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CHRISTIAN PACIFISM AND JUST-WAR TENETS: HOW DO THEY DIVERGE?

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RECENT STUDIES in Christian ethics have uncovered a "point of convergence" between pacifist convictions and just-war tenets. Although it is easy to assume that just-war ideas and pacifism are wholly incompatible approaches to the morality of warfare, James Childress argues that pacifists and just-war theorists actually share a common starting point: a moral presumption against the use of force. Childress uses W. D. Ross's language of prima-facie duties to show how pacifism and just-war thought converge. The duty not to kill or injure others (nonmaleficence) is a duty within each approach. For the pacifist, nonmaleficence is an absolute duty admitting of no exceptions. For just-war theorists, nonmaleficence is a prima-facie duty, that is, a duty that is usually binding but may be overridden in exceptional circumstances—particularly when innocent life and human rights are at stake. Prima-facie duties are not absolute, but place the burden of proof on those who wish to override them when they conflict with other duties, "in virtue of the totality of . . . ethically relevant circumstances."[1] War poses just those exceptional circumstances in which the duty of nonmaleficence may be overridden. In this way Childress both highlights the point of contact between pacifism and just-war tenets and reconstructs the essential logic of the *jus ad bellum*.

To override a prima-facie duty, however, is not to abandon it. Such duties continue to function in the situation or in the subsequent course of action. That is, a prima-facie duty leaves "residual effects" or "moral traces"; after overriding such a duty, our conduct must be affected by it. In the context of war, this means that the duty of nonmaleficence exerts a "pressure" upon the conditions and methods of war. War must be a last resort, pursued for the ends of peace, declared by a competent authority, carried out by limited means, etc. In other words, Childress reconstructs the logic of the *jus in bello* without departing from his central point—that pacifism and just-war tenets share a common pre-

[1] James F. Childress, "Just War Criteria," in *War or Peace? The Search For New Answers*, ed. Thomas A. Shannon (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1980) 42.

sumption against the use of force.[2]

The notion that pacifism and just-war thought enjoy a logically close relation has virtually become the conventional wisdom in recent discussions of war and peace. Drawing upon the data of traditional sources in his historical analyses, James Turner Johnson argues that just-war thinking and pacifism "have something profoundly in common: a searching distrust of violence."[3] Similarly, the U.S. Catholic bishops echo Childress' thesis when they insist that church teaching "establishes a strong presumption against war which is binding upon all; it then may be overridden precisely in the name of preserving the kind of peace which protects human dignity and human rights."[4] Indeed, any decision to go to war "requires extraordinarily strong reasons for overriding the presumption *in favor of peace and against war*."[5] In addition to these authors, David Hollenbach argues that "for Christians, it is impossible to *presume* that the resort to lethal force is compatible with the respect for the sacredness of human life or fidelity to the gospel of Christ." Hollenbach then develops a theology of history according to which pacifism and just-war tenets are equally valid and theologically *necessary* in the "time between the times."[6] Charles Curran also speaks of the "common ground" shared by pacifists and nonpacifists in the Christian community: "All are called to work for peace." Drawing an analogy between religious vocations and the witness of pacifism, Curran argues that there should be "vocations in the Christian community through the gift of the Spirit

[2] Ibid. 45–50.

[3] James Turner Johnson, "On Keeping Faith: The Use of History for Religious Ethics," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 7 (1979) 113.

[4] U.S. Catholic Bishops, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response," *Origins* 13 (May 1983) 8.

[5] Ibid. 10. Despite the fact that both Childress and the bishops use the language of presumptive duties, a key difference remains. The bishops' use of rights language and the principle of human dignity entails a substantive view of justice. Childress' reconstruction of just-war tenets according to the logic of prima-facie duties, in contrast, implies a "thin theory" of moral obligation. Interestingly, Childress wishes to distinguish his use of prima-facie duties from purely formal or procedural theories of justice, and the use of the prima-facie duty of nonmaleficence serves his purposes. But because this prima-facie duty is not derived from a substantive notion of justice, human dignity, the common good, or human rights, it remains unclear why the prima-facie duty is a duty at all. Childress could reply that the bishops' version of justice is "too thick" to allow for widespread agreement in a pluralistic context, and he may be correct. But then it is necessary to show how the prima-facie duty of nonmaleficence could receive public approbation as a starting point in moral analyses of war.

[6] David Hollenbach, *Nuclear Ethics: A Christian Moral Argument* (New York: Paulist, 1983) 15, 25–33.

for people to bear witness to the value of peace."[7] These arguments suggest that pacifism and just-war tenets do not run on distant tracks, but are like contiguous curves, sharing a common point before proceeding in divergent directions. Moreover, spotlighting this point of convergence provides tremendous moral force for those, like Hollenbach and the U.S. Catholic bishops, who wish to authorize a pluralism of views within the Church and the public realm.

Conventional wisdom notwithstanding, significant differences can be obscured when we confine our attention to this point of convergence, even when a well-intended pluralism is at stake. By now it is a commonplace to recall Reinhold Niebuhr's "realistic" criticisms of pacifism to accentuate the divisions between pacifists and just-war-theorists.[8] Ironically, however, a hasty appeal to Niebuhrian "realism" may attenuate further divisions between pacifists and just-war theorists, because it ignores the criticisms that pacifists place at the doorstep of the just-war advocate. While I am sympathetic to the main lines of just-war thought, I wish to highlight here the profound contributions made to discussions of war and peace by those Christian pacifists who criticize the unstated premises of just-war ideas. I do not wish to resolve the differences; rather, I wish to show that pluralism, however well-intended, will necessarily include significant theological and ethical divisions among the ranks of Christians, and that a study of such differences may reveal yet more profound points of *convergence* than those adduced by the conventional wisdom of the day.

Pacifism, no less than just-war thought, has assumed various expressions over the course of its rich and checkered history.[9] Both religious and secular principles authorize pacifist arguments; within religious accounts Christian and non-Christian convictions emerge. However, within this variety certain patterns recur. For the purposes of this article, I shall attend primarily, but not exclusively, to these patterns in contemporary Christian pacifism as it is represented by John Howard Yoder, Stanley Hauerwas, Gordon Zahn, Martin Luther King Jr., and James Douglass. Representing broad theological and ethical currents in Prot-

[7] Charles E. Curran, *Critical Concerns in Moral Theology* (Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame, 1984) 163–64. Curran rightly reminds us that traditional Catholic theology does not elevate religious vocation to a higher status of Christian life, and warns against this tendency in pacifist circles today.

[8] Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics* (New York: Scribner's, 1946) 1–32: chap. 1, "Why the Christian Church Is Not Pacifist."

[9] John Howard Yoder, *Nevertheless: Varieties and Shortcomings of Religious Pacifism* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald, 1971). Yoder briefly analyzes 18 versions of pacifist thought and practice.

estant and Roman Catholic thought, these authors examine the stated and unstated axioms of just-war tenets. A close study of their theological and ethical critiques of just-war ideas indicates that the point of convergence between pacifism and just-war tenets is both more vexing and more suggestive than Christian ethicists have heretofore maintained.

CHRISTIAN PACIFISM: THEOLOGICAL CRITICISMS OF JUST-WAR TENETS

For these pacifists, war is a crucible, perhaps a "limit situation," in which the classical issues of Christian faith are tested under intense heat and pressure. Indeed, like pacifists in times of persecution, the issues of creation, Christology, the doctrine of God, theology of history, ecclesiology, anthropology, the nature of religious faith, and theological methodology all undergo special trials when the morality of war is broached. Making matters even more problematical for most pacifists is the fact that they must contend with others in the Christian community who, as just-war theorists, rarely invoke specifically theological authorizations to support their views. Generally, then, these pacifists' criticisms of just-war thought must proceed indirectly. Insofar as they criticize all authorizations of war, their views apply a fortiori to just-war thought. Since just-war theorists rarely make appeals to specifically theological warrants, pacifists must uncover the unstated premises and the final assumptions on which just-war ideas seem to depend.

Christian pacifists characteristically begin their theological critiques by objecting to the authoritative sources of just-war thought. Just-war theorists engage in specious argumentation, from a specifically Christian standpoint, insofar as they draw upon extrabiblical sources, e.g., natural-law morality, to derive a principle of justice. Natural-law morality, as Yoder argues, draws upon a "competitive revelation claim" as an authoritative source. Relying upon such nonbiblical sources, just-war theorists "have us place our faith in some other channel of ethical insight . . . than that which is offered us through Jesus as attested in the New Testament." At stake in this first objection, then, are methodological considerations about the proper authorities for any distinctively Christian treatment of war.[10]

[10] John Howard Yoder, *The Original Revolution: Essays on Christian Pacifism* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald, 1971) 134–35; Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus: Vicit Agnus Noster* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1972) 21–22. Just-war theorists who wish to meet this objection might argue that, within recent developments of transcendental Thomism, orders of creation cannot be separated clearly from orders of redemption. Thus, "natural" moral imperatives are derived from indicatives of a gracious order. For a discussion of this development in Roman Catholic theology, see James M. Gustafson, *Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics: Prospects for Rapprochement* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1978) 114–19. For an example of pacifist thought which draws upon more traditional natural-law claims, see Gordon Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* (New York: Hawthorn, 1967) 34; James Douglass, *The Non-Violent Cross: A Theology of Revolution and Peace* (New York: Macmillan, 1966) 209–11.

Yoder's argument, as it stands, would have little relevance outside of any concern for a distinctively Christian approach to the morality of war, but Hauerwas has radicalized these considerations about proper authority by criticizing foundational efforts within more general currents of theological and philosophical ethics. Foundationalism refers to all efforts to secure moral reflection on a neutral, ahistorical Archimedean point—a foundation which might have public appeal in pluralistic societies. Efforts to establish universality and neutral objectivity from an ahistorical vantage point, however, distort the true nature of moral experience. Our moral reflection, Hauerwas insists, cannot be divorced from the relativity of its phenomenal, affective, historic, and communal aspects.[11] In his mind, efforts to authorize moral claims according to ostensibly universal criteria in fact require coercion, especially for dissidents. When the centrality of history and community in moral reflection is obscured, the inevitable consequences are confusion, fragmentation, and violence in our moral grammar and corresponding social practices. A return to biblical authority and biblical narratives, in contrast, eschews such efforts to secure public approbation and, in turn, mitigates the kind of violence that accompanies the false pretenses of public theology and ethical discourse today.[12]

Insofar as just-war theorists pursue foundational efforts to ground their ideas on an allegedly universal principle or Archimedean point, e.g., human rights or the prima-facie duty of nonmaleficence, Hauerwas' critique issues in an ironic judgment: if just-war theorists place their argument on an Archimedean point, their enterprise will contribute to the social and intellectual fragmentation conducive to violence itself. By securing their ideas to a universal anchor, just-war theorists contribute to the demise of their own moral principles. In a word, the link between just-war ideas and foundational principles leads to the deconstruction of any moral discourse designed to mitigate or regulate the use of violence. Although Hauerwas does not engage Childress directly, one inference seems clear: if the duty of nonmaleficence is meant to serve as a foundational principle for just-war tenets, then the ostensible point of contact between Christian pacifism and just-war thought may actually be the place where the divisions between them are the greatest.

A concern for proper theological authorization and/or emphasis upon

[11] Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame, 1983) passim.

[12] Ibid. 23–29. However, one implication of Hauerwas' rejection of foundationalism is that he rejects, along with secular just-war theorists, other non-Christian pacifists whose views are not tied to the particularity of the Christian story.

narrativity in ethics leads many Christian pacifists to develop their case according to biblical insights. As is well known, the Sermon on the Mount enjoys a pride of place in pacifists' use of Scripture, and pacifists consistently refuse to weaken the "hard sayings" of Jesus by restricting them to individual relations, interior dispositions, relations between Christians, or supererogatory duties.[13] Jesus actively renounced the use of force and rejected all power by means of the sword; as such, his paradigmatic teaching and voluntary suffering lie at the heart of imitation and discipleship.[14] The cross is the summary of Jesus' ministry, defining the true pattern of social relations in history. The example of nonresistant love has radical social implications—implications that cannot be compromised or overridden by conflicting duties.[15]

Christian pacifists usually develop their use of biblical materials by constructing a theology of history. Most Christian pacifists look to the cross as the meaning of history and argue that God is the sovereign agent who is directing history according to providential designs.[16] Efforts to control the direction of history through human politics are bereft of trust in God's providential care. Insofar as just-war theorists place an uncritical trust in the machinations of statecraft to steer the direction of history, they lack patience and confidence in God's saving, sovereign purposes.

Hauerwas, in particular, has devoted considerable attention to a theology of history and Christian eschatology to accentuate the differences between pacifism and recent just-war theories.[17] He addresses his criticisms to Hollenbach and the U.S. Catholic bishops, who frame their policy analyses according to a theology of history which emphasizes the "interim" nature of our present condition—an interim between the times

[13] Yoder, *Politics of Jesus* 15–21; Yoder, *Original Revolution* 34–51.

[14] Yoder, *Politics of Jesus* 115–34.

[15] G. H. C. Macgregor, *The New Testament Basis of Pacifism* (Nyack, N.Y.: Fellowship, 1954) 37–38, 46.

[16] Yoder, *Politics of Jesus* 238. Yoder remarks: "If God is the kind of God-active-in-history of whom the Bible speaks, then concern for the course of history is itself not an illegitimate or an irrelevant concern. No mystical or existentialistic or spiritualistic deprecation of preoccupation with the course of history is justified for the Christian. But the answer given to the question by the series of visions and their hymns is not the standard answer. 'The lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power,' John is here saying, not as an inscrutable paradox but as a meaningful affirmation, that the cross and not the sword, suffering and not brute power determines the meaning of history. The key to the obedience of God's people is not their effectiveness but their patience (13:10).... The relationship between the obedience of God's people and the triumph of God's cause is not a relationship of cause and effect but one of cross and resurrection."

[17] Stanley Hauerwas, *Should War Be Eliminated? Philosophical and Theological Investigations* (Milwaukee: Marquette Univ., 1984) 50–54.

of Jesus' first and second coming. Hauerwas insists that the theology of Hollenbach and the bishops is incompatible with the chief tenets of New Testament eschatology. A more adequate eschatology rests "not on the conviction that the kingdom has not fully come, but that it has."[18] Jesus has inaugurated a new aeon which points forward to the kingdom, of which the present is a foretaste. Our loyalties to the passing aeon must give way to the requirements of life in a new age. Peace is not only an eschatological ideal but is now present in the Church. In the Church, not the world, Christians learn the true meaning of history, i.e., that "war is not a part of [God's] providential care of the world."[19] As members of a distinctive community, Christians must be confident that their historical destiny is not carried by the nation-state.

Christian pacifists also appeal to various theologies of creation to back their views of nonviolent resistance and witness. Martin Luther King's authorization of nonviolent resistance, for example, drew heavily on an inchoate theology of creation, a view premised on the organic mutuality and interdependence of all life. According to King,

> ... all life is interrelated. All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of all reality.[20]

King often made reference to the "world house" and the "beloved community" to capture his sense of organic belongingness and unity. He saw the multiracial character of the civil-rights movement—black and white together—as a microcosm of his vision of the beloved community—races coexisting in co-operation and mutual support.[21]

King's understanding of human relatedness functioned as an important warrant for his practice of nonviolent resistance. On several occasions he insisted that to injure another was to injure oneself, the implication being that no one profits from the use of lethal force. His claim, "Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly," can be translated, "Whoever injures some directly injures all indirectly." To harm others is

[18] Ibid. 50.

[19] Ibid. Faith in God's providence frequently grounds the pacifist's trust in the enemy and confidence in nonviolent risk-taking. See James F. Childress, *Moral Responsibility in Conflicts: Essays on Nonviolence, War, and Conscience* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ., 1982) 2–28.

[20] Martin Luther King Jr., *Strength To Love* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1963 and 1981) 70.

[21] Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967) chap. 6.

to poison the entire community, black and white, innocent and guilty. Within King's outlook, there is no such thing as the individual in any unqualified sense. Rather, all persons are parts of a larger organic whole, a "single garment of destiny," and to damage any part of the garment is to injure the whole. For this reason, King necessarily avoided the use of force to advance what he considered to be just causes.

As an alternative to the use of force, King appealed to the principle of nonco-operation with evil as a religious and moral duty. This notion, indeed, was intimately wedded to his general understanding of the radical mutuality and interdependence of all reality. Because all reality is interrelated, one can clearly and effectively frustrate another's unjust designs by refusing to co-operate. Moreover, nonco-operation would insure the moral purity of those who follow its course; not to co-operate is to remove oneself from the contagion of evil that affects all whom it touches.[22] The claim that injustice contaminates those who contribute to its cause makes sense for King only if we understand that the nature of all reality is radically interrelated."

In other expressions of Christian pacifism, a theology of creation is invoked to criticize the implied theory of statecraft in just-war thought. In the minds of many pacifists, just-war ideas are tied inexorably to the interests and militaristic hubris of discrete political entities known as nation-states. One problem with the state is that it is part of the order of creation that is present but is passing away. While there is a tendency to consider the state as inherently violent, Christian pacifists nevertheless grant some qualified legitimacy to the state. As part of the passing aeon, the state may be used by God for limited goals, e.g., maintaining order.[23] However, any exercise of politics and statecraft must be limited to legitimate means, which exclude the use of violence to secure otherwise legitimate ends.

Christian pacifists are acutely suspicious of the imperial claims that states can make for themselves.[24] While this suspicion is not unique to pacifists, they are manifestly uneasy about ascribing even qualified value to the exercise of politics. These authors underscore the frequency with which states presume uncompromising loyalties. Too often the orders of creation supplant the orders of redemption in Christian faith, so that the state, not Christ, becomes the object of religious loyalty. The kind of

[22] Ibid. 61–63. See also Martin Luther King Jr., *Why We Can't Wait* (New York: New American Library/Mentor, 1984) 144.

[23] John Howard Yoder, *The Christian Witness to the State* (Newton, Kan.: Faith and Life, 1964) 36; Yoder, *Politics of Jesus* 203.

[24] Yoder, *Christian Witness* 38; Yoder, *Original Revolution* 157.

trust in statecraft evident in much recent just-war theorizing is, for many Christian pacifists, an expression of bad faith.

Ecclesiological considerations impinge directly upon these pacifist criticisms of statecraft. For Yoder and Hauerwas, the Church is the "social manifestation" of the new aeon which has been inaugurated by Jesus.[25] The Church is a countercultural social body which nurtures unique loyalties, universal or transcultural loyalties which supplant the henotheistic loyalties of nationalism. Relative to secular institutions, the Church is a deviant institution and offers a distinctive cultural ethos.[26] Catholic pacifists, e.g., Zahn and Thomas Merton, draw upon the traditional vocabulary of the Church as the "mystical body" to develop similar ideas.[27] These authors define Christian community as a locus of universal loyalty wherein alternative values and relations are nurtured. The Church may be a source of cultural and political dissent; it must avoid all temptation to accommodate itself to the state. Virtually all of these authors are critical of the "Constantinianism" of the Church, a stance which effectively eliminates the Church's prophetic and critical roles.

However, none of these authors adopts a radically sectarian ecclesiology whereby the Church wholly eschews political and social responsibility. The task of the Church is neither to convert the world according to a Constantinian self-understanding nor to ignore social problems. Rather, the Church is to "witness" to its distinctive heritage, grammar, and ethos.[28] Although the meaning of "witness" remains unclear, two distinct currents emerge in pacifist literature. "Witness" may denote an unswerving fidelity to the will of God, regardless of the consequences.[29] In this sense the term denotes exemplary adherence to absolute religious and ethical values. "Witnessing" may also refer to the contrary relation between Church and world. As a sign of contradiction, the Church unmasks the false pretenses of the secular order by posing a radically different social option.[30] To be sure, these two senses of "witnessing" may be woven together: the Church unmasks the false pretenses of the secular order by adhering to absolute religious and ethical values. In this

[25] Hauerwas, *Should War Be Eliminated?* 53; Hauerwas, *Peaceable Kingdom* 96–115; Yoder, *Original Revolution* 60–61; Yoder, *Politics of Jesus* 63.

[26] Yoder, *Original Revolution* 28, 30, 107–9; Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* 279.

[27] Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* 11, 289; Thomas Merton, *Faith and Violence* (Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame, 1968) 19.

[28] Yoder, *Christian Witness* 16–28 passim; Hauerwas, *Should War Be Eliminated?* 56.

[29] Hauerwas, *Peaceable Kingdom* 166–67.

[30] Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 204. See also Stanley Hauerwas, *The Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Social Ethic* (Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame, 1981) 84–85.

way the Church remains socially responsible without accommodating itself to worldly compromises or Constantinian designs. However, when the Church attempts to affect public policy by appealing to ostensibly secular terms like those found in just-war ideas, it compromises itself to the grammar and practices of the public realm.

Not surprisingly, a pacifist theology of history, theology of creation, and ecclesiology can be developed with reference to either the history of God's activity or the nature of God's being. Protestant pacifists characteristically appeal to historical revelation. Insofar as the divine has disclosed itself as self-sacrificial agape, divine love is universal and nonpreferential. The ethics that derives from this theology, as we shall see, must correspond to the requirements of undiscriminating love. G. H. C. Macgregor states this theme of nonpreferential agape most succinctly: the ethics of pacifism is "based upon belief in a Father who loves all men impartially and sets an infinite value on every individual soul."[31]

Using philosophical vocabulary, Douglass, a Roman Catholic pacifist, constructs a similar argument based on God's nature. Douglass defines the nature of Ultimate Reality and develops an ontology of nonviolence.[32] Beneath all of the illusions of the world is the ultimate unity of the human family, and we can unmask our worldly illusions by conforming to the truth of the cross. As the basis of Ultimate Reality, self-emptying love is as objective and real as all physical laws of nature. Drawing upon quasi-empirical metaphors, Douglass insists that the spiritual energy of self-emptying love is at least as potent as the physical energy of the universe. Both energies can be harnessed to transform human life; as Jesus and Gandhi demonstrated, real changes can occur in history through the power of self-emptying love. Ethical implications issue from this theology: authorizations for lethal force are contrary to the very structure of being itself.[33]

Finally, Christian pacifists' views of God, Jesus' ministry, the Church, and history are often linked to a theological anthropology. King, for example, drew his anthropological views from the tenets of Boston personalism—the theological and philosophical outlook entrenched at Boston University during the time when King was working for his doctorate in systematic theology there. Boston personalism emphasized the sacredness of the human personality and the personal nature of the Sacred. King believed that human consciousness was a special mark of

[31] Yoder, *Original Revolution* 51; Macgregor, *New Testament Basis of Pacifism* 12.

[32] James Douglass, *Lightning East to West: Jesus, Gandhi, and the Nuclear Age* (New York: Crossroad, 1983) 9.

[33] Ibid. 14, 18, 42, 48, 53–54.

human nature and a trace of God's image. Violence against one's opponent is a religious problem within this outlook because violence defaces the sacred image with suffering and pain. King believed that all people retained this sacred image—even whites who were irrepressibly racist. For this reason he commanded his followers to hate the deed but not the doer, to hate the sin but not the sinner.[34]

Christian pacifists also draw upon anthropological considerations to insist that one's enemy is not incorrigible. Pacifists generally insist that enemies may be converted and social relations may be improved by means of trust, patience, and love.[35] For Zahn, this means that one's enemy has a conscience that may be awakened by nonviolent witnessing, understood in both senses used above.[36] Moreover, anthropology is linked to eschatology: a trust in the neighbor entails hope for the neighbor, and hope for what God can do in the neighbor. In the minds of many Christian pacifists, the resort to force, even as a last resort, signals a lack of patience and a corresponding lack of hope. Confident in God's providential designs, pacifists generally refuse to resign themselves to cynicism about the possibility of human transformation. As Merton remarks, pacifist convictions "are inseparable from an eschatological hope which is completely open to the presence of God in the world and therefore to the presence of our brother who is always seen, no matter who he may be, in the perspectives of the kingdom."[37] Acting out of this fundamental hope and trust, many pacifists are willing to undergo great personal risks to effect personal conversion and social change.[38]

Taken together, the points adduced above should indicate that Christian pacifists consistently underscore the *theological* dimension of warfare. War is the crucible within which one's most fundamental religious convictions either emerge or collapse under the pressure of political expedience. Whatever else one wishes to say about ultimate concerns during the everyday affairs of life, one cannot eschew such concerns when debate about war transpires. Hauerwas captures this theological dimension of the debate most succinctly:

> For what is war but the desire to be rid of God, to claim for ourselves the power to determine our meaning and destiny? Our desire to protect ourselves from our

[34] King, *Strength To Love* 50.

[35] Merton, *Faith and Violence* 15, 20; Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* 105; King, *Strength To Love* 49. See also James F. Childress, "'Answering That of God in Every Man': An Interpretation of Fox's Ethics," *Quaker Religious Thought* 15 (spring 1974) 2–41.

[36] Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* 105.

[37] Merton, *Faith and Violence* 26.

[38] Childress, *Moral Responsibility in Conflicts* 25.

enemies, to eliminate our enemies in the name of protecting the common history we share with our friends, is but the manifestation of our hatred of God.[39]

But these theological considerations also include a more subtle point within Christian pacifists' agenda. The point is that war is a theory-dependent notion, an idea whose intelligibility is linked to a wider constellation of ideas whose meaning and importance can go too easily unnoticed. One important task of their theological agenda, then, is to force nonpacifists to come to terms with the background considerations on which depend their understanding and justification of war. Those who justify some uses of violence may not be theological in any strict sense, but that does not mean that their view of war has intelligibility apart from basic considerations about human nature, history, and the ultimate concerns of human commitments. Christian pacifists do not reduce the issue of war to theology, but their appeals to theological ideas force nonpacifists to unmask the many assumptions on which their theories rely.

CHRISTIAN PACIFISM: ETHICAL CRITICISMS OF JUST-WAR TENETS

Christian pacifists amplify their critiques of the practice and justification of war with manifold ethical arguments. Generally, pacifists frame their ethical views about peace and nonviolence in terms of positive and negative duties. As a negative duty, nonresistance to evil is absolute, admitting of no exceptions. As Hauerwas remarks, pacifism denotes "a position that involves the disavowal of violence as a means to secure otherwise legitimate ends."[40] Positively, pacifists insist upon building a peaceful world, resolving conflicts, and reconciling themselves with enemies. Pacifists usually cast their disavowal of violence in deontological terms, setting aside political effectiveness and beneficial outcomes from ethical and religious considerations. Positive efforts to build peaceful relations, however, seek to transform the world; beneficial outcomes and political effectiveness remain central religious and ethical matters. Although pacifists often fail to distinguish between these positive and negative currents, occasionally they bring them together by arguing that

[39] Hauerwas, *Should War Be Eliminated?* 53.

[40] Stanley Hauerwas, "Surviving Justly: An Ethical Analysis of Nuclear Disarmament," in *Religious Conscience and Nuclear Warfare*, ed. Jill Raitt (Univ. of Missouri–Columbia, 1982 Paine Lectures in Religion) 2.

the disavowal of violence will be the only manner in which social relations will be transformed.[41]

A recurring criticism of just-war tenets draws upon "realistic" considerations of the sort that might alarm advocates of Nieburhrian "realism." Christian pacifists frequently claim that the just-war tradition is obsolete in the era of total war.[42] The assumption that modern war can be limited is delusory and belies the general facts about war as it has been carried out in the 20th century. Those who use just-war tenets today fail to recognize the qualitatively different features of modern weaponry. Douglass, for example, argues that the danger of escalation in modern war is such that "any war today is necessarily an exercise in automated mass destruction." Hence pacifist conclusions are more important today than the just-war premises from which one may begin.[43] Nuclear pacifists subscribe to the same view: if nuclear weapons cannot be used within the compass of just-war tenets, their use is wholly immoral. But pacifists rarely stop at this conclusion. They often argue that the perils of modern war only vindicate a realistic judgment that pacifists reached centuries ago, i.e., that violence is always an ineffective means of resolving conflicts. Today the legacy of warmaking has arrived at the same conclusion, only at a considerably greater peril.

Douglass is most outspoken about the qualitatively new dangers of the present era and the uselessness of nuclear weapons. In his terms, nuclear weapons are "eschatological weapons" because their use could end human history.[44] The quest for military security has led to the insecurity of possible annihilation. Nuclear weapons are useful only insofar as they require us to rethink and re-evaluate completely the nature of power.[45] Such a re-evaluation, says Douglass, must return to the truth of Jesus' teaching and example, which were also colored by an eschatological reading of the signs of the times. Just-war thinking, in contrast, operates within a different historical horizon. Just-war theorists continue to assume that military power may be used to *protect* one's history. Because

[41] These two positive and negative duties appear in the seminal texts for most Christian pacifists: Mt 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall see the kingdom of God," and Mt 5:39, "Do not resist one who is evil." For examples of the positive requirements of peacemaking, see Eileen Egan, "The Beatitudes, the Works of Mercy, and Pacifism," in *War or Peace?* 170; Yoder, *Nevertheless* 48–52; Macgregor, *New Testament Basis of Pacifism* 11.

[42] Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* 49–50; Gordon Zahn, "Afterword," in *War or Peace?* 235.

[43] Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 156, 171, 175; King, *Strength To Love* 153. King admits that he once saw war as the lesser of two evils, but that later he changed his views in light of the new destructive capacities wrought by nuclear technology.

[44] Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 5–6; Douglass, *Lightning East to West* 3.

[45] Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 6.

the destructive power of nuclear weapons has ushered forth the end time, however, we are unable to retain just-war assumptions about the utility of force in the world today.

Pacifists frequently go beyond the exigencies of today to argue that just-war thinking has always been ineffective in limiting war.[46] The just-war tradition, they argue, has always legitimated war more effectively than it has restrained the use of lethal force. Eileen Egan labels this criticism the "failure motif."[47] The history of effects of the just-war tradition indicates that it has been ignored, compromised, or distorted by authorities who wish to cloak their decisions with moral language in times of conflict. Rarely, if ever, have just-war tenets been fully operational in moments of international crisis.[48]

Authors who develop this failure motif argue on two fronts. One approach examines historical developments that have compromised the just-war tradition over the centuries. Yoder, for example, isolates a variety of complex and interrelated factors that have weakened the effectiveness of just-war restraints. He begins by examining the social context of the Church during the Reformation and the Church's relation to the state in mainline Protestant confessions. The institutional collusion between Church and state weakened the theologian's ability to criticize the decisions made by secular authorities. If theologians ever differed from their political protectors, they were likely to recommend a greater amount of force to effect political goals.[49]

Philosophical and political currents during the Enlightenment furthered the demise of just-war tenets. With the rise of popular democracies and independent sovereign states, greater value was ascribed to the interests of nations to the exclusion of transnational concerns.[50] Nations cultivated popular loyalties by waging war against rival nations. As social-contract theories emerged, moreover, the idea of intrinsic, universal rights

[46] Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* 34–35, 79, 83, 272; Zahn, "Afterword," in *War or Peace?* 239–40.

[47] Egan, "Beatitudes," in *War or Peace?* 184–85.

[48] James Turner Johnson argues that restraint in recent warfare serves as evidence that just-war tenets are viable today; see his *Can Modern War Be Just?* (New Haven: Yale, 1984) 50–51. However, the presence of restraint is necessary but not sufficient to support the claim that just-war tenets are operative. Nations may restrain themselves out of self-interest, not moral rectitude or adherence to "just" imperatives. On this issue of self-interest and restraint in war, see Thomas Schelling's extremely influential work *Arms and Influence* (New York: Yale, 1966).

[49] John Howard Yoder, *When War Is Unjust: Being Honest in Just-War Thinking* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984) 33.

[50] Ibid. 36–39.

subsided.[51] In a word, we find Yoder echoing Hauerwas' critique of foundationalism, but from a more historical perspective. Enlightenment efforts to anchor morality to a neutral foundation ironically generated strong preferential rather than universal duties. The implication of Yoder's claims is that Enlightenment efforts to secure a universal morality were doomed to fail. Attempts by social-contract theorists to place morality on a foundation that could be immune from relativism and religious factionalism only secured protections for those envisaged within the contract. Thus, immunities once ascribed to "foreigners" were easily set aside, and the kinds of limits once imposed by just-war ideas lost their theoretical force.

By Yoder's reckoning, the development of modern weapons has likewise weakened just-war restraints. Nations have unprecedented technological capabilities to effect their lethal designs. Moreover, modern nations mobilize entire populations on behalf of a war effort. Taken together, widespread mobilization and unparalleled material capabilities strengthen the temptation to override just-war restraints in light of the alleged demands of military necessity.

Insisting that just-war advocates must face the "limit" question of modern war honestly and soberly, Yoder notes that, according to just-war criteria, certain wars may be unjust and that the only recourse may be surrender for a nation that subscribes to just-war tenets.[52] Failure to address this question and to make appropriate institutional preparations for surrender is but another symptom of the ineffectiveness of just-war ideas in political and moral discourse.

A second approach to the failure motif examines recent failures of just-war advocates to press their views effectively. Zahn documents such a failure in his historical and sociological analysis of Roman Catholic Church leadership in Germany during the rise of Nazism.[53] Church leaders were unwilling to use moral principles to condemn Nazism, although the injustices were morally unambiguous. Prelates sought to avoid rash judgment, persecution of the Church, and placing individuals in a conflict of conscience. The fact that Catholic leaders set aside just-war principles for purposes of expedience should indicate that the tradition is a "patently useless and socially meaningless intellectual exercise."[54]

Zahn's sociological analysis goes beyond a study of the German Cath-

[51] Ibid. 62.
[52] Ibid. 64, 82.
[53] Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* 43, 246–61, 354.
[54] Ibid. 43.

olic hierarchy. He examines the implicit assumptions of just-war thought that contribute to its ineffectiveness. Two interrelated factors emerge: just-war thought presumes the justice of political leaders and restricts the proper scope of individual competence in moral judgment. German Catholic leaders explicitly removed the responsibility of moral judgment from individual believers by appealing to the prima-facie legitimacy of secular power.[55] The subtle pressures of nationalism made it more difficult for individuals to dissent from political authority.[56] In order for the Church to reverse its tendency to legitimate political authority, it must detach itself from the interests of a nation and accept suffering in the event that it must express prophetic criticism. The implication is that the just-war tradition will continue to fail as long as the Church assumes a Constantinian or accommodationist stance vis-à-vis the state.[57]

Above and beyond this failure motif, Christian pacifists see themselves as members of a religious community with a distinctive ethos, an ethos that clearly departs from the ethos of violence and militarism in the secular affairs of popular culture and the state. Often these authors argue that "the state is an engine of violence and tends to infuse its ethos throughout all life."[58] The theological backing for this judgment draws from a view of the state as a vestige of fallen creation. Moreover, the ethos of militarism is conducive to a set of virtues that are inimical to Christian hope and trust in God's providential care.[59] Critical of the regnant values in societies that continually prepare for war, Christian pacifists discern an erosion of moral sensibility in social attitudes and practices. Modern societies with elaborate defense capabilities breed competition, violence, and particularism. As Paul Deats remarks, "the ethos of war-making is conducive of cheapening the value of life in every area and to extending the range and severity of coercive measures."[60]

Although he is not a Christian pacifist, Gibson Winter provides some helpful parameters for critically assessing militarism and social ethos in the age of nuclear technology. At the heart of our present ethos is "nuclearism," which designates "the knowledge and technical management of nuclear weaponry, a politics that takes their possible use for granted and a 'religious' sense that possession of nuclear weapons is

[55] Ibid. 252.

[56] Ibid. 253.

[57] Ibid. 261.

[58] Mulford Sibley, *The Political Theories of Modern Pacifism* (Philadelphia: Pacifist Research Bureau, 1944 [rev. 1970]) 54, cited in Paul Deats, "Protestant Ethics and Pacifism," in *War or Peace?* 80.

[59] Hauerwas, *Peaceable Kingdom* 17–49, 99–101, 135–52.

[60] Deats, "Protestant Ethics and Pacifism" 84.

foundational to national security."[61] "Nuclearism" is not an aberration of beneficent Western technology. Rather, it is the historical and logical consequence of Western thought and culture, which has deeply pathological elements.[62] Specifically, the proliferation of nuclear weapons is a symptom of technical rationality which has become divorced from the basic ends that reason must serve. The result is widespread alienation from the ontological harmonies which unite humans with themselves and with the wider rhythms of the cosmos.

For Winter, moreover, nuclearism leads to a "numbing of consciousness," a deadening of moral sensitivity which enables political authorities to blithely consider widespread death and destruction. Given the centralization of political and military authority, significant decision-making processes have been removed from popular control. Technical reason, divorced from its sources in creation, has produced conditions in which humanity will destroy, not serve, the wider interests of the cosmos. Indeed, the broader implications of militarism and nuclearism include widening circles of poverty and economic hardship throughout the globe. In Winter's mind, the connective tissues of nuclearism touch many dimensions of social life:

> Thus, the search for security leads to deepening states of insecurity. To this extent, the religious refusal of finitude generates a politics of annihilation, oblivious to those ties that make life human and enjoyable, ties to children and parents, forests and rivers, familiar streets and corner stores.[63]

In a less strident manner, Douglass expresses many of these same suspicions about burgeoning militarism and technical reason as a panacea for social ills.[64] Technology denotes not only a "huge power complex" but also a "state of mind" which permeates the ethos of society. Contemporary society, Douglas avers, now trades in the currency of quantitative calculations, domination, power, and the standardization of life styles—all of which are symptomatic of dehumanized rationality. Alienated from the very purposes it is meant to serve, reason has created the conditions of self-destruction. We remain victims, in the words of Merton, of a

[61] Gibson Winter, "Hope for the Earth: A Hermeneutic of Nuclearism in Ecumenical Perspective" (1983 Wm. Henry Hoover Lecture, Univ. of Chicago) 8.

[62] Similarly, Jonathan Schell examines pathological conditions and disordered passions in a culture in which the future is uncertain; see his *The Fate of the Earth* (New York: Knopf, 1982) 156–58.

[63] Winter, "Hope for the Earth" 8. For a theoretical development of the foundations of Winter's argument, see his *Liberating Creation: Foundations for a Religious Social Ethic* (New York: Crossroad, 1981).

[64] Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 28–31, 39–46.

"fetishism of immediate visible results."[65]

Several Christian pacifists amplify an implied difficulty that follows from judgments about militarism in the social ethos. War and preparations for war imply an understanding of the enemy as an objectified, impersonal "thing."[66] Preparations for war are the quintessence of impersonalism in modern culture, where the enemy is often depicted as "evil incarnate."[67] Pacifists, in contrast, want to insist upon the indisputable value of every person. Macgregor, for example, argues that "personality is the watchword of Christian theology" and that "there can be few actions more un-Christlike than to de-personalize one's attitude to one's brother man."[68] Ideologies which justify war draw from a "cult of the enemy" and reduce the infinite worth of human persons to "cannon fodder." Drawing from these personalist tenets, pacifists persistently argue that war is ultimately fratricide.

Pacifists also criticize war and authorizations for war on the basis of their understanding of Christian discipleship. Virtually all of our authors identify the way of Christ in terms of voluntary suffering and universal agape.[69] Central to a life patterned on Christ's teaching and example is the duty of nonpreferential, nonresistant love of neighbor and unswerving loyalty to God. In the Church, Christians are empowered to love the enemy and to discover that Christian "particularity is not destroyed but is enhanced by the coming of the stranger."[70] The ethos of the state, in contrast, is only able to empower its members to embrace preferential duties, duties only to the proximate but not the remote neighbor. Any authorization of war as a duty only to one's proximate neighbors runs contrary to the distinctive elements of Christian discipleship and the ethos of the Church.

In response to these charges about the problems of preferential duties, just-war theorists often justify the use of force to defend citizens of a state by drawing upon some notion of moral tragedy. The U.S. Catholic bishops, for example, justify war as a necessity that may be required in a sinful history. Tragedy implies a dissonance between ideal goals and the realities of history. Although they do not use the term "tragedy," they frame their discussion of war and peace in terms of the tensions

[65] Merton, *Faith and Violence* 22.

[66] Macgregor, *New Testament Basis of Pacifism* 77; Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 18, 71.

[67] Yoder, *When War Is Unjust* 61.

[68] Macgregor, *New Testament Basis of Pacifism* 77 n. 1.

[69] Ibid. 11; Yoder, *Politics of Jesus* 115–34, 204 n. 3; Yoder, *Original Revolution* 51, 55–57, 80–81; Merton, *Faith and Violence* 16; Hauerwas, *Peaceable Kingdom* 80; Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 53–55, 62–65, 191–214, 234–54 passim.

[70] Hauerwas, *Should War Be Eliminated?* 56.

between the kingdom (ideal goals) and history. Prior to the fulness of the eschaton, we must settle conflict and recognize the many conflicts of moral duties.

Pacifists have recognized that this appeal to tragedy allows for certain compromises which they are unwilling to concede. Rather than jettison an understanding of tragedy, however, they wish to redefine it in accordance with their theological and ethical views. Hauerwas, for example, defines tragedy in terms of the tensions between the requirements of peace and the fabric of secular society. Peace threatens the internal order of secular institutions because such institutions rely upon violent methods. (Violence, as Hauerwas uses the term, denotes not physical harm but the exclusion of strangers from human fellowship.) Indeed, violence is woven into the very structure of social life; it is "the warp on which the fabric of our existence is threaded."[71] Peace introduces an element of tragedy in secular life because it disturbs the subtle violence that cements social relations. Specifically, such relations require preferentiality and intimate friendship. Christian peace, in contrast, requires the all-inclusive, nonpreferential acceptance of strangers. Universal love unsettles the stability of preferential relations; agape destabilizes philia. Insofar as peace threatens the order that derives from exclusive human friendships, it may be anarchic. Tragedy follows not from the fact that the eschaton is not here but from the fact that it has been inaugurated by Christ. The peace of the kingdom requires patterns of conduct that contradict the working assumptions of everyday social life.

Operating at cross-purposes with Hauerwas' defense of peace as anarchic is a justification of nonviolence in the name of social stability and order. King, for example, constantly warned against the use of force, especially violence by blacks in retaliation against whites, because he feared that violence would assume its own momentum and take an uncontrollable course. By King's reckoning, violence breeds retaliation and retaliation only breeds more violence, thus generating a cycle of violence that feeds on itself. Nonviolence, in contrast, serves the interests of all—blacks and whites together—because it puts a stop to self-perpetuating patterns of harm and reciprocal injury. Against consequentialist critics, King could argue that nonviolence has beneficial outcomes because it saves society from sowing the seeds of its own progressive demise.[72]

[71] Hauerwas, *Peaceable Kingdom* 142–45.

[72] King, *Where Do We Go from Here?* 59–62. Although King's discussion of global warfare was less developed than his defense of nonviolence in the civil-rights movement, he could have extended his argument beyond the movement to the world situation, given his understanding of the interdependence of all reality.

Whether Christian pacifists look to nonviolence as anarchic or stabilizing, they generally understand their views as running against the grain of conventional wisdom about the utility of force in the present international order. Such conventional wisdom, Christian pacifists often allege, is socially and politically conservative, unimaginative, perhaps anachronistic. Several just-war theorists, for example, grant the "givenness" of the international system of sovereign states and attempt to introduce moral rules to govern the conduct of war. Pacifists refuse to grant that war is a necessary feature of human behavior and often argue that such an assumption frequently becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Moreover, many insist that the present system of nation-states is obsolete for regulating global relations.[73] Insofar as just-war thought continues to operate within the framework of conventional statecraft, it will continue to beg the more important questions facing the globe today. Those questions include the measures necessary for reducing hostility and cultivating trust between nations. For global relations to be improved, an alternative vision of social relations is necessary, a vision that countenances novelty and risk-taking. Resources for intellectual alternatives are available today only to the visionary who refuses to grant the legitimacy of war and the sovereign-states system as a working prius. Drawing upon the language of loyalty, virtually all of our authors insist that constructive visions must begin by assuming the importance of loyalty to God as a religious and ethical imperative.[74] As long as just-war thought continues to draw from the reservoir of nationalistic loyalty, these pacifists often allege, it will lack a prophetic vision necessary to advance the state of global affairs.

CONCLUSION

The theological and ethical criticisms adduced above may lend the false impression that Christian pacifism can be conceived as a "seamless garment," weaving together biblical data, methodological concerns, ecclesiology, and various appeals to theological symbols. However, the pragmatic and "particularist" character of pacifist thought often defies facile systematization. Despite the variety within Christian pacifists' critiques of just-war ideas, three general inferences and three hidden points of convergence can be drawn from the patchwork constructed above.

First, the theological and ethical observations adduced above suggest that Childress' reference to the duty of nonmaleficence captures only

[73] Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 257–82.

[74] Zahn, *War, Conscience and Dissent* 46, 117, 304–6; Douglass, *Non-Violent Cross* 8–10, 275, 278; King, *Strength To Love* 124; Yoder, *Original Revolution* 111; Hauerwas, "On Surviving Justly" 20.

part of a wide constellation of ideas that back Christian pacifism. Christian pacifists develop their views by appealing not only to negative duties (e.g., nonmaleficence) but also to positive duties, theories of virtue, social ethos, the nature of violence, the beneficial outcomes of nonviolence, and the fundamental religious beliefs according to which ethical claims gain added force and intelligibility. Peace, for Christian pacifists, is a theory-dependent concept, a value whose full meaning cannot be reduced without remainder to the duty of nonmaleficence.

Much the same might be said about Christian pacifists' perception of war and just-war tenets. Pacifists' theological and ethical criticisms of just-war ideas suggest that, in their minds at least, the wider implications of war may be concealed if we structure our moral discourse about war according to the logic of prima-facie duties. The theological and ethical critiques developed above complicate the clarity and seeming simplicity by which just-war tenets might be structured.

The point, then, is that war and authorizations of war have social, religious, and ethical implications that go beyond the logic of prima-facie duties, and much of the project of Christian pacifism is to unmask the wider implications of war in our moral discourse. For this reason, pacifists attend with uncanny diligence and critical acumen to the many implications of war. Such diligence is a function of the claim, implicit throughout the criticisms listed above, that war is a limit situation, i.e., an extraordinarily complex and brutal affair, relatively unique on the terrain of our moral problems, and deserving of special attention if not grave suspicion.

Although the exceptional nature of war in moral discourse may be recognizable only after we sharpen the differences between pacifism and just-war tenets, it actually adumbrates an essential point of contact between Christian pacifism and Childress' reconstruction of just-war ideas. One essential implication of Childress' argument is that, from the perspective of the just-war tradition, the use of force is an exceptional act, requiring special claims under grave circumstances. Such claims override the basic duties that govern our ordinary, workaday commerce with one another. By this account, the use of force requires special permissions and grave limitations, however just its apparent cause might be. The fact that appeals to justice require such caution is only intelligible if the act itself—war—is perceived as an extraordinary affair, lying on the limits of our moral experience, disanalogous with other acts in which justice might be invoked without reserve or qualification.

We might sharpen this first point by contrasting Childress' reconstruction of just-war ideas with Paul Ramsey's understanding of the morality of war in light of the principle of agape. For Ramsey, the use of force to

protect innocent persons requires no special permission or exceptional authorization. Engaging in war to protect the innocent is an expression, not a compromise, of agape; no duties are overridden, no qualifications are necessary, so long as force is used to help those who might be innocent victims of aggression. The effect of Ramsey's argument is to render war analogous with other moral acts, to domesticate war as it were, by suggesting that war is like other expressions of duty or virtue in which the needs of the innocent are special objects of care.[75]

Childress' argument, in contrast, suggests a greater dissonance between war and the fabric of ordinary moral experience. War immerses its participants and victims in an unusual realm of affairs—a realm of carnage, suffering, and waste that has few, if any, parallels with other moral acts in which we appeal to love or justice as principles of authorization. Childress' construction of just-war tenets suggests a greater sense of moral tension than does Ramsey's; for Childress, a conflict of duties lies at the heart of moral discourse about the use of force. To the extent that war is perceived as an exceptional affair—a limit situation for its participants and victims—pacifist convictions and certain just-war theorists retain an important, albeit subtle, point of contact, one that has been missed in the conventional wisdom that has followed Childress' lead.

Second, granting that war is an extraordinary affair, one that stands on the limits of our moral experience, it seems to follow that much of our fascination with war and the dilemmas of war ought to be removed from the center and placed at the periphery of our moral imaginations. If just-war ideas are designed to address the exceptional case of national or international conflict, then it seems that in the normal (rather than the exceptional) course of human commerce we should work more assiduously to make the requirements of peace central to moral discourse and practice. Indeed, assuming that just-war ideas pose duties for the exceptional case of war, then it seems entirely coherent for the just-war theorist, no less than for the pacifist, to develop positive requirements of peace for the ordinary course of human affairs. Placing just-war ideas at the edge of our moral imaginations ought to create a clearing in which the requirements of peace can be pursued according to a wider range of conceptual and practical strategies than those available in an ethos dominated by a fascination with war. Relocating just-war tenets to the edge of our moral discourse may entail a dramatic peripeteia, especially for those just-war theorists who persistently restrict their agenda to the dilemmas of war. If my second observation is correct, such exclusive

[75] Paul Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics* (New York: Scribner's, 1950) 166–71.

attention to the dilemmas of war represents a myopic focus, one that misperceives the place of just-war ideas and effectively eclipses considerations of the positive requirements of peace. But more importantly, one can make such a charge either as a pacifist or as a just-war theorist who grants the exceptional nature of just-war tenets. In other words, critical reservations about commonplace fascinations with war can be yet another point of contact between Christian pacifists and those just-war theorists who recognize the "limits" of just-war ideas.

This second point might be sharpened with reference to the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter "The Challenge of Peace." Clearly, one of the most striking features of the document is that the bishops, developing a trajectory from *Gaudium et spes*, endorse both pacifism and just-war tenets as equally legitimate moral options for individuals. As indicated above, the bishops affirm a point of contact between pacifism and just-war theory, claiming that both approaches share a moral presumption against war and in favor of peace. Equally important, the bishops develop several constructive suggestions for building peace, including iterated, bilateral disarmament and a greater recognition of the practical requirements of global interdependence. To the bishops' credit, developing such positive suggestions constitutes an exception rather than the rule among just-war theorizing today. The bishops' ability to resist an exclusive fascination with the dilemmas of war seems to proceed from the clearing that is created once just-war ideas, cast in the language of presumptive duties, are relegated to the boundary of moral discourse.

Third, the notion that war is a limit situation suggests that, for pacifists at least, war has a profound religious dimension. War raises the limit questions for humanity insofar as it forces us to consider ultimate questions about the meaning of history, the human condition, the value of statecraft, and the proper objects of human loyalty. Thus, it is only natural that Christian pacifists turn to the symbols of their religious tradition to frame their discussion of war. An important inference that we may draw from Christian pacifists' criticisms is that just-war theorists persistently fail to address the ultimate questions posed by war, especially when just-war theorists confine their terms to the language of duty.

Specifically, Christian pacifists suggest that such terms obscure a fundamental religious issue facing humanity, viz., the nature and limits of loyalty to the state. Attention to the issue of loyalty should remind nonpacifists that even well-intentioned states can appeal to their own special necessities in the limit situation of war, and that such appeals easily curdle into tribalism, neo-fascism, and henotheism. The point of pacifists' criticisms is to test the force of just-war tenets; in particular, to see whether just-war ideas have the internal resources to resist the

imperial claims that nations often make in the name of necessity during wartime. By broaching the issue of religious loyalty, then, Christian pacifists suggest a crucial difference between their broader agenda and that of nonpacifists.

Yet the effect of this criticism is to force yet another subtle point of convergence into view. Although just-war theorists may not explicitly raise the issue of loyalty, just-war tenets are structured to restrict the kinds of imperial claims that states may make in the name of necessity. The structure of just-war ideas according to the logic of prima-facie duties places a presumptive weight in favor of nonviolence and against violence; that is, the burden of proof lies on those who wish to resort to violence. The burden of proof imposed by prima-facie duties implies a basic suspicion that lies at the heart of just-war reflections, and such suspicion, taken seriously, has the effect of distancing the just-war theorist, no less than the pacifist, from the regal claims of political leaders during times of conflict. The suspicion imposed by the prima-facie duty of nonmaleficence suggests that neither the just-war theorist nor the pacifist may endorse uncritically the fiduciary impulses of nationalistic fervor or patriotic zeal. Once its implications are recognized, moreover, such suspicion enables the just-war theorist to mitigate the charge that just-war ideas are necessarily conservative.

These three inferences concern the exceptional nature of war, the place of just-war ideas in our moral discourse, and the constructive role that suspicion plays when we must assess the religious dimension of war and statecraft. If the moral presumption against maleficence is taken seriously, then war appears to be an exceptional problem from the vantage point of both the just-war theorist and the pacifist. In addition, if just-war ideas are structured to address the exceptional case of war, then a clearing is created in which we may pursue the positive requirements of peace during the normal course of human affairs—requirements that ought to bind the conceptual agendas of pacifists and nonpacifists alike. Finally, if just-war tenets establish a presumptive burden of proof against the use of violence, then pacifism and just-war ideas are bound together by a common suspicion about the kinds of claims that states often make to justify the use of force.

These points of contact may be most evident, oddly enough, when sharp differences between pacifism and just-war thought are first brought into focus. Indeed, these differences leave us with a mixed and complex conclusion. On the one hand, they indicate that pluralism within the ranks of Christians—pacifists and just-war theorists together—will inevitably include notable divisions in theology and ethics. On the other

hand, these differences do not completely attenuate the points of convergence between Christian pacifism and just-war thought. Rather, these differences show, ironically enough, that the points of contact may be just the place where the pressures between Christian pacifism and just-war tenets are the greatest.