

PACIFISM 2. In the 1800s the philosopher Bernard Bolzano taught about the social waste of militarism and the futility of war. He urged total reform that would direct the countries' interests toward peace rather than toward armed conflict between nations. **J**ust imagine his ideas had been put into practice then and there: WWI was initiated by a particular non-pacifist reaction of Austria-Hungary to the assassination - in 1914, by a Serb - of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to their throne. When Austria-Hungary demanded retribution from Serbia - to no avail - they declared war. **T**he European dynasties at the time were rife with militarism, not to mention pride. The Austrians were blind to the possibility that their hard-line approach could spell their own annihilation - but the war they initiated was the beginning of a slide into the First World War. **H**ad Bolzano's ideas been heeded and put in place, had pacifism been a stronger force at the time, neither World War would have occurred and we would live in a radically different world today. **P**acifism is not easily applied once a conflict has turned into a war. It's not an energy that works instantly, it often only works in the long term, over generations; pacifism applied in the past has an effect now, pacifism applied today will benefit our children and grandchildren.

Following are some examples of how pacifism can work:

In New Zealand, during the latter half of the 19th century, British colonists used warfare to confiscate land from the indigenous Maori. One Maori leader, Te Whiti-o-Rongomai, inspired warriors to stand up for their rights without using weapons, which had led to defeat in the past. He convinced 2000 Maoris to welcome battle-hardened British soldiers into their village and even offered food and drink. He allowed himself and his people to be arrested without resistance for opposing land confiscation. He is remembered as a great leader because his passive resistance prevented British massacres, thereby protecting far more land than could have been achieved with violent resistance.

Mohandas 'Mahatma' Gandhi was a political and spiritual leader of India and of the Indian independence movement. He was the pioneer of a brand of nonviolence - the resistance of tyranny through civil disobedience - that was not only nonviolent, but sought to change the heart of the opponent. During his leadership of the Indian Independence Movement from 1917 to 1947, Gandhi led dozens of nonviolent campaigns, spent seven years in British prisons, and fasted nearly to the death on several occasions to obtain British compliance with a demand, or to stop inter-communal violence. His efforts helped lead India to independence in 1947, and inspired movements for civil rights and freedom worldwide.

Aung San Suu Kyi used to be a nonviolent pro-democracy activist in Myanmar (Burma). A devout Buddhist, Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her peaceful and non-violent struggle under a

repressive military dictatorship. One of her best known speeches is the 2010 'Freedom From Fear' speech: "It is not power that corrupts, but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it." (These words may haunt her now [2017], as she finds herself in a position of power, unable or unwilling to oppose the ruling military on account of the repressed Rohingya people, who are subjected to ethnic cleansing.)

Epecially famous for leading a pacifist movement is Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth and current Dalai Lama of Tibet. Faced with the occupation by the forces of the People's Republic of China, Tenzin Gyatso opted for peaceful resistance and eventually fled to India, where he was active in establishing the Tibetan Government in Exile and preserving Tibetan culture and education among the thousands of refugees who accompanied him. The Dalai Lama travels the West to spread Buddhist values and to publicise the cause of a free Tibet. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989.

After the Society of Quakers was founded by the pacifist William Penn, Quaker-controlled colonial Pennsylvania employed an anti-militarist policy. Unlike residents of other colonies in America, Quakers (a.k.a. the Religious Society of Friends) chose to trade peacefully with the Indians, including for land. The colonial province was essentially unarmed and experienced little or no warfare.

Some pacifists are in favour of a World Government to control and prevent international aggression. As an example for a functioning World Government, the European Union is noted as having been established peacefully.