the higher criticism is responsible for most of the notions about an evolving God. They say He was a brutal tribal deity in Exodus, then later softened a bit in the Prophets, and finally He became the pacifist Lamb in Christ and Paul. One of the biggest problems with this higher criticism is that it is brought by people who for the most part absolutely hate Christianity and its exclusive message of salvation or damnation. And this consequently colors and biases their opinions. A good example is Karen Armstrong, who wrote a recent book, *A History of God*. Ms. Armstrong is an apostate ex-nun whose book is just dripping with hatred for Christianity. The section of her book which deals with Christianity is devoted almost exclusively to her attempt to disprove Christ's divinity. These critics never allow the Prophets, Christ, or His disciples to speak for themselves. That is the crux of the matter. They believe that these ancients were so much less elevated in their thinking than they are; and as a result, what the Biblical figures themselves actually believed about their own God is often treated as irrelevant to these know-it-alls. A good historian first and foremost lets his historical subject speak for

themselves. And only later should the historian offer his interpretation, which of course should be qualified as being based upon his own “modern” perspective. When it comes to their evolving god theory, they rarely ask what the biblical people who actually believed in their God would have thought about such evolutionary changes. So let us see what Paul thinks. Is the God of Exodus the same one who met Paul on the road to Damascus? He gives us his answer in Hebrews 11.

Hebrews 11 is what Christians call the “faith chapter.” In it Paul is writing to the Hebrews giving them examples of exceptional faith, i.e., belief in God and trust in His promises. Here Paul is calling attention to those great figures in the history of the Covenant, stretching all the way back to Abraham, who kept the faith even though many of the promises made by God went unfulfilled at the time of their deaths. Paul is using the history and heroes of Israel to demonstrate to the Hebrews that the very God of Abraham is the same God come in the flesh of Christ. That is the purpose of this entire Epistle to the Hebrews: to convince the Jews that there is a continuity in God's plan and that acceptance of Jesus was a continuation of the same plan of faithful service to the God of their Fathers. Let us listen to Paul:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

(Hebrews 11: 1-2, 24-29)

You will notice Paul directly identifies Moses' God with Christ Himself. Remember that this is the “man of war” in Exodus 15:3, the “lord who overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the Red Sea,” (Ex. 14:27), and the God who killed the “firstborn of Egypt” (Ex. 13:15). And here Paul is saying that this God is Christ Himself. Now that we know who Paul thought was the God of the Old Testament, he goes on to enumerate more heroes of the faith:

By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days.

By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.

And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.

Hebrews 11:30-34

It does not sound as if Paul is condemning the militant deeds of these heroes of the faith. On the contrary, he is praising their deeds. There is nothing about a transitional faith here, where once these deeds were necessary, but now a perfectly pacifist faith is demanded of the believers. No, these men and women were being praised for their steadfast faith, while they carried out their earthly calling, whether their calling was to war and politics or prophecy and religion.

Even though it is important in understanding Christ and his disciples to realize that they were men of the Book, come in the form of the prophet—and though they preached the ideal of peaceful relations between all men, as all prophets should, Christ was never an absolute pacifist and his actions demonstrate this fact. First, when he came to the Temple and found the money lenders defying the sanctity of Yahweh's house with their crass behavior, he “made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the Temple, and ... overthrew the tables.” (John 2:15). This was righteous indignation not a loss of temper. He never apologized for these actions, nor did he issue some soft-soaping pronouncement of non-violence. Then there was his commandment to the disciples to arm themselves with swords (Luke 22), and his rendering unto Caesar in Matthew. He also healed the servant of the Centurion (Matt. 8:5-11). Jesus had the highest praise for this man and his selfless commitment to duty, saying of the Centurion, “Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith not in Israel.” He prophesied that such men as this centurion would “sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven.” Jesus said this despite the centurion's being not only a Gentile and a soldier, but a soldier serving in an army of occupation that most Jews are required to hate. He never adjured this soldier to leave his profession; he never made any pacifist pronouncements, but instead offered the highest praise. Later the Apostles would preach to the soldiers as well. For example, Peter's first Gentile convert was also a centurion in the Roman army, Cornelius. This conversion took place in Acts 10. Like Christ, Peter never demanded that Cornelius abandon the profession of arms. In the days when Christianity started to grow, Roman soldiers were many of the early converts. All of this started with Christ's ministry to the centurion.

What many Christians try to do is separate Christ's compassionate, merciful side (Beatitudes in Matt. 5) from the Jesus who comes to judge (Matt. 13:24-42). They don't like the intolerant Christ who states quite clearly that when He returns with his kingdom he will separate the wicked from the righteous in a ruthless culling process. They want the god who accepts everything and everybody without judgment, who would never insist that a person's actions are wrong. This is Father Christmas, the Tooth Fairy version of deity.

A recent commercial on television sums up this idea of Jesus. You may have seen it: it shows parishioners entering a church, and a couple of bouncer looking concierges dressed in black turning some of these people away saying, “Sorry, you can not come in.” Those being excluded included homosexuals. The commercial ends with the touchy-feely message, “Jesus accepts all of the people—all of the people.” By acceptance, they mean unconditional acceptance without the slightest need for these homosexuals to repent, or make a good faith effort to correct their behavior. This message says that the homosexual is not a sinner requiring repentance, but rather homosexuality is inherent in their identity, and Jesus would not condemn these people for something they cannot change. God made these people homosexuals and his son would surely accept them as they are without reformation. It is a touching little piece of tolerance propaganda, and an excellent expression of the pop-spirituality, but it bears no resemblance to anything Jesus taught.

The Bible has always taught that homosexuality is a sin, a transgression of the Law: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the Law: for sin is the transgression of the Law” (1 John 3:4). Paul condemned homosexuals for “abandoning natural relations with women,” and because they “were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. * * * Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them” (Romans 1:27-32).

Jesus and his disciples taught obedience to the Law of God (Matt. 15:18-19) and offered salvation to any and all men and women if they would repent (John 3:24, Matt. 4:17) for their transgressions, and finally make a good faith effort to reform their behavior (James 3:14-16). But those who rejected his message and would not repent of their sins, and made no effort to change—these people he condemned to eternal damnation. (Matt. 13:41-42). This is a synopsis of his Gospel, and can be found in most of his parables. Jesus and Paul, of course, knew that we are all sinners (Rom. 3:10-12), and that all of our efforts would never make us completely spotless, but the effort, the struggle to do so is the Christian path, the essence of what it means to be a Christian, to follow through the

“straight gate” (Matt. 7:13-14). Nowhere in the scriptures does it give the kind of nonjudgmental acceptance as portrayed in this commercial. The scriptures themselves are a condition, that is the meaning of the words “testament” and “covenant.” It is a pact, a contract. And who offered this contract?--God. What are the conditions of the contract?--do what God tells you to do, and if God judges your attempted efforts to fulfill the contract as sincere, you will have eternal life. What the makers of this commercial do is exactly the same thing the “higher critics” do with respect to their “evolving” god—they create a new god in their own image. They deliberately take Christ's conditional offer of salvation to all people and turn it into an unconditional one. Christ would accept anyone, preach anywhere, and forgive any sin, but only on the condition that the person accept his message, follow his commandments, and make a good faith effort to change. The creators of the commercial lop off the last conditional part, and have Christ accepting everyone as they are, without the need for repentance and change.

This god who loves without judgment is the god of the pacifist. They say that if God is love, how can a god of Love judge those He loves, and as a necessary part of this judgment, issue punishment? A god of love could never separate the “wheat from the weeds” (Matt. 13:29) as Christ says he will do at the end of time. Love and judgment are incompatible, they say. No loving father punishes his children (this was Dr. Spock's argument too). This is the heart of the issue. They want a god who loves us but will never punish us. They see the two—love and punishment—as incompatible. Like the spoiled brat who can do no wrong, they have never come to the realization that they are ever in need of punishment. This is because they believe if trouble comes it is always someone else's fault. Have you ever seen children fighting over a toy? When the parent intervenes and asks who is at fault, they both point at each other. This is it. The Christian who wants a non-judgmental god has never grown up. They are like the brat, who wants the parent confronted with the conflict over the toy to always come down on their side, because they are never at fault, and certainly never in need of punishment. Maturity, on the other hand, comes when the child realizes that he is at fault, and in order to correct this fault, he is sometimes in need of punishment. It's a just and loving parent who corrects their child, who lays the rod of correction onto the child's rebellious buns (Proverbs 3:11-12). This is necessary in order to raise the child into a loving and just adult. Without it, you get a grown brat, sophisticated and learned in their spoiled ways. Also, it is a loving and just government that dispenses care and correction in the same way, for without it a peaceful society is not possible. And ultimately, it is a loving and a just God who gives mercy and judgment when needed. This is the message of the Bible as found in the Laws and the Gospel of Christ: we are all rebellious children in need of love and judgment.

Christ demonstrates His manner of judging and excluding the unrepentant in Matt. 18:15-17. These verses present a very different Christ than the one portrayed in the all-inclusive commercial. Jesus explains to His disciples how a Christian should go about forgiving a brother in Christ his trespasses:

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

All of His parables involving judgment contain the same message: the Gospel is a free gift to all no matter their sin or condition. However, if a person rejects the teachings by their actions, their judgment and exclusion from grace is their own fault. The message of the commercial leaves off judgment and exclusion under any circumstances making it a distortion of Christ's teachings.

The brat says he is inherently good, that he is never in need of punishment. If the brat finds something wrong in his life, it is always derived from outside of himself: it is society that is responsible for creating the conditions—poverty, inequality, tyranny—that have made him do bad things; it is genes which have made him angry,

predatorial, or incompetent; It is ADD; It is ADHD; and it is the planets lining up to conspire against his success. If left to his natural wants, says the brat, his human nature is loving, educable, gentle, and selfless. The so-called "Enlightenment," with its love of reason and science, enshrined this approach to human nature into doctrine. And many of the controversies of our day can be traced to the different approaches to this fundamental question: Is human nature inherently inclined to be good or bad?

The rationalists—Rousseau, Fourier, Robespierre (all of whom were consummate brats)—said that humans were essentially rational and good, and therefore a perfect society was possible, if only people were given Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. The problems, in society, they said, were all caused by bad, repressive culture—laws, aristocracies, governments, and rules enforced against the wisdom of the greatest number of people. If only we would let man be what he is inherently, utopia would be possible. Thus, all of the institutions causing the evils in the world were in need of essential reasonable reforms.

Then there is the ancient wisdom about human nature: that the individual is ultimately geared toward self-interest and therefore inclined toward antisocial behaviors if left to his own devices. Law, custom, rules, culture were put into place and enforced upon the individual from the time of birth in order to curb this essential selfishness. And the purpose of the rules was to inculcate in the individual the idea of self-correction. Once the individual was exposed to this culture all through their lives, from family, church, and government, it was hoped that they would correct themselves in contradiction to their selfish desires. This was the purpose of culture, to harness man for the good of society.

Christianity gives expression to this essentially selfish nature with what it called "Original Sin." Christians believed that this came about because Adam disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden by eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Adam was kicked out of the Garden and Paradise was lost as sin came into the world because of his deed. Every child born into the world was thought to be tainted with this Original Sin, thus making human nature inclined to sin. This created the need for the Law given to Moses in order to lead fallen humanity out of Original Sin and back to the Paradise that Adam lost. However, because this Original Sin was so ingrained in human nature, following the Laws of God became problematical. So many Jews came to believe that the works of the Law were not enough, that only by faith is salvation possible. This did not mean that they should stop obeying the Law, but only that it was impossible to fulfill all of the Laws and a bridge of divine grace was used to make up the lack. It was Jesus, they believed, who provided this bridge by paying the necessary price for Original Sin. And now if a person believed that Christ was God and had saved them from their just deserts, and at the same time tried to do their best to follow God's Laws, Paradise could be regained.

Christianity's articulation of this essentially selfish human nature in the doctrine of Original Sin is merely the wisdom of the ages. Every culture develops the same general approach to human nature. The individual was thought to start out at zero and must earn their privileges in society by obedience to its rules and contributions to its upkeep. The Enlightenment's break with this concept was unprecedented. It reversed this notion of human nature and turned society into the servant of the individual. In the Western world, most of the conflicts in the past 200 years have their roots in this paradigm change. This goes for the assault upon Christianity, with the attempt to change the relationship between God and man based upon Original Sin. The modern interpretation of Christianity originates in the Enlightenment's attempt to rationalize human nature. And the creation of the exclusively loving, passive, non-judgmental god is uppermost on this agenda. Just as society is thought to be the servant of the individual, God is now a personal self-help deity at the beck-and-call of the new Christian.

The brats say to all of this, "Judge not that ye be not judged." (Matt. 7:1). This is yet another verse that is taken out of context. This one is used to suggest that Jesus never judged anybody for anything, and Christians, they say, should do likewise. The reason why Christians should do this is because everyone is sinful and in the wrong, or has a different definition of what is sinful and wrong, and therefore nobody has the moral authority to judge anyone for anything. Thus everyone should except and tolerate everyone else's faults and differences

without judgment. If you were to ask the average churchgoer today about this verse, this is how they would paraphrase the meaning.

The correct interpretation is clear to see. If read down to verse five of chapter seven, you will see that this is an admonition against hypocrisy:

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Matt. 7:1-5.

This is certainly not an admonition to never judge others. It is a condemnation of those who would judge others for minor faults (speck of sawdust) while they themselves have major faults (plank). If one is going to judge others, says Jesus, be prepared to be judged by the same standard. If once you have looked into your own heart and have recognized your own sins, then by all means feel free to point at the faults of others.

God is love. This is true. However, in the traditional Christian view of God's love, that includes both caring and correction. The correction is based in the idea that essential human nature is predatory and in need of discipline. As a consequence of this inherently predatory nature, an imperfect world of necessary human competition is created. Crime has its origins in this essentially self-interested will to power, and wars find their roots in this power competition as well. War is endemic to life, it is a condition of life like death, and like death a person or people can face it or run from it; regardless of how they are approached, crime, punishment, and war will remain.

* * *

Every historian of the faith realizes that Christianity survived because of the sharp steel and dry powder of Christian armies and fleets. But for these men of steel, Christendom would have gone under years ago. You see dear pacifist, for a thousand years Christianity lived on the defensive. Except for the brief excursion to the Holy Land (Crusades), Christians fought defensively against Islam and the barbarians as they battered at the gates of Europe.

There is no more poignant example than the great Charles Martel (The Hammer), the Frankish king and grandfather of Charlemagne. In 711 A.D., the Islamic Moors of North Africa invaded and conquered almost the whole of Spain, pushing the Christians into a small enclave in the northwestern corner of Spain. These great Muslim armies seemed unstoppable as they crossed the Pyrenees mountains into southern France. All of Christendom was held in the balance, a decision was to be made whether Christian Europe would remain as such or succumb to the Muslim hordes. The decision would not be made in the comfort of some legislative body; it would not be made by fashioning signs with cute slogans written on them and marching in nonviolent protest. It would be made on the battlefield. It was time for Western steel to answer this question. In the path of the Muslim army stood Charles Martel. On the bloody field of Tours in 732 A.D., he stopped them cold, sending them back across the Pyrenees into Spain. If not for his violent actions dear pacifist Christian, you would be praying toward Mecca today.

It took 600 years for the Christians to finally drive the Moors out of Spain. It was the tremendous efforts of men like Sancho I, King of Navarre, and the legendary El Cid whose military prowess began the Reconquista (the reconquest of Spain). It took centuries of bloodshed, the Christians getting the worst of it until the great victory at Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), where Christian warriors finally wrested control of central Spain from the Moors. It

was not until 1492, the same year that Columbus discovered the new world, that the Moors were finally driven out.

Not only was Christendom threatened on its southern borders by Islam, every century or so a terrible host would emerge from the steppes of Central Asia—Avars, Magyars, Bulgars, and Mongols. As a priest of that era described it, the hosts would suddenly appear “like demons let loose from hell,” burning killing and looting without mercy. Unlike the Moors and Turks, the barbarians from the steppe were not in the possession of an advanced civilization and did not have a particularly well organized state with any permanence. When a leader died the state generally broke apart until some other strong man could assert his rule. Their incursions into Europe were not on the same order of threat that the Muslim, Moors, and Turks posed. They were more or less large raids for booty, and as soon as they achieved what they wanted or were resolutely opposed they retreated back to the steppes as quickly as they appeared. Their incursions were like large natural disasters that inundated Europe every fifty or one hundred years. However, despite their political fragility, the Mongols military tactics were often superior to that of the Christians. It was solely because of Christian courage and tenacity in a face to face fight that the Western armies were ever successful against the nomads.

Attila and his Huns stormed out of the Hungarian plain like a swarm of locusts in 450 A.D. They sacked city after city, Metz was put to the torch, its people massacred. Women were raped, children hacked to death in the streets. The Roman Empire of the day was unprepared for the onslaught, and the alarm went out through the Western Empire. The brilliant Roman general Aetius gathered the little forces he could and sought the help of the Visigoth king Theodoric. Having been a captive of the Huns years before, Aetius knew his opponents well. A combined army of Visigoths led by Aetius and Theodoric finally brought Attila to ground on the plain near present day Troyes, France. And in a long, ferocious fight Roman and German steel won the day. The noble Theodoric was killed on the battlefield and Attila retreated to the East. He was back the next year, invading Northern Italy, only to be turned back again. This time Attila's army was suffering from an outbreak of the plague. The protestation of the Pope himself, who met him in Milan, along with the landing of Emperor Marcian and his army—all convinced Attila to call it quits.

Every few generations another horde would descend upon the West. The Avars ravaged Europe in the 7th and 8th centuries. The great Frankish King, Charlemagne finally crushed them on the Emms River in 796, and later he took their tent-city capital, the Ring. In the summer of 955, the Magyars invaded Germany and the hero King Otto I mustered an army of Franks, Swabians, Bavarians, Saxons, Thuringians, and Bohemians. He surprised the Magyar horde on the Lech. Backed against the river without room to maneuver the steppe warriors were no match for the armored knights. Many were drowned in the river, horses and men struggling in the red water.

The worst threat from the East came in the 13th century. After Chinggis Khan united the Mongols, he embarked upon a conquest that spanned Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. Unlike the other hordes, the Mongols brought a measure of stability to their state and the empire that they founded lasted much longer than the typical steppe kingdoms. China and much of Central Asia fell under the Mongol yoke in the early 1200s. After the death of Chinggis Khan, his son Occodai decided to expand the empire into Russia in the 1230s and 40s. Whole cities were burnt to the ground, their people put to the sword. The Mongol armies were highly mobile and seemingly unstoppable .

The Central European campaign which followed in 1241 shook Christendom to its foundations. Europe was divided into several squabbling kingdoms. Pope Gregory IX and the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II were at war with each other, Poland was divided among its dukes and Hungary's King Bela IV was at odds with his nobles. In spite of this when Mongol scouts were spotted in Poland and Hungary, Europe's nobility began to muster armies. However, these armies never succeeded in forming a common front. Two massive thrusts came simultaneously into Poland and Hungary. In Poland an army of 40,000 under Duke Henry of Silesia and in Hungary another army of 80,000 under King Bela stood in the path of the Mongol hordes. At Leignitz, Duke Henry's army was drawn into

a feigned retreat, a typical Mongol tactic. With the Christian army strung out and lacking concentration, the Mongols turned around and surrounded the scattered elements. They let loose massive flights of arrows, which disabled the knights' horses, forcing them onto the field to await their fate. A massive moan could be heard as the Mongols moved in for the kill. Lacking water and being peppered by flight after flight of arrows, the knights were finally finished off in ferocious fighting. Only 5,000 men managed to escape alive. The Mongols cut off the head of the brave Duke Henry, placed it upon a pike and paraded it before the walls of the still defended city of Leignitz. The Mongols cut off the ears of the fallen Christians. They filled nine large sacks with ears and sent them to their generals Batu and Subatai as trophies.

Bela's Hungarian army of 80,000 fared no better. Like Henry, he was lured into an ambush on the plain at Mohi. Just a few days after Henry's head was dancing on a pike, Bela's army was virtually destroyed. Over 65,000 Christians were slain. Bela barely escaped with his life.

Central Europe was wide open to the Mongol armies. In one of the freakish miracles in history the Mongol armies pulled out of Hungary and Poland. The Great Khan Occodai had died, and as all Mongol successions were chaotic, General Batu felt he should be close to the action as the jockeying for power began back at the capital in Central Asia. Europe breathed a sigh of relief. True to form, the Mongol state later broke apart and it never renewed its drive into Western Europe. However, the Russians had to endure 200 more years of the Mongol yoke before the Princes of Moscow finally drove them out.

In the 11th century, Christendom decided to take the fight to their oppressors. Christian Byzantium had lost control of Palestine during the 7th and 8th centuries; all of North Africa and Syria were lost as well. Then after the disastrous defeat of Emperor Romanus Diogenes at the battle of Manzikert (1071), they finally lost Anatolia (modern day Turkey), thus isolating the great Christian city of Constantinople in a sea of hostile Muslims. It was the last Christian stronghold in the East. Christians were murdered, the pilgrim routes of the Holy Land were shut down. The Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus called upon his Christian brethren to come to their defense, and the great friar Bernard of Clairieux and Pope Urban II responded by preaching the crusade (1096). The crowds of France were so enthused they ripped the red cloth from priceless drapes of great mansions in order to sew the crusader's cross upon their chests. No finer man ever lived than Godfrey of Bouillon who led the assault upon Jerusalem. No more pious Christians ever bowed before the cross than the selfless Knights of the Temple (Templars) and the monks of the Order of St. John (Hospitalers). These were monks who took priestly vows but carried the sword in defense of the faith. Surrounded on the battlefield called the "Horns of Hatten" (1187), these military monks fought to the last man. The Saracens (Muslims) had lit the dry fields of grass on fire, and amid the flames, smoke, and heat, they slew double their number before soaking this hollowed ground with their precious blood. A billion pacifist tomes could not erase this one noble immortal deed. No slipshod left-wing Hollywood movie could ever lessen its nobility.

Later, the Ottoman Turks crossed the Bosphorus Straits invading the Christian Balkans, and finally in 1453 took Constantinople, impaling the emperor's head on a pike. Greece, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary fell under the Turkish yoke. The Sultan's armies pushed all the way to the gates of Vienna, and once again Europe was threatened with complete subjugation to Islam. Great battles were fought to beat back this first effort to take Vienna. The Ottomans then moved to dominate the Mediterranean by taking Crete and Sicily. The Pope himself threw together a coalition between the Spanish and Venetians who organized a large fleet. He gave them his blessing in a massive moving ceremony. The fleet met the Turks at Lepanto in 1571. In one of the largest naval battles in history the Christians were victorious. Cervantes, the novelist who wrote Don Quixote, took part in the battle, losing part of a hand in the melee. Later, the Turks tried to take Vienna again in the late 1680s. The great Polish king, John Sobieski, was called upon to raise the siege of the city. Upon viewing the large Islamic host about the great capital, King John said in defiance of the Turkish numbers, "This man knows nothing of war." He vanquished the Ottoman forces and sent them reeling back into the Balkans. The Turks never threatened Vienna again, but it took hundreds of years to drive them out of the Balkan nations. Greece won its independence in a

war of liberation (early 1800s), and it was not until Turkey's defeat in WWI (1918) that the Balkans were cleared of Turkish control.

These are just a few examples of a glorious history of Christian warriors. There are many, many others, their precious bones lie beneath our feet, and are the very foundation stones upon which Western Civilization is built. How about Wallenstein, Cromwell, de Saxe, Frederick "Barbarossa," Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry II of England, Gustavus Adolphus, Charles V of Spain, Charles XII of Sweden, Louis XIV, Henry of Navarre, Elizabeth I, Washington, Clive, "Mad" Anthony Wayne, George Rogers Clark, Robert E. Lee, "Stonewall" Jackson, and Patton. All were Christian warriors and rulers, part of a long tradition. And now we are to learn at the weak knee of some Christian pacifist that they were a pack of brutes, lacking in "true" Christian virtues. Or some left-wing secular pacifist perched on his pink pedestal is going to tell us that these heroes were "ativistic," "backward," and unrepresentative of Christian compassion. We are supposed to believe these "progressive" people as they cast their darts at these giants. They lack even the courage to think of the many things these giants have wrought for them. Without the efforts of such heroes it is hard to see how Western pacifism could have ever developed, let alone survived. There are few pacifists in the Islamic world; it was only Christian ideas about compassion and charity that has allowed this idea to flourish. It was the bloody deeds of such men that permitted Christianity and its ideals of charity to survive. For almost 1,000 years this was a near thing. And as the planes crashing into the building on 9/11 showed clearly, the Western world will once again be called to the barricades. Does this mean that might makes right? No, but might secures the existence of the nation, and might makes and secures obedience to the laws. Whether or not a particular nation and its laws are right or wrong, in this world without the might of such men and women as above, neither the nation nor its laws would exist. So, dear pacifist, bow down and thank these men of steel for their exertions on your behalf, kiss the precious white stones where they are buried. Thank them each day that you have the right to parade your pacifist ideas about, for without them, without their deeds, you would not exist.

Despite its tendencies to pacifism and asceticism, Christianity is not a pacifist religion. Christ taught like a prophet. He was not a political activist. Although he stopped on the way to engage persons in daily life, he was interested in the next world and taught a message about the individual's relation with that world. Even though he did not involve himself in the issues of his day, he did not mean that we should follow suit. It was purely a matter of a division of labor. As Paul later said, there is a place for all members in the body of Christ (Church):

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ... If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. ... But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. I Cor. 12:12-18.

Many have suggested that Christ's life provides the only model for a person to follow in order to be a good Christian. That his lack of involvement in a militant role, they say, shows he disapproved of violence under any circumstances. The problem with this is Christ not only did not take a political role, he neither married, nor did he have regular employment while he preached the Gospel to the people of Palestine. By the reasoning of these people, we should also avoid procreation and economic activity because Christ did not concentrate on these things in his life either. Christ knew the absurdity of this and so did his Apostle. None of their teachings reflect this totalitarian approach.

As to how Jesus would have reacted to the abortion issue: he would certainly have opposed it. But even though he would have concentrated on his preaching, his direct intervention in the Temple, driving the money lenders out with a whip, shows clearly that he would have condoned militant action in defense of the innocent. What is not found in his teachings is anything like a condemnation of direct physical action to protect the innocent. And nothing in the Christian tradition reflects this complete pacifism.

In short, Christianity has many tendencies at the margins, but it has one clear ethic that runs through the whole. Using both historical comparisons of its teachings and practices as well as the entire Bible cannon, one must conclude that the Christian ethic condones the use of force in proscribed situations. Early Christians were living in a hostile environment which forced them to take a passive stance to the provocations of the majority; thus creating a non-aggressive demeanor. Christ's teachings on the coming Kingdom of Heaven have also caused many to avert their gaze skyward, away from the cares and concerns of the world. This has led to an aversion or at least an indifference to issues of political conflict. These things, taken to extreme, have caused many Christians to take Christ's message and turn it into a completely other-worldly ascetic faith, disconnected from terra firma. This it certainly was not. Christ's teachings, the New Testament, cannot be taken alone. They must be placed into the larger Hebrew tradition. When seen within the context of this tradition (the Old Testament) it is easy to see that Christ was not an aberration or break with the faith, but rather a logical, essential extension of that tradition. Part of this tradition is the necessary role that force plays in society. When Christ is seen in the faith community of Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Barak, Ehud, and David, it is plain to see that Christian pacifism is a heretical offshoot of the faith that is only tenable if one excludes ninety percent of the tradition and bases it upon a few verses taken out of context. The essential Christian belief in Christ's divinity hangs upon the idea that He is one and the same God throughout the Old and New Testaments. The same God that is called a "man of war" in Exodus 15:3 must be the same God that preached the Sermon on the Mount, or Christ's claims in Mark 14:62 and elsewhere are naught, and He becomes a mere holy man but not God. It was Christ Himself who declared He was the God of Exodus come to earth. To say that this man of war is a pacifist makes Him a fraud or at least a changeable God. It does not matter a whit whether minor historical inconsistencies can be pointed to between the God of the Old and New Testaments because it is clear that Christ considered Himself the God found in Exodus. When it comes to the use of force there is a consistent theme that runs through the Judeo-Christian tradition that overcomes the extremes found in the warlike book of Numbers to the loving Sermon on the Mount in Matthew. The theme is that Christians and Jews should want peace, should work for peace, and should preach peace, but if conflict is inevitable and unavoidable, they should be prepared to fight. The history of Western Civilization is a testament to this, for without the military prowess of Christian warriors Western Christianity would not have survived.

IV. War and Ideology

There has been much debate about the relation of war and ideology or religion. Is war moral? Are religions and ideologies the causes for war? If not, how does religion and ideology relate to war? And finally, is it possible to outlaw war, which is the dream of pacifists? Or is war an inevitable part of existence? By comparing the reality of political actions in relation to war to the stated ideological rationalizations and aims, a correct interpretation of history is possible, and it will bring us closer to answering these questions.

Wars are fought over power interests, not ideals. There has been much debate about the morality of war and politics, and unless one understands the meaning of the opening sentence, it is impossible to interpret history correctly. Lest I be accused of taking an amoral view of war, let me explain using an example close to home about power interests taking momentary precedence to moral issues in time of war. The Civil War was not fought over the abolition of slavery, it was fought over whether the nation would be divided into two nations. The South was fighting for independence, the North was fighting to maintain the Union, albeit with Northern dominance. However, one of the biggest moral issues which created the identities whose interests clashed leading to war was slavery. If the South had not succeeded from the Union, the idea of abolishing slavery in the South would never have been a possibility in the 1860s. Before the war, the fight in Congress was about whether slavery would be expanded into the western territories. If the Southern politicians were successful in expanding slavery into the West it was hoped that these new slave states created in the West would seat representatives and senators friendly to southern interests. Maintaining a balance in Congress between representatives from free and slave states while opening the new territories in the West had been the major issue in Congress since the 1820 Missouri

Compromise. Slavery and anti-slavery representation in Congress was merely the leading guidepost that signified a deep divide as America developed two general identities, actually three—South, North, and West. Many other issues were dividing the nation as expressed by these identities. For example, southerners opposed liberal land policies in the West and wanted lower tariffs. The North wanted a strong tariff and liberal land policies. The West came down on both sides of many of these issues. The political contention between 1820 and 1860 was to keep the identity interests—North, South, and West—equally represented in Congress. Generally, the South and West had the lion's share of power in Congress before the 1860 election. When Lincoln came to power on a strong tariff, anti-slavery, free land, and “Radical” Republican platform, the balance of power was upset. The southern leaders felt that the interests of their identity, including slavery, were threatened, and in response to this threat they declared their states to be independent, thus challenging Lincoln's government to force them back into the Union. This disjunction was the cause of war: the South's bid for independence, and the North's effort to prevent it. Once war was embarked upon, the successful solution to this disjunction became paramount to any of the underlying identity issues which led to this disjunction such as slavery, tariffs, or land issues. The issues became subordinate to the political disjunction. Victory or defeat.

In order to achieve this victory, Lincoln knew that he had to soft pedal the slavery issue. Even though the North was dominated by a powerful Northeastern Abolitionist element, the border states—Missouri, Maryland, Kentucky—were largely pro-slavery and were absolutely essential for the Union's cause. Lincoln needed these states on the Union side in order to defeat the South. Without them he could not win the war. Consequently, he maintained slavery in those states and promised protection for the institution, at least during the war, while holding the more rabid Abolitionists at bay. His Emancipation Proclamation (1862) was floated as a military measure aimed exclusively at the South's slaves. The slaves in those border states under Union control were not included in this emancipation. However, any fool could see, and Lincoln was no fool, that if the South was defeated and brought under Federal control, the Abolitionist element in the federal legislature would be almost absolute. What little pro-slavery sentiment that still remained in such a government would never be able to halt any anti-slavery legislation. But during the war Abolitionism had to take a backseat while the border states were still in play. After the war the South would be at their feet, and with no southern representation in Congress, at least not from the slaveholding class, Abolitionism was assured.

Let us play devil's advocate for a minute. What if the Southern leaders would have sued for peace after losing the Battle of Bull Run in 1861? This was a possibility. If this were to have happened complete Abolition in the Southern states would not have been possible, at least not then. Perhaps the South would have had to give in on slavery in the territories, but Abolition would never have been possible in all the South in 1861. The South would have still had considerable power and would have certainly called for representatives in Congress. And the border states and those northern Unionists who could not have cared less about slavery in 1861 would have been too powerful to make a move toward absolute Abolition. Abolitionism in 1865 was only possible because as the war progressed the border states and the Copperheads (those Unionists who sympathized with the South on slavery or who were at least ambivalent) lost the power they had back in 1861. And with the Southern leadership knocked out of the equation, the only people left standing in 1865 were the “Radical” Republicans like Sumner, Wade, and Stevens. This fortuitous result of a war about power was the only thing responsible for the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. If Lincoln had stated in 1861 that these amendments were the heart of the Union “cause,” he would never have been able to successfully prosecute the war. The Union cause was to prevent the South from setting up an independent nation, and if successful this would have opened up a whole host of possibilities, including those amendments.

This does not take away from the fact that the two sides—North and South—tended toward either extreme on slavery: if the North was successful at any point during the war, slavery was sure to be threatened. And if the South were successful, slavery would have likely been long lasting in this independent nation. But to say that the North's cause was anti-slavery and the South's cause was slavery would have been an over generalization, a poor

generalization early in the war. There were many southerners opposed to slavery—Jackson, Longstreet. And there were many northerners who owned slaves—Frank Blair. The war was being fought over which identity would have the freedom to do as it chose as a sovereign nation, and this included deciding what policy it would have towards slavery. In fighting the war to a successful conclusion, Lincoln quite rightly allied with slavers in order to put himself in a better position to later oppose slavery.

Another useful example is the Second World War, which was fought for world dominance. Hitler was intent upon uniting Europe by force and ruling it under German hegemony from Berlin. This would have destroyed the independence of France and threatened Britain's empire. If it controlled Europe, Germany would be the dominant power in the world. The governments of England, America, and the Soviet Union did not want to live in deference or subjection to this German hegemony, so they decided to defeat this thrust. In the Pacific, Japan was also working for hegemony by expanding its power at the expense of European and American interests in the region. England and America felt threatened by this effort as well and worked to defeat it too. As the war developed, it quickly became clear that America would become the paramount power in the world. It was Roosevelt's expectation that a partnership between the U.S. and Soviet Union would dominate a new world order that would end Europe's hitherto monopoly on power. Working through an international organization (which later became the U.N.) he thought these two major powers would create a new peace. Churchill believed that Britain would, if victorious, retain its empire and become an equal partner to these powers. He was naive.

Also about power, the American Revolution was fought over control of the New World colonies: the colonists wanted a government of their own, fighting for self-determination. The British were fighting to retain control of their colonies. And at present, American troops are fighting in Iraq to prevent the loss of American's power interests in the Middle East, in the face of threats offered by Saddam's Baathist regime and the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism.

Once a political disjunction occurs, ideals are subordinated to the struggle. America's alliance with Stalinist Russia is a good example of this. Roosevelt and Churchill considered Stalin's regime to be less of an immediate threat to their power interests, so they decided an alliance was advantageous. They did this despite their obvious ideological differences. Churchill, for instance, had spent the 1920's trying to organize the Western world to overthrow the Bolshevik regime, by supporting the Whites in their Civil War with Lenin's Reds. Stalin's Russia was far more repressive of democracy and individual liberty than Nazi Germany. Before the war, one could get a passport to enter or leave Hitler's Germany if he chose to do so. Such a thing would have been impossible in Stalinist Russia. Many, many millions of people were liquidated by the Bolsheviks in the gulags long before Roosevelt and Churchill's alliance. By contrast Hitler's camps before the war were rather small, holding at that time mostly communist political prisoners. None of these moral ideological concerns were paramount in the decision to go to war. War was declared by the Allies solely because Hitler intended to expand his power beyond his borders, cutting into the power interests of England, France, and later America and the Soviet Union. The Stalinist government was expansionist too, but this expansion took place far from American, English, and French interests. Hitler, on the other hand, directly challenged their interests.

The positioning of power interests touching off the Second World War are instructive of what I mean by practical power interests being paramount to ideological concerns in warfare. Hitler's attack upon Poland on September 1, 1939, was the pretext that drove France and Britain to declare war on Germany. In the propaganda, this invasion served as the moral cause for the declaration of war. However, the power decision was different and obvious. Before war was declared, Czechoslovakia and Poland were allied with France and England in keeping a check upon German expansion. In order to expand, Hitler had to break this ring of hostile powers hedging him in on all sides. His plan was to take them one at a time, to strike the smaller powers to his south and east, hopefully without raising the ire of the Western powers, causing them to declare war. First, he took Austria in an Anschluss (peaceful absorption), using roughneck diplomacy. From this position he could outflank the Czechoslovakian defenses to his north. With the acquiescence of the Western powers at Munich, he was able to engineer the

downfall of the Czechs. Once Hitler had Austria and Czechoslovakia, Poland was finished. The only other possible way for the Poles to survive was to bring the Soviet Union into the Allied fold, and with the Western powers squeezing from the other side, Germany could have been contained. However, the Polish government was understandably unwilling to let Russian troops on its soil, so Poland stood alone in the East. Once Czechoslovakia fell in the Spring of 1938, England and France's only hope was to convince the Poles to accept Soviet help, or if that failed, and Poland fell, at least they would have the Russians available later to eventually defeat the mighty Wehrmacht. A two front war was the great fear of Hitler and all Germans. This is what brought them down in the First World War. Without an alliance with the Soviets, the Western powers would not be able to stop Hitler's crack divisions from taking Poland. With Poland in his possession, Hitler could easily turn around and direct his Blitzkrieg at France. Once that happened, unless they had the Soviets, France and the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) had better warm up their leg muscles, because they were about to do a lot of running in the Low Countries.

Meanwhile, Stalin knew that Hitler would offer him more if he allied with Germany instead of the Western democracies. Also, if he were to ally with England and France, Stalin guessed that they would make him do all of the fighting and dying. His solution was a deal with Hitler, a Non-Aggression Pact. This entailed a division of interests in Eastern Europe: In exchange for giving Hitler a free hand in western Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and the Balkans, Stalin would be given a free hand in eastern Poland and the Baltic countries (Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia). The Pact was signed by Ribbentrop (German Foreign Minister) and Stalin just on the eve of the already planned September 1st invasion. The Western Allies were thunderstruck by the pact, knowing that now Hitler would swallow his half of Poland and once finished turn around and hit France with everything he could without any threat to his flank from the east. This was practically ideal for Hitler and Stalin. However, ideologically they were both attacked by their followers. Communists and Fascists the world over were astounded by this deal between these incredibly antagonistic ideologies. Nevertheless, Hitler's game was working. A two front war was ruled out (at the time anyway). To avoid this war, he thought it was worth the temporary ideological inconsistency. The balance of power had been shattered by the Austrian Corporal.

Knowing that they had been outmaneuvered, and that war was inevitable, England and France had nothing to lose by giving an unconditional guarantee to Poland: if Germany invaded, said the guarantee, they would declare war on Germany. Notice, the guarantee only covered a declaration of war against Germany if she invaded Poland. The secret protocol to the guarantee explicitly ruled out a declaration of war against the Soviet Union if she were to invade Poland. Martians could have invaded Poland, but the only invasion that would have produced a declaration of war from the Western democracies was one by Germany alone. Why? For the same reason that Hitler made a deal with Stalin, his chief ideological opponent--political expediency. The Allies targeted only Hitler's invasion for a declaration of war because if successful, Hitler's armies would be freed to turn on France, which shared a border with Germany. Germany directly threatened France and England's power interest--their territory. The guarantee had nothing to do with the morality of Hitler's "aggression," as we shall see shortly.

Then on September 1st--England, and France's declarations of war came on the 3rd. Then Stalin came into the act on September 16th, by invading the eastern half of Poland. Most of the fighting had ended by then, a few pockets being cleaned up by the odious Red Army. (In an interesting aside, the Soviets took some 15,000 Polish officers as POWs in their half of Poland. Later when Germany invaded Russia in June of 1941, German troops uncovered at Katyn the mass graves of these same Polish officers; all had been shot in the back of the head, their wrists bound behind them.) As the secret protocol of the English guarantee made clear, no declaration of war was made against the Soviets or even discussed by England and France. Rather than there being a moral cause for war, England's war declaration is one of the best examples of power politics.

The Allies knew--as did Hitler and Stalin for that matter--that eventually Germany's interests would collide with Russia's, and the Allies would then have a good opportunity to defeat Hitler, using piles of dead Soviet soldiers to do so. Their prediction came true in June of 1941. After Hitler crushed the Allies in France, driving the British army into the sea at Dunkirk, he was at an impasse. He could not bring his well oiled panzer divisions to bear

against England; he was inferior in the air and at sea, and consequently could not transport his army across the English Channel. And more ominously, Churchill's overtures to Roosevelt were likely to pay-off bringing America into the war at some point. But if Hitler could become the only major power on the European continent, the Allies could never threaten his power. However, there, lurking in the East was the possibility of a two front war. If conflict with Stalin erupted, and the Soviets could tie down enough German troops, then Hitler would be vulnerable to a reentry of allied troops on the continent. But if he could knock the Soviets out of any possible formula, Hitler would be untouchable.

Weighing in Hitler's decision to invade Russia was not only Stalin's being a long time ideological opponent of Nazism, Stalin was also moving his troops into Buchovina and Bessarabia (areas of Rumania), both of which were specified in the non-aggression pact as being within the German sphere of influence. Stalin had also invaded Finland in the fall of 1939, angering the German people, and making Hitler's pact highly unpopular. Finland had always had close ties to Germany; most Germans became convinced that Hitler had sold the Finns out for a chimerical peace pact. Stalin was trouble. Germany's power was not secure unless the Soviets could be neutralized before America gathered enough strength to threaten invasion. Hitler decided to knock Stalin out of the war. If successful, Hitler would be safe from any invasion in the West. However, if he bogged down and America came in, Hitler was highly vulnerable.

After Hitler's invasion of Russia in June of 1941 bogged down, England and America knew they could gather their armies before Hitler defeated Stalin and turned to meet the Western Allies with the entire German army. The Western powers quickly made an alliance with Stalin after the invasion, America sending massive amounts of Lend Lease aid to keep the Bolsheviks from collapse. Churchill opined about the seemingly ideological hypocrisy of the alliance, "I would have made an alliance with Satan if Hitler invaded hell." Once America officially came into the war after Pearl Harbor, it quickly joined this marriage of convenience. This was clearly for power purposes. Stalin's Russia was never thought to be a democracy or a promoter of social justice. Even though the war was cast as a moral fight, the "Good War" as Studs Turkel called it, the major combatant on the "good" side was the despicable Moscow regime headed by the psychopath Stalin.

And what ever happened to poor, "innocent" Poland after the war? Remember that war was declared based upon Germany's "aggression" against Poland in September of 1939. That was the propaganda ideological justification for England and America's waging war. Germany's leaders were sent to the gallows at Nuremberg in 1946, after being convicted of waging "aggressive war," i.e., the invasion of Poland in 1939. They were convicted despite the fact that one of the three judges on the bench at Nuremberg was a member of the same Soviet government that also invaded Poland in September of 1939. (Incidentally, also piled onto the German leader's convictions at Nuremberg was the Massacre at Katyn, which I mentioned earlier. Despite almost universal agreement that the Soviets were responsible for the murder of the 15,000 Polish officers, political amity and the insistence of the Soviet government caused the Allies to lay this crime at the doorstep of the already prejudged Germans.). And was the 1939 government of Poland shipped back to Warsaw to take their place at the head of their government once the war was over? No, they remained exiles in London; their country was given to Stalin by Roosevelt and Churchill at the Yalta Conference in February of 1945 as the price for political expediency. Poor innocent Poland had to wait until Solidarity freed them from the Soviets in the 1980s.

After the war, Roosevelt hoped to form a lasting alliance with the Soviets, but this proved illusory as the Communists threatened to hold on to the countries they were occupying and expand into western Europe. This produced an intense standoff for the next 50 years (Cold War), as the Soviets threatened expansion, funding and supporting revolutionary and guerilla movements in an attempt to create communist regimes around the globe.

America responded to this new threat by supporting those who would weaken this Soviet expansion. In order to accomplish this, Washington had to put ideology in the back seat once again and fund autocratic regimes like

the Shah's in Iran, Diem's of Vietnam, and Syngman Rhee's in Korea. All of these regimes were corrupt and undemocratic, immoral, but none threatened American foreign policy as much as Soviet expansion.

America's challenge to Soviet expansion into the Persian Gulf is a textbook example of political expediency outweighing ideological concerns. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Washington funded Islamic fundamentalist Mujahideen to resist the invasion. The invasion threatened Washington's interests in the Middle East and the balance of power in the area. The Mujahideen were there on the ground offering an excellent opportunity to throw a wrench into this Russian advance. It was a no-brainer. The Soviets were eventually defeated, much to the advantage of Washington, but now, 25 years later, Washington is facing many of these same Islamic extremists in the present "War on Terrorism" (Bin Laden). Was it a poor decision to fund the Mujahideen? Did Washington's chickens come home to roost because of immoral associations? No, of course not. In the world of power politics, yesterday's friend could be tomorrow's enemy. This same thing happened with the Soviets as well after World War II. That is just the way the game is played. Funding the Mujahideen was decidedly less harmful to American foreign policy in the 1980s than the possible Soviet domination of the Middle Eastern oil supply. Also, using them to fight the Soviets rather than American troops was an excellent choice. Foreign policy is not missionary work, it is concerned with the survival and security of the nation's existence, and it will use what is available to achieve this paramount objective. Survival comes first, principles come second in the world of power politics. Losing control of the Middle Eastern oil supply to Russia because of objections to the way the Mujahideen treats women was not an option any capable statesman would have chosen.

The American Revolution is another good example of power politics taking precedence to moral ideological issues. The colonists were fighting for independence against the British who were attempting to retain their imperial possessions. After the victory at Saratoga in 1777, the colonists were able to secure an alliance with France. France had been defeated in the Seven Years War (1758-1763) (called the French and Indian War in America), and was hoping for revenge as well as some of England's colonies, especially in the West Indies. The colonists needed money, guns, and, most of all, they needed French troops and ships to win their independence. It was a marriage of convenience that had nothing to do with ideology. First, France was a monarchy far more absolute than George's England. The French king loathed the idea of an alliance with the upstart republicans, fearing that this would encourage his own radicals, who were then calling for a reform of the French monarchy. (This would prove prescient. The money that was spent to help the colonists sunk the monarchy into debt, and led directly to the French Revolution some five years after the colonists finally achieved their independence.) Further than this, Washington and many of his officers had fought the French during the French and Indian War. Washington had several horses shot from under him at Braddock's Defeat in 1755, where the French and their Indian allies inflicted a crushing defeat upon the British and colonial troops. Nevertheless, expediency paid off, the French help was decisive in defeating the British at Yorktown, forcing England to the negotiating table. Without this help it is doubtful whether independence could have been won. Using the French to help win independence was the same as getting the Afghans to help stop the Soviets and the Soviets to help stop Germany, they were all effective decisions from the perspective of expediency.

Bush's recent push into Iraq is similar to Reagan's decision to fund the Afghan resistance, namely the protection of American interest in the Middle East. Those interests are oil and Washington's protection of Israel. The entire Western world depends on oil to function. Most of this oil comes from the Middle Eastern fields. This is not a proposition but a reality. Without oil the West's economies would collapse. A capable leadership, whose job it is to look after the national welfare, would make sure that this pipeline of oil stays open. Even the fool Bush knows this. The West found the oil, built the infrastructures to pump it, and now protects that pipeline to the modern world. Unfortunately, this oil sits underneath one of the most politically volatile regions in the world. To maintain the flow of oil requires America keeping a tolerable peace in the area. With the creation of the state of Israel, this has been doubly difficult in a region buzzing with warlike peoples. In exchange for allowing America to keep the peace in the area, the governments in the region have been given incredibly generous compensation and

improvements to their infrastructure. It is indeed true that America's dominance of the region creates an environment more healthy for the people of the area than their own governments would be willing to provide for them if American influence was absent. However, since the 1950s the Arabs have threatened America's dominance of the region. The Arabs want to control their own area and the oil pipeline. This would be disastrous for the West, for it would put them at the mercy of men like Nasser, Arafat, Hussein, and the Ayatollahs of Iran. Hussein's Iraq, Islamic fundamentalism, and Iran's quest for nuclear weapons are the latest threats to American power in the region. If it is in the hands of capable leaders, Washington will defeat these efforts, and remove those hostile regimes and replace them with governments amenable to its interests. This is the reason why Bush is in Iraq. The efforts at democratizing the area are to create regimes to their liking, friendly to their interests. If for instance any of these democratic governments become hostile to American interests, Washington will also seek to undermine their power as well. The humanitarian effects like women voting and hospital construction are strictly secondary to securing American power interests in the region.

War arises because of a political disjunction. It is the last resort of politics. As Clausewitz said, "War is politics by other means." Nations develop power interests. These interests often collide with the power interests of other independent states. If the leadership decides these interests are vital enough to threaten the security and existence of the nation, and diplomacy is not capable of resolving the conflict to their satisfaction, war is likely. A political disjunction has occurred. Although other states may be moral, beautiful, Christian, and share similar ideological interests, if their power interests collide with similarly constituted states, war becomes possible. Foreign policy is first and foremost concerned with the survival of the nation, only secondarily is it concerned with other interests.

The origin of separate nations with separate power interests is in those factors that produce a separate shared collective identity. Ultimately nations are like individual humans in the large. Individuals are born with a unique identity that is then shaped by the larger culture he is exposed to. All individuals have a will to power, a need to impress upon the world their own particular mark, even at the expense of other wills. Groups--tribes, nations, cultures--evolve similar singular identities and a similar will to power and need to impress their collective mark on the world. Expressions of a separate collective identity are religion, customs, shared history, language, ideology, ethnicity, or race.

This is the origin of the independent state. Each group identity throws up an organized body to maintain law and order in their own society, and more importantly to defend itself and its interests externally against other independent identities. This organized force is called the state. Each state is a reflection of the individual human identity and its will to power. Both the individual and the state desire the freedom to decide all issues for themselves. This is not possible for the individual human who must live in an organized society in order to survive. But with the collective power given to the state, true freedom of action is embodied in this idea of the people. Given the opportunity, unconstrained by the laws, the individual would act with this same complete freedom. But unlike the individual human, there is no enforcement power above the state, it acts with the complete freedom that the individual is not able to.

Free states, by pursuing their own wills to power, develop interests, things that effect their survival. Territory, natural resources, trade and economic assets, political-military-ideological influence--all may effect the survival of the group. With other states in the world free to decide for themselves what interests to follow in relation to other states, regulating their own behavior in foreign affairs, clashes are inevitable. If the collision of interests is deemed vital to the leadership, war is possible. All states will use force to defend their vital interests. If they do not, they will not remain independent for very long. The ability to defend themselves is the essence of what it means to be an independent state. A state's power and influence in the world, and with that the independent existence of the group identity, is dependent on its war-making powers. Weaker states live in deference (alliance) to the stronger states. Any regulations that may be put into place to regulate international relations are dependent upon the approval of the stronger states. No strong state will ever allow any international

organization to make decisions for it that it feels jeopardizes its survival. States are laws unto themselves, the more powerful the state the more independent.

The things that give rise to states—religion, group history, ethnicity, language, etc.—play a morale building, a justifying influence in warfare. They help justify, to themselves, their actions in war. They encourage the soldiers and population by instilling pride in who they are and the justice of their cause. Warfare is a hazardous activity, taxing the individual with fear and anxiety. Confronted with the blood and horror of violent death, the soldiers need a justifiable cause for them having to endure this ordeal. Religions and ideologies come to the aid of the man shaking with fear in the foxhole; they form the basis of the morale building propaganda that is disseminated to the population. But despite the propaganda, the ideology is not the direct cause of the conflict, which are essentially power struggles between groups. The paradigm is one of victory or defeat, survival or extermination, and independence or slavery. The survival of the identity itself that holds to these ideological or religious ideas is what is being fought for. What is at issue is its freedom to act the way it wishes in the world. The dynamic of a group's ideology and religion is important to nobody but the group itself. The war is about whether it will survive or not. To deal with this reality requires a different mind set among the leadership in dealing with the issues of power successfully.

One can, however, make the inference that the origins of war are found in those unique identity attributes—religion, ideology, language, culture. Because without these things separate nations with separate interests would not exist. It is these separate nations following after their own interests that cause war. This is definitely true. Even though it is true that the cause of warfare is in the existence of these separate states, the immediate issue of conflict is usually over a power clash between these states. Once the conflict ensues, the issue that the leaders concentrate their energies on is not Christian or Muslim, moral or immoral, but victory or defeat.

Many people confuse the origin of the identity that gave rise to separate states with the issues of power that give rise the immediate conflict between the states. There are several examples of this, but one that is most illuminating. The power struggle in Northern Ireland is over control of territory not religion. The minority represented by organizations like Sinn Feinn and the IRA want Northern Ireland to be united with the southern part of Ireland, being ruled by the government in Dublin. These people are called “Nationalists.” The majority of Northern Ireland's population, on the other hand, want to maintain their present independence from the South, and continue to be ruled by Britain as a part of the Commonwealth. These people are called “Unionists” or “Ulstermen.” This is the power struggle, the clash of interests over territory.

What has created the groups that have brought about this power clash is religion and a history of conflict between these religious groups. The minority Nationalists are largely Catholic, as are the people in southern Ireland, with whom they want political unity. The majority Unionists are Protestant, as are the majority of the British with whom they want to continue union with. One cannot say that the war is being fought over religion because not all Catholics and Protestants in the world are at war with each other. They get along just fine in America. No, the war is being fought for power, the power of the IRA to force the British out and bring unity with the South, and on the other side, the power to prevent this and retain union with Britain. The indirect origins of the “troubles” generally can be found in the religious differences; however, the clash itself is political. I say generally because even in this religiously triggered conflict there are British Catholics who do not support the IRA; and there are Irish Catholics who support the British effort to defeat the IRA and vice versa.

This same is true of the other examples mentioned earlier in this section. The Second World War was not fought from the Allies' perspective over democracy and freedom. It was fought to prevent Germany and Japan from expanding their power at the expense of the Allies. However, what created the identities that clashed was on the one side militant autocratic fascism and Japanese militarism, and on the other, liberal democracy and Russian Communism. When the issues of the power struggle came to the fore, the respective ideologies took a back seat in the decisions making processes of the leaders responsible for the survival of their group: America

overlooked the autocracy and injustice of Stalin's Russia in order to use him to defeat Hitler; Hitler formed an alliance earlier with Stalin in order to give him a free hand against the Western democracies; and in the early days of the war Mussolini was even courted by the English in order to prevent his possible alliance with Germany. Ideology took a backseat when the issue became victory or defeat. The leadership knows that if there is no victory, survival is not certain, and if the nation does not survive, there may be no survival for the identity of the nation, including its religion and ideology.

Every chance Bush gets to speak about Iraq, he hits the requisite notes of "democracy" and "freedom" as the causes for his actions. If this were true why doesn't he invade China in an attempt to bring democracy and freedom there? Because this would be foolish, putting in jeopardy the survival of the nation. It would kill millions to achieve this, yet China is a bastion of anti-democratic government and totalitarianism. Bush's primary reason for invading Iraq was to protect America's vital interests first and indulge ideological sentiments second. The "freedom" Bush's propaganda is referring to is individual freedom, rights held by citizens. He is not talking about the freedom, the sovereignty of the nation. However, this latter variety of freedom is indeed the reason for the war in Iraq, as it is for all wars: the freedom of the nation to decide its own destiny. Individual freedom is only indirectly effected by a war: if the nation loses its freedom its citizens will likely lose their freedom as well.

Of course, there is a trade off. In trying to win a war and extend their power, leaders often have to ally with states holding objectionable ideologies and religious beliefs. By doing so they know there is the possibility of strengthening future opponents. The Soviet Union's rise to power was mainly due to the help afforded them by America, paving their way into Eastern Europe. Again, this happened with the Mujadideen in the fight against communist expansion. Now Americans are faced with planes flying into buildings, being piloted by some of these same people trained in CIA camps during the 1980s. History is not a math or logic problem to be solved. Leaders do their best, being confronted by new situations. In a world where independent states exist, it is always possible that today's friend will be tomorrow's enemy. This was the case with the Soviets in WWII and then the Cold War; the Mujadideen were friends 25 years ago and are enemies today; and it was the same with the French who terrorized the colonists for over 200 years, then helped them win their independence from Britain. It is a chess game of power.

On the great chess board of power it behooves an independent state to extend their power and lessen opposition by cultivating alliances with those states that share those identity traits. It is incumbent upon them to increase their power and reduce the likelihood of war by proselytizing with its religion, ideology, and culture. And if it is a fact that the source of the independent state is in the unique different identity, and the source of conflict is between states based upon these things, it follows that those states whose people are most similar in those identity traits will be more likely to be politically friendly. The greater the differences the more likely conflicts will ensue. Bush's democratization of the Middle East is based on this thinking. America and the Soviet Union did the same thing during the Cold War, as they spread their respective ideologies around the world. Today it is secular ideology, in former times it was religion and culture spread by missionaries and settlers. Certainly people of similar culture and ideology fight each other: China clashed with Soviet Russia, and both clashed with Vietnam; the Christian nations of Europe have fought each other for generations.

How do we prevent war? Can we outlaw it? As I alluded to above, war is the result of a political disjunction between independent identities represented by states whose freedom is absolute. The freedom that these states wield is a reflection of the individual will to power, the desire to act freely in all situations. Individuals are limited in their freedom by the laws of their particular state. The state's freedom on the other hand, is limited only by its own military-political-economic power in relation to other independent states, some weaker others stronger. There is no law enforcer that the state is beholden to obey. The United Nations (UN) is an instrument by which smaller states are given some voice in a world dominated by stronger states. No strong state will cede its sovereignty to the UN. And no small state is absolutely protected by the UN if a stronger state decides to make war on it. This was illustrated quite clearly by Bush's actions in Iraq, which were carried out against the wishes of

the UN. In a world of several independent states, free to do as they wish in pursuit of their own security, conflict is inevitable.

As I have said before, the state is a large person without self consciousness, its existence dependent upon a unique psychological-spiritual identity. This is mirrored by the individual human identity. The difference is the state is a collective personality lacking conscious deliberation. Its leaders must give it this conscious articulation. You cannot reproduce a state based upon an abstraction anymore than you can invent the human personality. The ideal of the UN, apart from its reality, is an abstraction. This ideal is world government. But since there is no singular world people (identity), there can be no world government. The nation is not an abstraction but an organic reality. It is a super-personality. You cannot create world peace based upon an abstract ideology putting forward a world government that will cut across racial, religious, ethnic, lingual, cultural differences. These things are born out of a long history and give rise to the larger superpersonal personality of the human group. Like the individual, these groups want to be free. War is an inescapable condition produced by the desire of the individual for freedom. Peace, even within a particular state, is brought about by constraining the individual's freedom. To outlaw war and bring world peace would require a world state to contain all people under one authority limiting their freedom, their will to power. Because of the many natural differences among the peoples yearning to control their own destinies, such a thing would be impossible. If any power attempted to rule the world, like other empires before it, this power would be faced with a dozen or more insurrections at any one time. People want freedom in accordance with their will to power, a natural product of this is conflict. And to resolve any conflict considered vital, humans will always use force if necessary. They will use violent force because they can. People will always use force as a last resort to protect what is most important to them. Almost everybody will fight to preserve their lives and their sense of freedom. Would you fight to avoid becoming a slave? Would you fight to preserve your life, the lives of your family members, your neighbors' lives? Every person and group defines, if free to do so, when exactly these things have been threatened and when to use force to secure them. As long as this is the case, war will always exist. It is not enough for the pacifist to say that he does not use force for any cause, and if the world would just follow his passive example world peace would be feasible. The fact is force is used in organizing the society that this same pacifist lives in. And if he takes advantage of this society in any way, he is giving his indirect assent to this use of force in his behalf. No person can be a pacifist without being at the same time a hypocrite.

If a nation wants success in war, it must equip its warriors with a clear conscience, a belief that their cause is just. The leaders must also justify the war to the home front. All groups do this, using what is most sacred to them as a people. War is an existential business; the warrior lives in fear of losing his life and needs some moral justification to keep him fighting. He must believe that he is the good guy and his opponent the bad guy. Each side believes that it is just, its cause the right one; and the way each goes about defining the "rightness" of their cause is usually found in the source of difference that has created the political groups they belong to. In the conflict in Iraq for instance, the insurgents draw upon their religious faith, Islam, to justify their cause. On the other side, American troops are largely reenforced by secular ideology. Which cause is just in an objective sense is not at issue here, only the fact that both sides in any conflict use what is most sacred in their own identity to justify their actions. In the case of Iraq, one is religion the other secular ideology.

In the Western world today, secular ideology is more important to the people than religion; the ideas of Freedom, Democracy, Liberty, Equality, all derive from the Enlightenment and are held to be sacred in our society. Every speech Bush gives on the war in Iraq is studded with the magic words "freedom" and "democracy." The reason why Iraqis call upon their god for support and Bush does not, is because Iraqis still take their religion seriously and most Americans do not. War is serious business, and only a serious justification will do. Most of the people in the Western world look askance at this mixture of religion and war. The utter contempt that Westerners, especially secular liberal atheists, have for religion being used for political purposes indicates their contempt for religion in general. The more anti-religious the person the more condemnatory. It

certainly has nothing to do with the religions themselves. Religion has been used for centuries to justify everything from warfare to farming practices.

The modern world worships at the altar of science, reason, and materialism, and uses these quasi-religious tenets to justify all kinds of things. One never hears a peep out of a liberal about the use of those beliefs to justify warfare. Fifty million people died in WWII. If you listen to the propagandists, this war was fought for “freedom, democracy, and equality.” You know the drill, the flag waving in the background as these tried and tested catchwords are paraded about. Just like most religions, this ideology promotes the idea of peace and human love for one another, yet there is no condemnation to its being used to condone some of the most horrific actions in history. Think about Hiroshima, Dresden, the murder of millions of Eastern Europeans at the hands of the Red Army—all were done in the name of freedom and democracy.

Christianity has really not been used in the West to psychologically equip soldiers in warfare since the 1800s. The decline started around the time of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). Religion has been so ruthlessly separated from war and politics, not because of something inherent in the faith, but rather because religion has become less important within the European world. Certainly, Christianity still influences politics at the grass roots level; however, few leaders in the West today would use the catchwords of faith for their war speeches. Bush caught hell when he spoke of the War against Terrorism in terms that sounded too religious for the secularists. At the grass roots level there still is the pro-life-family values movement, which has a strong Christian flavor. The last great success for Christianity in politics was the Temperance Movement of the early 20th century. Before that the Abolitionists shook the nation; they were mainly Bible based Protestants. But despite their influence on the Union cause, Lincoln primarily used the rhetoric of the Enlightenment (Gettysburg Address) to justify the cause. In former times Christianity was used extensively to sharpen the sword of Western nations. Its lack of influence in today's world is indeed a great loss; the comfort and power of the cross gave a sharp edge to Western steel.

We have scratched the surface of history in order to discover the relationship between war and religion/ideology. While the identity of the nation itself may be based upon differences of religion and ideology, and even though these separate independent identities develop power interests that are likely to cause a clash resulting in war, the causes of wars are usually found in the immediate power clash over interests and not in the ideological differences themselves. Once a clash over interests ensues, the leadership of the nation, if it is capable, concentrates its energies upon the successful outcome of the war, using everything available, including religion and ideology, to bring about victory. Insuring the survival of the group's identity and its freedom to exist as it wishes is paramount in the leadership's plans to win the war. Understanding this will help decipher the seeming ideologically inconsistent moves made by statesmen during war: they often make war on states whose ideology or religion is the same; they will ally with ideological opponents in order to win a war. They will do these things because the war is about the survival of the group identity itself, including its ideology and religion. After a thorough examination of the facts that produce war, the notion of outlawing war is seen to be chimerical. War is a natural extension of the human personality and will to power, the need for the identity to be free in the world. Without a power able to enforce its will upon all peoples and cut across all identity differences, war is inevitable.

Because it is inevitable, it is a healthy culture which will equip its people for war by promoting ideological and religious justifications for its cause rather than allowing the enfeebling poison of pacifism to spread through the body politic. In justifying its warlike actions, a nation will use what is most sacred. Whether this ends up being religion or a purely secular ideology is completely dependent upon what that society holds most sacred and has nothing to do with something inherent in the religion or ideology itself. The current argument against using God to justify warfare is solely due to the waning influence of God and religion in the Western world. Religion has been used to give justification and support to warriors from the beginning of time. It is only the society which takes its religion seriously that will use God and religion this way. If warfare is ever a legitimate endeavor in the eyes of God, then asking God's blessing as you embark upon war is only natural. Just as you would call upon God's blessing for the food you eat, if God is a serious part of your life, then you will ask His blessing and comfort while

you engage in something as important and serious as war. Those calling for people to never invoke the name of God to support them in time of war, saying that the Christian tradition supports this approach, show a complete contempt for God and Biblical tradition. Probably one-third of the Psalms are prayers for support and protection in time of war (see for example, Psalms 18, 91, 144, 149). Psalm 149 describes the privileges of the Saints of God: "Let the high praises of God be in their mouths and a two-edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathens and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and then nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgments written: this honor have all the Saints. Praise ye the Lord." [emphasis added]

Today, the ideal of pacifism says that there is no justification for war, least of all a religious one. They say that if people renounce violence, war will become extinct. Actually, the only thing that will become extinct is these pacifists and the nation that listens to them. To the extent that pacifism has influenced the nation, the nation is thereby weakened. A people who will not defend themselves will become slaves. Pacifism is cancer in the brain cells of the culture and weakens its ability to defend itself. It is the drop of blood in the sea that inevitably draws the sharks in for the kill.

V. Secular Pacifism

Larger than the issue of Christian pacifism is the issue of secular pacifism in our modern society. This is the more popular version of the two. Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., are the patron saints of this version. They have been surrounded by a sort of secular theology, largely replacing the older creed. They are the models for all left-leaning pacifists, their actions are thought to be the exemplars of how modern political and social change should take place—what is commonly called "non-violent change." Whether in the universities or the pop-culture as spread by Hollywood, this ideal of non-violent change reigns supreme in the Western world. However hypocritically, every politician when he mounts the stage speaks this language of non-violent change. Every pop star parades this ideal before him when pushing his two-bit cause. It is an essential aspect to the modern ideology. Despite this philosophy's claim to moral purity, the political reality of non-violent change is quite different than its stated ideals.

Gandhi is the figure that most of the acolytes of non-violent change see as their original mentor. He was an Oxford educated lawyer who had served as a stretcher bearer in the British Army during the Boer War (1900-1902). Even though he had many influences, Gandhi was schooled in the Jain tradition. As we have seen, the Jains have an extremely ascetic aspect, avoiding violence and following extreme vegetarianism and physical privations. For example, after dealing unsuccessfully with his homosexual tendencies, Gandhi swore off sex. In order to test his resolve, he often slept with young naked girls to see if he would be tempted. Like most educated intellectuals of the era, he was influenced by the new socialist ideas then current in Europe. Gandhi watched the success of the communist revolution in Russia and how it relied upon strikes and mass protest to accomplish its goals. Gandhi focused on the event that was most responsible for touching off the Russian Revolution—the Bloody Sunday Massacre of 1905. This occurred when a massive socialist protest was held in front of the Tzar's winter palace. In the snow covered streets of St. Petersburg, Cossack cavalry rode down the demonstrators, hacking and shooting close to one thousand defenseless men, women, and children on that Sunday in 1905. For decades the socialists had been raising hell about change in Russia, but it was not until Bloody Sunday that the revolution gained the moral superiority needed to carry them to power in 1917. Gandhi was fascinated by the moral power this victimization gave to the revolutionaries. In conjunction with the Bloody Sunday lesson, Gandhi drew upon his Jain tradition of ahimsa (non-violence) to fashion his protest movement against British rule in India.

After the First World War, the British Raj (British colonial government in India) was on the ropes. For centuries the British ruled millions of Indians with a mere handful of British soldiers and colonials. But after the loss of almost a million men in the mud and horror of Flanders, Britain was bankrupted both morally and monetarily.

Britannia was a shadow of her former self. The war had produced a fatalism within Britain, the days of Victorian glory long gone. The Empire, England's source of power, was in jeopardy. The ideas that thrived in this new environment of decay—Communism, pacifism, anarchism—viewed the British Empire as a great anachronistic evil. The old spirit of patriotism that filled the sails of British ships as they conquered the world was shot down in the Somme of 1916. The Empire was vulnerable to attack, its worst enemies were now those within Britain itself. India was the crown jewel of the Empire, and if India fell the Empire would fall with it.

Encompassing almost 1,000 languages, several ethnic groups, and dozens of religions, India had never been a united nation. It was a collection of loose entities whose only unity was in the Raj. The idea that Gandhi presented to the West of a united nation, all yearning for independence was disingenuous. While India was mostly Hindu, it also had large Muslim and Sikh minorities, both of whom were adamantly pro-British. The idea of India united behind Gandhi's efforts at independence is a piece of propaganda. Most Indians were so far removed from the Raj and politics in general that they were indifferent to Gandhi's protestations. For example, a group of British demographers set out in the 1930s to see what the people of India thought of British rule. They discovered that in many of the remote villages, the people were not even aware that the British were even ruling India, despite the British having been there for centuries. Like most of the governments that ruled India, the British had only scratched the surface of India; the interior villages were largely left to their own devices. India was a ferociously divided place. The Muslims who ruled India for centuries before the coming of the British, sided with the British against the Hindus agitating for independence, and this became the underlying dynamite of Gandhi's struggle.

Typical of Gandhi's tactics were the provocations used during the "salt marches". The British had put a monopoly tax on all salt, which played a major part in the Indian diet. To protest the tax, Gandhi organized massive marches to the sea, where the protesters were to have manufactured their own salt without having to pay the hated tax. Gandhi knew that the British would attempt to forcibly halt their defiance of the salt tax. If this happened, he told his followers not to resist the British, but to continue on their way of march until forcibly stopped. The Raj set up roadblocks of club wielding police to halt the marches. As long lines of salt marchers, four abreast, walked slowly up to the roadblocks, they were clubbed in the head. Strategically placed on the sides of the road were Western journalists scrawling sympathetic news reports for the clubbed marchers. Whack! Whack! The clubs reverberated off their skulls. And as the victims stumbled to the rear, a new set of marchers calmly walked up to be clubbed for the cause. The image of the marchers being bloodied by British imperialism caused "progressive" Westerners to be sympathetic to Gandhi's call for independence.

Gandhi deliberately chose this tactic that was designed to appeal to the liberal sentiments of progressive Englishmen and Americans. He hoped that the pressure put upon the British government by this wave of sympathy for the "oppressed" Indians would result in independence. Britain was losing moral support for its Empire already. If, on the other hand, Gandhi would have chosen armed struggle to gain independence, in all likelihood this would have given the Raj justification for its rule and the support of the British people in fighting any attempt to usurp this rule. Or at least armed struggle would have silenced the liberal element in Britain who wanted the Empire liquidated. Gandhi's use of "non-violent" protest caused liberals in Britain to feel no compunction in coming to his support. Whereas, if British forces were under direct attack they would have been reluctant to side with Gandhi while their countrymen were under fire.

To believe that Gandhi chose these tactics out of a principled opposition to all violence is a mistake. In a rare moment of candor, Gandhi made this clear when he said to a Western journalist that he chose non-violent protest because Indians were unable to produce a united front behind the idea of armed struggle. "And this would not have insured a military victory," he said. It was more reasonable to appeal to an already disillusioned British public than to commit themselves to armed struggle when victory was not assured. It must be remembered that at the time of Gandhi's movement several dozen groups on the Indian subcontinent were involved in an armed struggle against British rule. From the early days, Britain had fought numerous wars in India, especially on the

northwestern frontier. None of the groups were able to gather enough unified force to throw the British out, nor were they supported by British liberals in their efforts. Instead of armed struggle, Gandhi was counting on the Labor Party and British liberals to give India independence. Gandhi studied in England, knew the English mentality well, he caught the new wave of socialism, reformism, and liberalism then coming to the fore in the West. He knew that he could turn this element of the West to his advantage in winning independence. It was a political tactic plain and simple, chosen by a shrewd politician posing as a holy man for propaganda reasons. If he opposed violence in any form he would not have deliberately sent his followers into a phalanx of clubs to begin with.

Gandhi was the front-man, the focus and image of the movement while Nehru was the practical political side. Like Gandhi, Nehru was a rich, well educated socialist revolutionary raised on Western liberalism in England. After Gandhi's assassination in 1948, Nehru came to power. He formed an alliance with the Soviet Union, which hypocritically called 'Non-Alinment,' and became a spokesman in support of the various third world revolutionary movements that were then trying to topple the last of the Western colonial governments. Nehru knew quite well that Gandhi's non-violent movement was a mere tactic. And if that tactic did not succeed armed revolution was the next step. This became quite clear when he allied with the Soviet Union and spoke at Bandung alongside the likes of Nasser and Sukarno. He never had a change of heart. This rough edge to Gandhi's movement was merely kept in the background. To this day, Western liberals hide Gandhi and Nehru's revolutionary connections.

Finally, Gandhi's tactics paid off and he received what he had wanted all along—Bloody Sunday. After some British subjects were assaulted in the city of Amritsar (1936), the local British commander, the foolish Colonel Dyle (?), ordered a crackdown and curfew. To further intimidate the locals, Dyle even forced Indians to get down on all fours and crawl past the place where the British subjects were accosted. Predictably, the Indians held a rally in defiance of Dyle's decree. Dyle gathered his forces, marched to the square where the rally was held, and demanded that the crowd disperse. When they refused, he opened fire, killing about 350 protesters.

After the massacre at Amritsar, Gandhi's movement picked up steam. Under the guidance of Montague (head of British government in India), the British government began the official policy toward Indian self-government. If not for the intervention of the Second World War, self-government would have come sooner than it did in 1948. Once the war was finished, America's and the U.N.'s efforts to help dismantle Europe's old world type empires assured Indian independence.

With independence looming, a question was left unanswered that Gandhi paid scant attention to when he was agitating for independence: what was to be done about the split between Muslims and Hindus on the idea of independence. The Muslims did not want the British to leave because they did not want to live in a country that was to be governed by a majority of Hindus. The struggle between the two groups goes way back, and I will not labor you with an extended history, but suffice it to say that if independence came a war between Muslims and Hindus was certain. During the debate about independence, the British used this potential conflict to justify its continued hold on power, arguing that they were acting as a referee between the antagonistic groups. Being a politician and not a holy man, Gandhi was well aware that conflict with the Muslims was likely, but because his Hindus would win he paid little attention to the looming conflict.

The solution Gandhi reached was a partition of India. The Muslims were given an independent state, east and west of Pakistan (East Pakistan later broke with West Pakistan and became Bangladesh in the 1970s). Despite this solution, large numbers of Muslims still lived in Hindu India and vice versa. After independence, a massive population shift took place as Muslims scrambled to get out of Hindu India and Hindus out of Muslim Pakistan. The upheaval was accompanied by massive violence. Machetes and clubs were the weapons of choice, women and children were not spared. The estimated death toll was perhaps in the millions. Gandhi himself fell victim to his own revolution when a Hindu extremist upset over his giving Pakistan independence shot him down. Thus

Gandhi passes in to history as a martyr of peace, a man of truth who could never bring himself to support force under any condition. The facts are actually quite different.

Gandhi knew the possible consequences of his actions. He was an intelligent lawyer hiding behind the robes of a holy man. If he opposed violence under any condition he would not have set out to change the government of India. He certainly did not propose an independent India where armies would not be necessary or where laws were not going to be enforced.

Oh, but what about his famous condemnation of Moses' law: "If we take an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, that will eventually leave the world blind and toothless." How profound. What moral truth. Not. However brutally put, Moses' law was an ancient expression of what is called Lex Talionis, which is the concept that legal punishment should fit the crime committed. This is the basic formula of crime and punishment. Every society comes up with a different way to fulfill this basic concept, but no society has ever done away with the concept of crime and punishment. Gandhi's famous quote suggests that society should forgive and forget all offenses because retaliation for crimes only creates a cycle of violence that will ultimately consume everybody. This is nonsense. All societies in the history of the world, including Gandhi and Nehru's India, have used this concept of crime and punishment, and at no time have any of these societies reached a point where all of their citizens were in danger of becoming blind or toothless. The only blind and toothless people were those who broke the law and had to pay a price for that infraction. It is exactly those places in the world where there is no Lex Talionis where anarchy reigns, that one sees a high percentage of blind and toothless people—the victims of unpunished crimes. Gandhi himself never purposed a future state of India that would operate upon his nonsensical dictum.

Martin Luther King, Jr., was a student of Gandhi's tactics and fashioned his movement based upon Gandhi's model. King was the son and heir of one of the prominent preachers in Atlanta. Martin attended Crozier Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, where he imbibed the ideas of left-wing social activism. If one decided to go to Crozier to learn about Christ and his teachings, he would have been sorely disappointed. The divinity of Christ, the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, were all deconstructed at Crozier and the social gospel of political activism was taught instead. For those like King wishing to complete their activist education, Boston College was the place to go. After receiving his doctorate in political activism, King went back to the South intent upon changing the laws of segregation. The black churches would be the working medium for his political campaigns.

The image of King as a quiet pacifist preacher, reluctantly leaving his bucolic pulpit to pursue politics is a myth. King's preaching was purely incidental, a result of his being an heir to a large church in Atlanta (Ebenezer Baptist). He was first and foremost a political activist and a Christian preacher decidedly second. He chose to attend Crozier and Boston College against his father's advice. Both institutions taught left-wing activism, not Christian theology. Like many other political revolutionaries, King was struck early in life by injustice. He was a rich, privileged part of the black elite in the Old South. And yet despite his privileged status, he was still shut out of the white society he was so close to. He recalled with anger and humiliation the time he and his father traveled across the South and could not find a motel that would accept "coloreds," so they were forced to sleep and eat in their car. It was this barrier his skin color could not cross that drove his anger and shaped his personality. He chose to leave Jim Crow behind, heading toward the bastions of liberalism—Crozier and Boston College. There he thought he could cross the color barrier but he discovered the barrier was still there, just a little better camouflaged. For example, when he fell in love with a young German girl, her father would not allow the relationship. King, thinking it was the same racism he grew up with, fell into a complete breakdown, rending his clothes and running about the Crozier campus like a madman, railing against racial injustice.

From the early days he was a committed activist who surrounded himself with other hardcore activists. Two of his lieutenants—Bayard Rustin and Wyatt Walker III—were dedicated revolutionaries. Bayard Rustin was a longtime professional socialist activist and convicted child molester. Walker was a former member of the Young Communist League; in his early days he even conspired to organize hit teams to assassinate leading

segregationists. And King's major money backer was a mysterious fellow traveler named Levinson. Levinson had also put up the finances to defend many of the communists tried in the late 1940s and early 1950s during the McCarthy era. These men were not dilettantes, but rather serious minded professional activists who knew the game of politics well. The non-violent tactic of provoking the opponent into aggressive response is one they were all schooled in.

The South was under Jim Crow (segregation) since the end of the Civil War. When the war was over the "Radical" Republican dominated government was able to pass the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, which guaranteed to blacks freedom, civil rights, and voting rights respectively. Despite being under occupation by federal troops, and being forced to formally accept these amendments at the point of a gun, Southerners would under no condition allow their former slaves an equal share in society by fulfilling the spirit of these amendments. Although they were no longer slaves, blacks were never going to get equality before the law without federal intervention. The federal government finally gave up on Reconstruction, their social engineering experiment a failure, and pulled their troops out after the famous deal that gave Hayes the presidential election of 1876. Ten years of occupation had done nothing but create a lasting animosity between the South and the North and between black and white Southerners. The white South was now determined to hold the black man down if for no other reason than to spite the North, who destroyed their nation, killed their finest sons, and now was trying to force them into political equality with their former slaves. The war and Reconstruction had increased the hatred for blacks in the South. The black man became a convenient punching bag for Southerners to take their frustrations out on for the humiliation and defeat they suffered from as a result of the war. To have expected them to act otherwise was naive. Without federal troops the amendments were dead letters. Jim Crow was enacted. It would take another 80 years before black civil rights would become a national issue again. King's object was to bring the federal troops back.

Like British imperialism, Jim Crow was a highly unpopular institution outside the South. Since the days of Roosevelt, Jim Crow's days were numbered. Truman had signed an executive order in 1948 integrating the military, and he later asked Congress for a civil rights bill. However, the bill stalled in Congress. The only reluctance the federal government had about pushing harder on civil rights was the continued power of southern senators to derail legislation. Also, the Democratic Party had split over integration in the election of 1948. Strom Thurmond took many democrats with him when he ran on a separate ticket as a "Dixiecrat." They almost destroyed Truman's reelection chances, so in order to keep party unity, the Democrats soft peddled civil rights for another 15 years.

With civil rights stalled, King decided to force the issue. King's plan was to create a state of unrest in the South, and he hoped this would force the federal government to intervene. He intended to provoke the Southern governments to use aggression against his protesters, thus causing outrage in the rest of the nation. He believed that pressure would be placed on the President by this outraged nation, forcing him to intervene with federal troops. He also hoped that this outrage would give the Civil Rights Act the moral support necessary to ride through the halls of a hostile Congress.

The Southern mentality, which King knew well, was highly receptive to his to his design. Similar to Gandhi, King studied the potential reactions of his adversaries to provocative protest, and concluded that they would likely use force to put King's "uppity" Negroes in their "place." Just like the British in India, Southerners used fear and intimidation to keep blacks in subordination. Any threat to the status quo was likely to produce a violent response. If you challenged authority in the South, whether you were white or black, but especially if you were black, the traditional Southern reaction to this type of open defiance was to use naked force to retain the status quo. Back in the days of slavery, Southerners lived in fear of a slave revolt. The Haitian Slave Revolt of the early 1800s killed every white person on the island. Likewise, Nat Turner's revolt in Southern Virginia (1831) killed several dozen whites, many of them women and children clubbed and beaten to death in a school house. Southerners were fed a propaganda diet of real or imaginary black uprisings. They were taught that if blacks were

not kept in their place a massacre would ensue. King knew this mentality well. He knew that crowds of blacks, armed or unarmed, disobeying the white man's law was guaranteed to produce a forceful reaction. And he knew that this sort of thing beamed out to the nation on television by friendly northern liberals would bring immediate sympathy for his cause, and hopefully as a result action by the federal government.

NAACP lawyer Thurgood Marshall was opposed to King's provocative tactics and tried to warn him off. He knew full well this would bring blood to the streets. The NAACP believed that working through the courts, little by little, would force the feds to intervene without having to expose innocent Freedom Riders, protestors, and sit-in participants to attack. King disagreed.

What King, Marshall, and W.E.B. Dubois (president of NAACP) did agree upon was that armed struggle, like that suggested by Malcolm X's Black Muslims, was out of the question. This had nothing to do with moral consideration and everything to do with politics. Armed violence to overthrow segregation would have been counterproductive. Why? Because if segregation was to be destroyed it was a white liberal influenced nation, pressuring a white government that was going to do it for them. Blacks in the country were a powerless minority. Using armed struggle would have potentially alienated the majority of whites and given moral authority to the southern governments' efforts to crack down on any uprising. The federal government was already committed to integration and could be pressured by King to go even faster. To push the process into high gear, the idea was to make the southern governments look like the aggressors, not the victims. Being practical politicians, they made the right choice. To engage in armed struggle should be a last resort; the leadership must either have no other choice, or they must have the necessary support to see that the struggle is waged to a successful conclusion. The civil rights leaders of the 1950s and 1960s were faced with neither of these conditions. Only a fool would have waged armed insurrection against segregation. The southern governments were fighting a losing battle. King already had the passive support of most of the nation. All he had to do was turn this passive support into the active variety. What he wanted was sympathy from white America, what he wanted was Amritsar, what he wanted was Bloody Sunday.

The plan was working just fine. After the Supreme Court ordered the integration of Little Rock High School, the Governor of Arkansas, Oval Faubus, used the National Guard to halt the order. Eisenhower was forced to answer this defiance of federal authority by federalizing the Arkansas National Guard and reversing Faubus' order. The University of Mississippi was likewise integrated at the point of guns. Then the so-called Freedom Riders (mostly northern college kids recruited to ride Greyhound buses through the South defying segregation laws) attempted to integrate interstate bus transportation. This provoked famous incidents at Anniston and Birmingham, Alabama, where several of the Freedom Riders were beaten and a bus was ambushed and set on fire. The outrage of the nation caused President Kennedy to issue an executive order integrating interstate bus transportation, and federal marshals were dispatched to enforce this decree. Next was the integration of privately owned businesses that served the public such as diners, restaurants, and motels, which would fall under the Civil Rights Act that was still stalled in Congress. Sit-ins were held in southern diners, and photos of whites humiliating would-be black patrons brought support from a sympathetic North. But still a fallen martyr here and there, humiliated college students having milk shakes dumped on their heads, was just not getting the bill through Congress. Bloody Sunday eluded King's grasp. The tactics needed to be ratcheted up.

Finally he received what he wanted in Birmingham, Alabama. Birmingham was the heart of segregation during that era. It was policed by a notoriously violent man appropriately named "Bull" Connor. King led a march downtown to Kelly Ingram Park (1963). King and his lieutenants expected a violent response, but he hardly expected it in the manner in which it was delivered. Connor released police dogs on the demonstrators, and he used monitor fire hoses (high pressure fire hoses) to blow down women and children. All of this was caught on film and sent around the nation on news broadcasts. The nation was shocked at such outlandish violence against the demonstrators: women being plastered against the sides of buildings with fire hoses, and dogs tearing the pants off of helpless protesters. Even though Kennedy had been elected with the support of southern

segregationist Democrats, Kelly Ingram Park forced his hand and he immediately called Congress into action on the Civil Rights Bill. Its passage had to wait until after his assassination, but Kelly Ingram Park insured its success. The occasional bombings and shootings were hidden and not as compelling as the demonstrators being beaten on national television. Kelly Ingram Park is what brought the struggle into every American's living room.

The success in Birmingham led King to adopt the same tactics for his voting rights campaign in 1965. In order to call attention to the voting rights campaign, King organized a protest march across Alabama, from Selma to Montgomery. This was the Salt March all over again. Anybody in his right mind could predict that such a march, through that part of Alabama, was guaranteed to create violence. With cameras in tow, King set out with his "innocent" marchers. The march proved to be a disappointment in its first stage. But as they approached the Edmund Pettis Bridge, a line of state troopers dressed in riot gear blocked the road. Once again, broadcast images of Alabama State Troopers clubbing and tear gassing crowds of people was sufficient to create the desired effect—passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

To suggest that these incidents were unprovoked and unwished for is to misunderstand the situation. But the images of beaten women and children, the police dogs tearing the pants off of demonstrators are sacred in our memories as being pure and unadulterated by political expediency, you may say. It is hard to believe that King was anything besides a completely harmless holy man, oblivious to the prospect of violence that his marches might cause. The facts are always a little different than the perception. First, to have marched hundreds of chanting and yelling blacks and liberals into a park in downtown Birmingham in the early 1960s was to court violence. To believe otherwise is naive. Birmingham was notoriously repressive of blacks, a bastion of segregation ruled by a reputed hothead—Bull Connor—who was on record about his violent opposition to integration. For example, during the Freedom Rides through Birmingham, Connor ordered his officers to stand idly by while Klansmen beat the riders to a pulp in the Greyhound bus terminal parking lot. To have expected Connor to react any differently in Kelly Ingram Park was stupid. If you were to organize a march today of white Republicans into south central Los Angeles in order to protest affirmative action, who would you have to blame if violence erupted? Only a fool would expect a peaceful reception. Does this mean that King bears at least part of the blame for the violence in the park and at the Edmund Pettis Bridge? Well, if that theoretical march against affirmative action in to south central Los Angeles took place, and violence was the result, who do you think the liberal media would blame for that piece of nonsense? Of course, they would blame the organizers of the protest. If you go into a lion's cage and poke him with a stick, do not be surprised if he takes your arm off. If King had wanted to avoid violence at all costs, he would not have led his marchers into that park or across that bridge.

To men like King the casualties from these marches were a reasonable price to pay in order to achieve their objectives. He knew that unless the nation brought pressure to bear against the southern governments, segregation would not be abolished. The average white southerner was a supporter of segregation. The rest of the nation was opposed to it, but was reluctant to interfere in another man's backyard. How to force the issue was the question. How could King bring the focus of the nation on his cause and show the ugly, repressive, violent side of Jim Crow? To encapsulate and package this violent side of segregation to an indifferent nation, King felt he had to provoke the segregationist governments to violence: He knew the southern mentality well; he knew what buttons to push; he knew that crowds of "uppity," "impudent" blacks shouting defiant slogans would elicit a violent response, and he knew that it was a matter of southern "honor" with men like Bull Connor to react in a violent way to such provocation. To expect violence was a conscious and calculated part of King's formula, but whether this was known by the marchers who were clubbed and hosed down is another matter.

What needs to be emphasized is that the Bloody Sunday incident is not accidental. It is sought for, it is planned for, and all of Gandhi's and King's tactics were designed to provoke this kind of massacre. The mask of the ingenious holy man doing his best to avoid violence is a lie, a political ruse. This tactic of provocation is central to left-wing activism. It is taught to would be activists in activist training schools. One of the first and most influential

schools in America is the Highlander Folk School in Mount Eagle, Tennessee. King attended there in the early 60's as did most other communist, socialist or left-leaning activists.

Even the name and symbolism of Bloody Sunday carries a fascination and power for leftist movements. The contrast of these two images side-by-side is stark. Bloody is a word of violence and put next to Sunday, which is traditionally a day of peace and worship, makes for powerful propaganda, especially if those who are supposed to have perpetrated this Bloody Sunday are your political opponents. A variety of movements from across the left-wing spectrum have even used the same name. For example, the attack on King's marchers at Edmund Pettis Bridge in 1965 is known among the Civil Rights movement as Bloody Sunday. This is not a coincidence. The left leaning IRA (Irish Republican Army) used the same tactic and the same name. In 1973 Irish nationalists staged a Civil rights protest. A struggle ensued between British troops and the protesters. Believing that they were under fire, which was probably true, the troops opened up in retaliation, 13 protesters died in the crossfire. In Irish Republican lore this incident is called, you guessed it, Bloody Sunday. From then on whenever the IRA or Sein Fien needed justification for its actions they called upon Bloody Sunday. What men like Gandhi and King knew is that without a Bloody Sunday their cause is weaker, so they deliberately went in search of it, they provoked it. Bloody Sunday is the seminal event that gives their cause and movement its moral justification and its focus. The image of an unprovoked act of aggression against "innocent" people is tremendous political capital.

The purpose of this discussion is not to subtract from the obvious justice of Gandhi and King's causes. From their perspective, they were certainly pursuing what they believed to be right. The purpose is rather to separate the facts from the myths that surround two of the most celebrated figures in our time, and also important is the reason why they used such tactics, why they had to appeal to a population enamored of the holy man, peaceful, passive approach to practical political matters. In the popular imagination, men like Gandhi and King have come to usurp the position of the men of steel, the armed revolutionaries of the past. Washington and Jefferson are now thought to be somehow tainted with the blood and violence of their armed struggles. Because they openly used force, Bono tells us they came to "overthrow," while King, on the other hand, came to "justify." King and Gandhi are much more sacred than Washington and Jefferson, Bono says, because King "came in the name of love;" thus suggesting that the figures of armed struggle are lesser men who came in the name of hate.

It is Bono's mentality, which neither understands Gandhi or King, nor does it understand the society where we live—it is this mentality that is the focus of this part of my article. King and Gandhi knew exactly what they were doing. And I do not fault them for that. Unlike Bono, they knew that any attempt to change the law is an act of force. Because the laws are backed by force, and if King and Gandhi were successful by whatever method they chose to use, they wanted possession of the guns of the state to enforce the laws to their liking. To claim pacifism while engaging in politics may be effective in eliciting the support of people like Bono and those who think like him, but it is factually inconsistent. On the other hand, Washington's using guns to seize the state was transparent and up front. For a politician to claim to be above violence and attempt to seize the guns of the state is disingenuous.

We have looked at the practice and motives behind Gandhi nor King's pacifism, but this does not adequately explain why their message is so effective in today's world. Why does Bono's mentality exist? The larger community that is so smitten by the candle light vigil, the slow singing of "We Shall Overcome," and the sanctimonious speeches about peace, do not think too deeply about what it is they believe. Like most people they react to wordless emotions rather than reasoned agendas. Their emotional receptivity to pacifism is the reason why it is so very popular in our time. As we have seen, the more thought out principled arguments for pacifism whether the Christian variety or other are hollow and hypocritical. It is the people who do not have an agenda yet swoon at the sound of King's voice that we must try to understand. They are not ascetics, being quite materialistic. They have never read the Bhagavadgita nor have they practiced Buddha's eight-fold path. So what gives? Why is pacifism so powerful in the modern world?

I will tell you why pacifism is so well received today. Come up close and I will whisper it into your ear: weakness. Let me explain. Pacifism rules the day because the more complex and powerful our technology becomes the further the individual is removed from the competition for life. Once taken away from the necessity of struggle, the person begins to think that struggle is no longer necessary. Our society has been so well organized and compartmentalized that the average person performs one specialized function and takes for granted all of the other many functions that underpin his existence. This is especially the case with those functions which require force.

Law enforcement and war-making have been monopolized by the state and taken far away from the modern citizen's daily life. The typical citizen has never been confronted with these issues of war or assault; consequently, he has never been forced to resolve these things by himself. A well organized police force and army have provided the necessary functions for him. Add to these conditions a power elite promoting a propaganda that over emphasizes an ethic of passivity and tolerance in order to reduce conflicts between its citizens, and you have the ingredients for creating the modern wuss. War and violence are disagreeable business. Even the most ferocious warriors require many conflicts to inure them to the pain and fear of battle. So the more removed the person is from armed struggle, the weaker he becomes.

Think of the massive changes that have affected man with the compartmentalization of society. Today most men and women are specialized in one function; there are business men who sell shoe strings, tires, and beanie babies; technicians who fix computers, golf carts, and bubble gum machines; and there are foot doctors, ear, nose and throat doctors, and doctors for marsupials. Everyone is a cog in a great machine. Because they specialize in one thing, they know very little about anything else. They are completely dependent upon other cogs, performing different functions within the machine to provide them with all of the necessities that they personally know nothing about. There are grown men who know everything about molecular biology, yet could not change the oil in their car. There are doctors who can perform brain surgery, but can not built a fire. And what about the most important things that are taken for granted—food and safety. Only a small minority of the population is now devoted exclusively to these things, and yet the rest live because of this minority. It was quite different in former times.

Thousands of years ago all people were hunter-gathers living in small bands of less than a few hundred persons. The competition to survive required that every member of the band perform most of the essentials, such as food production and fighting other small bands. Except for the sexual division of labor and a few holy men, all males waged war and hunted. Life was brutal, hard, and short. There was no such thing as pacifism in their environment. Conflict was an ever present phenomenon. Anthropologists used to idealize the hunter-gatherer as being on the whole passive. But after having lived among them for a few years, they discovered that violence was not rare as they had previously thought, but was one of the leading causes of death, especially among men. In his recent book, *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Jared Diamond records a typical interview with a native woman: "My first husband was killed by an Elopi warrior. My second husband was killed by a man who wanted me. He was killed by a brother of my second husband seeking to avenge his murder." This was typical.

With the coming of the state, all violence was monopolized. Laws were laid down, courts were set up to hear disputes, police were fitted out to enforce the laws, and war, along with all of these other features, was now the exclusive domain of the state. Now, the individual was allowed to use force only when authorized to do so. Even still, war was a common occurrence and the laws and regulations of the state extended very little. It was still necessary for the citizen to use force quite frequently. The king still needed soldiers to fight his wars, so a militant ethic was necessary. As the power of the state grew apace with technology, laws and regulations began to organize every aspect of society. War was specialized along with everything else, and even though it became more deadly, was more remote from the citizen's life. In the hunter-gatherer times, the defense of the group was dependent on everybody's club. Today this club is a nuclear submarine 500 miles away and 500 feet under water. War is largely out of site and out of mind for most people. War is something seen on television as smart

bombs slam into a building 5,000 miles away. It takes an incident like 9/11 to breach this cocoon of safety surrounding people's existence, confronting them with a reality their ancestors had to deal with on a daily basis. For just because the struggle has been removed far from the citizen's life, does not mean that it has disappeared. No. The instrument of defense has been removed, like that submarine 500 feet underwater, but it is still essential to the survival of society.

Let me illustrate my point with an example about food production. When I was in the woods for five and one-half years, I lived the life of a hunter-gatherer. It took about six months of struggling close to near starvation for me to learn an essential truth—nature did not give a crap about my sentiments; if I did not fight for life I would die. Every creature was in this competition. And if I lost the battle with my competitors, nature was going to be unforgiving, and that beautiful little skunk was not going to mourn my death, but instead he would eat my rotting corpse. I learned to get up early, plan my moves meticulously, and keep my weapons sharp and poised to strike my opponents and prey. At night I used to sit in my tent thinking of the next day's hunt: which way would the deer move, given the season and weather? Given a dozen possible scenarios, where would I set up? Where would I step to shoot from? And how would I get my prey back to camp? When I fell asleep at night, I would dream of skinning and butchering deer. Knife strokes and frying pans filled to the brim with venison steaks danced in my head. Bears became enemies to be feared and were shot on sight, the fat from their rumps carved off and rendered into cooking grease. Before I acquired traps, mice were relentless competitors. They would destroy precious boots and nylon poncho/shelters over night. Over the years, mice and bears savaged much of my equipment. Many a night I sat with rain dripping in my face because a mouse had chewed through the shelter. I would wait for hours overlooking a small deadfall trap I had set up to kill the little critters. I quickly learned that life was a battle.

Today, the average person gets all of his food in exchange for some green paper. He has no idea about the millenniums of struggle it took to develop this organized food supply. The struggle is still there, he just does not have to personally face it. Farmers, ranchers, and processors defeat nature for him. The forces of the battle he cannot bring himself even to look at let alone engage in. For example, every few months there is some community beset with deer overpopulation, and rather than shoot them, there is serious discussion about providing birth control for the deer.

Far from being capable of hunting and killing a deer, grocery store shoppers can not bring themselves to witness a bunny rabbit taking perfume in the eyes or frogs being dissected for science classes. There are huge numbers of people who actually believe that animals should share legal equality with humans. As Ingrid Newkirk of PETA said, "A dog, is a pig is a boy." The lifestyle these people supposedly push is "cruelty free," meaning they do not eat meat or use animal products. The truth is that all life displaces other life—it is the basic formula of existence. Regardless of whether you are a vegetarian, the lentils and rice that you eat require space to be grown, thus taking habitat away from other creatures. Growing and harvesting grain or vegetables takes the lives of millions of creatures—frogs, rats, mice, insects, squirrels—before it reaches your table. The shelter where you live is the former habitat of other creatures that have died or were pushed aside for your domicile. Inside your very body a war is going on between your protective cells and numerous microbes (other life forms) trying to take your place, your life. If by living a "cruelty free" life they mean one where other creatures will not be killed in their behalf, there is only one condition available to them where this is possible, death. For all organisms to live others must die. The larger the organism the more creatures must die to secure its existence.

To use another analogy, the citizens of modern society are like spindly plants, artificially protected from the wind. When I was younger I once put in a plot of plants that grew tremendously. They were leafy, fat, and for all appearances were as healthy as any other plants. But there was a problem: the slightest touch would send them sprawling over, their stalks snapping. The cause, I discovered, was that I had neglected to subject them to strong winds, for the space was enclosed. To develop healthy stalks, plants need to be continually bent by the wind or at least some external force needs to lightly break the plant fibers of the stalk, thus causing the plant tissues to grow

back even stronger. Animal muscles must likewise be subjected to stress to maintain strength and be kept from atrophy. It is the plant struggling against the wind or the muscle struggling against weight resistance that makes them stronger. This analogy is apt for our society: not having been subjected to struggle the people become weak. A highly sophisticated technology and military has kept the winds of strife far from most people's lives. The thicker the technological barrier becomes the more spindly the people become. The more spindly the people become the louder they scream about the slightest breeze that manages to get through the barrier.

But the breeze (struggle) is a fact of life that all organisms must endure if they are to survive successfully. No technology however great is able to destroy the necessity of struggle. To artificially increase the barrier's thickness because the spindly plants (people) demand it, is to court disaster. War is a fact, pacifism is an ideal. If a nation becomes incapable of waging war another will take its place. Life is not a logical formula to be solved. Struggle will never be done away with among men because it is a necessary ingredient to life, like the breeze is to the plant.

The advance of pacifism is not inevitable. Humans are not the complete slaves of their environment. Despite the fact that pacifism (weakness) grows out of the conditions that our technology has created, as humans we have the ability to consciously manipulate our environment. Just as our technology artificially manipulated the environment to produce these pacifistic conditions, we can artificially reverse this process by promoting manly values instead of succumbing to the weakness. If we chose to, we can effect our environment for more than it effects us. This is what separates us from the animals, and this conscious choice is what separates one individual or society from another, not environmental conditions. The choice is ours whether we wish to deliberately reduce the atrophied condition of our citizenry by promoting the ideals and practices that curtail the sickness of pacifism. By encouraging patriotism instead of cynicism, rugged service rather than decadent self-indulgence, martial heroes in place of weakling pacifists, by using our technology to challenge and enhance our power and hold up the individual instead of wallowing in the fifth of pity—by doing these things we insure our continued survival and prosperity. Choose to go the other way and the breeze will ultimately get through. This is what happened on 9/11/01. A large hole was punched through the barrier; a large terrible breeze came through. But for a culture of our size, the breeze should have been weathered just fine. But because of the atrophied condition of our people, 9/11 sent the nation reeling. The reverberations caused by 19 men with box-cutters are still being felt. The solution Washington came up with—keep building the barrier thicker, reinforce the weakness, go back to “normalcy.” The leadership can follow the voices of weakness back into the cocoon, but history is not bought off; it will come back, only next time the hole will be larger. It is inevitable. The ruminations about “world peace” and a people “tired of war” are simply ruminations not realities. The breeze will indeed come. The question is will the plants thrive in it or flop over dead.

Thus, I hope I have helped a little in explaining why it is that the believers in secular pacifism are impervious to any facts that contradict their faith. Probably nothing I have written is more controversial than my suggesting that Gandhi and King were practical politicians that were far from the ingenuous holy men of pacifist propaganda. A closer examination of their actions shows that they deliberately chose their tactics to fit a particular situation, and their choice had nothing to do with principle and everything to do with practicality. Neither were pacifist, but rather they used pacifism as a part of their image in order to pander to a weak people. Likewise, the people influenced by their pacifist propaganda are not acting out of principle. Rather, they are the products of an over-protective society that has taken care of their every need, allowing them to indulge in pacifist fantasies. This would not have been possible if they had to struggle to survive like their ancestors. At this point it is hard to see how a reversal of this milquetoast effect can happen. But the consequences of its continuing are easy to see. Just today a Chinese general threatened to use nuclear weapons on America if Washington intervened in the Straits of Taiwan. The sharks smell blood in the water and are beginning to circle. The only question is when will they move in for the kill.