

8 Pacifism: Designing a Moral Defence Force

Andrew Alexandra

The legitimacy of a state rests in part on its capacity to provide the conditions for its citizens to lead good lives, through ensuring that they have access to the basic goods such as education, adequate housing, and the like which allow them to develop and pursue their own conception of the good, and by protecting them from the violation of important rights, such as the right to bodily integrity, to free association and the like. Given increasing global inter-dependence, both the provision of basic goods and protection against violation of rights require states to participate in the construction and maintenance of an orderly international system.

Among the central elements of that system are the arrangements for preventing and resolving violent conflict between states. Since the end of the Second World War, at least, there has been broad agreement about the principles which should govern those arrangements. Each state has sovereign authority within its own territory, and must acknowledge that all other states possess the same right. In particular, they must not use force, or the threat of force, to violate another state's territorial integrity, though they may be justified in using force to respond to such violation.

There is of course an elaborate structure of norms and organizations dedicated to instantiating those principles, what might be called the institution of war. That institution has a long history, but the acceptance of the prohibition of aggressive war has fundamentally changed its *raison d'être*, which is now (perhaps paradoxically) the preservation and restoration of peace. The primary purpose of national armies, the main purveyors of inter-state violence, is to deter attacks on the state and if deterrence fails, to resist such attacks.

Understood in the way sketched above, the institution of war is animated by a fundamentally moral purpose, and needs to be designed and evaluated in the light of that purpose. Many of the particular developments in the laws of war, such as the prohibitions on 'weapons of mass destruction', and on targeting civilians and non-military targets, can be rationalized as attempts to limit the damage that war-fighting can do to the pre-conditions for a good life in

peace-time. And there is a huge literature discussing the ways in which the institution of war should evolve in the face of changing contingencies in such things as weapons systems and socio-political forces.

However, although there have been important initiatives in the last century or so to limit the use of violence in inter-state conflicts, there is little current serious academic or political discussion of the question of whether the institution of war itself is the most effective means of achieving the goals which are the reasons for its existence. In particular, there is little discussion of the questions of whether it is possible and desirable to replace the institution of war with one which achieves the desired goals without the use of violence, that is, with what might be called a pacifist institution. Though that has been true for some time, it has not always been true, since pacifism, understood as a view about institutional structure, was a politically and intellectually influential doctrine until well into the twentieth century.¹

For reasons which I sketch in the next section of this chapter it seems that philosophers have come to accept that pacifism does not provide a practicable alternative to the institution of war, so the question of the relative desirability of a pacifist institution is not open. However, since, as I also argue in the following section, the assumption is not supported by the facts, the question of the relative desirability of the two approaches to dealing with inter-state conflict is live. Addressing that question is of course far beyond the scope of one chapter: here I focus on one aspect of it, the relationship between national armies and the values they are supposed to be protecting.

8.1

Following Michael Walzer's seminal 1977 book *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, there has been a large and lively philosophical discussion of the moral principles that permit and constrain going to and fighting wars, much of which has been informed by relevant empirical research in history, psychology and the like. Unfortunately, neither of these things hold of philosophical discussion of pacifism: there has been little of it and of what there has been has largely ignored empirical work on the history of pacifism as a social movement and more broadly the use of non-violent tactics in political conflict.²

¹ Historical information about pacifism as a social movement is found in Ceadel (1996, 2000), Brock (1968, 1991a, 1991b), and Chatfield (1992).

² Influential hostile discussions of pacifism are Anscombe (1970) and Naverson (1970). Discussions which are, to various degrees, sympathetic to pacifism include Ryan (1983), Norman (1988), Reader (2000), Orend (2001), and Alexandra (2003). Robert L. Holmes's (1989) *On War and Morality* is the only philosophical monograph (sympathetically) discussing pacifism of which I am aware.

On the face of it is surprising that there has been so little philosophical discussion of pacifism – obviously the philosophers who write about war do not think that it is a good thing, nor does it reflect the political importance of broadly pacifist movements and the practical effects of pacifist ideas. I speculate that the tendency to ignore pacifism at least in part has come about as a result of influential, agenda-setting dismissals of pacifism by philosophers such as Anscombe (1970) and Narveson (1970). Though the details of those dismissals vary, they depend on two common fundamental claims – claims which, in my view, are vitiated by their failure to engage with historical reality.

The first of these claims is that pacifism (variously understood as opposition to violence, to killing, or to war) is a morally absolutist doctrine – one defined by its absolute prohibition of violence, killing or war on moral grounds. Such a definition of pacifism is misleading in two ways. Firstly, though there have of course been absolutist pacifists, many of those who are clearly to be counted as pacifists, including such paradigm pacifists as Gandhi, were not absolutists. Secondly, such a definition turns pacifism into a matter of individual moral conviction. In fact, pacifism has been an important social movement, with specific aims – the prevention of war(s) – and like most social movements, attracted supporters who were motivated by a range of various moral, political and religious commitments. What has united actual peace movements is the conviction that non-violent methods, rather than military force, can be used to deter or resist the violent usurpation of political power by outside forces. (So just as a socialist isn't simply a person who believes in sharing, or a capitalist a person who likes money, a pacifist isn't simply a person who rejects violence). The dispute between the pacifist and the supporter of military force can thus be seen as a disagreement about policy – will non-violent or armed resistance more reliably bring about mutually desired results?

Like the pacifist their (reasonable) opponents agree that violence is, in itself a bad thing. Since at least the end of the Second World War what might be called a broadly liberal conception of political violence has underpinned the institution of war – the tools dedicated to the preparation for, and fighting of, wars, including the extensive standing armies, armaments manufacturers, intelligence agencies and the like that all modern states possess, as well as the rules and norms that govern the use of those tools. According to those rules, the legitimate goals of the national armed forces which are at the heart of the institution of war are deterrence of external violent usurpation of political authority and resistance to such usurpation if it is nevertheless attempted.

Those rules are consistent with standard moral and legal views about interpersonal violence, at least in modern societies. On the liberal conception of inter-personal violence, an individual's basic rights such as the right to bodily integrity and autonomy entail that others are not justified in using violence either as an end in itself, or as a means to the achievement of some pre-existing

end, where doing so would violate the rights of the subject of violence. Notwithstanding, violence, or the threat of violence, can become justified (and in some cases obligatory) given certain conditions, conditions which themselves reflect the status of violence as something that is in itself bad, and so to be avoided, other things being equal, and which imply that while its use might be justified, those who resort to violence incur an onus of justification. The first of these conditions is that violence is a response to the potential or actual ~~the~~ violation of basic rights, to deter or prevent them, or to rectify them if they nevertheless occur. Other conditions include proportionality (the violence done is proportional to the threat of harm), necessity (that is, that it is the harm will probably occur unless violence is used) and 'last resort' – that other ways of avoiding the harm, if such there be, have been attempted, without success. 'Last resort' is somewhat of a misnomer. It does not literally mean that violence cannot be resorted to until every possible alternative has been tried and failed – it does mean that there should be at least a serious effort to consider whether there are other feasible, not excessively costly, alternatives to violence and if there are, to exercise them.

The same approach to violence is now incorporated in the rules governing international relations – states are not supposed to use violence either as an end in itself, or as a means to further their ends, but may be justified in using it when the conditions outlined above apply (suitably adjusted for the difference in the nature of the agents involved). The institution of war presupposes that nevertheless states are disposed to use violence illegitimately – if it were assumed that states will never resort to unjustified violence then surely there would be no need or even justification for them to have specialized organisations dedicated to the use of coercive force against other states – and that the states who are the victims of that violence may be justified in responding violently, and in developing organisations which allow them to do so.

It is this last claim – that is that states may be justified in developing organisations dedicated to the provision of violence (armed forces), which stands in most need of justification by those who accept the liberal view of violence. The institution of war is premised on the notion that states face the realistic possibility of being subject to violence, ~~—that is,~~ that such violence is predictable, although obviously not inevitable. A state might satisfy the 'last-resort' condition in resorting to violence ~~to~~ if they have not developed any other effective means of responding to such violence. Nevertheless, if they could have developed an effective means of responding non-violently, they are clearly blameworthy for not having done so.

The second misleading claim made by Anscombe *et al* is that it is not in fact possible to develop an effective means to respond non-violently in every situation where a violent military response would be justified. They assert that

pacifism is a fundamentally impractical doctrine, that is, that it *cannot* prevent, let alone reduce, violence, killing, or war, and that at least on occasions the *only* way to deter or resist certain egregious rights violations is to use military force. This claim, it appears, is no self-evident that no empirical evidence is necessary to establish its truth. If true it would, of course, show that pacifism as a social movement has been deeply misguided. In comparing policies there are a number of different kinds of considerations which need to be taken into account, including cost, broadly understood, efficiency (the ratio of cost to benefits), risk and so on. But there is a threshold of effectiveness which any potential policy must reach before it can even be considered. The claim then is that pacifism does not reach this threshold.

Since of course no nation has relied purely on organized pacifist resistance to confront invasion, claims about the potential effectiveness of such a policy must be speculative – but that is as true for those who deny its effectiveness as it is for those who affirm it. We have increasing evidence of the power of non-violent action in effecting political change in the face of well-equipped and organized violent opposition, in resisting and overthrowing both oppressive rulers and external invaders. Arguably, non-violent tactics have been of primary importance in a number of successful struggles against oppression or invasion, including the overthrow of the Iranian Shah in the late 1970s, the removal of the Marcos regime in the Philippines in the 1980s, and the eventually successful struggle of the East Timorese to remove the Indonesian invaders in the 1990s.³

In their recent important book *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) develop a data base of three kinds of large-scale political campaigns – anti-regime, anti-occupation and self-determination – dating back to the start of the twentieth century, categorize them as either violent or non-violent, analyse the relative efficacy of violent and non-violent campaigns, and find the non-violent campaigns significantly more effective, though obviously not universally so.

Chenoweth and Stephan also provide a plausible explanatory framework for understanding why campaigns of the kind they are interested in, violent or non-violent, succeed or fail. A major predictor of success is the level of participation among members of a society. Typically, it is easier and less costly for people to

³ Gene Sharp is the most notable recent theorist of non-violent resistance (see e.g. Sharp, 1990, 2012). Strategy and tactics drawn from Sharp's work in particular are widely held to have played an important role in recent popular struggles in the Middle East. Historical accounts of non-violent resistance are found in e.g. Ackerman and Kruegler (1994) and Ackerman and DuVall (2000). An analysis of the relative efficacy of violent and non-violent methods in political conflicts in Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) finds that non-violent methods are significantly more effective.

participate in non-violent campaigns, so easier to obtain high levels of participation. Chenoweth and Stephan assert that

Higher levels of participation contribute to a number of mechanisms necessary for success, including enhanced resilience, higher probabilities of tactical innovation, expanded civic disruption (thereby raising the costs to the regime of maintaining the status quo) and loyalty shifts involving the opponent's erstwhile supporters, (including members of the security forces). (p. 97)

Irrespective of whether we accept Chenoweth and Stephan's claims about the relative efficacy of violent and non-violent campaigns in their entirety, they provide very strong support for the proposition that non-violent – pacifist – tactics can be effective, even in the face of powerful military force, and that in particular, contra Anscombe et al., they, like the use of military force, reach the threshold of effectiveness which allows pacifism to be taken seriously as a policy which aims to protect a state from violent usurpation.

Accepting that both military and pacifist defence policies meet the necessary condition of potential effectiveness we need to assess and compare them in terms of their all-things-considered merits. One of the things which fits under that heading is the relationship between the institutional arrangements for defence and the political values which those arrangements are supposed to preserve. The rest of this chapter raises some of the factors which pertain to that relationship in both military and pacifist defence policies.

Before doing so, however, let me point to another implication of the liberal view which is relevant here. On the liberal conception the ideal world is one in which there is no violation of rights and hence no need for violence, and a fortiori no place for organizations of violence. The best possible world is the one in which as much as possible of what would happen in the ideal world still happens. Organizations of state violence thus are guardians, dedicated to the realization of this world. There are thus two over-riding pragmatic desiderata for such organisations, and the regulatory framework within which they operate: effectiveness in preventing and limiting violence and other rights violations; and what might be called neutrality. This notion of neutrality connotes that the operations of these organizations should impinge as little as possible on the legitimate activities of the public they protect, and allow the resumption of normal life as fully and quickly as possible after conflict. Of course, in practice they will always have some impact, if merely because they are costly, so a system of taxation or the like will have to be put in place to fund them. Though these two desiderata – effectiveness and neutrality – are not logically incompatible there is a kind of de facto tension between them. Many of the most obvious ways of increasing the effectiveness of institutions of violence, such as giving them greater powers to monitor and restrict suspect actions or people, clearly reduce neutrality. In any case, since these organizations have

no independent intrinsic value, the desideratum of neutrality tells us that they should be as small and non-intrusive as is compatible with effectiveness.

Pacifist resistance does not involve the use of violence, so is not simply a guardian and not necessarily something whose effects on society should be minimized as far as possible (in fact, as I will argue below, it may be valuable) though it does need to be at least compatible with the political values of the society it is supposed to protect. Deciding what *is* compatible with political values presupposes that we know what those values are, and there is obviously a good deal of disagreement about that. Here I will simply assume what might be called a broadly republican view, according to which the people are sovereign and individuals and groups should be allowed to pursue their own conception of the good, compatible with others doing likewise, while society is, or at least aspires to be, constituted by a community of autonomous enlightened beings, engaged in critical dialogue with each other, as well as the institutions that embody and provide scope for the exercise of such critical dialogue in their operations, such as universities, free press, parliament, and so on ('Kantian institutions'). At the heart of the republican approach to the state is the belief that government – and hence government agencies – is a public matter to be directed by the public.

8.2

Both pacifist and military defence systems change over time as new technologies and forms of social organisation develop, so it is at least possible that the way they impact on the societies they are supposed to be protecting will vary in the light of changing contingencies, and there are many ways in which they could be arranged, and in the case of military systems already at least some variation across different states. Moreover, what a state-supported pacifist system would look like must be to some extent a matter of speculation, though the historical record of non-violent campaigns and reflection on that record by theorists such as Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) and Gene Sharp (1990, 2012) provides us with a good deal of guidance.

Nevertheless, in the case of major military systems, at least, there are some broad generalisations which hold for all and some others which hold for most. All contemporary national systems of military defence have at their core discrete armed forces, which are large, highly specialized organisations, both in terms of their mission and expertise – the provision of high levels of lethal force – and in terms of their equipment. These forces operate with a centralized decision-making procedure, and a hierarchical chain of command. There seem to be two reasons for that structure. Firstly, conventional military activity involves large numbers of people carrying out complex, interlocking activities, the success of which relies on a high degree of coordination – coordination

which can only be brought about through centralized authority. Secondly, the tools of violence can generally be used for purposes other than for national defence. Those who patronize armies need assurance that they will only be used in the ways they want them to be, and having a hierarchical authority structure which is ultimately answerable to them is a means to that goal (though, as history shows, not a completely reliable one.)

These facts about the military entail a number of other, which are directly relevant to assessing the desirability of armed defence relative to pacifist defence. Firstly, they mean that the military are very expensive, although they are economically unproductive. The costs of military defence include not only direct expenditure on personnel and equipment,⁴ but also the (very considerable) ongoing payments made to (ex) military service people for social welfare, health care, re-training and the like, as well as opportunity costs – the benefits forgone that would have accrued if the resources used to support the military had gone to more productive uses. The personnel to staff the military and the money to pay for it have to come from the people, who are consequently taxed and, often, conscripted to do so.

Secondly, these facts about the structure of modern military organizations mean that there is a well-coordinated organisation which possesses vastly more coercive power than any other in a society, with consequent potential for usurping political power – the very thing which it is supposed to be preventing. And that potential has been consistently realized, with armed *coup d'états* as a regular feature around the world over the past couple of centuries. Coups are in fact the single most important proximate cause of the downfall of democratic governments (though it seems that democracies are less prone to coups than non-democracies). According to a recent paper, 'by one count, three out of every four failures of democracy are the result of a successful coup d'état' (Marinov and Goemans, 2013, p. 3n8). Even where armies do not themselves usurp political authority, their coercive power can be misused by political authority against the people *they* are supposed to be serving, that is they can be a tool of political oppression and injustice within a state as well as outside it. Moreover, most advanced economies also possess substantial armaments industries, to supply their own and other states' armies with the arms they need. Those industries themselves possess and exercise considerable political influence in virtue of their size.

More broadly, there is a sort of cultural tension between the norms of military organisations and those of healthy democracies. The influential theorist of the military Samuel Huntington speaks of the military as an 'instrument of

⁴ Globally, around \$1.7 trillion is spent annually on military forces. The US, which is by far the biggest military power, is responsible for almost half of that spending, representing almost 5% of its GDP (Rogers, 2012).

obedience' (Huntington, 1957, p. 73). By definition an organization that can be characterized as an instrument of obedience is not a Kantian institution. The habits of mind that are required for people to be effective members of the armed forces, such as deference and unquestioning obedience to authority, respect for people calibrated to their position in a hierarchy, and loyalty to the organization, are directly antithetical to those that are necessary for participation in Kantian institutions. As the military becomes larger and more influential in a society it may become more difficult to foster the ways of thinking and forms of life that conduce to Kantian institutions. In terms of the desideratum of neutrality, then, the military does poorly.

Let's consider how a pacifist defence system would compare in these respects (that is, where it is comparable). For pacifist resistance to be effective, a very substantial portion of the adult population would need to be willing and capable of participation. There presumably would be a government agency which would provide training in non-violent resistance, help coordinate responses etc. However, such an agency would not be anything like the size of current armed forces, and a pacifist defence system does not need expensive weaponry. Indeed, one of the predictors of successful non-violent campaigns, according to Chenoweth and Stephan, is the decentralisation of its organisational structure. There appear to be at least two reasons for this. Firstly, such decentralisation means that there is not a single, or small number, of sources of authority the removal of which destroys the effectiveness of the campaign. Secondly, decentralisation allows resistance campaigns to draw on the strengths of different groups, who are best placed to tailor their actions to local conditions and are able to innovate as they see fit.

So the costs of pacifist defence would be much less than those of military defence. Moreover, since an institution of pacifist defence does not possess coercive power, there is no possibility of it using such power to overthrow legitimate political authority, or using to oppress the people it is supposed to serve – since it is in fact the people. Indeed institutionalized pacifism can take the form of a Kantian institution in which decisions and strategies are made on the basis of open and free discussion by members of the community, with the state playing at most a facilitative role. Since such an institution trains people in effective resistance to power, it could in fact stand as an effective bulwark against state oppression, in the way in which the US militia, for example, was originally supposed to do.

8.3

I noted above that in trying to determine the all-things-considered rankings of both pacifist and military defence systems we need to be sensitive to changing contingencies. In fact, armed forces, at least in most Western states, are

significantly changing in ways which should be taken into account in assessing their all-things-considered value. (I'll focus on the US, as by far the most important military power, and also one about which it is relatively easy to find information.) In the five hundred odd years that the modern state system has been evolving, there have been three main forms of military organization. Until well into the seventeenth century, mercenaries were the primary source of military force for European powers.⁵ Mercenary forces were spectacularly poor in terms of both desiderata outlined above (effectiveness and neutrality), with states ravaged by the very forces that were supposedly protecting them. The need to generate steady revenue streams to pay for mercenary forces stimulated the development of centralized state finance bodies, enabling European states to employ soldiers on a permanent basis, and form standing professional armies. These armies were organs of the state and, at least in their officer class, largely composed of nationals. However, in their modes of fighting, culture, and isolation from civilian life, and their role as agents of the rulers of the state – as useful for protection against domestic subversion as foreign usurpation – they resembled their mercenary forebears (see Alexandra, 2011; Howard, 1974).

The second major transformation was the move from professional standing armies to citizen armies, the model for which was the French Revolutionary Army. The French Revolution brought into play a radical understanding of the relationship between members of a nation and the state (understood here as the corporate entity that exercises political authority within a region) which is its political expression. The state is charged with preparing for, and if necessary prosecuting, war, and entitled to draw on all the human and material resources of the nation to do so. The people are sovereign – and with popular sovereignty come not simply universal rights of political participation and control, but universal duties to support and defend the nation. At the least, citizens are obligated to contribute to the war effort, the young men by military service. On this conception, the role of the soldier becomes a political office: civic status and military service are two sides of the one coin – there are no longer citizens, or soldiers, but rather 'citizen-soldiers,' and the armed forces are seen as continuous with, and at the service of, the nation, rather than the preserve of a separate military caste beholden to a ruling elite, as it had been in the ancien régime. Conscription became a means both to generate the manpower required by mass armies, especially in times of war, and to distribute the

⁵ This is not to suggest that mercenaries were the only such source. Local militias, for example, also played a role. Moreover, often there was no sharp break between a primary reliance on mercenary forces and the institution of a standing army, with mercenaries increasingly incorporated into state structures over time, a process that occurred earlier in Italy than in northern Europe. For more detailed discussion, see Alexandra (2011), Howard (1974), Mallett (1974), Trease (1970) and Milliard (2003).

burdens of service equitably, and to reinforce and express the concept of the 'citizen-soldier'.

Over the past couple of centuries citizen armies have undoubtedly been more effective than either purely mercenary or purely professional armies could have been. As the success of Napoleon's Grande Armee demonstrated, mass mobilization was necessary for military success in the kind of inter-state wars that remained a possibility for most advanced states from the early nineteenth until late into the twentieth century. For pragmatic reasons, other European powers were obliged to follow the French model, even when placing military power into the hands of the masses had the potential to subvert the status quo.

Popular sovereignty brought with it a particular, republican, conception of the accountability relations among the army, the state and the people. The state had authority over, and directed, the army, which was accountable to it. In turn the state was accountable for its use of the army to the people, on whose behalf it acted. The nature of citizen armies meant that it was difficult for the state to avoid such accountability. Because citizen armies are composed of soldiers whose lives remain intertwined with that of the civilian population, and because the burden of military service is broadly spread through the population, the citizenry have a powerful incentive to concern themselves with the military decisions of the state. Conversely, since the state can effectively prosecute a war using a citizen army only with the ongoing support of the populace, it is obliged to act in ways that will generate and maintain that support. Members of democratic societies, in particular, have shown a willingness to make the sacrifices necessary to prevail in armed conflicts that threaten the survival of their states, or those of their allies, and a disinclination to do so for conflicts that do not.⁶ As Cheyney Ryan (2009) puts it, 'the way to prevent irresponsible war-making was to ensure that its sacrifice would be borne by everyone' (p. 135). Citizen armies thus can be seen as providing at least some degree of insulation against both internal oppression, and external aggression.

Although all nations retain standing armies, the nature of those armies, at least in most Western states, is undergoing significant change. There are two interconnected reasons for this, both reflecting the radically altered geopolitical environment following the fall of the USSR and the end of the Cold War. In the first place, those changes have arguably done away with the need for mass citizen armies. The end of the Cold War saw the disappearance of

⁶ Gil Merom (2003) points to a number of cases (such as the Vietnam War, the Algerian War of Independence, and the Israeli invasion of Lebanon) in which democratic states were unable to prevail in wars they prosecuted with citizen armies (all of which included conscripts), despite having a persisting material and military advantage over their foes, because of, Merom argues, the loss of the domestic political support that made continuing deployment of troops impossible once public opinion decided that these wars were incurring costs disproportionate to their supposed benefits.

the realistic possibility of large-scale inter-state war, which had been the primary *raison d'être* of those armies. At the same time other threats emerged, including the growth of international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, uncontrolled mass movement of peoples, and the growth of intra-state conflicts, while advanced states were increasingly called to use their military power for 'humanitarian interventions' to prevent or end serious violations of human rights and to keep or make peace (often in multi-national operations).

Although they have remained dependent on financial support from the state, contemporary armies no longer need ongoing injections of large numbers of new recruits to maintain the mass of militarily trained citizens who could be rapidly mobilized in case of war, a development reflected in the phasing out of conscription in many states. The new calls on the military are also likely to place troops in harm's way, generating the political risks attendant on conscript casualties, even if it is possible to deploy them. Furthermore, technologies such as networked information systems have become increasingly important as 'force multipliers': conscripts are less likely to possess the skills needed to handle such systems than specialist professionals; the costs associated with extensive conscript intakes eat into the budget available for high-tech equipment and training.

The second reason for the changing nature of armies is the re-thinking of the relationship between state and citizen consequent on the ascendancy of neo-liberal ideology among policy elites. That ideology has altered the understanding of the role of the state in delivery of services to its citizens – from 'government' to 'governance.' Although the state still takes responsibility for the availability of a range of services, it oversees the provision of such services, rather than delivering them directly through its own agencies.

Neo-liberal ideology thus renders the provision of military services by private, rather than public, providers at least *prima facie* desirable. At the same time, neo-liberalism has also contributed to the need for private provision, by changing the relationship among citizens, mediated through state institutions. Fraternity has long been one of the animating values of Western states, expressed for example in welfare programmes such as age pensions and health care systems. Norms of loyalty, mutuality, and exclusivity, and preparedness to sacrifice individual interests for the greater good, all of which can be seen as specifications of the value of fraternity, have also been embodied in institutional arrangements for national defence, as well as in attitudes to those arrangements (and, as implied above, hostility to mercenaries and mercenary forces reflect their incompatibility with the value of fraternity). With the ascendancy of neo-liberalism, fraternal social values have been eroded. In effect, risk has been re-privatized. But, of course, norms of sacrifice and the like, on which the citizen army has been founded, inevitably are undermined in such circumstances.

These changes in the mission of modern armies, and in the relationship between state and citizen, have produced consequential alterations in the structure and nature of those armies, and their relation to the nation they serve. In the US, for example, despite involvement in major conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan over the past decade, a smaller percentage of the population belong to the armed forces than at any time since before the Second World War (currently around 0.5% are in the military, compared to 9% in World War II and about 2% in the Vietnam War). As well as remaining in the services for longer periods than previous generations, members of the military are also less typical of the US population as a whole – disproportionately drawn from the rural South, far more likely than the rest of the population to have a parent who served in the military, and less likely to come from either very poor or very well-off backgrounds (Halbfinger and Holmes, 2003; Pew Research Center, 2011). They are increasingly likely to identify themselves as politically partisan (in the main, supporters of the Republican Party), and for the first time in over a hundred years, military veterans are now under- rather than over-represented in Congress (Feaver and Kohn, 2001, p. 286). In the light of these facts, it is not surprising that in a recent survey of military veterans and civilians, both groups overwhelmingly agreed with the proposition that the ‘the public understands the problems that those in the military face either “not too well” or “not well at all”’ (84% of recent veterans and 71% of civilians) (Pew Research Center, 2011, Chapter 5).

As the US military has become increasingly detached from the broader society, so members of that society have decreasingly come to see involvement in the nation’s war effort as part and parcel of being a citizen. The military had difficulty in finding sufficient recruits to fight the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, even when there was overwhelming public support for them. (An example of what Cheyney Ryan calls ‘alienated war’). Initiatives to generate the required numbers included significantly increasing financial incentives such as enlistment bonuses, scholarships and mortgage assistance, targeting minorities, including non-citizens (by 2006, thirty thousand non-citizens were serving in the US military), and lowering standards – by 2007 almost 30% of recruits had to be granted a waiver for behaviour (including criminal felonies) or conditions (such as medical problems or low aptitude scores) that would normally have disqualified them.⁷ Notably, recruitment campaigns emphasized the personal benefits of enlistment, rather than service to the community, in part at least to forestall the resistance of parents to their children’s enlistment (Ryan, 2009, pp. 44–46) (though patriotic concerns remain important in motivating recruits; Pew Research Center, 2011, Chapter 2).

⁷ For evidence regarding the numbers granted waivers, see Baldor (2012). For discussion of the initiatives taken to stimulate recruiting, see Ryan (2009, pp. 44–46).

In short, although the US army is (largely) composed of citizens, it is moving away from the ideal of a citizen force in the direction of a professional army. At the same time, in the US, as in a number of other countries, private military and security companies are increasingly doing work that was previously undertaken by members of national armed forces. These trends are obviously concerning in that they generate an undesirable popular detachment from identification with the members of the armed forces and concern about their activities, and hence reduce the forces which in citizen armies act against both internal oppression, and external aggression. And they are independently undesirable in unfairly distributing the burdens and benefits of participating in national defence (those who benefit most, contribute little).

Contrast the increasing public alienation from military matters, with the likely state of affairs under a pacifist system. Such a system can only be effective if there is a very high level of public engagement. Everyone, or almost everyone, would be involved in programmes of preparation, which would include training not only in non-violent action but also in the theoretical bases of that action. Unlike the military, in conflict pacifist organization would be largely decentralized, encouraging local autonomy and innovation. Such organization is being made more potent by developments in media technology, especially the Internet and social media, which allow much easier and more rapid communication between members of that resistance, and between them and the outside world, than could ever have occurred in the past.

It's noteworthy that the various successful non-violent movements mentioned above developed from grass roots – that is, they did so without state support and in fact in the face of state opposition, and without access to official media and other channels of communication. It's worth speculating about what a system of pacifist resistance would look like, and how powerful it could be, if it had been put in place with state support before being needed.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that we can characterize the fundamental disagreement between the pacifist and the supporter of armed defence as one of concerning the institutional arrangements which will best realize the principles of state sovereignty and territorial integrity.

A necessary condition for such arrangements is that of effectiveness. If we can assume effectiveness – as I have argued we can do for both pacifist and military defence – we need to make an all-things-considered judgement about the relative merits of the two policies. What this chapter has focused on is the relationship between our political values, and the institutions which are supposed to be defending them. Since, as is agreed by both sides, violence is a bad thing, institutions dedicated to its provision have no intrinsic value and

should have as little impact on the life of the society they are supposed to be protecting as possible. Military institutions actually have significant impact on society, and in some cases at least, such as the usurpation of political authority, those impacts are directly contrary to the values they are supposed to be protecting. Pacifist institutions on the other hand can be arranged in ways which are both continuous with the values of the society they are seeking to protect, and which do not provide any threat to them. Moreover, while technological developments are fostering a disengagement between the military and the society on whose behalf they are supposed to be acting, they are making it easier for pacifist institutions to involve the people in dialogue with each other, to decide for themselves how best to resist external threats.

REFERENCES

- Ackerman, P., and DuVall, J. (2000). *A Force More Powerful*. New York: St. Martin's.
- Ackerman, P., and Kruegler, C. (1994). *Strategic Non-Violent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century*. London: Praeger.
- Alexandra, A. (2003). Political pacifism. *Social Theory and Practice*, 29(4), 589–606.
- (2011). Mercenaries. In G. Martel (ed.), *Encyclopedia of War*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781444338232.wbeow397/pdf>.
- Ansombe, E. (1970). War and murder. In R. A. Wasserstrom (ed.), *War and Morality*, 42–53. Belmont: Wadsworth. (Original work published 1961)
- Baldor, L. C. (2012). Army more selective on recruits, re-enlistments. *Army Times*, 22 May. www.armytimes.com/news/2012/05/ap-army-more-selective-recruits-reenlistments-052212/.
- Brock, P. (1968). *Pacifism in the United States from the Colonial Era to the First World War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- (1991a). *Freedom from Violence: Sectarian Nonresistance from the Middle Ages to the Great War*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- (1991b). *Freedom from War: Nonsectarian Pacifism 1814–1914*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Ceadel, M. (1996). *The Origins of War Prevention: The British Peace Movement and International Relations 1730–1854*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- (2000). *Semi-Detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chatfield, C. (1992). *The American Peace Movement: Ideals and Activism*. New York: Twayne.
- Chenoweth, E., and Stephan, M. J. (2011). *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Feaver, P. D., and Kohn, R. H. (2001). *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Halbfinger, D. M., and Holmes, S. A. (2003). A nation at war: The troops; military mirrors working-class America. *New York Times*, 30 March. www.nytimes.com/2003/03/30/us/a-nation-at-war-the-troops-military-mirrors-a-working-class-america.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm.

- Holmes, R. L. (1989). *On War and Morality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Howard, M. (1974). *War in European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Huntington, S. P. (1957). *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mallett, M. (1974). *Mercenaries and Their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy*. London: Bodley Head.
- Marinov, N., and Goemans, H. (2013). Coups and democracy. *British Journal of Political Science*, 44(4), 799–825.
- Merom, G. (2003). *How Democracies Lose Small Wars: State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Milliard, T. S. (2003). Overcoming post-colonial Myopia: A call to recognize and regulate private military companies. *Military Law Review*, 176(1), 1–95.
- Narveson, J. (1970). Pacifism: A philosophical analysis. In R. A. Wasserstrom (ed.), *War and Morality*, 63–77. Belmont: Wadsworth. (Original work published 1965)
- Norman, R. (1988). The case for pacifism. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 5, 197–210.
- Orend, B. (2001). Evaluating pacifism. *Dialogue*, 40, 3–24.
- Pew Research Center. (2011). The military-civilian gap: War and sacrifice in the post-9/11 era. www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2011/10/veterans-report.pdf.
- Reader, S. (2000). Making pacifism plausible. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 17, 169–180.
- Rogers, S. (2012). Military spending: How much does the military cost each country, listed. *The Guardian*, 17 April. www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/apr/17/military-spending-countries-list.
- Ryan, C. C. (1983). Self-defense, pacifism, and the possibility of killing. *Ethics*, 93(3), 508–524.
- (2009). *The Chickenhawk Syndrome: War, Sacrifice, and Personal Responsibility*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Sharp, G. (1990). *Civilian-Based Defence: A Post-Military Weapons System*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- (2012). *From Dictatorship to Democracy*. London: Serpent's Tail.
- Trease, G. (1970). *The Condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Walzer, M. (1977). *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*. New York: Basic Books.



Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

Author/s:

Alexandra, A

Title:

Pacifism: Designing a Moral Defence Force

Date:

2017

Citation:

Alexandra, A. (2017). Pacifism: Designing a Moral Defence Force. van der Hoeven,, J (Ed.). Miller, S (Ed.). Pogge, T (Ed.). Designing in Ethics, Designing in Ethics, (1), pp.157-172. Cambridge University Press.

Persistent Link:

<http://hdl.handle.net/11343/292545>

File Description:

Published version