Dear Readers,

The first item in this issue is an article on Reconciliation, by Andrew Rigby. Next comes a report by Paul Clifford and Diana Francis, on the conference of the European Network for Peace and Human Rights that was held in Brussels in October. The last item is a review by Diana, of a book whose relevance is wider than its title might suggest: 'Achieving Security in Sub-Saharan Africa: Cost Effective Alternatives to the Military', edited by Geoff Harris.

Reflections on reconciliation

by Andrew Rigby

At a conference in April 2005, I got into conversation with a woman who had been active in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and had continued to work at the grassroots, campaigning for social change. On discovering that I was director of a Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies she remarked with a smile – actually it was more of a smirk: 'Oh – you are one of those reconciliation people are you?' She was categorising me with those in post-apartheid South Africa who have prioritised the restoration of social peace above the pursuit of social justice. It also became apparent that she associated me with those idealists inspired by such prophets as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who hold out a utopian vision of a 'rainbow kingdom' informed by notions of forgiveness and injunctions that we should all love each other as members of a common human family.

Beyond the banter she had struck a chord that resonated with some ideas that had been circulating around my mind for some time. I had begun to feel that too many people involved in conflict transformation and reconciliation work operated with an unrealistic image of 'reconciliation'. However weakly their vision might be expressed, at its core was some kind of scenario where former enemies shook hands, embraced and lived a life of cooperative co-existence ever after. In so many cases with which I was familiar, such a vision, however beautiful, seemed unrealistic. Furthermore, to the extent that such a vision served as a guide to action, then it seemed to me that it could lead to inappropriate forms of intervention. Just to take one example – there is evidence from anecdotal and research sources that the people of Northern Ireland are ready for peace – an end to the killing and the violence, but they are not ready for 'reconciliation' which, for many, seems 'utopian or idealistic ... demanding a process of coming together for which they were not ready.'[1]

So, I thought it was time I tried once again to crystallise my thoughts and observations about this elusive concept. Here are some of them.

1. Reconciliation is an open-textured concept, in the sense that there cannot be an exhaustive specification of the conditions for its correct use, but at the same time most writers and

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[1] G. Kelly & B. Hamber, 'Coherent, contested or confused? Views in Northern Ireland', pp. 21-35 in G. Kelly & B. Hamber, eds., *Reconciliation: Rhetoric or Relevant?*, Belfast: Democratic Dialogue, 2005, p. 24.

practitioners who use the term generally include some reference to a core feature: the restoration of constructive relationships between those that have been divided.

2. As a process through which fractured relationships can be repaired or healed, reconciliation can take place between different types of 'actors': individuals, groups, and larger collectivities such as nations or peoples.

3. Reconciliation initiatives can take place at any point during a destructive conflict, as people seek to establish bridges across the conflict lines, but 'reconciliation work' is more commonly encountered during the post-settlement phase when the space available for such activities becomes broader.

4. Reconciliation can refer both to a process and to a goal. Recognising when that condition of reconciliation has been achieved is somewhat problematic, and must always be context specific.

5. Hence, in envisaging the type of coexistence – the goal – of any particular reconciliation process, due consideration must be given to the types of relationships that existed before the fracture and, of course, to the way the fracture took place. Thus, if the former relationship was a simple trading or economic one, then reconciliation would involve the restoration of what was a quite narrowly instrumental relationship between the parties. The richer and more multi-faceted the relationship, the more problematic it becomes to identify those features of a post-fracture relationship that might merit the use of the term 'reconciliation'.

6. According to Antonia Chayes and Martha Minow, 'Clumsy, premature attempts at reconciliation may do more harm than good.' [2] Accordingly, 'realistic reconciliation workers' might find it useful to work towards one of three types or levels of co-existence.[3]

    Surface coexistence of separate lives, where those that have been and remain divided continue to *live apart from each other* in a form of social apartheid, informed by the general ethos of 'You leave us alone and we shall leave you alone'. In such circumstances interaction between the two is often by arrangement, with very little casual social interaction.

    Shallow coexistence of parallel lives, where people *live alongside each other* by mutual preference and cross-community interaction tends to be quite role-specific (as in the exchange of various types of goods and services) with only a limited amount of casual social interaction, although the spaces and occasions for cross-community conviviality are generally recognised and respected.

    Deep coexistence of community, where people from different identity groups and networks *live with and amongst each other*, and where everyday interaction is rich and multi-textured.

7. Considering reconciliation as a process, whatever the depth or type of coexistence targeted as a goal, it is possible to distinguish at the analytical level between two dimensions or processes: becoming *reconciled to* the pain and loss of the past, and becoming *reconciled with* former enemies for the sake of future coexistence. For reconciliation *with and between* former enemies to take place, one or more of the parties has to become reconciled *to* past loss, and thereby be prepared to carry some of the cost of moving forward towards future coexistence alongside those from whom they have been divided.

8. The deeper the levels of co-existence (*reconciliation with*) targeted as the goal of any reconciliation process, the greater the degree of *reconciliation to* past loss required of the parties

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[2] Antonia Chayes & Martha Minow, eds., *Imagine Coexistence: Restoring humanity after violent ethnic conflict,* eds., San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003, p. xx

[3] I freely acknowledge my indebtedness to the writings of Louis Kreisberg and David Crocker in the construction of this typology. See especially L. Kreisberg, 'Changing forms of coexistence', in M. Abu-Nimer, ed., *Reconciliation, Justice and Coexistence*, Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2001, pp. 47-64. See also D. Crocker, 'Retribution and reconciliation', Institute for Philosophy & Public Policy, available at *www.puasf.umd.edu/IPPP/Winter-Spring00?retribution_and_ reconciliation.htm.*

to the process. As Michael Ignatieff has observed, 'You can coexist with people without forgetting or forgiving their crimes against you. Cold peace of many kinds does not require reconciliation of a personal kind.'[4]

9. There are certain parallels and continuities between 'dealing with the past', in the sense of people becoming reconciled to past loss, and processes of interpersonal forgiveness. Both involve what can be called 'memory work'.

10. There are a number of factors that facilitate constructive memory work on the part of communities that have been divided.

    i.   Truth: The capacity of a community to create a new collective memory that allows for the relinquishment of the desire for revenge will be enhanced to the degree that former enemies acknowledge the wrongs they have perpetrated in the past.

    ii. Security: A necessary condition for people to become reconciled to loss is the experience of a break with the past in the form of an identifiable end to the wrongs perpetrated sufficient for them to enjoy a degree of personal and collective security.

    iii. Justice: The capacity of people to relinquish the desire for revenge will be enhanced if they feel genuine efforts have been made to 'make things right' – either in terms of punishing the perpetrators or making reparations to the victims.

    iv. Time: It should be obvious that the pursuit of the degrees of truth, security and justice necessary for dealing constructively with the past, whether at the interpersonal or the collective level, requires time.

    v.   Culture: To the extent that a particular culture emphasises the importance of letting go of any desire for retribution, this will facilitate people's capacity for becoming reconciled to loss.

11. Turning to a consideration of processes and means for promoting reconciliation between those that have been divided, a distinction is often made between cultural approaches and those that focus upon structural/institutional change as a pre-requisite for deepening patterns of co-existence. Both are necessary. Economic development and institutional change in the political and other spheres, however worthwhile in themselves, cannot guarantee the repair of broken relationships. Indeed such changes can lead to new conflicts. Likewise, there is little evidence that 'dialogue' alone, particularly in the form of short term encounters for verbal and emotional exchanges aimed at bringing about attitudinal change, can promote deeper levels of coexistence.

12. The most problematic dimension of any reconciliation process in the aftermath of collective violence and abuse is balancing the tension between the three values that most observers agree are pre-conditions for movement along the reconciliation axis: peace/security, truth and justice. Most state-directed efforts to deal with the legacy of past abuses are variants of three standard approaches, each of which prioritises one of the values: amnesties and official amnesia for the sake of peace, purges and prosecutions for the sake of justice, and truth commissions.

13. Whatever variant or combination of these three approaches is pursued, the dominant concern of new regimes is to promote the necessary degree of social order to ensure regime security and legitimacy. This is the *national* reconciliation project. Unfortunately such state-driven projects can leave many victims of abuse feeling excluded. One of the main challenges facing those involved in promoting reconciliation is how to move beyond the rhetoric and the theatre of national reconciliation projects in order to support civil society groups and organisations committed to promoting deeper forms of co-existence at grass-roots community levels in societies emerging out of violent conflict and division. Integral to this should be a sensitivity to the important role that can be played by individuals and groups who champion reconciliation and

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[4] M. Ignatieff, 'Afterword' in Chayes & Minow (2003), p. 326.

who have the moral and physical courage for prophetic acts of advocacy and witness at all levels of society.

14. Another challenge facing those seeking to promote reconciliation is how to measure the effectiveness of their work? How do you identify progress along the path towards deeper levels of co-existence? Beyond the specificity of each case, are there common dimensions that can be identified and measured?

    Answers on a postcard please.

Andrew Rigby

Conference of The European Network For Peace And Human Rights, Brussels, 20/21 October 2005

by Paul Clifford and Diana Francis

Introduction

We attended this conference, organised by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and held in the European Parliament, on behalf of CCTS. It was attended by over 100 people, not only from Europe but from around the world. They were mainly from single issue campaigning organisations but there were also representatives from the European Parliament and broad based organisations such as the Quaker Council for European Affairs.

For all plenary sessions and some workshops there was simultaneous translation into a number of European languages. The layout of the conference room and some of the workshop rooms was not conducive to interaction between participants and most sessions took the form of speeches from the front followed by contributions from participants on their own area of interest. There was therefore not much dialogue between participants in the formal sessions, though of course conversations took place during breaks and over meals.

Opening session

The first day opened with a plenary session and welcome, followed by presentations from people who would be leading workshops, designed to help participants decide which workshop they wished to attend.

There were then brief presentations by Peacerights and Public Interest Lawyers on the illegality of 'preventive attack' and unilateral military action in Iraq. The main thrust of these was that this illegal war was, in effect, 'legalised' by the UN Security Council when it condoned the illegal occupation. Thus the UN Security Council is legalising actions which would otherwise be illegal. This needs to stop.

Then Senator Pierre Galand spoke about Palestine, where, he said, international law has been turned upside down. The International Court issued an opinion that Israel should dismantle the 'separation wall' and the UN decided that Israel should be forced to abide by the opinion, but nothing has been done to enforce this. At a UN Special Assembly meeting, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was received as a 'promoter of peace'. The European Social Forum is attempting to get European Governments to take action against Israel. An International Tribunal is being set up in support of Palestine (not against Israel) in co-operation with the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

We decided to attend different workshops to maximise our experience of the conference.

Their titles are given below, with summaries of their contents.

The crisis in civil liberties and human rights

This workshop was led by Tony Bunyan from Statewatch. There were also contributions from the platform by representatives of The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Save Omar Deghayes Campaign (he is a British resident imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay), and a presentation by Jean Bricmont, a Belgian academic, on the conflict between Human Rights and Peace.

Tony Bunyan argued that technology has progressed to the point where it is possible to track all of us all of the time. Protection is needed against abuse of this ability. We are moving towards surveillance societies.

The view of the ACLU is that the 'War on Terror' is not pursuing specific individuals but is putting out a dragnet that is making us all suspects. Peace activists should be concerned, since what is aimed at 'terrorists' today will be aimed at peace activists tomorrow.

Omar Deghayes is a British resident of Libyan citizenship, who married an Afghan woman. He was in Afghanistan on September 11th 2001 and fled to Pakistan, where he was picked up by 'security forces' and transferred to Camp Delta. The British government does nothing for him, arguing that he is only a British resident, not a citizen. He, like all other prisoners there, is kept in inhuman conditions. In ACLU's view, what goes on at Guantanamo Bay is not only against International Law but also against US Domestic Law.

Jean Bricmont posed the question 'Is there an inherent conflict between Human Rights and Peace?' Unilateral 'humanitarian' intervention on issues of human rights can be in direct opposition to peace. This is illustrated by the invasion of Iraq, which is now argued to have been undertaken 'to bring about democracy'. Only the powerful are going to intervene in such ways and will do so to their own agenda.

From the floor, some participants urged that groups working on different concerns should make links and co-operate, not simply focus on single issues. Amnesty International is now focussing on social, economic and development rights, as well as on political rights.

In response to a question about what could be done, various kinds of action were identified: making demands to governments about Human Rights; getting the message out to the general public and putting pressure on the media to highlight human rights abuses; campaigning and lobbying at the European level.

Making Europe nuclear-weapons-free

This workshop was organised by Abolition 2000. It was focussed on ways of building broad support for nuclear disarmament in Europe. This would entail a big educational push, informing people about the whole nuclear chain and the 'victims at every link'. A variety of campaigning strategies and methods were proposed: use of the Mayors for Peace initiative; boycotts of companies implicated in the nuclear chain, and shareholder actions; exchange of activists and expertise; replicating and publicising each other's actions; holding parallel actions on internationally significant dates, such as the 60th anniversary of the Nuremburg judgements (1st October 2006); and holding citizens' tribunals on nuclear weapons.

US military bases around the world

The analysis of this workshop was that the purpose of US military bases around the world was to enforce US global dominance, particularly in energy-rich areas. Bases were used to encircle enemies – recent developments focussing on China and Iran.

Quite apart from the bases that house US military personnel and hardware, there are those that service its aircraft carriers and the like. There are also those used for training, which can become jumping off points for attack, and command, control and intelligence bases. Sometimes a very tiny base – in Iceland or Tadjikistan – is established for the purpose of 'flying the flag'. Joint exercises were used to bind countries into US strategies and policies, even where they did not accept bases. Now the US has its sights on space and the development of a 'moon-earth space well'.

There is a No Bases Global Network and both they and a researcher called Catherine Letz have amassed data on the number and location of bases – though no doubt some remain secret.

There is resistance to US bases in many places, often stimulated by the environmental and human abuses associated with them: the seizure of land; low flying and firing exercises; sexual harassment and violence by troops. Resistance can be motivated both by nationalism and internationalism.

The role of the United Nations in strengthening international peace and security

This workshop was led by Vijay Mehta from Action for UN renewal. He identified two key events for the UN in recent times. The first was the invasion of Iraq and the second was the World Summit.

In the invasion of Iraq the UN was marginalised. Afterwards, Kofi Annan set up a high level committee to look at key challenges for the UN. It produced a report with over 100 recommendations on areas such as security, environmental issues, terrorism, civil war, the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and organised crime. It identified the need for working together free from undue influence by any member state, in an interdependent way, using a multilateral approach.

The World Summit, among other things, established a Peacebuilding Commission, focussed on post conflict rebuilding and reconciliation in 'failed states'. Its membership will include Security Council members, the World Bank, the IMF, the EU and the AU, but not NGOs. It is due to start work by the end of this year and will be funded by voluntary contributions. The Human Rights Council will be re-vamped and the Millennium goals were re-stated.

However, the reform of the Security Council itself was put off; no progress was made on disarmament; there was a failure to agree on a strategy to counter non-state terrorism and there was no detailed discussion on health issues such as HIV/AIDS.

The war on Iraq

This workshop was led by Ayse Berktay of the World Tribunal on Iraq and focussed on the work of the World Tribunal. A number of conclusions were reached:

a) The resistance of the people of Iraq is legitimate.
b) No support should be given to the illegal occupiers.
c) Under law, none of the 'legal' things happening now, e.g., the constitution and elections are legal.
d) The work of the world Tribunal on Iraq should continue for as long as the occupation lasts.

We learned of these conclusions only in the final plenary. Neither of us was present in this workshop. Had we been, we might well have questioned some of the assumptions and views of the presenter and other participants.

Concluding plenary

The concluding plenary comprised some remarks by the organisers, reports from the workshops, a few comments from the floor and concluding remarks by Caroline Lucas, MEP. Caroline stated that the European Parliament is doing more than it was on peace issues. She and others have been working on the Non Proliferation Treaty and on issues related to the demobilisation of US bases in Europe. They have been promoting the 'Mayors for Peace' campaign, and there have been vigorous debates about the need to balance actions against non-state terrorism with the protection of civil liberties. She considers it important to work on these issues in Europe and at the same time finds it very frustrating. Europe is well placed to be a counterweight to US hegemony but there are forces within the EU that have a different agenda. There is a need to define what we mean by security and the way this is understood needs to be broadened beyond the military. There is also a need to focus on environmental issues and energy efficiency. Key challenges for the Peace Movement are to develop a clear vision of the kind of world we want to live in and to continue to engage the people who came out and marched against the Iraq war.

Our evaluation

Overall, we found that the conference was useful, if patchy. The format of presentation from the front and responses, rather than dialogue, is not one we would have chosen.

Nonetheless, some of the information and ideas that were exchanged were useful and stimulating. And we made some useful contacts amongst like-minded people and there may be a possible connection between CCTS and the Quaker Centre for European Affairs*.

*The Quaker Centre for European Affairs was founded in 1979. It works to express a Quaker vision in matters of peace, human rights and economic justice in the European context. It was instrumental in establishing the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), representing NGOs in Europe which 'aim to promote sustainable peacebuilding policies among decision-makers in the EU.

Paul Clifford & Diana Francis

Achieving Security in Sub-Saharan Africa: Cost Effective Alternatives to the Military

book review by Diana Francis

This book, edited by Geoff Harris, was published in 2004 by the Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria. As its title would suggest, its focus is Sub-Saharan Africa, but the ideas under discussion have much wider implications. Geoff Harris indicates their global relevance in his preface, which begins:

> "The phrase 'there is no alternative', which has become known by the acronym TINA, is one of a number of things for which former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher will be remembered."

He counters that 'there are always alternatives' (acronym TAAA). Asserting that the military response to September 11th has made the world less, not more, secure, he states that there 'is an opportunity for Africans to think differently' and that 'there are indeed alternatives which are less costly, more effective and more moral than the use of force'. The purpose of this book, he says, is to 'help move Africa at least some way down these alternative paths'.

I have quoted extensively from this (brief) preface because for me it accurately encapsulates what makes the book so valuable. The contributions it contains are very varied, not only in content but also in the assumptions they reveal, some being more radically 'alternative' than others. (One of the debates implicit in this book is whether the military is capable – or worthy – of reform.)

The book is divided into five parts. Although this is not usual in reviews, I have decided that listing them, together with their chapters and authors, will be the simplest and most effective way of indicating the range of approaches that are elaborated.

Part One: The case for demilitarisation
'The case for demilitarisation in sub-Saharan Africa' by Geoff Harris

Part Two: Transforming the military
'Defensive restructuring of the military in sub-Saharan Africa' by Bjorn Moller

'Civilianising military functions' by Geoff Harris

'Defending without the military' by Brian Martin

Part Three: Reducing the number of disputes

'Befriending the neighbours' by Rebecca Spence

'Building security through democracy and balanced economic relationships' by Lloyd Dumas

'Development and security in Africa: a challenge for the new millenium [sic]' by Sue Willett

Part Four: Developing dispute resolution capacity

'Educating the population in conflict resolution and conflict management' by Anne-Marie Maxwell

'Developing peacemaking institutions: an economist's approach' by Jurgen Brauer

Part Five: Implementing demilitarisation

'The demobilisation of military personnel' by Kees Kingma

'National ministries of peacebuilding' by Keith Suter 'Central American demilitarisation: a model for small countries?' by Geoff Harris

Of course I found some of these chapters more cogent (or more to my way of thinking) than others, but all were thought-provoking and interesting.

Finally, there is an epilogue by Geoff Harris. Here he returns to the broader question of demilitarisation, and the radical mental and structural shifts that this requires. He outlines steps that could be taken and produces an excellent, simple table of 'Alternative ways of achieving security: relative costs and effectiveness'. He ends with some reasons for optimism.

All in all, I found this book a stimulating, challenging and encouraging read. For those who live and work in Sub-Saharan Africa and for all those who care about alternatives to the military I would highly recommend it.

Copies of the book are available free (!) from the author at the School of Economics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban 4041, South Africa, email: harrisg1@ukzn.ac.za

CCTS: Participating Organisations

Conciliation Resources, London

Quaker Peace & Social Witness, London

Responding to Conflict, Birmingham

War Resisters International, London

Centre for Study of Forgiveness & Reconciliation, Coventry

St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace, London

International Alert, London

Peace Direct

Article19, London

Saferworld, London

International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Alkmaar

Richardson Institute for Peace Research, Lancaster

Conflict Analysis and Development Unit, London

Moldovan Initiative Committee of Management, Belfast

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