



Making Waves



Turning the Tide Programme of Quaker Peace & Social Witness
advancing active nonviolence for social change

Issue 18

Spring 2006

Editorial

Nonviolence thinking and practice has in some ways been easier for those of us in liberal Western democracies. We don't face the same dangers as some in life and death situations elsewhere; we can explore in comfort and safety different strategies and finer points of nonviolent challenges to injustice and oppression – often of other people. It seems, though, that we are moving from that relative comfort to a different place of greater state scrutiny and harsher penalties for dissenting action. Kathryn Tulip and Matthew Herbert take us on a trip down the memory lane of increasingly restrictive legal measures that can now, with the revised Terrorism Act and Serious and Organised Crime and Police Act, define peaceful protest as serious criminal activity. Moth Foster describes a Clowns' training workshop – a wonderfully creative response to these new laws; Hugh Warwick gives us an alternative view of animal rights activism; we take a look at how Gandhian philosophy and practice is being reborn in a land rights movement in India; Chris Gwyntopher reflects on the cycle of violence in the context of the London bombings last year, and we have accounts of different types of action around Aldermaston. We commissioned articles on how change happens and Ruth Tod, Ken Jones and David Lewis provide insights and examples. And Jim Forrest, with help from Thomas Merton, reminds us that whatever our understandings of how change can come about, the end result is not always in our gift.

Steve Whiting, *Programme Manager, Turning the Tide*

Criminalising protest?

Kathryn Tulip

Our civil liberties can no longer be taken for granted. It's hard to tune in the radio, or pick up a paper without hearing something about the further erosion of our rights – compulsory ID cards, shoot to kill, stop and search, ending jury trials, and of course the recent Serious Organised Crime and Police Act (SOCPA) that has reawakened the debate about our right to protest. The government mantra is the constant:

“To protect you we need more power. If you've got nothing to hide, you've got nothing to fear” So how does this affect those of us working for social change? Where do our individual and collective utopian visions fit into this 21st

century 'war on terror' that feels like a war on our rights?

SOCPA has caused real concern. Why? Because it has the potential to criminalise protest at, or near, the seat of government – Parliament and Downing Street. We've taken it for granted that we can protest and stay within the law. Now such protests cease to

be the acts of law-abiding citizens working for change, but become acts of civil disobedience – defying the law on a specific issue in order to make change. Dissent in all its forms is steadily becoming illegal.

Those of us who choose, or are compelled, to dissent will need to make choices. Increasingly, we're standing at the parapet, and we have to decide whether to stick our heads above it or stand down. It's a decision many will already have made. But for many others it will be the first time they have had to choose between following their consciences and being criminalised, or ducking back down behind the parapet.

Inevitably some will be radicalised, but by no means all.



To us the choice seems clear, to maintain an effective voice for change, we need to be prepared to step outside the law. Our tried, tested, honoured, and effective methods of making change are becoming unacceptable to a government that is increasingly intolerant of dissent. Finally we're seeing what the agenda really is. We may not like it, but there's a certain brutal honesty about it, and it confirms what a lot of us have always thought about the nature of centralised power.

The interesting question, to us, is whether even civil disobedience is enough? Civil disobedience, by definition, is an act of temporary defiance – “we, the people, will resist in this manner until you, the government, right this injustice”. At its heart is an acceptance that the concept of the state is fundamentally just, but that governments occasionally act unjustly. Can we be sure of that any more? Can we be sure it's our interests, the planet's interests, and not corporate interests that the state represents? There's an old anarchist saying - “whichever way you vote the government always gets in”. If that has any resonance for you, there may be another choice to make - do you accept the law?

Our answer is nonviolent direct action. Not disobeying a law to make change, but making change with no consideration of the law. Using compassion, co-operation and our consciences as guides. Living dissent, not practising acts of it. Not asking permission of the government to make change but giving ourselves permission. Not negotiating with them when they don't make change fast enough but setting our own timescale. Not withholding consent for a while until we force them to change, but making change ourselves! Whether it's resisting injustice in the form of action to prevent oppression and destruction, or actively building justice through creating alternative social structures. So let's take back our power and wield it together.

Does the society we live in leave us at liberty even when we live a law-abiding life, or are we imprisoned in dozens of ways every day by advertising, social pressure and more? It's a comfortable prison, but a prison nevertheless. We need to act out of conscience not out of deference to the law. If you've never stolen, murdered or raped, is that because it's illegal or unconscionable? If you believe and act out of conscience in disregard or open defiance of law, that's nonviolent direct action. And that's a force no government can effectively legislate for.

Eroding our right to

protest - from the CJA (1994) to SOCPA (2005)

Matthew Herbert

Governments of the day frequently argue that new legislation is targeted at controlling a particular element or grouping - animal rights extremists, idle youth, terrorists etc. Bad enough in itself, but once the proposals become law, they are frequently used much more widely. With anti-social behaviour orders (ASBO's), the initial target was youths on housing estates. Now these orders are being used against environmental and animal rights activists. The justification for the Terrorism Act was the threat presented by Muslim extremists - but the law was drafted widely enough to cover many forms of nonviolent direct action. However, the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act (SOCPA) like the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) before it, was clearly drafted with peaceful protestors in mind.

Here are some of the key erosions of our right to protest over the past 12 years:

Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

In response to the successful campaigning tactics of hunt saboteurs and road protestors, this widely opposed law criminalises trespass on private land (more recently amended to include inside buildings), if the trespasser intends to disrupt, interfere with or intimidate anyone engaged in a lawful activity. It has been regularly used against activists, including in a recent high profile case of the George Fox 6, Lancaster University students and graduates, convicted of aggravated trespass for handing out leaflets and holding a banner at a peaceful demonstration on the university campus. The act also curtailed rights to freedom of assembly and movement, changes mainly aimed at the activities of travellers and ravers. The CJA also eroded the right to silence, giving the court or a jury the right to draw inferences from a suspect's silence, when determining whether they are guilty.

The **Protection from Harassment Act 1997** was principally intended to protect women from stalkers, but has been used extensively against protestors, particularly animal rights activists. It allows companies to obtain very broad interim injunctions before the criminal case of harassment has been tried. Injunctions have been obtained to restrict individual's movements, rights of protest, assembly and freedom of association, and to create exclusion zones around animal labs and arms factories,

The **Crime and Disorder Act 1998** introduced antisocial behaviour orders (ASBO's) into the legal

lexicon. ASBO's can be obtained against behaviour which, whilst offensive to society, had not previously warranted criminal sanction. ASBO orders have been obtained for: wearing a hat, not wearing anything, feeding birds, letting pigs escape. Activists have also been ASBOed or threatened with them. Breach of an ASBO brings a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment. ASBO's, with their lower burden of proof, can serve as a short cut to getting a criminal conviction without the need to prove the original crime.

The **Terrorism Act 2000** has the potential to regard many types of nonviolent direct action as acts of terrorism. An act of terrorism is now defined as any act that causes serious economic damage, endangers life or creates a risk to the health and safety of the public, and is designed to influence the government, and is for the purpose of advancing a political or ideological cause. Activists pulling up GM crops or dismantling Trident submarines could arguably fall within this category.

The Act has also widened police powers of stop and search - section 44 gives a blanket search power, with no requirement for the police to suspect that you are a terrorist for the power to be exercised. It has been used extensively to intimidate and delay protestors, including at the anti war protests at Fairford in 2003 (almost 1000 people stopped and searched), the DSEi Arms Fair 2003, and at the Labour Party Conference 2005 (600 people stopped and searched).

Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005

SOCPA has brought in a series of new offences directed specifically at protestors. There is a new criminal offence of trespass on a 'designated site'. The 'designated sites' include military bases at Coulport, Faslane, Fairford, Fylingdales, Lakenheath and Menwith Hill. Unlike the offence of aggravated trespass, there is no requirement that you must have been interfering with a lawful activity; the penalties are also more severe than for aggravated trespass. It is now an offence to organise or participate in an unauthorised demonstration within 1km of Parliament and whilst the police response to unauthorised demonstrations has been variable, there have already been a number of arrests and convictions. The Protection from Harassment Act has been extended by SOCPA to include a new offence of harassment of two or more people in an attempt to persuade them to do/not to do something. What this means for activists is not yet clear, but leafleting or talking to two or more workers at a factory gate with the intention of persuading them not to go to work could now be an offence.

SOCPA also brought in a new criminal offence of interference with contractual relations. The act turns civil wrongs into criminal offences, where they are carried out with the intention of hindering an animal research organisation or with the intention of persuading someone to sever their links with such an organisation. For example, a noisy demonstration outside an animal lab, which could amount to the civil wrong of 'private nuisance', or handing out a leaflet which could be held to be defamatory, another civil wrong, are criminal under SOCPA. Though specifically directed at animal rights activists this offence can be extended to other forms of protest with the minimum of Parliamentary scrutiny.

Whilst SOCPA has certainly eroded the right to protest and has specifically targeted peaceful protest, it's not the first time, nor likely to be the last, that we will need to adjust our focus, find ever more creative ways of making effective protest and keep following our consciences.

Resources:

Activists Legal Project Legal resource for activists <http://www.activistslegalproject.org.uk> -website under reconstruction

FreeB.E.A.G.L.E.S. Comprehensive legal briefings for activists at <http://www.freebeagles.org>

Trident Ploughshares. Trident Ploughshares legal briefings including new briefing 'Trespass on Designated Sites' <http://www.tridentploughshares.org/article1404>

Liberty website of one of the UK's leading human rights and civil liberties organisations has sections on ASBO's, right to protest, ID cards, police powers <http://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/issues/index>

People in Common website with information about the campaign against section 132 of SOCPA <http://www.peopleincommon.org>

Freedom to Protest conference website with briefing papers on many aspects of the changes to the law and the impact on the right to protest <http://www.freedomtoprotest.org.uk/workshops.htm>

White Rose a blog focusing on civil liberties, set up to point a finger at the erosion of personal freedom in the UK <http://whiterose.samizdata.net>

Kathryn Tulip and Matthew Herbert are activists and trainers for Seeds for Change. Matthew is also a Turning the Tide Resource Person.
www.seedsforchange.org.uk

Quaker hedgehogs

Hugh Warwick

Direct action from animal rights groups is often stereotyped as sinister, balaclava-clad and potentially violent. This is a stereotype that some in the movement do little to counter, seeming keen to be cast as renegades and outlaws.

And it is also a stereotype that is found very useful by the authorities as they seek to belittle the issues behind the protest.

But this can have the unfortunate consequence of painting the authorities into a corner as they demonise people they should be negotiating with. This is what has happened in the case of the Uist hedgehogs.

First, a little bit of history: in the mid 1970s someone introduced some hedgehogs to the Uists – three islands of the Outer Hebrides. The islands have internationally important breeding populations of a number of ground nesting birds, including lapwing and redshank. And when the rapidly expanding population of hedgehogs emerge from hibernation they are confronted with a veritable smorgasbord of birds' eggs to eat. These apparently benign beasts have been linked to a precipitous decline in the breeding success of the birds.

So a decision was taken to remove the hedgehog – but should it be dead or alive? After much debate Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), the responsible authority, decided to kill them. They argued that translocating them would lead to unjustifiable levels of suffering, as the hedgehogs would die slow and lingering deaths.

The vast majority of people who had any experience working with hedgehogs doubted that this was the case, and a group was set up to actively oppose the cull. Not by interfering with the killing, but by rescuing as many hedgehogs as possible from the islands and releasing them in a closely monitored manner on the mainland.

This group, Uist Hedgehog Rescue, is a coalition of highly respected scientists, welfare organisations such as the British Hedgehog Preservation Society and wildlife rehabilitators. But the press office at SNH put a great deal of effort into describing the rescuers as band of dangerous extremists, telling the media that they would not be releasing details of the people actually killing hedgehogs as they were frightened for their lives.



Hedgehogs rescued on the Uists receiving a health check

The reality was that both teams of people had arranged not to work in the same areas to ensure that there was no possibility of conflict.

And now? After three years, the numbers of hedgehogs being killed is less than the number being rescued (and more worryingly, it is less than the number of new hedgehogs being born). Worse still for SNH, their central tenet; hedgehogs would die on translocation, has been disproved by a piece of research due to be published soon.

But will SNH consider reversing its position? After all, it has also been shown that the translocation is considerably cheaper; in the first year alone £90,000 of taxpayers money was spent killing just 60 hedgehogs.

So far they have refused, in fact they have suggested upping the ante by hunting with dogs – though they were disappointed to discover that the new hunting laws mean that any hedgehogs found by dogs will either have to be shot or killed by a bird of prey.

Why this inability to consider changing their position? Because they set the opposition up as animal rights extremists and are now frightened at being seen to be influenced by such an imaginary band. It is going to take a move of great courage on the part of the authorities to admit that they have made a mistake. And recent research may come to their rescue – as this work, currently in press, shows that hedgehogs translocated from the Uists do just fine when introduced to a new environment. Then we might, at last, see both teams of people working together.

Hugh Warwick is an independent researcher and writer on environmental and ecological matters.

The Futility of Violence

Chris Gwyntopher

People were blown apart by bombs in three underground trains and a bus on 7th July 2005. 52 people were killed and 700 injured. Such acts were unquestionably acts of violence. Bombing Iraqis in their towns and villages allegedly to liberate them from Saddam Hussein was also violence and seen as such by the majority of the world, but not by the perpetrators. Depriving people of the means of survival by unfair trade terms, structural adjustment programmes, denial of access to free medicines and to education is also violence. It is not acknowledged as such by the powerful Governments and Corporations of the world.

Smashing the side window of a private car in Stirling was clearly seen as violence by the mainstream media and many who read about it. It may not have been seen as violence by the perpetrator because it was damage to property not people. It would be seen as violence by most nonviolent activists and by many anarchists. The term violence has a contended meaning.

Too often the perceived enemy or outcast is held responsible for violence, "We are just defending ourselves, upholding the law, working for global justice."

For this essay I take violence to be action which deliberately causes serious injury either physical or psychological to other living, feeling creatures.

In this sense there was relatively little violence by the protestors against the G8 or its policies. The violent activists were a minute proportion of the total. They however got most of the media coverage before July 7th. Most of the violence was against property not people. Police violence was more injurious to larger numbers of people. This fact was reflected in much of the photographic record but not in the headlines. In London however the violence of terrorists was immediately greater than the violence of police. We do not know for certain what the motives of the perpetrators were. If they were responding to the bombing of Afghanistan or Iraq then their violence was as ruthless as that of the state but killed fewer people than the agents of the state in relation to those events.

In my view violence is not only wrong but also futile. It does not usually achieve any just humane, liberal, peaceful or ecologically harmonious objective. This is close to being a tautological truth. Violence is by definition inhumane, takes away the freedom to live as they would wish from its victims. Its impact on

natural ecology is contingent not necessary. What are contingent reasons that make violence futile? In relation to the G8 summit:

1. Violence diverted attention from the injustices of the global capitalist system to the violence.
2. The relatively minor violence of the G8 anticapitalist demonstrators trivialised and devalued the protests of millions for trade justice, debt cancellation, aid without disempowering conditions, radical action to end and reverse climate change and for a people-centred world.
3. It helped justify over-policing at Gleneagles, Stirling, Edinburgh and Glasgow.
4. It helped justify use of Section 60 encirclement powers around Stirling Eco village, stop and search and similar curtailments of civil liberties.
5. The security guards, police and behind them the armed forces were much better equipped, organised and trained for violence than anticapitalist activists.
6. Acts of violence disempower. Generally only a few feel able to take part so it is inherently elitist. Violent activists adopt and encourage a football supporters "us and them" mentality. Our team usually loses. The use of the fear of violence disempowers other anticapitalist, environmental and social justice activists.

The objectives of the perpetrators of more extreme violence on 7/7 were not certain. Four British men were identified as prime suspects. It appears that they committed suicide when placing the bombs. There has been much speculation and a widespread assumption that they were an al-Qaeda group.

The bombings provided excuses for an extension of the already draconian anti-terrorist powers taken by the UK government. The bombings may be used to generate popular support for authoritarian, corporate capitalist objectives, such as bombing Iran.

Violence is not futile only if the perpetrators' objectives are the extension of elite and undemocratic power, to replace one elite by another, to prevent decisions against the interests of powerful corporations, Governments or anti democratic groups, to extend the powers of the state and to promote scapegoating of ethnic or religious minorities. Hitler was aware of these likely outcomes of violence and exploited most of them in the Reichstag fire. Violence is not only wrong in itself. It also prevents progress toward a more just, peaceable and sustainable world.

Chris Gwyntopher is a Turning the Tide Resource Person

Clowning Around

Moth Foster

I recently participated in a clowning workshop run by Sgt. Bob Sideshow from the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA) in Aberystwyth.

After a warm-up, we split into two groups for 'grandmothers footsteps'. A member of one group stood facing the wall. The others had to creep up to 'Grandmother' and touch her /him whilst touching or holding some 'treasure' (a juggling club!). Grandmother had three chances to guess who had the treasure. If right everyone went back to the beginning, if wrong everyone took one large step towards her. When she turned around all creeping towards her had to freeze. Anyone spotted moving went back to the start. As with all the co-operative games we played the idea was to learn how to work as a team. Some of us tried linking arms and walking slowly up with more than one person holding the club at a time.

We played cat and mouse tag. The cat had to try to catch the mouse. The mouse could join either end of a group of three to find safety. If she did the person on the other end became the mouse. Like many of the games I found this challenging to play because of my visual impairment (lack of left hand peripheral vision). However, I still enjoyed it.

Next was an exercise that our trainer called 'cripple king'. Not a pc name but descriptive, suggestions for a better name please! Chairs were randomly placed. The 'crippled king' stood at one end of the room, everyone else sat at the other leaving one chair vacant. The 'king' had to shuffle/ walk slowly towards the chair with the aim to sit on any vacant chair. If someone left a chair they could not return till they had sat somewhere else. It was quite easy for the king to get to sit down - until people began to play as a team and not individuals. Even then it was not easy to stop the king sitting down. The one left standing when the king sat down was the new king.

During the break we went through some hand signals that might be used for quick decision-making, including signals for 'I have a question',

'quick response', 'technical point' and agreement.

After a shared lunch we did 'What's in the box?' an exercise to develop imaginative, quick and lateral thinking. Working in pairs one had an imaginary box the other asked questions about what was in the box. The keeper of the box just let their imagination run wild and thought of anything that came into their head (eg the USA, a rabbit, the night sky).

The next was the most thought provoking exercise. Groups of three were given a news story to analyse and had to search for the essence of the story: what was the journalist trying to say? What was the actual story? We re-worked the story from a clowning



Clown army recruit singing

angle - how we might want the story said and a clown response to the journalists' version of events.

One group had a story about the Crown Prosecution Service failing to prosecute and came up with a story involving the 'Clown' Prosecution Service.

Finally we watched and discussed a DVD of clown nonviolent direct actions, including a tv documentary that followed clown activists going to the Make Poverty History demo and the G8.

We enjoyed scenes showing police playing Giants, Wizards and Dwarves with clowns!

Some of us went to a student party on the seafront that Saturday evening and we re-convened between on Sunday morning. To warm up we played passing a handclap around a circle - like 'Ping, Pong, Pow'.

The techniques of socking and fishing.

Imagine you are turning a sock inside out and that gives you some idea of another exercise we did. We

split into two groups, one being the audience. The active group formed a huddle to discuss what emotions they were going to express. They formed into two columns of three in close order at an end of the space. The people at the back would move down the sides of the columns to the front whilst expressing the emotion and then freeze. The people now at the back would then move to the front expressing the emotion. This would continue until the group could go no further.

The group then withdrew by socking in reverse, ie people at the front would move to the back, this time expressing a different emotion. The audience then had to guess what the emotions were.

Fishing is a technique where the group acts like a shoal of fish or flock of birds. All took their lead from whoever was at the front edge. The gaggle of people as viewed from above moved forward but when the lead person changed direction they all changed. The leader had to change by turning on the spot by 90 or 180 degrees to start with. Whoever was now in the lead position now was the leader! Later the leader added hand movements and noises. This exercise helped build teamwork and a leaderless form of direction!

After lunch we learnt about Bouffant, a French style of clowning which forms the basis of a lot of Clown Army techniques and training. One group was the audience again. Historically this could have been a Royal Court, the king and entourage. The other was the troupe of clowns. Again we used a juggling club as 'treasure'. The troupe slowly moved towards and sometimes away from their audience taunting them and tempting them with the 'treasure' but at no point letting them get hold of it. In doing this the troupe could incorporate a lot of what had been learnt or practiced over the weekend.

Clowning Drill

An important role and function of the Clown Army is to parody the conventional forces. As a part of this we need to be able to perform Clown Army drill. This serves more than one purpose.

When a group forms up initially everyone has to remember their position, ie who is around them. This means that whenever the army forms up anyone who is missing can be quickly identified (security and safety for individuals).

It looks impressive and it's funny to see a bunch of anarchistic clowns doing this. It also shows up the police who often have worse drill than the clowns - possibly because the clowns want to learn it and the police don't!

We learnt spacing and did some marching,

scattering and reforming. Scattering is used if someone in the troupe thinks the group is about to be surrounded by the police. Anyone can shout scatter but it must only be used in extremis because it can be difficult to reform.

All in all the weekend gave me a wider perspective of how nonviolent direct action can be used. Many of techniques we learnt and exercises we did are very useful for affinity group work and training. I think Turning the Tide and other nvda training groups would all benefit from doing Clown Army training.

More information: <http://www.clownarmy.org>

Moth Foster is a Turning the Tide Resource Person

Turning the Tide in India

Steve Whiting

"What do you want for your children?" we asked Agro, the village leader. The villagers were Dewars, previously a nomadic community of Dalits (or Untouchables) who gained a meagre living through rag picking and other salvage work. Such was their experience of economic hardship and persecution they decided to establish a settled community. Their village, Damakheda-Kurway, was one of many in Chhattisgarh state in India that I visited in November with my Quaker Peace & Social Witness colleague Stuart Morton, South Asia Programme Manager.



Agro, the village leader, with reclaimed glass

Fifteen years ago, the villagers had asked PV Rajagopal to help them. Rajagopal is founder of Ekta Parishad (United Forum), the Gandhian land rights organisation that partnered QPSW in hosting

a group of human rights and peace workers from countries across South Asia. He helped the Dewars, firstly by working through some serious difficulties of conflict with neighbouring villagers, which involved an Ekta Parishad (EP) activist living in the community for a while. They built mud huts and asked EP for some pigs to rear for food and income. After a few months they had sold all the pigs and were back to square one. Raja provided them with crockery to sell, but this led to the same outcome. Then he encouraged them to cultivate some unused land and provided them with seeds and bullock carts, but the government department issued them an eviction notice and threatened them with legal action. With help from EP they resisted. They went to the government office with their pigs and chickens and challenged the eviction order, threatening to stay there until they were granted land.

Entitlement to the land was eventually granted, and they slowly learned the new skills involved with cultivation and animal husbandry. EP built a grain store, but also encouraged the villagers to include a livelihood that they could understand. Their skill remained in rag-picking, salvage and selling to market. So EP provided them with bicycles and big bags for collection, built a yard for salvage collection and a shop to sell day-to-day items to encourage spending within the village. They also trained villagers in skills to enable them to negotiate with dealers in other villages. Today the village is settled, accepted by its neighbours, economically self-sufficient and active in empowering other villages in the region. The children attend neighbourhood schools and the village decided to ban alcohol. Agro, the village leader's simple reply to our question was, "We want our children to be self-sufficient and do useful work".

This was just one example of the impressive work of EP with people who are being deprived by state, national and international policies of access to land, water and forest. Ekta Parishad works towards community-based government (Gram Swaraj), local self-reliance and responsible government. To achieve this it

- brings deprived peoples together to struggle for their livelihood rights, taking action only when dialogue has proven impossible. It uses methods of nonviolent struggle such as padyatras (long marches), satyagraha (nonviolent protest), dharnas (sit-ins) and gheraos (encircling people who wield power).
- develops community based economic systems that promote local self-sufficiency, reduce dependence on welfare and dysfunctional government programmes and give unemployed

people another opportunity to support themselves. Examples of constructive programmes include grain banks, development of village industries and women coming together in mutual help groups.

- acts as advocates for poor communities to those in power from state officials to the Prime Minister, and networking with a wide range of like-minded organisations in India and across the world.

It recruits and trains large numbers of activists who help to organise and mobilise their village and spread the work to neighbouring villages. We witnessed one such youth training at an EP self-built institution called Prayog (Experiment), where over 100 people from across tribal, caste, class, and gender divides worked, trained and sang together for a week. About 20% of these were selected for advanced leadership training at a later date. A key focus was mobilising for a nationwide march on Delhi in October 2007 to put pressure on the Congress government to deliver the pro-poor policies on which it was elected. International support for the march is welcome, so if anyone fancies a trip to India for an unforgettable experience, check details at www.ektaparishad.org

EP is also working to change the political culture by grooming political leaders to reliably represent the interests of the poorest people. EP's upfront emphasis on nonviolence, inclusivity and equality has clearly been a positive revelation to many. In Rajagopal, it has a charismatic leader who is the model servant leader, and who has built a movement that will surely outlive him.



TTT workshop at Prayog

There was much for QPSW and the others in the South Asia group to learn and bring back to our own work, but what could we contribute?

Certainly our international presence on a forest padyatra (foot march), at villages, public actions and meetings with journalists and politicians helped raise the profile and standing of Ekta Parishad. And QPSW was instrumental in bringing the group together in the first place to strengthen nonviolence movements across the South Asia region.

But would the techniques and tools used by Turning the Tide in Britain, translate to these different cultures? We delivered a week-long series of workshops during our stay at Prayog, taking it one step at a time, starting with personal and professional experiences and building each day's workshop on the work of the previous day. Our South Asia group included human rights and peace workers from Afghanistan, Bangla Desh, Naga people of north-east India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. We explored aspects of conflict transformation, nonviolence, power and conflict dynamics of the issues that group members were working with in their countries. We considered what a network of South Asian organisations might look like and how it might function. At the end of the visit the group established a basis for a continuing network based on shared experiences and mutual support on common issues. It was pleasing to learn that they valued the TTT contribution highly, to the extent that they requested more of it in the future.

Steve Whiting is a Turning the Tide staff member

Them and Us

Ruth Tod

Recently I have been reflecting on how change happens and more particularly, how people actively contribute to this. Big moments stand out. In September 2000, Sharon's visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem sparked the second Palestinian uprising. In 2001 the destruction of the Twin Towers provided the opportunity to go to war in Afghanistan and Iraq. And on a different scale, Rosa Parks stayed seated on the crowded bus. Why are these so powerful? Is it because they touch people's hearts or challenge their whole sense of identity?

At a recent Turning the Tide workshop on Spirituality and Nonviolence, led by Veronica Pelaric of Pace e Bene, we felt that spirituality includes compassion for one another, understanding differences, connecting with the universal spirit and receiving inspiration. Spirituality overrides different religions,

which often just get in the way. It is not just about feeling good; it connects to the deepest level of our being and can bring people together, despite their differences.

I would like to explore what this has to do with change. I think the spiritual dimension is where we can connect with one another about the concerns that matter most to us. The three examples I gave above, challenged people's sense of themselves; they brought fears, frustrations and hurts to the surface and revealed deep insecurity and injustices. They were spiritually charged moments.

For me the image of Rosa Parks staying seated on the bus resonates deeply. This was not a decision taken out of the blue because she was long practised in nonviolent campaigning. Her simple act exposed her vulnerability, humanity and courage and in doing so, connected to the vulnerability in her opponents, drawing out a huge groundswell of passion - both fury and compassion. She simply showed that she was tired of campaigning and tired of shopping. 'She could do no other'.

So what is the learning here for those of us engaged in nonviolent action? Action that influences people at a spiritual level changes dynamics, relationships, perceptions and ways of doing things - sometimes for good and sometimes for bad. Personally I think it is important to get in there because that is where we may awaken new understanding, shift behaviour patterns and connect with one another.

We can engage at that level through planned action, for example, at the Arms Fair a group of Buddhists meditated on the train whilst one or two others spoke to men in grey suits and offered them leaflets. Across the Atlantic, in protest against the Iraq war people put hundreds of army boots outside the Pentagon to draw attention to all those who had died so far. I don't know what practical difference these actions made but I am sure they reached out to people and at least made some contact, however fleeting.

We can also engage on a spiritual level through every day activity. One of the most empowering spiritual ideas is that each of us can 'Be the Change', with the emphasis on **be** as well as **change!** To use Quaker language, we put our values and beliefs into practice, we witness to our belief in that of God in everyone, we further our vision of the Peaceable Planet by *being the change* ourselves. To create a more peaceful and just society we act peacefully and fairly, starting now, wherever we can.

There are lots of things we can say about this. Here I would like to come back to the question of *them*

and us because for me one of the big challenges of *being the change* is how I can connect even where there are big differences. How can I step over the barrier of them and us? Some of my work involves community groups and Quaker groups, where there are differences of approach and experience. When I am planning what to do, how to respond or initiate in different situations, I may need to sit with my plans and ideas, and test them against my values and my vision. I might ask questions such as:

How will this action help me to communicate so that people hear and understand me?

Will I learn more about their perspectives and feelings, so that we can find common ground or common concerns?

Will it make a useful difference to the dynamics of a situation?

Will people be enabled?

Is it congruent with my beliefs?

For me this kind of thinking is important in all contexts whether in face to face meetings or public acts of resistance. If the answer is *no* on either a spiritual or a practical level, I need to think again! From practice I often do this without thinking, but there are also times when things go awry because I forget.

Turning the Tide recognises the importance of linking the spiritual and practical and offers various ways to start thinking about *Them and Us* at this level. For example at last year's Quaker Peace & Social Witness Representative Council, we facilitated workshops on *The Other* when we role played *Walking in Another's Shoes* and explored what it was like to feel left out and marginalised.

When we connect with others we may awaken new perceptions, disturb hidden feelings and discover new possibilities, which can be scary. But it is a place where change can really happen. This is where we can get beyond the violence of revolution or the collusion at the heart of short term reform and instead reach into the deeper place of transformation. Our challenge is to see how can we get in there and witness in ways that make those changes that we long for.

Ruth Tod is a Turning the Tide Resource Person

Change

Ken Jones

The precondition for effective change, in my view, is when there is deep and heartfelt acceptance of the

challenging situation that confronts us. This is especially difficult for the dyed-in-the-wool activist to whom it may feel like quietism and evasion. When there is such acceptance by the self that is itching to DO something (and thereby also to AFFIRM this needy self) we cleanse the windows of perception (in Blake's words) and, (in mine) we begin to get out of our own light, and to lift the shadow of our own need to act from the situation or problem to which we want to respond. So the preparation for action, for effecting change, is meditation and the insight it can give into the subjective springs of action -- the need to make our mark, to do good and to be good, and the underlying existential fear and insecurity from which these impulses arise. When we are thus deeply aware our action for objective change is not subjectively contaminated. We are able to respond 100% to the demands of the situation.

All this applies no less to the reverse situation, of inaction, where we may be reluctant to attempt change be perhaps sceptical and disillusioned. Here again, if we have developed an inner eye, we may discern why we are reluctant either to change ourselves or to initiate change out there. And why? may range from self-protectiveness to the need for assured results as a means of feeding hunger for self-affirmation.

Ken Jones is an Engaged Buddhist, writer and poet

How Change Happens The *Streetbeat* Experience

By David Lewis

Streetbeat is a bold and innovative intervention in community cohesion that encourages a change in the way young people, the police and their communities see each other. It has its early development in the policing world of central London and has been continuously developed by 'This Way Up', a team of passionate and committed individuals. The Metropolitan Police in the City of Westminster, together with their partners in this field, have been constant encouragers and supporters.

In this case the 'change,' or transformation, as 'This Way Up' prefer as a term, is being encouraged between young people on the streets and police officers and other 'authority figures' with whom they have everyday or occasional contacts. This article looks at some of the reasons behind how and why this programme came about so that those who have similar issues in their communities can share their experiences.

The Landmark Forum, February 2004. A police officer sits next to a twice-imprisoned young offender, now a successful entrepreneur, life coach and development facilitator. They begin to talk in the first stages of an awakening to who each other really is, a conversation that is observed by a third party who challenges them to be straight with each other and to hear each other's story, a process by which their perspectives suddenly and dramatically change.

Two years later in February 2006 the three people in this conversation founded 'This Way Up', a programme of workshops and events dedicated to changing perspectives in a range of potentially conflicting areas of life. Their first programme, *Streetbeat*, launched as a pilot in 2005 started by bringing police officers in the City of Westminster together with young people from the local inner-city estates. Some of their joint stories were both moving and inspiring.

R was a young 19 year old from the north of England with anger management issues, which made it hard for him to settle down, hold employment or be in permanent accommodation. After a period spent living on the streets, finding food from wherever he could and sleeping on the top deck of night buses where he picked up continual spot fines for travelling without a ticket, he attended a Streetbeatz programme. There he found a forum where his rocket-fire way of expressing himself could be heard patiently and caringly and from which his natural powers of leadership together with an inspirational enthusiasm could be harnessed. At the end of the first part of the programme R led an exchange of views with police officers which would have been impossible for him or for the police before the programme. From there he was encouraged to apply for a voluntary post in Europe under the European Voluntary Service programme of The British Council, one of a range of outcome opportunities harnessed by 'This Way Up'. Within a month of the programme R had been placed in an exciting voluntary programme in Poland.

The issues that R opened up were addressed using innovative and proven arts based tools in the drama and music fields providing a real hope for the future in reducing traditional hostility, improving individual and group relationships and allowing a new respect to develop between two groups who in many cases had well-set stereotypical views of the other.

In another case F was a 24 year old with an inability to settle in work or relationships through a deep suspicion of betrayal and exploitation by other people in his early years. Although difficult to

engage he had recently found regular work in only the second real job of his life but the programme patiently helped him to see that he was able to trust other people and that there were people in the world who were able to give him unconditional regard for who he was. With barriers broken down it was possible for him to have his story heard and to hear how his life on the street had affected other people in the community. The support he needed was to help keep his job open whilst developing the capacity within himself to help others, something he had previously been unable to understand.

But what are the elements of change that allow this transformation to take place?

'This Way Up' and the *Streetbeatz* programme utilises three main tools of the process of change which can be described as Integrity, Empowerment and Leadership.

'Change through Integrity' allows individuals to move from a position of an often characteristically chaotic state where some things work for them and some things don't and where those that do don't always work for others (anti-social behaviour, drug misuse, inappropriate use of power, stereotyping, lack of discretion) to a position where they start to experience a life that works for them and for everyone else around them. And they start to experience this without having to give up the power, self-esteem and peer-respect that often drive their being. This change element is shown in outcomes such as young people helping local police officers to understand their street culture (The *Streetbeatz* 'Young Mentor' scheme where the traditional mentoring model is turned on its head-the young person 'mentors' the police officer in that specific area) and in the potential development of police officers as 'Youth Liaison Officers' on the Police 'Safer Neighbourhoods' teams.

T is a police constable with nine years service who was initially sceptical of the benefits of the Streetbeatz work but agreed to give it a chance. Once on the programme he started to see that the young people he had previously seen as anti-social thugs had many of the same pressures and issues in their lives that he had but without the social structures, regular income and supportive surroundings in place that gave him help at most stages of his life. With the understanding that the young people he was sharing with often didn't want the life they had but were left with few choices and a dangerous level of peer pressure T ended up offering to go out on the street with the young participants to share something of each others worlds without bitterness, rancour or suspicion getting in the way.

‘Change through Empowerment’ encourages participants to move from a position where life happens to them and to which they merely re-act to a position where they have the power to make the life they want for themselves. The participants in the *Streetbeatz* programme of change are encouraged to increasingly remove layers of their defensive screen and to replace them with the skills of self-expression, confidence and openness needed to transform their lives

P is an articulate 19 year old woman with issues around trust, men, authority figures and generally having an inability to work and live socially together with other people. This had isolated her and led her into a community of young people where negative influences were coming to bear but her creative talent remained intact. The Streetbeatz programme was able to harness the creativity and allow her into new experiences of working with the police which let her see that there were many people like her in all walks of life and that by sharing her story others could be empowered by her.

‘Change through Leadership’ encourages participants to move from a set position of either always being the dominant force to those around them, or from being subservient, to a position where they can assume the role of leader when required and to allow others to lead when the conditions are more appropriate, the art of ‘followship’ as it is sometimes described. By providing the preparation and allowing discovery of the skills latent or suppressed in everyone *Streetbeatz* provides a way up from an often predictable, uninspired and uninspiring life into a fulfilled life of real presence in the world where the individual’s contribution to their own life and to other people’s is fully understood and realised.

K is a 20 year old who came straight to the programme on release from a prison term for a variety of offences around criminal damage and anti-social behaviour. His street life was about the gang culture of some inner London estates where his graffiti ‘tag’ on the notice board walls of the gang’s territory marked him out as the dominant leader in this closed and sometimes secretive world of street youth. Clearly a natural leader, his opening up on the Streetbeatz programme allowed him to express the needs of many young people marginalised by their wider communities. For the first time for many of the police present they came to understand that the need to express and be heard by young people was being blocked through fear of the ‘hoody’ appearance and mannerisms of the street culture. K came to see that where he was being listened to and respected for himself, he could give respect back and lead others to make a positive impact on

the community rather than a negative one.

Change comes about when individuals realise for themselves, as when looking in a mirror, that the perfect image they are seeking is not what the image is reflecting back to them. When the realisation comes, either through their self-started journey of self-discovery or through a catalyst such as a developmental programme of whatever sort then the openings for Integrity, Empowerment and Leadership are there. Applied to one and then to many in a self supporting community linked not by knowledge of each other as a group but by the shared application of the elements of change, those who aspire to lead through an empowered integrity can change the world. Those who already do so through the Friends, through programmes such as *Streetbeatz* or Landmark Education or through many and various routes and communities are hereby duly acknowledged for their stand to create a world people co-existing in justice, equity and peace.

David Lewis works with the Metropolitan Police

The power of love resisting the power of AWE nuclear weapons complex

Chris Gwyntopher

The multi-faith service in April was part of the non-violent blocking of building of the new nuclear weapons complex at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston. On the day after the Buddha’s birthday and Palm Sunday some key participants could not come. But thanks to a group of Buddhists from Milton Keynes at least 12 people took part. We were celebrating the power of love not the love of power.

The work at the Atomic Weapons Establishment is sustained by the love of power, the power of the most destructive weapon conceived by humanity, the power to threaten majority world countries with devastation, the power of a place on the UN Security Council. As the missiles, the guidance system, much of the research and the dominant company running AWE are American that power does not make the UK independent. The UK usually backs the US on the Security Council. This “power” helped UK complicity in the war on Iraqi people and the occupation of Afghanistan. It may implicate us in an attack on Iran.

The service started just after 7am. It was sunny but a cold wind chilled the fingers of the worshippers

holding the sheets of readings and prayers. Lead by Angela, we were able to find peace and feel love even in the face of noise and preparations for acts of extreme cruelty. Chris found that silences and Buddhist chanting particularly helped him to centre.



The power of love not the love of power

After the end of the service two of the novice Buddhist monks, Levy and Samantha felt they should attempt to stop the builders going in by lying linked together on the road in the Tadley gate entrance. They remained holding each other in the road for about 1/4 hour before the police, using pressure points, separated them. They were put in a small prison van. Workers trying to get into AWE were offered leaflets appealing to their consciences to consider changing their jobs.

The remainder processed to Home Office gate, the other entrance to the vehicle security inspection area. Soon after arriving Alex another of the novices and Chris decided to again stop builders driving in to extend the nuclear weapons research complex. We lay down in the entrance area and linked arms by the Home office gates. We were arrested and taken in the same van as Samantha and Levy to Newbury police station.

Samantha and Alex accepted a caution, Levy, who is 16, a reprimand and Chris was bailed and charged with obstruction of the highway. He had sat down in the road twice, at Tadley Gate and Home Office gate, before being arrested.

Further multi-faith services and nonviolent blockading are planned at AWE. All are welcome.

Contact: chrisandgwyn@phonecoop.coop.

Block the Builders, c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DY. 07969739812.

Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM)

By Evelyn Parker

When the Government set up this committee 3 years ago, I thought cynically that it was a PR exercise to gain public acceptability for a hole in the ground somewhere in the UK probably not far from Sellafield. After following its proceedings, which have included reams of paperwork, I am glad to say I was wrong, and CoRWM is doing something new – incorporating ethical considerations from their extensive consultations into their conclusions.

Firstly, it declined to deal with storage forever, but shortlisted variants on longterm interim storage up to 300 years. Experts, stakeholders and public have identified the shortlist and criteria by which options should be judged. Seven waste streams and six variants of interim storage, three of deep geological disposal and five of non-geological disposal for reactor decommissioning wastes are shortlisted.

A cross section of experts was then asked to assess each option against each criterion and devise a scoring method – this needed a separate gathering of supplementary information – and the results are recognised as being based on currently available information, gaps, uncertainties and conditionalities and differences of opinion being acknowledged. The rationales and justifications of the scores are recorded, and the scores were presented as a range rather than a fixed amount.

Next, back to the stakeholders and public for weighting of the criteria. This was what was happening in the CoRWM organised series of round table events around the country in Jan/Feb 2006. I took part in one in Reading, and found myself at an NGO table. Other tables had people from Local Government, community groups, statutory regulators and the nuclear industry (in our case Aldermaston and Harwell). I was pleasantly surprised at the degree of convergence in this disparate roomful as to what we thought were the most important criteria in the vexed problem of what to do about our radioactive waste. Top priorities were intergenerational equity, minimising radiation doses, and “flexibility”, by which is meant monitorability and retrievability. These were ranked above security, environment, employment, amenity, implementability and cost.

Next came a “swing” weighting exercise, which involved taking account of the difference between

the top and bottom of the scores ranges presented by the experts. We found this rather subtle – the example quoted was that in purchasing a car one might consider cost and MPG as equally important, but on finding lots of cars in the same price bracket but huge variations in MPG on offer at similar price, MPG would move up the priorities agenda.

All of a sudden, a seemingly straightforward exercise began to look complex! CoRWM has tried hard to accommodate both science and the “softer” inputs based on values and ethical considerations. I wish them luck in their attempt at an holistic bringing together of the detailed strands from the perspectives of both criteria and options, and good for them that they have tried to bring young people into their exercise.

What a pity then, that they do not seem to be taking a firm stand over the debate around new generations of nuclear power plants and/or nuclear weapons. They see themselves as dealing only with the existing stockpile. We in the NGO sector are trying hard to convince them that their valuable work is in danger of being undermined before they have even finished.

Evelyn Parker is a Turning the Tide Group member

Understanding Failure

Jim Forest

This article appeared in *The Acorn*, the journal of the Gandhi-King Society Vol XII, no 2, 2004 and is reprinted with permission of the author.

“Do not depend on the hope of results” Merton wrote me early in 1966 (the letter is below). I no longer remember what I had said that prompted his comment, only that it had something to do with activity aimed at ending the war in Vietnam. In fact the war was just warming up in 1966. It had another nine bloody years to run. Year after year opponents of the war such as myself would have the experience of absolute failure. Many thousands of people were yet to be killed. Most of the people whose names are now carved on The Wall commemorating American soldiers who died in Vietnam were still alive and well. Many were still children in 1966.

Merton’s letter – since published time and again and translated into various languages – has become one of his best-known letters. It has even been made into cards and even bookmarks. When it was first published in *The Catholic Worker* in the mid-70s, it was given the headline, *Advice to a Young Activist*. But one needn’t be an activist or young for it to

make helpful reading.

The letter’s main theme is similar to the first Beatitude: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Not depending on the hope of results is a way of describing poverty of spirit – learning to live a life that is not enslaved by achievement or reputation or rewards, but rather a life whose mainspring is self-giving love. Such poverty of spirit requires us to swim against the very strong tides which sometimes, even often, get the better of us.

Merton doesn’t mean that results don’t matter or that we shouldn’t be interested in them – only that it must not be the attainment of hoped-for results that rules our lives. To live the first Beatitude is something like being one of the people in medieval times laying the foundation of a cathedral. The builder knows he will not live to see it finished. Perhaps his children or grandchildren might one day stand on the towers, but he will not. Yet without his labour, towers he can only imagine will never rise.

A key word in Merton’s letter is “truth”. It’s no easy thing to know the truth, still harder to speak it and hardest of all to live by the truth. In a prayer often used by the Orthodox Church, we speak of the Holy Spirit as “the spirit of truth”. To know the truth and live in the truth is to participate in the life of the Holy Trinity: the primary community, the community without which there is no communion.

Merton – among the most prolific and gifted of writers, a man of words if ever there was one – warns us not to lose our way in words, rhetoric and slogans. Social movements, whatever their particular agenda, tend to be environments in which words are constantly on the boil, and where ideologies and slogans become a substitute for thought and the silent activity of conscience. Movements of dissent, within themselves, rarely appreciate dissent.

Merton sees peacemaking as nothing less than an apostolic vocation. Far from being merely political, it has to do with drawing us closer to God, and thus in the process closer to each other. One can see in the lives of such people as Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King that all the good that they accomplished had an evangelical core and motivation. “If I have accomplished anything in my life,” Dorothy once remarked, “it was because I wasn’t afraid to speak about God.”

A key sentence in Merton’s letter is: “In the end it is the reality of personal relationships that saves everything.”

Living as I do in a country that only a few decades

ago was occupied by the German army, I often think of those people who, despite extraordinary danger and the influence of propaganda, struggled to save the lives of Jews and others who were being hunted by the Nazis. The parents of the eldest priest in our Amsterdam parish were such people. Finally, they were arrested and jailed. They survived the war, but all their guests died in concentration camps.

What this family did might be judged an absolute failure, yet the memory of such actions – not all of which failed – still generates life-saving actions. Thanks to such people, light shines in the darkness of times in which evil seemed invincible.

On an especially sad day in his life, when death seemed to be laughing at each and every member of the human race, my Vietnamese Buddhist friend, Thich Nhat Hahn, told me, “Nothing is wasted.” What precious words! He was weeping as he whispered them, gazing out a dark window at falling snow.

Nothing we do that is founded in love and truth can possibly be wasted – only we ourselves may not live to see what God does with actions which, at the time, seemed like pebbles thrown down a dry well.

Once, standing on the south porch of the cathedral at Chartres, an area devoted to the Last Judgement, the guide, Malcolm Miller, asked the question: “Why do you think we are not judged one by one as we die rather than all together at the end of history?” The answer was: because it’s not until the end of time that the consequences of what we did and what we failed to do can be fully weighed up.

*Jim Forest is a preacher and author.
More about his work and life can be found on:
www.incommunion.org and
www.incommunion.org/home.htm*

Do not depend on hope of results

Thomas Merton. Extract from his letter to Jim Forest

Do not depend on the hope of results. When you are doing the sort of work you have taken on, essentially apostolic work, you may have to face the fact that your work will be apparently worthless and even achieve no result at all, if not perhaps results opposite to what you expect. As you get used to this idea, you start more and more to concentrate not on the results but on the value, the rightness, the truth of the work itself. And there too a great deal has to be gone through, as gradually you struggle less and less for an idea and more and more for specific people. The range tends to narrow down, but it gets much more real. In the end, it is the reality of

personal relationships that saves everything.

You are fed up with words, and I don’t blame you. I am nauseated by them sometimes. I am also, to all the truth, nauseated by ideals and with causes. This sounds like heresy, but I think you will understand what I mean. It is so easy to get engrossed with ideas and slogans and myths that in the end one is left holding the bag, empty, with no trace of meaning left in it. And then the temptation is to yell louder than ever in order to make the meaning be there again by magic. Going through his kind of reaction helps you to guard against this. Your system is complaining of too much verbalising, and it is right.

The big results are not in your hands or mine, but they suddenly happen, and we can share in them; but there is no point in building our lives on this personal satisfaction, which may be denied us and which after all is not that important.

The next step in the process is for you to see that your own thinking about what you are doing is crucially important. You are probably striving to build yourself an identity in your work, out of your work and your witness. You are using it, so to speak, to protect yourself against nothingness, annihilation. That is not the right use of your work. All the good that you will do will come not from you but from the fact that you have allowed yourself, in the obedience of faith, to be used by God’s love. Think of this more, and gradually you will be free from the need to prove yourself, and you can be more open to the power that will work through you without your knowing it.

The great thing after all is to live, not to pour out your life in the service of a myth: and we turn our best things into myths. If you can get free from the domination of causes and just serve Christ’s truth, you will be able to do more and will be less crushed by the inevitable disappointments. Because I see nothing whatever in sight but much disappointment, frustration and confusion

The real hope, then, is not in something we think we can do but in God who is making something good out of it in some way we cannot see. If we can do His will, will be helping in this process. But we will not necessarily know all about it beforehand ...

Enough of this ... it is at least a gesture ... I will keep you in my prayers.

All the best, in Christ,
Tom

[The letter is dated 21 February 1966; the full text is published in *The Hidden Ground of Love*, letters by Thomas Merton, edited by William Shannon]



About Turning the Tide

Turning the Tide aims to advance the understanding and practice of active nonviolence and its use for positive social change, using the experience of contemporary and previous nonviolence movements.

Turning the Tide provides

- Public introductory interactive workshops exploring active nonviolence;
- Consultancies, or tailor-made workshops, for groups. These can cover campaign strategy, empowerment, building strong groups, group process and preparing for nonviolent action;
- Providing materials. TTT has an award winning video, *Nonviolence for a Change*, a journal *Making Waves*, a website www.turning-the-tide.org and a nonviolence resource library.

Turning the Tide is a programme of Quaker Peace & Social Witness. Please contact Turning the Tide, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ, UK
 Tel: +44 (0)20 7663 1064/1
 Fax: +44 (0)20 7663 1049
 Email: sophier@quaker.org.uk or stevew@quaker.org.uk
 Web: www.turning-the-tide.org or www.quaker.org.uk/qpsw

Book review

Love of Enemy: the Cross and Sword trial

By Leonard Desroches, pub 20002, Dunamis, Canada ISBN0-9680828-2-3

Reviewed by Ruth Tod

This is a very personal and moving story of a small and powerful act of awareness raising in Toronto, Canada in 1998. The writer, Leonard Desroches, was deeply troubled about Canada's complicity with US wars, particularly the latest in Iraq. On his way to a meeting to organise a 3-week fast, he suddenly had one of those ah hah! moments. In front of him, outside the Anglican church, was a huge cross with a sword at rest upon it. The Cross of Sacrifice, as it was called, was a monument to those who had died fighting in war, a common sight that he often walked past. But that day Leonard saw it afresh, as a symbol of the Church's collusion with war - at least with 'Just Wars'.

In part I think this book is for churchgoers and in part for campaigners who want to explore ways to engage in direct action. In the introduction he shows how the idea of Just War is embedded in the culture of the Church going back to the 5th century when only Christians were allowed to fight in the Roman Army! He also examines the choice between violence and nonviolence. If you are looking for ways to express the spiritual aspect of nonviolence, this is a great place to look. Nonviolence, he says, is the true calling of the Church, it honours the sanctity of life and makes repentance possible. It is rooted in the living spirit of God.

The bulk of the book is the story of what Leonard and others did to challenge the presence of the Cross outside the church. After lots of vigils, discussion and leafleting about the monument and its message, they had failed to have either the monument or the sword removed, and so a small group decided to physically remove the sword from the cross on Good Friday 1999. Their trial is an impressive conversation. The Sword and the Cross movement had become a catalyst for a major discussion on the Just War.

Views expressed in *Making Waves* and any leaflets enclosed are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by Turning the Tide, Quaker Peace & Social Witness or Britain Yearly Meeting. Edited by Steve Whiting and Sophie Reynolds

Text available in large print
020 7663 1064