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THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES



DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE RAAD VAN KERKE

Division of Justice & Reconciliation

20th April 1983

TO: Field Workers of the SACC and Regional Councils

Dear Friend,

Here are two articles that may interest you.

Sometimes you may work in situations that are dangerous and violent and the question of protection arises. Would it be safer to carry a gun, or to learn karate?

On the other hand, the gun can be even more dangerous if others find out that you are armed. And your frame of mind might be dangerous if you have learned karate and are prepared to inflict serious injury or even to kill. It's a real moral problem for the Christian worker. Is there another way?

These articles are about the non-violent approach to such situations. One field worker read them and decided he would try this instead of being armed. So the J & R Committee suggested we should share them with you.

The first is a personal story of Will Warren (65-70 years old at the time) who took the non-violent approach in Northern Ireland and relied on the power of open friendliness. The second, by Charles Walker, puts these ways of acting into a systematic outline designed for people who lead non-violent action against violent opponents.

If you know others who should get these articles, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rob Robertson".

Robert J D Robertson  
Commission on Violence & Non-Violence

GUIDELINES FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION  
IN SITUATIONS OF IMMEDIATE CONFLICT

A Working Paper by Charles Walker

.....  
Legitimacy.

1. Appeal to it at all relevant times.
2. Have identification on hand : badge, sign, letter of authorization.
3. If visible to the public, make it clearly visible;  
If visible primarily to fellow actionists, keep it modest;  
If no visible identification, avoid problems of "a secret operation".

No Armament.

1. Let it be known the group has no weapons. Perhaps the point can be made clear in a leaflet, news release, or public statement.
2. Keep hands in sight when in the midst of conflict, e.g. street disorder.
3. If leaders learn a group member has a weapon, don't ignore it; take immediate steps to get the weapon away from the action.

No surprises with intent to manipulate.

1. Signal behaviour by :
  - (a) announcements before a tactical move;
  - (b) let others overhear discussions of tactics.
2. Avoid "playing games" with adversaries.
3. Notify parties in advance about plans, demands, etc. (See below)
4. Keep educating the group about the need for such an approach.

Advance notice to interested parties.

1. Signals no intent to surprise.
2. May include request for a meeting to discuss the matter. In such meetings the parties get to know each other personally (some of them), size each other up, and gets rituals of first meetings out of the way so that on-the-spot communication is speeded up and facilitated.

3. Others can plan alternatives, and thus will be less likely to be put into untenable positions by surprise from which they will "lose face" if they retreat.
4. The "meaning" or implications of some action will not necessarily be self-evident, and will be interpreted by the parties partly on the basis of what they know about the people involved.

NOTE :

There may be times when such advance notice poses real risks that the other parties will pre-empt proposed tactics. Several considerations :

- (a) Have alternate tactics or strategies on hand.
- (b) The fact that an opponent or the police stops a group from some intended course is not necessarily a disaster. The announcement of intent may be needed to give credibility to a proposed action whether it can be consummated or not. E.g. during Algerian conflict, some French actionists went to a detention camp for Algerians and dissenters and demanded to be put inside too because they were as "guilty" as the others. The authorities stopped them. The alternative : sneak in then announce that they were inside (if that could indeed be done). Which would be better?
- (c) There is a sharp difference between telling less than every detail and deliberately deceiving or lying about it. The line will not always be clear but there is a meaningful line to be distinguished here.
- (d) There can be a distinction between a general announcement of plans and revealing all the specifics of how they will be implemented. Indeed it would be impossible to do so because of what might develop anyway.
- (e) These distinctions are noted to suggest that the issue is not simply one of giving away plans and the immediate result is ineffectiveness, especially if the announced plan seems credible and others trying to stop this show they are arbitrary, unreasonable, deceitful, unlawful, or just on the wrong side of an issue with public support. This discussion can take place with relevance as a specific strategy is advanced, e.g. trying to liberate someone who has been kidnapped from an action scene.

Communication problems and issues.

1. Relate physically to all parties : greetings/gestures/eye contact/names. At least some form of acknowledgement, whether verbal or not.
2. Minimize machinery and technology; use only when really needed such items as walkie-talkies, bull horns, loud speakers.

3. If an explicit discipline has been adopted or prevails, consider writing it down and circulating it (a) among the people in the group (b) among rival groups (c) to the press. This can be an educative device, and tells important things about the group.
4. If hand or other signals have been adopted, don't assume that verbal instructions are sufficient (sometimes they are too contrived or are unrelated to group practices or memories); try out the signals as unobtrusively as possible, or in advance training or briefing sessions.

#### Demeanour.

1. The key word is composure. This suggests (a) knowing what's going on (b) keeping oneself under control (c) being open to a new situation.
2. Usually : walk, don't run; talk, don't shout.
3. Try to avoid the two extremes of rigid discipline or mindless sloppiness. Demeanour sends out signals constantly, so be sure of what signals are being sent or one wishes to send. This is not a matter of "rule" but of awareness.
4. There may be occasions when it would not be appropriate to smoke, use profanity, engage in friendly antics.
5. A major means of communications at several levels is simply "setting the tone" and that speaks louder than words, rules, etc.; and provides a basis for others to interpret actions which may otherwise seem random, eccentric or perhaps hostile.
6. Dress too is a signal, a major one. It has a social function of signalling one's interpretation of the immediate situation. Again, this is not a matter only of "someone setting the fashion" or insisting that "clothes make the man or woman" (though it is disturbing how much this appears to be true in all groups, such as the amusement about how "squares" or "freaks" dress; the amount of time and energy spent on this matter suggests how powerful a factor it is). The question then becomes : how does the group wish specific parties to interpret the group via impressions : (a) rivals (b) the press (c) the police (d) those in the immediate area.

#### Initiative.

1. Keep action space (both physically and psychologically).
2. Take initiative in small, even trifling matters, as well as major ones.
3. Note the difference between deliberate intent to manipulate with deceit or surprise, and the inherent "surprise" that comes inevitably when one reacts unconventionally to some provocation, for example. A provocateur may expect hostility to foster counter hostility, and may be "surprised" when it does not and thus be on the defensive in face of an unconventional counter-action.

4. It is a good antidote to despair, defeatism, uncertainty, confusion. Note S.L.A. Marshall's comment : "Improvisation is the essence of initiative ... just as initiative is the outward showing of the power of decision". (in his book Men Against Fire).

Solidarity : counsel to leaders.

1. Keep circulating, give casual greetings.
2. Don't talk more than necessary to adversaries, or police, unless it is an assignment (ongoing) from the group, or the group knows why this is going on; perhaps there can be a division of labour; the action may be one, of course, which emphasizes this form of "communication" and then such talk will not lead to feelings or charges of "wheeling and dealing" or of "selling out" or "acting like a leader".
3. Set up a buddy system; this can be a steadying force in a crisis; members will find it less easy to run out; better reporting will result too.
4. Include some tactics that are almost certainly achievable, e.g. getting to some geographical objective (top of a hill, salient object in environment) to enhance solidarity that comes from achieving objectives. Out of context this can become somewhat juvenile and manipulative; furthermore, it can detract from the seriousness of the strategy. It is mentioned here as one way to cope with passing phases of uncertainty or disaffection or discouragement.

Hands off people.

1. Too easily misunderstood; many examples can be cited.
2. "Hands on" tends to reinforce whatever the prevailing emotion is : if sympathy is the mood, it may help; if hostility is the mood, it may well intensify it. (This gets to extreme points in some cultures; or at crisis times, don't bet on the usual interpretation, e.g. the extreme hostility that usually results if a white person "puts a hand on" a black person. In the Spanish culture, hostility or friendliness is often interpreted by the distance two people put between each other .
3. A standard police practice is to signal arrest by formally putting a hand on the arrested person. (This was instituted to provide a legal point to identify an arrest from a warning or threat or phony arrest). Some who are frequent police victims associate "hands on" with arrest or with their experience with police.
4. Some individuals are hypersensitive to touch, and touch becomes an abnormally powerful emotional stimulus. A crisis situation may intensify this even more.

Photography.

1. Generally, leave it to the professionals in a tense situation : that is, the press, or photographers one has assigned to the action.

2. Let the contending parties know who is photographing and why ... unless all is calm enough that no problem is likely. (During sit-in days in the South, photographers were special victims of hostility and violence, and were a destabilizing influence on a situation, frequently).

#### Violence and response.

This is a long story, perhaps beyond the scope of this document. The foregoing is affected significantly if group members believe it is all just a prelude to actual violence, rather than a preventive. These actions can be :

1. A prelude to actual violence, the ritual beforehand.
2. A preventive to actual outbreaks of hostilities or overt violence.
3. A means of stating the case no matter what the outcome.

#### Study geography and staging.

1. Find promontories where one can be seen, can give instructions, or speak.
2. Assess how geography will provide the staging for the conflict or action.
3. Identify hazards : alleys, traffic, a cul de sac, provocative symbols, breakable glass, etc.
4. Have maps available unless inappropriate.
5. Can be very useful in briefing sessions, not only to clarify plans or instructions, but as a steadying force (participants identify with this part of the preparation).

#### Assess key people among adversaries (as a basis for plans or initiatives).

1. Who most hostile, aggressive, provocative?
2. Who indecisive, reluctant?
3. Who a potential moderator, conciliator?
4. How united are they? Who disaffected and why?

#### Keep group up to date.

1. Talk while moving around among the participants.
2. Report to group in (a) impromptu meetings (b) regular reports sessions (c) in longer actions, through news briefs or newsletter (d) bulletin boards. Circulate or post news releases so that group can read them.
3. Deflate rumours, avoid repeating rumours.

Schedule events realistically.

1. Unrealistic schedules, without leaving enough time to accomplish tasks, are a significant occasion for disorientation and frustration.
2. The other side of this problem : encourage reasonable degree of promptness.
3. Avoid "herding" people around (an almost inevitable result of schedules gone awry, or dangers at hand unbeknownst to all parties).
4. Failing to keep schedules is a reliable way to alienate the press.
5. Leaders cannot possibly know all the problems they unwittingly create by letting matters get out of hand, or of departing from schedules without good reason ... this among the actionists in particular. Actionists should perhaps make themselves available and on call for indefinite periods and not make schedules they can not easily break ... but they do. Frustrations, family tensions, and feelings that leaders are unreliable can result and serve as a drag on the action, or on future actions. When leaders in a crisis ask the participants to keep faith with them in the big things, it helps a lot if leaders have tried to keep faith with them in smaller matters along the way.

Starting an action.

1. Choose initiators carefully if violence or disorder is likely.
2. Don't let publicity factors distort the opening action, so that it looks more like a staged play than a serious action. Defer reporters till later.
3. Realize that people in salient spots will set the tone in a special way, while group morals gets relationships that permeate the action.

First draft : November 30, 1971

Second draft : December 6, 1971

## AN EXPERIMENT IN NON-VIOLENCE

by Will Warren

I am writing this account of six years spent in Derry, Northern Ireland, because it tells of the experience of an ordinary man. I believe it might encourage other ordinary people to try to do something constructive in violent situations.

It is necessary to preface my tale with a brief account of myself.

My father was a C.O. in the first world war. This demanded a lot of courage and determination, for he did not know any other person to hold this position; indeed at first he thought he was the only one in the world to do so. My mother, although she was socially minded, was ostracised by the neighbours, so much so that frequently I had to do the family shopping as the shopkeepers would not serve her. I was sent to a Quaker boarding school, where I was like a fish out of water, consequently unhappy, lonely, and reserved. It was not surprising that my scholastic successes were nil. I believed that Christianity was something to be lived rather than sung about. Later I had long periods of ill health (physical and mental), of unemployment, and earning my living in a wide variety of occupations: day labourer digging trenches, carpenter's labourer, errand boy, night watchman and so on. I was apprenticed as a compositor, later becoming a printer's reader till my eyesight debarred me from following that trade. As can be seen I was a rolling stone, and certainly I gathered no moss. Anyone less likely to be able to cope with the Northern Ireland situation would be hard to find.

I arrived in Ireland with one great advantage over other people: ignorance. Because of this I was the more ready to listen and learn rather than to speak and teach. In addition I had a healthy adverseness for publicity. Previously I had been the recipient of a great amount in England, and I wanted no more. It was as well that I felt like that for much of what I did would have been impossible had I been given publicity. My upbringing in the Society of Friends I found to be a great help. I was used to the sight of groups of people with conflicting views resolving their differences with neither side feeling defeated. This was what I tried to do in Northern Ireland. I was far too ignorant to take sides, but soon found that I had much in common when talking to the men of violence. Of more importance I found that these men had much in common themselves, for both Protestant and Catholic, divided as they were had a common desire to live in peace, for security for their families, for good housing, good, well-paid jobs, for opportunities for recreation and fellowship. Furthermore I found everyone willing to be friendly.

If there was one thing more than another that I learned in Northern Ireland it was the futility of violence. On several occasions I was the bearer of threats of one sort or another. Invariably the reply was further threats. It was at such times that I was able to express a point of view that offered another course of action. That I was sometimes successful is an indication that the para-militaries are honest when they declare that they only adopt violence as a last resort. The tragedy is that all too often no other resort is offered them. Once people think of them as 'terrorists' and cut off communication with them the gunmen lose touch with the ordinary man, and in so doing find their choice of action limited. I'm certain that it was only because I treated them as friends that I had any influence on them at all. Obviously the converse is also true. They had an influence

on me to the extent that they treated me as a friend. This is how reconciliation works.. It is not a one-way flow, but a penetrating interchange of ideas leading, often, to unthought of solutions. It would be of interest were I to illustrate this with concrete examples. However, another factor enters into the discussion, that of confidentiality. These friends of mine learnt that they could trust me not to reveal words and actions. Because of this they trusted me further, and I am sure that I should keep this confidentiality even after I have left the country.

I felt it necessary to be 'on call' twenty-four hours a day, and so had the telephone by my bed as well as in my office. It was obviously imperative to have some kind of 'pecking order'. Any request from the para-militaries came top of the list, anything I might be doing had to be put on one side while I attended to that request. Next in order of importance came the local clergy, police, and politicians. Children came next, then the Derry Peace Women, then the Peace People, and then others. In effect this debarred me from promising regular help with the Meals on Wheels service, the Long Kesh Prisoners' Families runs, evening classes, and so on, although I could, and did, help out in emergencies. I managed to attend a number of conferences, in particular some at Corremeelea. People visiting had to take pot luck, frequently I was also to find time to attend to them and take them round with me, but it was always on the understanding that I might suddenly be called away. Children took up a deal of my time.

When I first squatted in a house in the strongly Republican area of the Brandywell small children saw me move in. Within an hour many had come to see what I was up to. In fact some helped me move in. They came in whenever they wanted, often straight from school, staying till I turned them out when I wanted to go to bed. Frequently they cooked meals for me. Many times they were engaged with running fights with the British Army, and rushed in the house when attacked with CS gas. On one occasion they were more than usually gas-ridden, so I packed seventeen of them into my Mini (designed to hold four) and drove them over the border, a couple of miles away, so they could get some fresh air. This delighted them and gave rise to a custom whereby I took loads of them out when I was not too busy. This for an hour, a half day, or a whole day. Later with a minivan (given to me by the Cabot Trust, of Boston, Mass.) a few boys for a week-end. The children were usually well behaved but I had bad times with them too, as when they started to run riot in a chapel. One of the advantages I gained from these outings was the parents got to know me and the para-militaries decided I was not too bad if I cared for their children. At odd times it was thought, especially by the Peace Women, that I was taking children out in order to extract information concerning the activities of their parents and elder bothers in the 'organisations'. This, however, I never did. The children would have said this to anyone who asked them.

After the Provos had created their 'no-go' areas they found it necessary to form their own police force, called Vigilantes. When I had been living in the area some months I was invited to join. Quickly making up my mind I agreed. I soon found that although most of their function was really to police the district and was performed with no violence, whenever it appeared that the British Army was about to enter they ceased to be vigilantes and

became para-militaries. This was an opportunity for me. I invariably moved away from my comrades towards the Army and stood in the middle of the road, this to the surprise and consternation of my friends who were fearful of my safety. It then became easy, indeed inevitable, for me to explain my philosophy of non-violence. As I had demonstrated my concern for the well-being of their children and the community at large, and also my willingness to share the work of policing, they accepted my sincerity and acknowledged the fact that non-violence does not mean simply opting out of the struggle, standing on the sidelines, watching others do the work and facing the danger. The fact that I was an Englishman helped, for it was not my struggle but theirs I was involved in.

I was up early on the morning of 'Operation Motorman', (when the British Army entered the No-Go areas in force). I think I was the first person, other than soldiers, to enter, and I had to talk my way in through the troops. As I walked down the streets I saw many women standing anxiously at the doors. Most asked if there was much fighting down the road, and if I had seen many dead. In fact I had seen none, (it was reported that only one man had been killed), and I was able to lessen their worries. I tried later to get permission from the authorities to deliver Meals on Wheels, and was told that I could take them in, but would not be permitted to drive out again. I went to the Red Cross, who organised the service, and was told they would not be operating that day. In the afternoon some milk got in and I bought an amount for some of my friends in the Brandywell.

Never have I seen so many soldiers and army vehicles as I saw that day. The whole area was swamped with troops. Due to the overwhelming superiority of force the operation was relatively quiet. Had the Army used fewer troops there might very well have been much bloodshed. As it was the Provos discretely slipped over the border and made their headquarters in Buncrana.

There was a man unemployed, not too intelligent, given to drink, whose family was below the poverty line. Suddenly he was seen to have money to burn. The family became better fed, and he frequented bars more often. Always on the alert for anything suspicious the Provos noticed this and, putting two and two together, decided the man was an informer. They invited him to an evening out at a bar over the border. He went. A week or so later a priest went to the man's wife with a letter informing her that the Provos were sorry but they had to execute him as he was an informer. Distraught she asked the local M.P. to investigate. This he did but could find nothing. She was advised to seek my help. I spent the whole of two nights walking round the Creggan looking for the Provo leader. I knew many homes that harboured him, visited them all and many others. Eventually I ran him to earth. He confirmed the truth of the letter, and gave me a message to the woman telling her she was no longer a wife but a widow. It was an uncomfortable message to deliver. She asked me to produce the body, so she could prove he was dead, enabling her to claim widow's benefit. Then came a series of meetings with the Provo chief, friendly but determined on both sides: he not to move any further in the matter and me to get him to produce the body. I felt strongly I should get him to move. He told me he couldn't produce the body. Determined to bend his will to mine, (not, I confess, a truly non-violent attitude), I said I did not believe him. One of two things had happened, either he had thrown the body into the sea, in which case it would eventually turn up, or else he had tortured the man so extensively that he was ashamed to have anyone see it. This, as I had hoped, cut him to the quick. "You know we wouldn't do a thing like that, Will", he said, and went on to promise to produce the body.

A day or two passed and nothing turned up. So I called on him, to find he had gone to earth. There followed another period of walking round his haunts. One morning I was told I would never find him; he had gone over the border to Letterkenny. So I drove there and searched the hospital as I knew wounded Provoes were sometimes treated there. He was not in the building so I drove off. In the main street I saw a group of Provos walking along the pavement. Slamming my brakes on I jumped out and called to them. Turning round, surprised, they came back. Not attempting to lower my voice I demanded, once again, that the body be produced, reminding him of his promise to me. He assured me that he would do as I wanted, and that quickly, anyhow within twenty-four hours. "Do not worry, Will; we really will do it this time". Next day I heard on the radio that a body had been found in a car on the border.

Later I heard details. A car, with its headlights on, was seen by British soldiers who investigated and saw a body inside. Deciding it was probably booby-trapped, (not an unusual occurrence), they called in the police, who coming to the same conclusion, notified their chief. The rest of the story was told by the chief himself. 'I went to investigate, saw the body, recognised the man, knew you were seeking him and was sure you were responsible for the body's return. I was convinced you would have nothing to do with a booby trap and that the Provos would not involve you in one, so I opened the car door. It was all right.' I must confess my blood ran cold as he told me this.

The end of the story is a little happier. The widow did get her pension. I was able to get her and her family away for a Christmas holiday at the Glencree Centre for Reconciliation, near Dublin. As far as the Provo chief is concerned our friendship continued and deepened. When subsequently he was in prison I visited him and on his release was partly instrumental in getting him a job.

Some students hired a coach intending to take children out for the day, inviting twenty five Catholics. They then decided to have Protestants as well, but knew none. (This is not unusual with people coming to Northern Ireland, most visitors being inclined to be pro-Catholic in their thinking). I was asked to find some for them. This, I thought, would be easy. I approached the Democratic Unionist Party, (Ian Paisley's creation), and the local organiser willingly agreed to the proposal. The day arrived but no Protestants. Next day I found why the children had not turned up: "We could only get twenty-four, and it was not advisable to go as a minority; our children would have been beaten up."

On another occasion I had a number of Catholics in my van and decided to invite some Protestants. The children beseeched me not to do so as they might be outnumbered by the Protestants. So I had to use other methods. One Catholic boy who often came out with me was a suitable subject for an experiment. I took him, alone, to the Waterside, slowed down outside the house of a friend and, as I expected, out rushed a lot of boys and girls begging for a ride. I invited them in. A long period of silence. When I told Johnnie, the Catholic, to change seats so a Protestant child could sit in front, being an obedient child he moved to the back, having to sit next to the Protestant children. More silence. And then what I had hoped for. "What's your name?" "Johnnie." A pause, then "What's yours?" "Denn." Gradually the ice melted and by the time we have finished the run they were

chattering away like normal children. Another day I returned with a number of Catholics, apprehensive but reassured by John. So I broke down the fear in the hearts of a few children.

A small, token, act. But it was worthwhile. Reconciliation is always slow. But once effected is, I believe, lasting.

It may seem strange that I have been asking for books for the Island of Saints and Scholars, whereas there is a definite need for books of all sorts in Derry. This is not because there are no books there; it is not because there are no public libraries (although the main one containing thousands of volumes was burnt to the ground, as the Army was stationed in the same building); it is not that the people cannot afford to buy books (most people, however, would place books low on their list of priorities); many children are glad to have books of their own, and then their mothers want some too.

When I was in England I collected over 4 000 books from Friends Meetings and elsewhere and put them on display in my room, a friend giving me a bookcase for this purpose. Since then a trickle of people climbed up the stairs to my room, browsed round the shelves and helped themselves to books that interested them particularly. To start with children only, then came a few mothers, and later on fathers and elder brothers. Children's books were always in great demand, but also love stories, and works of a political, economic, and religious nature. Most of the volumes I had given to me were in an excellent condition, only a few were tattered, torn, or scribbled on. Those I destroyed. A good many were new and those I gave as birthday or Christmas presents. I made up four large parcels, two for Republican prisoners; two for Loyalists.

At one time there were riots in a particular road, commencing at ten minutes past three. It may seem strange that I can be so definite as to the time and place. The schools finish at three and it takes ten minutes to walk down to William Street. Here was an Army post. The children determined to destroy it. It took them some time, but in the end they succeeded, by means of cat-calls followed by stone throwing and eventually by fire. I do not remember seeing anyone over school age engaged in this. Flushed with success they proceeded to burn down the little houses, some occupied by old people, in a side street. Next they decided to treat William Street to the same process. The Army determined to prevent them, so the children got reinforcements in the shape of their elders, and so confrontation ensued.

About this time I moved into the side street. I decided I should walk through the riots. This I did most days for some three months. At first stones and rubber bullets, and gas canisters were thick in the air, many narrowly missing me. Sometimes the soldiers apologised for so nearly hitting me. Over the days I noticed the stone throwing slowed down; as I quietly walked down the street the soldiers held their fire and the rioters did likewise.

In various other streets I have done the same. Sometimes the soldiers tried to stop me, but when I insisted on going through they would wash their hands of me, saying they accepted no responsibility for any injury I received. On such occasions I had brief opportunities of saying I neither wanted nor needed their protection.

It is difficult to assess the result of this kind of action, (as in so many things I did, and not easy to explain exactly why I did it, apart from an inner sense of rightness. Primarily I wanted to demonstrate that there is something more powerful than what comes out of the barrel of a gun. Also I wished to show that I was not pro-Army or pro-rioters, but pro-people.

The phone woke me. Half asleep I stretched out my arm and was startled into wakefulness by the voice of a well-known politician telling me that a bomb had blown half a car over his house. Would I come at once? Slipping into my clothes and stumbling downstairs I drove about four miles into the country into an estate where Protestant and Catholic people lived in harmony. Going to my friend's house I was told he was at the scene of the explosion. I walked round and found the woman distressed but dry-eyed. Her husband had been taken to the Alteragelvin hospital, was being operated on, but not expected to live. The family had been invited out and intended to drive in their own car, but her brother coming round they decided to go with him, leaving their own car in the drive. Returning they all got out and went indoors to put the baby to bed. The man turned back to put his car in the garage. As he started the engine the explosion occurred. The wife completed her account by adding "I do not want any retaliation".

I spent the rest of the night with my friend discussing how best we could cope with the emotion generated by the crime. Eventually we decided on a course of action. Next morning saw the Protestant bishop of Kerry, the Catholic Bishop of Kerry, the leaders of the Presbyterians and the Methodists, the Mayor of Derry, the leader of the Community Association, my friend and myself going round the estate. We visited every home. The remarkable and hopeful result was that we found not one person who wanted any sort of retaliation. That night we called a meeting in the assembly hall of the local school. It was packed. Various suggestions were made as to how further explosions might be avoided, ranging from more playing fields, better street lighting to visiting the neighbours more often and closing the roads to all traffic at night.

I was a member (by right of residence) of a Protestant Residents' Association. One evening while at a meeting I was asked to go along to the Apprentice Boys' Hall as there was a phone call from Belfast for me. I went and was told by the Ulster Defence Association leadership that two of their members had been murdered, it was thought by Derry Provos. The UDA proposed to murder six Derry Catholics that night in reprisal. However if I could assure them within an hour that no Derry person was involved, they would not do so. An hour, I complained, was too short a period for me. I must have at least two. They agreed to two hours. I hurried round to the Bogside, was lucky in finding the man I wanted, and was told that no one in Derry knew anything of the murders till I told them. I rushed back home and rang back just in time to prevent a party of men setting out for Derry. It is interesting to note that each side accepted the word of the other. I found this so on numerous occasions. All that seemed necessary was to have a trusted intermediary available.

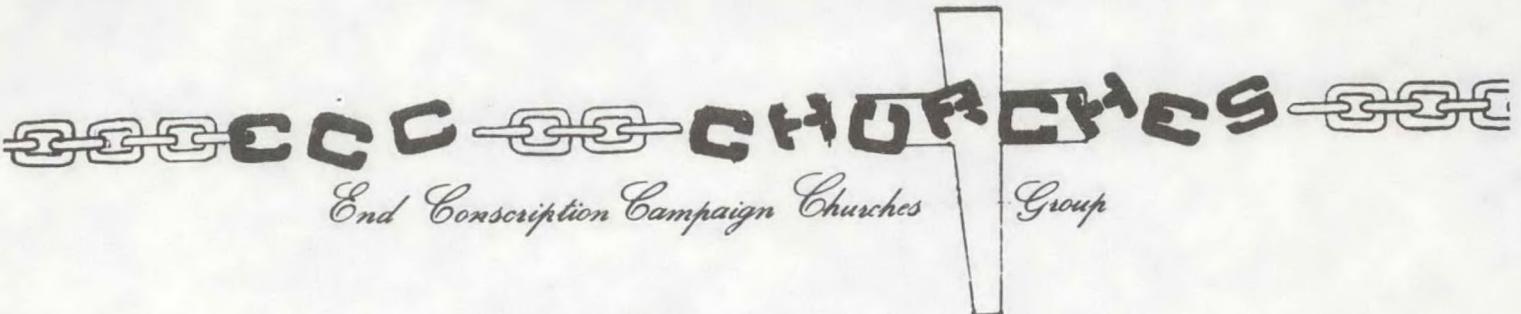
One Christmas I decided to follow the example of the American Non-Violent Action. The members of the FoR in Derry decided to hold a vigil and fast for the twenty-four hours of Christmas 1972. The basic group consisted of Robin Perceval, Colm Cavenagh, Peter Davidson, and myself. Many others came for shorter periods, including members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary,

the Bogside Community Association, some of the clergy, and the Peace Women. I had, with the assistance of the local papers, the British Army, the Provisional IRA, Tenants' Associations, and so on, compiled a list of all the people who had been killed in Derry. Then I put them in alphabetical order. This list, of almost a hundred, was read out at intervals throughout the vigil by various people, including Mrs Best, the mother of Ranger Best, a British Army boy, a native of Derry, who had been shot by paramilitaries. It was a shocking thing to do. Shocking for few people had realised the list would be so long, and shocking to find their son's name next to that of a British soldier. That was something totally unexpected, and made them think in an unaccustomed way. I was criticised for this initially, but after a while people realised the reason I had done this. The readings were moving experiences for many people. The British soldiers were curious when we erected a large banner bearing the words "Pray for an end of all violence and the causes of violence". Some of them even came over to us, offering us coffee, which we had to refuse as we were holding a fast. This the men appreciated. A number of people offered us money, which we declined to accept. This action became a talking point for some time. A number of people subsequently held vigils for a variety of causes, usually in support of their relatives in Long Kesh.

I decided against repeating the project the following Christmas, fearing to get into the position of having to hold one every year, which would, I thought, have declining impact. However, Colm Cavenagh up-dated the list recently and published it in his Community Mirror.

If this account seems uneven, disjointed, and downright mixed-up, then it presents a correct account of my life in Derry. I had no preconceived plan of action. I tried to work out my concern day by day as seemed best. Had I a different upbringing I might very well have behaved in another way. This is natural. Everyone must behave in the way that seems right at the time. No hard and fast rules can be laid down which are applicable to all people for all occasions. Everyone has a part to play in the non-violent movement. What really matters is that each of us tries to take part in the best possible way.

Will Warren



Dear Christian Friend

Conscription is a burning spiritual, moral and indeed life-issue for young white male South Africans, and their families. As the conflict intensifies, so the crisis of conscience which they face becomes even more severe.

Conscripts need to know that Christians care. They need to know that we support them as they struggle with limited choices in a role which they did not choose for themselves. This is particularly true for those of us who exercise a pastoral role in the church.

We invite you to put your name to the attached Message to Conscripts. This is an opportunity for you to publicly declare both your concern for conscripts and to say a prophetic word to the government on their behalf.

The Message is entirely legal and the press has agreed to carry it on the first weekend in August. This is the weekend before the August 1987 call-up.

It will appear only in the names of those individuals, church groups and Christian organizations which support it by putting their names to it. In other words it will not be inserted by or in the name of the ECC Churches Group. We are simply co-ordinating the effort on your behalf.

If you, your church, group or organization would like to support this message by being a signatory please fill in the details overleaf and return the tear-off slip to the address as indicated, by the 24th of July, latest. In order to cover the costs of placing it in the press individuals are requested to donate R5.00 and groups or organizations R10.00 or more. Please share this information with others whom you know would be interested in supporting the Message to Conscripts.

Finally, you will also find attached information on a Service for Peace and a Fast for an end to Conscription. You are warmly invited to share with us in both of these events. We would be very grateful if you also advertised them on your bulletin board, in your church notices, amongst your youth and social action groups, and with others who may be interested.

Yours in the service of Christ for a just peace

for Durban ECC Churches Group

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**END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)**

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