PEACE MOVEMENTS AND RELIGION IN THE UNITED STATES

PEACE MOVEMENT ISSUES AND ACTIONS

There is a long and rich history of religious peace movements in the United States. These movements have addressed issues of military conscription, the nuclear arms race, bellicose policies toward other nations, and a variety of social justice issues. While there have been hundreds of religious peace groups in the United States, in this article I survey and highlight ten. I categorize these movements around the issues of nuclear weapons and disarmament, the Vietnam War, low-intensity warfare in Central America, and nonviolent intervention in conflict zones. I selected these ten movements for the following three reasons. First, all focused primarily on nonviolent direct action rather than educational endeavors or consciousness-raising. This more directly qualifies them as social movements. Second, these are arguably some of the most innovative movements, demonstrating tactical ingenuity and creativity rather than the traditional methods of organizing marches and petitioning Congress. Although some of these movements were controversial, they nonetheless had an impact—not necessarily in terms of achieving the goal of peace, but rather by stimulating debate within American religious communities about issues of militarism and war. Third, these movements challenged imperialist goals. Some of these movements resisted U.S. efforts to establish global military dominance through its destructive capacity. Others challenged U.S. involvement in conflicts abroad to benefit U.S. business and political interests. In this regard, the article should not be seen as an exhaustive survey of U.S. religious peace movements. Rather, it highlights a few movements with the purpose of demonstrating the ways in which religious resources and faith have mobilized citizens to resist war, challenge imperial aspirations, and promote nonviolent forms of conflict transformation.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND DISARMAMENT MOVEMENTS

Although religious groups had mobilized for the cause of peace before World War II, the advent of the nuclear era was transformative. The United States demonstrated that it had the most destructive military capacity of any nation when it dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945, and three days later on Nagasaki. Over 100,000 people were killed instantly, and tens of thousands died over the subsequent months. Others suffered long-term effects from massive radiation exposure—this included malignant tumors, various forms of cancer, ophthalmological disorders, neurological disorders, and birth defects.[1] The use of nuclear weapons raised serious moral and theological questions. Those questions intensified as the Soviet Union developed atomic weapons, launching a rapidly escalating nuclear arms race.

Catholic Worker and the Civil Defense Drill Protests. One of the earliest critiques of the nuclear arms race came from the Catholic Worker movement. Founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, this movement combined works of mercy (or charity) with works of social justice. It also promoted dialogue on labor and political matters through its newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*, which mimicked the communist newspaper of that era, *The Daily Worker*. Witnessing the human suffering and the difficult labor conditions of the Great Depression, Day and Maurin shared the labor movement's goals, but their politics were motivated by their Catholic faith. They

addressed the immediate needs of the poor through a soup kitchen and "houses of hospitality" for the homeless. But charity was never enough: they emphasized that a social revolution was needed to eliminate the roots of poverty.

Dorothy Day insisted that this social revolution must be waged nonviolently. A committed pacifist, she firmly believed that the Gospel called for nonviolent resistance to all injustices. The Catholic Worker movement's views were supported by the theological writings of Paul Hanley Furfey, a priest and sociology professor, who called upon Catholics to reject the "Constantinian Compromise" of the Just War tradition and return to the early Christian church's pacifist roots. Yet once Pearl Harbor was attacked and the United States entered World War II, Americans became more critical of Catholic pacifism. As Dorothy Day called for conscientious objection, discouraging young men from registering for the draft, the majority of American Catholics supported the war.[2] As a result, the *Catholic Worker* lost many subscribers. Newspaper circulation declined from 130,000 monthly copies in 1939 to only around 50,000 monthly copies by 1944.[3]

Catholic pacifism remained unpopular as World War II ended. Yet, as the world entered the era of nuclear weapons, Dorothy Day continued writing in the *Catholic Worker* about the need to end the arms race. She argued that weapons of mass destruction rendered the Just War tradition obsolete by violating the principle of *proportionality*, which states that the good that will be accomplished through war must outweigh the totality of destruction and suffering that it will cause. Moreover, nuclear bombs violated Just War rules about how war should be waged—namely, these weapons violate the principle of *distinction*, which requires that civilians not be targeted.

Up to this point, the Catholic Worker's pacifism was primarily a theological stance that they articulated in their newspaper. Yet Dorothy Day also had a longstanding history of political action, and thus it didn't take long before she was resisting militarism with more than her words. The first widely publicized action occurred in 1954. Instigated by Ammon Hennacy, who had newly joined the movement, a number of Catholic Workers refused to cooperate with New York City's air raid drills, which were to prepare the population for a nuclear attack. Under the Civil Defense Act, all citizens were legally required to participate, taking cover in designated shelters when the alarms went off, simulating an air raid. Even though such measures would not provide any viable protection in the event of a real attack, the drills were designed to encourage acceptance of the arms race and provide a (false) sense of protection.

To challenge these acts of militarism, seven Catholic Workers—including Day and Hennacy—refused to take shelter. The next year, in June 1955, twenty-three activists from the War Resisters League and the Fellowship of Reconciliation joined the Catholic Workers. In 1956, they again refused to cooperate and were sent to jail for five days. Year after year, they repeated the action, telling New York's civil defense director that, "Civil defense, after all, is an integral part of the total preparation for nuclear war. We, on the other hand, are convinced that the only secure defense is for people to refuse to participate in any way in the preparations for war."[4] In 1960, when the sirens went off, nearly 2,000 protesters assembled in Central Park, enjoying a picnic instead of cowering in fear of a nuclear attack. The protest was covered by various news agencies, marking it as the largest direct action against nuclear arms to date.[5] Eventually, when city personnel realized that they couldn't enforce

drill participation with so many protesters, they suspended the policy.[6]

Quaker Movements to Stop Nuclear Testing. Around the same time that Catholic Workers were defying the civil defense drills, a group of Quakers affiliated with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) grew concerned about radioactive fallout from nuclear testing. This concern expanded in March 1954 when a nuclear test in the South Pacific contaminated the Marshall Islands, harming its residents and nearby fishermen. Shortly thereafter, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru proposed an international moratorium on testing. While waiting for international governments to respond, Quakers at the Chicago AFSC chapter decided to take action. They organized a meeting in 1957 to form the Committee to Stop H-Bomb Tests. Eventually, they merged their efforts with two other groups: the Committee for Nonviolent Action (CNVA, earlier called Nonviolent Action Against Nuclear Weapons) and the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE). Quaker donors provided the resources to fund these new organizations, and SANE and CNVA became the test ban movement leaders. Their goal was to instigate a testing moratorium as a first step toward nuclear disarmament.[7]

One of SANE's initial actions happened in November 1957, when they published a full-page ad in the *New York Times* that detailed the dangers of nuclear testing and nuclear weapons. The ad included two coupons that readers could cut out. One coupon was a letter to President Eisenhower, requesting that he work with the United Nations to establish a moratorium. The other coupon could be sent to SANE headquarters, indicating that the reader was interested in making a financial contribution, receiving more information, or joining a local SANE group. Within a few weeks, staff had received 2,500 inquiries. Local chapters were set up, providing a network of grassroots groups. By the summer of 1958, SANE had 130 chapters throughout the country, comprising a membership of 25,000.[8]

Obviously, not all SANE and CNVA members were Quakers. Yet the Quaker tradition of nonviolent engagement shaped the organizations' approach, even as they established a division of labor in which SANE generated political pressure for a test ban treaty while CNVA engaged in direct action. Consequently, when the Soviet Union unilaterally declared a suspension of atmospheric testing in the spring of 1958, SANE supporters called upon the United States government to reciprocate. The Eisenhower administration did not reciprocate. Moreover, the president had public opinion on his side. According to a Gallup poll, only 29 percent of U.S. citizens favored a test ban moratorium.[9] During this time, CNVA was organizing acts of intervention in testing zones. It launched its first campaign in 1957, on the twelfth anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing. On that date, twelve activists entered the Nevada atomic test site and were arrested for trespassing. One of those arrested was Alfred Bigelow, who began planning a campaign to obstruct atomic testing in the American South Pacific. Those plans culminated in the spring of 1958, when Bigelow and a crew of three set sail from San Francisco in a boat named *The Golden Rule*. When they arrived in Honolulu, the crew was told that if they continued on to their destination, they would be arrested for violating a law that prohibits taking passengers into dangerous zones. Undeterred, the activists set sail, only to be apprehended by the Coast Guard. They were prosecuted and sentenced to probation. They set forth again in early June of 1958 but were quickly arrested, prosecuted, and sentenced to ~~60~~ days in jail.[10]

Even as it seemed the campaign was doomed to failure, someone else stepped in and took up the cause. That person was Earl Reynolds, a U.S. scientist who had spent several years in Japan studying the effects of the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He and his family were on a round-the-world voyage on their yacht, the *Phoenix*, and happened to dock next to Bigelow and his crew in Honolulu. Moved by their commitment, Earl Reynolds and his wife Barbara attended the CNVA activists' trial. Once *The Golden Rule* crew was sentenced, the Reynolds decided to finish the task. They set sail on June 11, 1958, headed toward Japan. By July, they approached the exclusion zone. Over the radio, they reported that "the United States yacht *Phoenix* is sailing today into the nuclear test zone as a protest against nuclear testing."[11] Approximately 120 kilometers into the testing area, the Coast Guard arrested Reynolds. He was prosecuted in Honolulu and found guilty of entering a forbidden area.

While the exact influence of SANE and CNVA's actions is difficult to gauge, it is worth noting that one month later, in August 1958, President Eisenhower announced that the United States would suspend its nuclear tests on October 31 of that year. Moreover, he stated that his administration would collaborate with other nuclear nations to establish a nuclear test ban treaty. U.S. activists grew skeptical of their government's commitment, however, when the military prepared for new tests in 1962 on Christmas Island in the South Pacific. Once again, activists set sail, successfully entering the exclusion zone. An expanding portion of the American population supported a testing moratorium and, under growing public pressure, the U.S. government relented. In August of 1963, the nuclear nations signed the Partial Test Ban Treaty, prohibiting nuclear weapons testing in the water, atmosphere, and outer space.[12]

The Catholic Left and the Plowshares Movement. While Catholic Workers refused to cooperate in nuclear defense drills and Quaker-inspired activists resisted atomic testing, a group of Catholic Left activists took aim at the weapons production process. This group, known as the Plowshares movement, engages in symbolic moral witness by enacting the words of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations shall not lift up sword against nation. Nor shall they train for war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4). Toward that end, Plowshares activists enter weapons production sites or military installations to damage weapons of mass destruction—what they call "acts of disarmament." They hope to render these weapons inoperable, but they also challenge Catholic complacency on matters of militarism and war.

The roots of the Plowshares movement can be traced to a vigil held outside a General Electric (GE) Plant near Philadelphia in the late 1970s. A local activist had initiated the vigil when he discovered that the GE plant was making first strike nuclear weapons. At that time, the U.S. military's official policy was mutually assured destruction (MAD), which mandated that the United States keep pace with the Soviet Union's military capacities to ensure reciprocal annihilation. Military leaders believed that this would deter a Soviet attack. Yet the production of these new weapons indicated something different: the United States had shifted to a first strike policy whereby immensely powerful and accurate nuclear weapons could be launched that would decimate an enemy's military sites, crippling its ability to strike back.[13] General Electric was producing the first strike warheads known as the Mark 12A re-entry vehicles.

For months, activists held vigil outside the GE plant, protesting the "business of

genocide." One of those activists was John Schuchardt, who observed that there was little security at Plant No. 9, where the Mark 12A was being produced. As he watched the employees file in the plant's back door, he realized that it would be quite simple to enter the building. He stated, "[We knew] these weapons were not defensive; they are criminal and genocidal. I thought, if we believe this, then what is our responsibility? Here we are vigiling but is it possible that a group of us could go in and bring this production line to a halt? These warheads have all these electronic components that would be very vulnerable to a hammer blow.... When I [started] talking about this... it was a practical question of how we could render this electronic equipment harmless. We thought we could take in some hammers. I wasn't putting two and two together until the Isaiah passage when we realized, yes, this really will be hammering swords into plowshares."[14]

After months of planning, eight people launched the first Plowshares campaign. On September 9, 1980, the eight arrived at the King of Prussia GE Plant. They had made false employee identification cards to facilitate their entrance during the morning shift. Two of the activists, Sister Anne Montgomery and Father Karl Cabat, distracted the security guard, enabling the other six to enter the facility. The guard quickly sent notification that several individuals had entered the plant without authorization. Montgomery and Cabat stated that there was nothing to be worried about since this was a nonviolent witness and the activists would cooperate as soon as they had disarmed as many weapons as possible. Meanwhile, the other six—including Father Daniel Berrigan, former Josephite priest Philip Berrigan, Dean Hammer, Elmer Mass, Molly Rush, and John Schuchard—quickly located a room where some warheads were stored. Remarkably, the security door was unlocked. They quickly went to work, hammering upon the warheads and then pouring their blood, which they had brought into the facility in baby bottles. Within minutes, they were arrested. In jail, they released a press statement that read:

> We commit civil disobedience at General Electric because this genocidal entity is the fifth leading producer of weaponry in the U.S. To maintain this position, GE drains $3 million a day from the public treasury, an enormous larceny against the poor. We also wish to challenge the lethal lie spun by GE through its motto, "We bring good things to life." As manufacturers of the Mark 12A reentry vehicle, GE actually prepares to bring good things to death. Through the Mark 12A, the threat of first-strike nuclear war grows more imminent. Thus GE advances the possible destruction of millions of innocent lives.... In confronting GE, we choose to obey God's law of life, rather than a corporate summons to death. Our beating of swords into plowshares is a way to enflesh this biblical call. In our action, we draw on a deep-rooted faith in Christ, who changed the course of history through his willingness to suffer rather than kill. We are filled with hope for our world and for our children as we join in this act of resistance.[15]

Members of the "Plowshares Eight" were convicted of burglary, conspiracy, and criminal mischief. They received sentences ranging from ~~18~~ months to ~~10~~ years. The courts imposed lengthy sentences to deter others from following their example. It didn't work. Within months, another action took place and a movement was born. Over the course of the next 35 years, over 200 activists participated in more

than 80 campaigns, spreading to Australia and several European countries.[16]

ANTI–VIETNAM WAR MOVEMENTS

Interference with Conscription. In the summer of 1963, as the Vietnam War escalated, a small group of Catholic Workers organized a ~~10~~-day picket outside the New York apartment of the Vietnamese Permanent Observer to the United Nations.[17] When the picket concluded, the participants decided to form the Catholic Peace Fellowship (CPF) to support ongoing resistance. Under the leadership of Catholic activists Jim Forest and Tom Cornell, and advised by Cistercian monk Thomas Merton, the organization focused on the moral aspects of the Vietnam War, the Christian tradition of nonviolence, and Catholic social teachings on peace and militarism.[18]

It did not take long for the newly formed Catholic Peace Fellowship to gain public attention. Several of its members attended a protest at the Whitehall Induction Center in Manhattan. During the protest, Catholic Worker Chris Kearns burned his draft card in resistance to the Vietnam War. When *Life* magazine published a photo in August 1965 of Kearns setting his draft card on fire, Congress immediately responded by passing legislation that made such acts punishable by a fine of $10,000 or five years in prison. In October 1965, Catholic Worker David Miller let Congress know that the new legislation would not work: he destroyed his draft card and became the first person to be prosecuted under the new laws.[19] Eventually, roughly 3,500 people destroyed their draft cards.[20]

The draft card burnings led to a period of tactical experimentation among religious peace activists in the United States. Immolations—that is, the self-sacrificing act of killing of oneself by fire—were the most controversial. Several Buddhist monks in Vietnam had performed immolations, but it did not occur in the United States until March 1965, when Alice Herz, an 82-year-old Jewish Quaker who had fled Nazi Germany, set herself on fire in Detroit, Michigan. She stated that the immolation was an act of protest against "a great country trying to wipe out a small country."[21] A few months later, on November 2, 1965, another immolation occurred. This time it was 32-year-old Norman Morrison—the director of a Quaker community in Baltimore—who set himself on fire at the Pentagon, directly in front of the office window of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. One week later, Roger LaPorte—a 22-year-old volunteer at the New York Catholic Worker house—immolated himself outside the Dag Hammarskjöld Library at the United Nations.[22]

Another controversial tactic of this era were draft board raids. In October 1967, four Catholic Left activists entered the draft board office in Baltimore. Once they entered the building and encountered the receptionist, one of the activists, Father Philip Berrigan, stated that he was there to check on the draft status of his parishioners. When the receptionist refused to give him access to the files, the four pushed their way in, grabbed the draft files, and doused them with blood.[23] They were arrested and convicted. While out on bail and awaiting sentencing, Philip Berrigan began plotting the next draft board raid. In May 1968, Phil Berrigan, his brother Jesuit Dan Berrigan, and seven other activists entered the Selective Service office in Catonsville, Maryland. There they pulled 600 conscription files, brought them to the parking lot, and set them on fire, using home-made napalm—the jellied form of petroleum that had burned so many children in Vietnam. They released a public statement: "We destroy these draft cards not only because they exploit our young men but also because they represent misplaced power concentrated in the ruling class in America. . . . We

confront the Catholic Church, other Christian bodies, and synagogues of America with their silence and cowardice in the face of our country's crimes."[24]

National newspapers published front-page stories about the event, including a now-famous photo of the nine standing in front of the burning draft files. The "Catonsville Nine," as they were called, were eventually convicted on the charges of interference with the Selective Service Act of 1967, destruction of Selective Service records, and destruction of U.S. government property. They all received three-year prison sentences and were ordered by the courts to turn themselves into federal authorities. Four of the Catonsville Nine refused, choosing to go underground.[25] Most were apprehended fairly quickly, but Father Daniel Berrigan managed to evade arrest for several months, showing up periodically at anti-war events before being whisked to another hiding spot. Infuriated by their inability to capture Father Berrigan, the FBI placed him on their "most wanted list"—making him the first priest in the United States to be on this list. Eventually, he was arrested at a friend's home in Rhode Island.[26] Berrigan's arrest did not end the movement, however. This bold new form of war resistance inspired others. Scholars estimate that between 53 and 250 draft board raids occurred between 1967 and 1971.[27]

Clergy and Laity Concerned. While small groups of radical Catholics burned draft cards and raided Selective Service offices, a larger coalition of mainstream religious leaders opposed to the war was forming. The nation's biggest faith-based anti-war organization was established in January 1967, when religious leaders gathered in Washington, D.C. to discuss the war. This meeting, sponsored by a group calling itself Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam (CALCAV), drafted a position paper, stating, "A time comes when silence is betrayal. That time has come for us in relation to Vietnam."[28] Clergy acknowledged that political issues had moral ramifications and thus they had an obligation to speak out.

There were a number of factors leading up to the formation of CALCAV. First, A. J. Muste, a well-known pacifist leader, addressed the New York Theological Union in October 1965, challenging religious leaders to reject passivity and act on their convictions vis-à-vis the Vietnam War. Second, it became evident that many religious leaders did not feel at home in the secular New Left movements or in radical pacifist religious groups such as the American Friends Service Committee, the Catholic Workers, or the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Mainstream clergy wanted a moderate alternative. Third, there was a growing effort by the U.S. government to discredit the anti-war movement as communist. Consequently, roughly 100 Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish clergy from New York met in October 1965; they held a news conference to publicly endorse citizens' right to protest the war. The group then appointed three leaders to formulate a strategic plan: Rev. Richard Neuhaus (Lutheran), Rabbi Abraham Heschel, professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, and Father Daniel Berrigan (Jesuit). Over the course of several months, these three initiated a variety of demonstrations, vigils, and fasts.[29]

Encouraged by the turnout at these events, the three leaders developed a strategy for expanding their movement into a national force, promoting itself as a moderate peace group that would organize actions within legal confines. CALCAV aimed to mobilize political centrists who opposed the war, thereby complementing (rather than competing with) other peace movements that mobilized more radical segments of the population. The strategy worked. Within a matter of weeks, almost 165 local chapter groups were formed throughout

the country. Each chapter independently organized local actions, while the New York office served as the national coordinating agency.[30]

CALCAV quickly determined that it would primarily work to promote policies of de-escalation and negotiation in the Vietnam conflict and to establish amnesty for draft resisters and military deserters. Another notable effort was CALCAV's Honeywell campaign in the early 1970s. Honeywell, a large U.S. weapons manufacturer, was producing anti-personnel weaponry. CALCAV organized demonstrations and stockholder challenges, pressuring the company to cease its weapons program.[31]

In 1972, CALCAV changed its name to Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC), in part to denote that its activists were engaging with issues beyond Vietnam, such as civil rights and women's rights. It continued to be an important influence for mobilizing primarily Protestant and Jewish communities on a variety of social justice concerns.

CENTRAL AMERICA SOLIDARITY MOVEMENTS

As the Vietnam War came to an end, many Americans had grown critical of their government's foreign policies and reluctant to get involved in overseas conflicts. This reluctance has been called the "Vietnam War Syndrome." This so-called syndrome made it difficult for Ronald Reagan to garner public support for his anti-communist policies. After his election in 1980, Reagan announced that his highest foreign policy priority was stopping the Marxist-inspired revolutionary movements in El Salvador and Guatemala and reversing the revolutionary Sandinista government in Nicaragua. U.S. citizens were clearly cautious about Reagan's plans. According to polls conducted at the time, between 62 and 74 percent of Americans felt that the conflict in Central America "was likely to turn into a situation like Vietnam."[32]

To circumvent public resistance, the Reagan administration implemented a strategy called "low-intensity warfare." In this approach, no U.S. troops would be sent to intervene. Rather, the United States would essentially fight a proxy war, providing military training, equipment, and aid to counter-revolutionary forces in Central America.[33] Moreover, the U.S. military brought Salvadoran and Guatemalan military personnel to the United States for training at the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia. There these military leaders learned the techniques of counter-insurgency warfare, strategic sabotage, psychological operations, and the use of selective repression against the population. The overarching goal of this training was to severely intimidate Central American citizens so that they did not dare to join or support revolutionary movements.[34]

President Reagan was particularly committed to overturning the government of Nicaragua, where the revolutionary Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) had overthrown the longstanding and highly repressive dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza in July of 1979. The revolutionary Sandinista government was not your typical Marxist regime, however. This revolution had enjoyed widespread participation from Catholic laypeople and the support of many clergy, who were inspired by liberation theology—a set of religious teachings that combined Marxist social and political analysis with biblical teachings on justice. In fact, when the Sandinistas took power, five priests were appointed to cabinet positions in the new revolutionary government.[35] Although the new government claimed that it was establishing a pluralist political system with religious freedom and a mixed

economy, many wealthy Nicaraguans feared the implementation of Soviet style policies. They appealed to President Reagan, who, in December of 1981, authorized the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to spend $19.5 million to sponsor a counter-revolutionary military group known as the Contras.[36]

In the beginning, the Contras' strategy was to directly attack the Sandinista government. That quickly proved to be ineffective. With guidance from the CIA, the Contras shifted their approach to destroy the country's human and material infrastructure. Specifically, the Contras aimed to disrupt the economy, government services, and everyday life in order to foster popular discontent with the Sandinista regime, which had promised a variety of improvements as part of its revolutionary agenda. The Contras primarily targeted: (1) the rural social service infrastructure, such as health clinics, schools, and food storage facilities; (2) the economic infrastructure, including state farms and agricultural cooperatives, bridges, and power lines; (3) grassroots and popular organizations; and (4) individuals associated with any of the above.[37] In other words, Contra fighters assassinated doctors and teachers to undermine state social services while simultaneously shooting at peasant farm workers harvesting crops to undermine the national economy. The hope was to wear Nicaraguans down, making them weary of civil war, until they voted the Sandistinas out of office or sided with the Contras.

Meanwhile, a sizable number of U.S. faith communities were disturbed by U.S. support for the Nicaraguan Contras and for the Salvadoran and Guatemalan regimes. Even though U.S. troops were not being sent to directly intervene, many progressive religious groups found this strategy of targeting civilians immoral and unacceptable. As a result, numerous religious peace movements emerged to express support and solidarity with Central Americans but also to stop the aggressive policies of the U.S. government. Three of these movements are described below.

Witness for Peace. In the spring of 1983, Gail Phares led a delegation of religious leaders to Nicaragua. Phares had served as a Maryknoll missionary in Nicaragua and Guatemala in the 1960s. As she developed an understanding of the roots of Central America's economic and political problems, she became convinced that she needed to return to the United States to change her own country's policies toward the region. That conviction deepened in the early 1980s, as reports about the Contra War surfaced. Phares decided that it was imperative to respond, so she recruited religious leaders through the Carolina Interfaith Task Force to travel to Nicaragua. When they arrived in Managua in April 1983, they heard reports that Contras had just attacked villages near the Honduras border. The delegation boarded a bus the next day, headed straight for the war zone. They stopped at a village that had been attacked hours before and spoke with those who had survived. They saw the blood-spattered walls, the damage to the village, and they picked up shrapnel from the ground, noting that these mortar shells had been manufactured in the United States. While they were still in the village, one of the delegates pulled out his binoculars and watched Contra forces just over the border. He asked why they had stopped shooting. The villagers replied that they would not shoot with North Americans there; the Contras did not want to jeopardize the funding they received from the U.S. by killing or injuring U.S. citizens. As the delegates rode back to Managua, one had an idea: if the presence of North Americans deterred Contra attacks, why not organize a permanent group

of U.S. volunteers to live and work in the villages?[38]

The delegates quickly began planning "Project Witness." This plan had two parts. First, there would be long-term delegates who would live in the war zones to share the risk of Contra attacks. Second, there would be short-term delegates who would travel to Nicaragua, learn about the political situation, visit war villages, and then return to their homes to report their observations to the media, their faith communities, and their local political representatives.[39] That summer, a proposal was circulated to a variety of religious organizations, asking for support. Many responded, including Clergy and Laity Concerned, the American Friends Service Committee, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the InterReligious Task Force, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., the United Methodist Church, the Catholic Worker, and the Washington DC-based Religious Task Force on Central America.[40] By October 1983, a national steering committee met to develop a statement of purpose and work out the organization's logistics. The committee released a statement about this new movement organization, Witness for Peace, describing it as "prayerful, biblically-based, nonviolent, and politically independent."[41] Within a year the organization had several regional offices, twenty-seven local support groups, fundraising and recruitment campaigns, and they sent off their first long-term volunteers. By December 1984, the progressive evangelical magazine *Sojourners* hired a media specialist to cover the new movement, depicting it as a "shield of love" for the Nicaraguan people. Every major national newspaper and several television networks picked up the story. But the media coverage didn't end there. Part of the strategy with the short-term delegates was to teach them how to tell their story to local newspapers, how to make presentations to their faith communities, and how to use their new knowledge to appeal to their representatives. Within a decade, several thousand people had traveled to Nicaragua with Witness for peace. One organizer summarized the effect:

> There were three things we asked them [short-term delegates] to do. First, speak to your community, your church. Show them slides, tell them about your experiences, write a letter to your friends and family, tell everybody you know. Second, do media work. You could write a letter to the editor, but also let your local newspaper know what you're doing. Third, we asked them to do congressional work to change U.S. policy. . . . And to multiply that news story hundreds and thousands of times in towns and cities around the country, it began to have an effect. It counteracted the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* that ran stories favorable to the Contras.[42]

While returning delegates worked in their local communities, the national Witness for Peace office began coordinating political campaigns. For instance, Witness for Peace organized an "End Contra Aid!" campaign in 1988 that generated 11,000 calls to various congressional offices.

Pledge of Resistance. Around the same time that Witness for Peace was formed, the United States sent 7,000 troops to the island of Grenada with the purpose of overturning its leftist government. Many activists in the United States believed that this was a dress rehearsal for a full-scale invasion of Nicaragua. Several progressive religious leaders held a retreat in Pennsylvania to discuss the situation. At the retreat, they unanimously concluded that they needed an organization that would pre-emptively mobilize opposition to such an invasion. Toward that goal, Jim Wallis and

Jim Rice of *Sojourners* magazine drafted a "Pledge of Resistance." In this pledge, activists vowed that if the United States intervened in Nicaragua, they would mobilize masses of U.S. Christians to "go immediately to Nicaragua to stand unarmed as a loving barrier in the path of any attempted invasion." On the U.S. side, they called upon Christians to "encircle, enter, or occupy congressional offices in a nonviolent prayerful presence with the intention of remaining at those offices until the invasion ended."[43] The idea was to provide a U.S. complement to the resistance work that Witness for Peace was doing in Nicaragua. *Sojourners* leaders sent copies of this pledge to President Ronald Reagan, every member of Congress, the Central Intelligence Agency, and to the Departments of State and of Defense. Then they set out to gain pledge supporters throughout the country and to develop a mobilizing infrastructure.

This small initiative developed into a national organization when the American Friends Service Committee provided the funds to hire Ken Butigan, a theology student from Berkeley, California, to direct the Pledge of Resistance campaign. Building on the work of *Sojourners*, he slightly altered the pledge statement to read, "If the United States . . . significantly escalates its intervention on Central America, I pledge to join with others . . . in acts of legal protest and civil disobedience as conscience leads me."[44] Butigan launched a public event in October 1984 outside the San Francisco Federal Building, where 700 people signed the pledge. Encouraged by this success, Butigan attended a meeting of major solidarity and anti-intervention organizations in Washington, D.C. At the meeting he proposed various ways to nationally coordinate Pledge initiatives. His suggestions took root. Those gathered in Washington, D.C. agreed to have an "analyst group" that would monitor all U.S. activities in Central America. These analysts would then consult with a "signal group"; together they would decide if the actions were bellicose enough to activate the network. Once they gave the green light, local Pledge chapters would undertake a variety of actions, designed to stop or obstruct any major military escalation in Central America. By early 1985, over 50,000 citizens had signed the pledge and there were 200 local groups. The budding organization had the power to create political chaos.

Fairly quickly, movement leaders realized that an overt invasion of Nicaragua was unlikely. Instead, the Reagan administration continued its low-intensity warfare strategy, and thus Pledge leaders shifted their focus to challenging Contra Aid bills. In June of 1985, Congress passed a Contra aid package of $27 million. The Pledge network responded, activating its chapters throughout the country, resulting in demonstrations in 200 cities in 42 states. The following year, Pledge of Resistance activists challenged four separate Contra aid votes in Congress. By this point, nearly 70,000 U.S. citizens had signed the pledge. Tens of thousands took action by occupying congressional offices, staging funeral processions, obstructing arms shipments, running "Stop the Lies" advertisements in newspapers throughout the country, and renting planes to fly over sporting events, carrying a banner saying "U.S. Out of Nicaragua Now!" The activism continued throughout the 1980s, contesting U.S. policies toward Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.[45]

School of the Americas Watch. A third ecumenical peace movement targeted the U.S. training of military leaders who were responsible for human rights violations in Central America. This training occurred in Fort Benning, Georgia, at the School of the Americas (SOA). The U.S. military argued that the SOA was an important means of promoting

democracy by helping Latin American militaries defeat Marxist insurgencies. Yet a growing number of critics, including former SOA instructors and students, have condemned the school, asserting that it mainly teaches psychological warfare, intelligence-gathering techniques (including torture), and commando operations that have contributed to widespread violence and authoritarianism in the region.[46]

The SOA came under greater scrutiny when the Archbishop of El Salvador, Oscar Romero, was assassinated in March of 1980. The Vatican had appointed Romero archbishop in 1977, believing that he would keep the Catholic Church out of the country's divisive politics, class conflict, and brutal civil war. When the impoverished population began protesting, the military regime cracked down viciously. It used paramilitary groups called "death squads" to abduct, torture, and assassinate political dissidents. Progressive church groups and organizations particularly suffered under the military regime since they were seen as responsible for promoting liberation theology, which encouraged Catholics to work for social justice and an end to oppressive social structures. Throughout the 1970s, priests, nuns, and Catholic lay leaders were the primary targets of state repression. At one point, the army even circulated anonymous pamphlets urging, "Be a patriot! Kill a priest!"[47] Many priests were, in fact, killed during this period, including Father Rutilio Grande, a close friend of Archbishop Romero's, who was known for his public denunciations of the regime's human right abuses. This assassination transformed Romero, who began to see the extent of political repression. In response, the archbishop spent more time in rural areas, where people would line up for hours to speak with him, sharing their experiences and showing him photographs of loved ones who had been murdered or disappeared. With time, Romero became more and more outspoken, demanding that the military stop the repression and that the government implement social and political reforms. Romero paid the price for his public pleas. On March 24, 1980, the archbishop was shot and killed by a government assassin while celebrating Mass.

When Father Roy Bourgeois learned that those responsible for Romero's murder had been trained at the School of the Americas, he decided to expose the connections between the SOA and human rights violations in Latin America. Bourgeois, a Vietnam veteran and Maryknoll priest, moved to Georgia and began investigating. The more he learned, the more he was compelled to act. Together with two others, he purchased a military uniform at a local store. Impersonating officers, the three entered the base. Using a map of the compound, they located the barracks where the Salvadoran soldiers were housed. After nightfall, Father Bourgeois climbed a tree outside these barracks, with a portable stereo strapped on his back. When the last lights went out, Bourgeois played a tape, at full volume, of Romero's final homily. The Salvadoran soldiers awoke to hear Romero's voice proclaiming, "No soldier is obliged to obey an order against God's law. No one has to carry out an immoral law. It is time to recover your conscience and obey it rather than orders given in sin. In the name of God, and in the name of this long-suffering people whose cries rise more thunderously to heaven, I beg you, I order you: stop the repression!"[48] Father Bourgeois was quickly arrested and eventually served a year in prison for this action.

Prison did not deter Father Bourgeois. In fact, he organized in full force after the assassination of six Jesuits in El Salvador in 1989. In November of that year, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) launched a final offensive against the state, hoping to capture the city of San Salvador and declare victory for the revolutionary movement.

During the battle, the FMLN fled through the grounds of the Jesuit University of Central America. The government-sponsored radio programs aired the news, accusing the Jesuit professors of being communist sympathizers. As the fighting continued, the army commanders decided to strike back forcefully. Believing that the University of Central America was a launching point for the FMLN's operations in San Salvador, they targeted the campus. On November 16, military forces broke down the campus gates and entered the Jesuits' residence. They ordered all the priests to lie face down in the garden; then they shot and killed each one. Next they entered the house and killed the Jesuits' housekeeper and her teenage daughter.[49] Outraged by these events, the international Jesuit community called for an investigation. The investigation substantiated the claim that the army had killed the Jesuits, the housekeeper, and her daughter. Furthermore, the United Nations Truth Commission found that nineteen of the twenty-six officers responsible for these murders had been trained at the U.S. School of the Americas.[50]

In 1990, on the first anniversary of the Jesuit killings, Father Bourgeois called for a commemorative protest. Only ten people attended. To spread the word about the SOA, Bourgeois traveled across the country, speaking at college campuses, peace groups, and churches. Slowly, people began paying attention. In November 1991, the commemorative protest drew seventy people. But momentum was accruing. In 1993, Representatives Joseph Kennedy and Joe Moakley introduced an amendment to Congress to close the School of the Americas. Although the amendment was narrowly defeated, the media coverage brought even greater attention to the cause. In 1996, 500 people attended the commemorative protest in Fort Benning. In 1997, 2,000 protesters filled the street. Over 600 people were arrested for trespassing onto the base in a mock funeral procession, carrying eight coffins to represent the six Jesuits, their housekeeper, and her daughter.[51] With each passing year, the numbers of protesters expanded. Eventually, the commemorative actions drew more than 20,000 people from across the country. By 2000, there had been six legislative attempts to cut the SOA's funding.[52]

What was the effect of the SOA Watch movement? In 2000, the School of the Americas closed its doors. Yet in 2001, it reopened with a new name: the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. The Institute had a new emphasis on human rights, democracy, and humanitarian relief. Yet SOA activists continued to monitor and protest the new institute, ensuring that it lived up to its stated commitment to human rights and democratic sustainability.[53]

CHRISTIAN PEACEMAKER TEAMS

The final religious peace movement that this article addresses is Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), which was organized by activists within the Anabaptist tradition—specifically the Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren. The seeds of this movement were planted during the 1984 Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France, where progressive theologian Ron Sider called for a Christian peacemaking "army" that would intervene in conflict situations.[54] He called upon Mennonites to move from their historic pacifism to actively confronting and transforming violent conflicts. Of course, this idea had previously been articulated by Mohandas Gandhi and had been implement by secular groups such as Peace Brigades International, which has provided "nonviolent protective accompaniment" to threatened church workers, labor activists, and human rights advocates in places such as Guatemala, Colombia, and Sri Lanka.[55] Yet this pro-active approach

marked an important development in the Anabaptist tradition.

By 1986, the proposal to form such a group was officially accepted by leaders in both the Mennonite and the Church of the Brethren traditions. In its mission statement, the founders of Christian Peacemaker Teams summarized their purpose: "CPT provides organizational support to persons committed to faith-based nonviolent alternatives in situations where lethal conflict is an immediate reality or is supported by public policy."[56] The precise method of support entails "getting in the way"—or intervening between aggressors and their intended victims.[57] While delegates live in the region and address local conflicts, they also engage in a variety of daily solidarity tasks. They plant crops, reap harvests, rebuild destroyed homes, dismantle barricades or barriers that impede human rights, and so forth. They also participate in political demonstrations.

The CPT organizational headquarters were established in Chicago and the movement began sending formal delegations to conflicts within North America and other regions of the world. They eventually had teams in fourteen different settings, from Haiti (1993–1996) to Bosnia (1996), Chechnya (1996), Chiapas (1998–2001), Richmond, Virginia (1997–1999), South Dakota (1999–2000), Iraq (2002–present), the Great Lakes region of Africa (2008–2009), and Palestinian territories, to name but a few.

Christian Peacemaker Teams made international headlines in 2005 when several of their volunteers in Iraq were kidnapped. After the 2003 invasion of Iraq, CPT volunteers assisted those who had been detained by the U.S. military and they documented stories of detainee abuse. In November 2005, four CPT activists—Tom Fox, Norman Kember, James Loney, and Harmeet Singh Soodan—met with the Muslim Clerics Association in a Baghdad mosque. As they were leaving the meeting, a group calling itself the Swords of Righteousness Brigade abducted the four volunteers. The kidnappers stated that the four would be executed unless the United States released all Iraqi prisoners held in U.S. prisons. In March 2006, the body of Tom Fox was found. The other three hostages were released two weeks later after a multinational force freed them.[58]

In all these movements, religious resources have been invaluable for providing infrastructural and sometimes material support, moral credibility, and a value system that encourages altruistic engagement and sacrifice for the goal of peace.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As this article documents, the United States has a rich tradition of faith-based activism on issues of peace, militarism, the arms race, and war. Movement participants and advocates, who wish to explain their motives, convictions, and experiences, have produced a sizeable portion of the literature on these religious peace movements. For instance, Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, wrote her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, and also published an account of the movement in *Loaves and Fishes*.[59] In addition, many of her articles from the Catholic Worker newsletter were compiled into a book of selected writing called *By Little and By Little*.[60] Philip and Daniel Berrigan, leaders of the draft board raids and the Plowshares movements, have written extensively about their experiences. Philip Berrigan documented his experiences in the draft board raids in his book *Prison Journals of a Priest Revolutionary* and later wrote an autobiography entitled *Fighting the Lamb's War: Skirmishes with the American Empire*.[61] Daniel Berrigan was a prolific writer and poet, authoring or

co-authoring more than fifty books, many of which dealt with his activist experiences.[62] Similarly, many Christian Peacemaker Team members have written about their experiences and published these accounts in books such as *Getting in the Way: Stories from Christian Peacemaker Teams* and *Letters from Apartheid Street: A Christian Peacemaker in Occupied Palestine*.[63] In addition, there are hundreds of other books written by those who support the religious peace movements described in this article.

The academic literature on this topic tends to fall in three disciplinary categories: history, theology and religious studies, and social movement studies. Historians of U.S. Catholicism have documented many of these 20th-century peace movements. One of the best overview books is Patricia McNeal's *Harder Than War: Catholic Peacemaking in the Twentieth Century*.[64] Other historians have focused on specific movements, such as Anne Klejment's and Nancy Roberts' work on the Catholic Worker movement and Catholic pacifism or Mitchell Hall's writing on Clergy and Laity Concerned.[65] In the field of religious studies, emphasis is often placed on the theological beliefs and religious basis of such activism. This includes Kristin Tobey's work on the Plowshares movement as well as Dan McKanan's work on the prophetic power of religion in various radical U.S. movements.[66] Finally, social movement scholars have analyzed how the organizational and cultural resources of religious groups can help peace movements emerge and persist through repressive periods. Religious organizations often provide financial support, recruitment networks, and moral resources such as a sense of altruism and sacrifice—all essential elements of movement mobilization. Works that fall into this category include Christian Smith's study of religion in the U.S. Central America peace movement and Sharon Erickson Nepstad's study of the Plowshares movement.[67]

While this quick literature review is not exhaustive, it ~~1971~~highlights the various types of publications that exist on American religious peace movements.

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RELIGION AND NATIVE AMERICAN ASSIMILATION, RESISTANCE, AND SURVIVAL

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND AMERICAN COLONIALISM

U.S. Indian policy focused on removing Native American tribes from their homes east of the Mississippi River and resettling them on western lands acquired through the Louisiana Purchase in the 1830s. Earlier generations of European and European American settlers had engaged in similar practices of dispossession; however, U.S. authorities intensified their effects when they adopted Indian removal as official policy during this period. The rapid emigration of white settlers to regions west of the Mississippi River in the mid- to late 19th century demonstrated the inadequacies of the existing Indian policy to U.S. officials. Determined to open new lands to white settlement, the U.S. government enacted new consolidation policies in the 1860s to force the removal of Native Americans yet again. These policies aimed not only to limit conflict between Native Americans and the white newcomers who had encroached on their lands, but also to eradicate Native cultures by forcing Native Americans to live on isolated reservations where land and resources would be shared among different tribes. U.S. officials expected such changes to break down existing tribal identities and undermine traditional customs over time. Eventually, they hoped that consolidation would result in the total assimilation of Native Americans to U.S. culture.

Christian missionaries acted as the U.S. government's partners in this effort. Shared assumptions that Christianity and civilization were coextensive helped to forge strong alliances between (mostly Protestant) Christian missionaries and federal officials as they worked together to transform Native societies according to their own cultural standards. Protestant understandings of conversion as a spiritual transformation that manifested its reality through specific cultural practices aligned with the interests of American colonialism and helped to support its continued expansion. According to this logic, Native Americans would convert to Christianity and American civilization virtually simultaneously. Their inward embrace of Christian religion (understood by American Protestants as inherently individualistic and democratic) would result in a speedy transition from traditional to new customs. Christian missionaries taught that polygamous marriage, varying styles of dress and adornment, and gendered divisions of labor that put women in control of agriculture