THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND TO WORLD WAR I

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Department of History
McGill University
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ABSTRACT

When the British Government declared war against Germany and her allies in 1914, the Church of England was immediately faced with the question of whether or not it would support the war and, assuming it did, of how to reconcile their participation in the war with Christianity.

In seeking to answer these questions about the war and their own relationship to it, Churchmen elevated it from the level of the just war to that of the Holy War. This ideology, and the special relationship of the Church to the English state, determined the answers which Churchmen gave to the problems inherent in the conduct of the war and the conclusion of the peace. However, the ideology of Holy War was unable to cope with the problems of warfare in twentieth century terms, and in the final analysis the Church's teachings about the war were subjected to hostility or indifference.

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INTRODUCTION

When Great Britain declared war on Germany and her allies in August 1914, no one was prepared for the kind of war which resulted from the clash of approximately equal forces, a war which grew steadily in size until it became attrition and slaughter on a grand scale. The immediate and popular cause of the British declaration of war was the violation of Belgian neutrality, which Britain had a right to defend. Everyone -- whether Germany and her allies or Britain and hers -- believed that the war would be over within a few weeks; it would be fought as a war of movement, with victory going to the side which could best utilize its manpower resources and the new technology. After a few battles -- or perhaps only one great confrontation -- a peace conference would be called, and the diplomats would restore balance and harmony to the European political system. But the Battle of the Marne, and all which flowed from it -- the trenches, the "race to the sea", and the four years of military stalemate on the Western Front -- involved Britain in a war which was different than any she had ever before experienced. British participation in a continental war was not new; what was new was the growth of this war into a total war, and the demands which this kind of warfare made on the traditional organizational and moral patterns of British society.

When the British Government declared war in August, Churchmen were immediately faced with the question of whether or not to support the war and, assuming that they did approve of British participation, they were also faced with the question of how the war could be reconciled with Christianity.

The answer which Churchmen gave to the first question is largely a reflection of the special relationship which existed between the English State and the Church as an Established Church: the Church of England, which bears the persona of the nation in its religious aspect must, in the final analysis, accept, if not actively support, the aims of the nation as they are expressed by the Government. Thus the answer which Churchmen gave to the question of whether or not the Church should acquiesce in the Government's decision was already predetermined.

What was not predetermined was the degree of support which Churchmen would give to the war, nor what form their support would take; the answers to these questions reflect the way in which Churchmen tried to reconcile Christianity with war, the nature of the war itself and, once again, the relationship of the Church to the state.

The Church of England had never accepted the pacifist or literalist position that the use of force under any and all circumstances was absolutely precluded by belief in a gospel of love and forgiveness which included among its precepts the command, "Resist not him that is evil." Rather, the Church accepted the

theory of the just war, a theory which was generally held by all Protestants and Roman Catholics, and which had its roots in the writings of Augustine and Aquinas. Essentially, it was argued that a war was just or necessary if it were waged for defensive or punitive reasons; that war waged by one state against another for defensive or punitive reasons was analogous to criminal justice within the state, and that Christians had a duty to resist wickedness or aggression by the use of force if necessary, in order to prevent the extension of evil and to protect the innocent.

But Christian moralists never believed that war, for whatever purpose, was a good thing; it was, at best, the lesser of two evils. War was an irrational means of settling disputes, born of passion and greed, and it produced feelings of hatred and vengeance even in the nation which was waging a just war. War upset the moral order: respect for life, liberty, and property were suspended. Its after-effects included the dulling and perversion of moral sentiments. Thus Christian participation in such an evil must always fall back upon the argument that the nation's cause is just, and churches will thereby always give moral overtones to warfare.

In 1914, the Church of England was able to justify Christian participation in the war by showing that the nation's cause was indeed just: Britain had gone to war in defence of a weak member of the international community, and in accordance with a pledge made

to that country,[1] But the Church soon elevated the war from the level of the just war to that of the Holy War; this step was precipitated by the same factor -- the military stalemate -- which eventually involved the nation in a total war. Yet the implications of the Holy War were inherent in the just war; all that the Church really did by proclaiming the Holy War was to strengthen its justification for participating in the war, because that war now gave indications of continuing for a longer period of time than had been originally anticipated.

While the Church began to wage a Holy War in 1914, and continued to wage it until 1918, the nation and Government gradually but steadily moved away from this position and began to wage total war. We are here concerned only with the Church's attitude to the war, but because the Holy War and the total war shared some things in common, and because the two existed side by side in the period 1914-18, it is important that the distinctions between the two terms be made clear.

The Holy War was inherent in the ancient concept of the just war; it was arrived at by identifying the just cause with God's cause, by proclaiming that God was using Britain as His instrument, and by showing that Germany threatened to destroy Christian civilization. A just war prescribed the

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[1]The validity of the pledge was never held up to question by the Established Church; suffice it to say, then, that it was a convenient and acceptable justification for participation in the war.

use of limited means towards a limited end, and though in a Holy War the ends were close to being unlimited, the precept still applied that war must be waged with limited means. Specifically, this meant that the Church of England would resist a war of unrestrained violence and indiscriminate destruction, and the assertion that military necessity should override the principles of morality. It meant, also, that the Church would resist the adoption of what it regarded as unnecessarily cruel methods of warfare, such as the use of gas, and that it would insist that the distinction between combatants and non-combatants be maintained. Consequently the Church steadily opposed the adoption of a policy of reprisals, on the grounds that the primary aim of such a policy was to wage war against non-combatants and was, therefore, indiscriminate murder. Wars were fought for the protection of the civilian population, not for its destruction.

The Holy War involved implications other than waging war in a just manner. It implied making a peace in a spirit of forgiveness, not vindictiveness. It implied keeping one's cause pure, not only by the way in which one waged war against the enemy, but by the kind of spirit which was cultivated at home. But it was in the size of the issues at stake that the Holy War approximated the total war: both were being fought for liberty and justice and democracy, and both precluded a negotiated peace, for righteousness must be vindicated, not compromised. Yet there

was an essential difference, for in the final analysis righteousness, in terms of the Holy War, meant the righteousness of God, while righteousness in terms of the total war meant the righteousness -- that is, the survival -- of the state as a political unity.

The total war was a product of the twentieth century, and began with the perpetration of a military stalemate which resulted from the clash of equal forces, until such time as the battle became one in and for itself.[1] The implications of the total war were much greater than those of the Holy War, and the British Government committed itself slowly to the waging of such a war.[2]

Total war meant the disappearance of the distinction between combatants and non-combatants: the war would be won only if every citizen contributed something to the war effort, whether in the army or the factory. Total war meant that because an entire nation waged war, an entire nation became a legitimate

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[1] "The very situations that bring about a modern war are destroyed in its wake. It is the battle in and for itself, and not the origin of the conflict or the peace treaty, that constitutes the major fact and produces the most far-reaching consequences."
Raymond Aron, The Century of Total War (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1954), p. 17-18.

[2] "Though the national effort grew steadily, this was imposed from outside, by the enemy and by popular pressure, not by any coordinated direction. It was a last experiment in running a great war on the principles of laissez-faire."
A.J.P. Taylor, English History 1919-1945 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1965), p.34.

war target. Total war meant conscription, mass armies, attrition, and slaughter. Total war meant an organized effort to maintain national morale -- propaganda for home consumption; it meant the Government direction of industry, and it meant a reorganization of the Government of the country so that it became, in effect, the rule of one man. Total war meant that morality was determined by military considerations; total war meant total victory.

The ideology of the just war was not able to cope with all aspects of war waged in twentieth century terms. Some aspects it understood and accepted, some aspects it ignored, and some aspects it did not understand and did not accept. Thus the Church accepted the disappearance of distinctions between combatants and non-combatants in terms of the Government direction of industry; in fact, it accepted the need for industrial mobilization much more readily than did the Government.[1] It attempted to sustain national morale, but it did this because it believed in the righteousness of the nation's cause and desired to serve it, and not as part of a conscious effort to mobilize public sentiment through the deliberate use of propaganda. Conscription, the size of the committment, and changes in the Government went unnoticed. Only prayers were offered as a complement to the attrition and slaughter. The Church accepted total victory, not because it understood what that meant in

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[1]For example, the Bishop of London said that the slogan "Business as usual" was a mischievous narcotic, and that the slogan should be "Nothing as usual", for there had not been such a day of God for a thousand years. The Times, May 6, 1915, p.6.

political terms, but because it could see no way of determining when righteousness had been vindicated other than though a military decision. However, the Church never accepted that military necessity should determine morality, nor could it agree that war might be waged against non-combatants. In the end it was shown that the docrine of the Holy War no longer had any relevance to the actual war which was being waged.

This study is concerned with the attitude of the Church of England to the war, the extent to which the Church participated in the war effort, and why its participation took the form it did. It contains the opinions of Churchmen whose views can be regarded as representative of the thinking of Churchmen generally. Frequent references have been made to "the Church"; this refers to Church opinion generally, including that of its leaders and not, unless otherwise specified, to an official statement of opinion as expressed by resolutions passed in the Convocations.

The important position occupied by the Archbishop of Canterbury, both as a religious and a national leader, has resulted in frequent reference to his opinions, and this has meant heavy reliance on the excellent biography written by the Bishop of Chichester. Archbishop Davidson's papers have not

been published, and thus Dr. Bell's work, with its sizeable inclusion of Davidson's correspondence, speeches, and memoranda, becomes a primary source of great importance.

The Journals of Convocation were not available for consultation, and it has therefore not been possible to make a detailed examination of the views of particular Bishops and clergy on specific issues; however, representaive opinion can be determined from many other sources.

I

THE CHURCH ON THE EVE OF WAR

In the years preceeding the outbreak of war in 1914, the Church of England was content to regard problems of war and peace as lying within the realm of responsibility of politicians and soldiers and it followed, not led, Government policy where matters of this nature were concerned. When war was declared in August, the Church viewed British participation as a regrettable necessity, but this view soon approximated outright enthusiasm, culminating in the proclamation that the war was a Holy War. For four years, Churchmen stood before the nation, preaching the righteousness of Britain's cause and urging the nation onwards to continued sacrifice until such time as righteousness were vindicated. In their enthusiasm, the cause of peace was lost, for the logic of the Holy War demanded not peace, but victory, and thus Churchmen came to regard service of the national interest as the cause to which they must dedicate themselves if victory were to be realized. Although there were disagreements within the Church about how the national interest might best be served -- disagreements between those who attempted to balance their patriotism with their Christianity, and those who put their patriotism first -- there were no disagreements about what must

be done. All were agreed that Britain must win the war, and to that end Churchmen must do what they could to support and to maintain national unity behind the Government which was waging the war. The fact that before the war Churchmen showed little public interest in matters of war and peace, and that after war was declared they so consistently did their best to serve the national interest as they understood it, is largely a reflection of the nature of the Establishment, modified to some extent by a new attitude with which Churchmen viewed their responsibilities to the nation.

Establishment means, "not that the Church is identified with the State, nor that the Church is a department of the State, but that the Church is formally accredited by the State to bear the persona of the nation in its religious aspect, and to lead the nation in prayers."[1] Edmund Burke defined the principle underlying Establishment when he said that "religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort."[2] The creation of a national Church, therefore, is the religious consecration of the nation, and it is made, according to Burke,

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[1]Leslie H. Hunter, "Some Basic Issues", in Leslie H. Hunter, ed., The English Church: A New Look (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966),p. 23.

[2]Edmund Burke, Reflections on the French Revolution (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1910),p.87.

> that all who administer in the government of men, in which they stand in the person of God Himself, should have high and worthy notions of their function and destination; that their hope should be full of immortality; that they should not look to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar, but to a solid, permanent exercise, in the permanent part of their nature, and to a permanent fame and glory, in the example they leave as a rich inheritance to the world.
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> Such sublime principles ought to be infused into persons of exalted situations; and religious establishments provided, that may continually revive and enforce them.(1)

However, the practice was often much different than the ideal, and in proportion as the only qualification for an ecclesiastical living was to be well-born, and as the Church became identified with the Conservative Party and the ruling classes, Establishment had the unhealthy effect of undermining the quality of the Church's ministrations to the nation as a whole without the compensatory effect of significantly influencing the conduct of men in public office. In the nineteenth century, the Church "was expected to keep its place as a kind of department of morals and public worship, and to provide a religion conformable to the notions of the upper classes, and calculated to maintain a due respect for the established order of things among the lower."[2] The early years of the

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[1] Ibid., p. 89.

[2] Gordon Crosse, "Ecclesia Anglicana", Commonwealth, XXI (Sept., 1916), p. 279.

twentieth century still saw the Church subjected to taunts such as the Conservative Party at prayer, and the buttress of vested interests.[1] Such charges were not unfounded. Although the educational qualifications for ordinands had been raised considerably, the clergy still tended to be well-born or related to the well-born, or to be the sons of clergymen and thus part of the tradition. The Bishops practically all shared the common educational background of Oxford or Cambridge. More than a third of ecclesiastical livings were under the patronage of the Crown, universities and schools, and private patrons; advancement depended upon becoming known in the right political circles. Before 1914, the major problems within the Church still concerned doctrine[2], for the Church was only gradually awakening to its responsibilities in the field of social reform.

The tradition that the Church should not become involved in politics ha d a long history. Such a strong believer in a close relationship between church and state as Burke, said:

> politics and the pulpit are terms that have little agreement. No sound ought to be heard in the church but the healing voice of Christian charity. The cause of civil liberty and civil government gains as little as that

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[1]E.K. Talbot, "The Ministry of the Church to the Nation", Commonwealth, XXIV (Feb.,1919), 38.

[2]Roger Lloyd, The Church of England in the Twentieth Century (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1946-50), I,p. 67.

> of religion by this confusion of duties. Those who quit their proper character, to assume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part, ignorant both of the character they leave, and of the character they assume . . . . Surely the church is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind.(1)

This tone was still prevalent within the Church in 1914. The Church spoke to private men about their private lives, and not to men as members of a community, about their relationships with that community. Only by making individuals into better Christians could the moral level of the state be raised:

> Christianity is a spiritual power, and it affects political life by inspiring men to look at their political duties religiously; there is no way in which it can permeate the nation but by making the citizens more religious personally.(2)

As Lord Bryce said, ecclesiastical organizations could enlighten the state and guide its actions only:

> by influencing the minds and consciences of the citizens who are their members, so that these

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[1]Burke, op. cit., p. 10.

[2]William Cunningham, British Citizens and their Responsibility to God (London:Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1916), p. 12.

> citizens, as voters and as holders of any office, should try to use their civic rights and perform their civic duties in accordance with the teachings of the Church.(1)

The proper function of the Church, then, according to this view, was to be the conscience of the nation, but it could only exercise this function in a particular way -- by abstaining from involvement in politics:

> The power of the Church to be the conscience of the nation, to give the lead in spiritual matters, will be strengthened in proportion as it is content to confine itself to purely spiritual matters . . . .
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> . . . . . .
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> The Church, as such, is not called upon to solve our social problems, but to give the spirit in which men must labour to solve them.(2)

To do otherwise, to suggest a solution or to take sides with a party which offered a solution was, according to this view, fatal to the spiritual nature of the Church.[3] The role envisaged for the Church in times

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[1]Lord Bryce,"Opening Address-- The International Crisis: The Theory of the State", in The International Crisis: The Theory of the State (London: Oxford University Press, 1916), p.4.

[2]Louise Creighton, "Church and State", in Ibid., p. 20, 23.

[3]All this, it must be emphasized, applied only to the Church of England; towards the latter part of the nineteenth century the Roman Catholic Church had made an adjustment of a different kind, as exemplified by the growth of several Christian Democratic parties and, in Germany, the Centre Party.

of crises was essentially no different:

> It can give a call to consider righteousness in the first place; it can bid the exponents of different opinions test their opinions by Christian standards, and exhort them to work together in a Christian spirit to find a way out of their difficulties, but to take a side as the Church with either party would be to sacrifice its unique position.(1)

Thus it would appear that the Church, acting as the nation's conscience, had an important role to fulfil. However, this was so in theory only. In practice the Church, as a national institution closely related to the social and political structure of the state both in terms of membership and purpose, more often followed than guided Government policy: if it were charged with the function of leading the nation in prayers, then it must desire what the nation desired, as expressed by the Government; if it bore the _persona_ of the nation in its religious aspect, it reflected a quality of life which was determined more by the actions of the State than the Church. To call on men to consider righteousness, to exhort them to work together in a Christian spirit to solve their difficulties -- in short, to be the nation's conscience -- was a meaningful role for the Church only in so far as its voice was heeded; otherwise, to suggest the spirit in which problems must be solved, but to suggest no practical application

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[1] _Ibid._, p. 23.

of that spirit, was to make Christianity into a religion of mere words, and the Church into a mouther of those words. Moreover, it must have become apparent to many that in a society where problems were solved on the basis of a two-party political system, it was meaningless to argue that the Church would become involved in politics if Churchmen advocated solutions which might or might not coincide with solutions advanced by one or the other of those parties.

The danger was not unperceived, and from the middle of the nineteenth century there existed within the Church of England groups which challenged the assumption that the Church was not called upon to solve social problems.[1] They realized that because the Church had nothing to offer towards the solution of the problems of every-day life in an urbanized, industrialized society, it was rapidly losing its relevance to the common people and becoming still more identified as a class church.[2] These men sought

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[1]For a brief history of these movements, see Lloyd, op.cit., I, passim.

[2]In 1914, about 70% of the population were members of the Church of England, based on figures in the baptismal, marriage, and burial registers. But a study of the weekly attendance at Church services and of the communicant rolls would indicate that not more than, and probably less than 8% of the population could be called active members of the Church. (Bishop of Carlisle, "The De-Nationalisation of the Church of England", The Nineteenth Century and After, LXXXII (1917), 914.)

to make Christianity more meaningful to the working man by involving themselves in his difficulties, and by trying to assist him in finding solutions to these difficulties -- in short, they sought to relate the Church to the movement for social justice.[1] If a statement of principle or practice meant trespassing into the field of politicians, then this must be done if religion were to continue to have meaning and relevance. By 1914, this movement had gathered considerable strength; more and more clergy and Bishops were becoming convinced that the Church had an obligation to do more than preach about the private lives of private individuals and should, instead, be suggesting ways and means of social evolution.

These, then, were the two prevailing views

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[1]The end of the century saw the growth of the most important of these movements, the Christian Social Union, which had considerable success in interesting the Church generally in the question of social reform and the problems of labour. Many outstanding men belonged to it, including Charles Gore, the Bishop of Oxford; Canon Henry Scott Holland, who edited its monthly publication, Commonwealth, and the labour leader, George Lansbury. The objects of the C. S.U. were to claim for the Christian law the ultimate authority to rule social practice, to study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic conditions of modern times, and to present Christ in practical life as a loving master and King, the enemy of wrong and selfishness, and as a power of righteousness and love. (G.L. Prestige, The Life of Charles Gore (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1935), p.92).

concerning the place of the Church in the national life, and when war broke out the Church, under the impact made by the latter view, was in the process of reexamining the role which had been assigned to it by tradition. What did each of these views offer in time of war? According to the former view, the business of the Church was, "to learn and teach the spiritual lessons of the war; to call to penitence; to keep love, even the love of our enemies, alive; to diminish the inevitable suffering; to prepare for a better future in which peace and goodwill may prevail; to strengthen and build up the nation in righteousness."[1] During the war, the Church attempted to do all of these things: it proclaimed that the war was a Holy War and preached its spiritual lessons; it sought to strengthen the nation in its righteousness by urging that the nation follow a particular line of conduct; it warned of the dangers of being motivated by hatred and vengeance, and it looked to the future peace settlement.[2] The approach of the reformers was basically the same, although they applied their principles somewhat differently; their influence made itself felt to the extent that the Church sometimes did more than speak in generalities and consequently found itself opposed to the Government. However, as the Established Church it could not long

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[1]Creighton, op. cit., p. 24.

[2]It should be pointed out that not all Churchmen acted this way; some put their patriotism before their Christianity and looked only to victory, regardless of how it was won.

maintain such a position, and in the long run the Church of England's attitude to the war was determined by its special relationship to the state.

A consideration of the Established Church would be incomplete without some consideration being given to the personality and opinions of the Archbishop of Canterbury. As the head of a national institution, with access to the Royal Family and the leading men in public life, with a place in the Legislature, and with a wide audience for any views which he might express in the House of Lords, in the press, or in public speeches, the Archbishop is in a unique position. This is especially true in times of crises, when people tend to look to the Church for guidance or comfort. Although the Archbishop cannot speak for the Church as a whole he is, in effect, its spiritual leader, and any statements which he makes will command wide attention. Moreover the Archbishop, as leader of a national institution, is in frequent contact with the Government and is usually readily available for consultation on any number of issues; the Government, therefore, may consult only him, and not the Church as a whole, for an expression of opinion on a particular question.

The period 1914-18 saw an Archbishop who was particularly active in trying to give direction to the nation's war effort, whether through public statements or, more often, through the numerous and

frequent contacts which he had with men in public life. To speak of the Church's attitude is, in many instances, to speak of Randall Davidson's attitude; he represented Church opinion to a greater or lesser degree according to the matter under discussion. Regardless of how representative his views were, his was still the most important voice in the Church and the one likely to command the widest public attention. Davidson's actions were motivated by a genuine conviction that the Church had a role to play in national affairs; they were regulated by his awareness of the delicate position which the Established Church occupied in the national life.

Randall Davidson combined a desire for social reform with qualities of caution, statesmanship, and acute awareness of the delicate position which he occupied as a leader of a national institution which was supposed to be above politics. He believed deeply in the Establishment and the role which the Church should play in the national life: "Bishops . . . are entrusted . . . with a place in the Legislature not only for what are technically called Ecclesiastical questions, but for whatever things directly concern the moral life and social well-being of the English people."[1] Davidson utilized the opportunities of his position to the full, and was often consulted , or

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[1] G.K.A. Bell, Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury (3rd ed.; London: Oxford University Press, 1952), I, p. 318.

participated in discussions, on any number of questions, whether of an ecclesiastical, national, or international nature. The Archbishop of York, and Davidson's successor at Canterbury, gave the following assessment of the way in which Davidson viewed his role:

> He [Davidson] had a whole-hearted belief in the Establishment of the Church as the expression of its national character and of its place in the national life. It was this which led him to "magnify his office" as Archbishop. He felt that he had, and he was zealous to maintain, his position as the holder of a national and not merely an ecclesiastical office. So he loved the House of Lords and was never more, so to say, at home than when he was there . . . . His chief pleasure in life was to have talks with important people on important affairs; and after these talks he was careful to make memoranda of them. He was always pleased and excited when he was consulted on matters of State. He valued all this not only because it suited his temperament, but because it emphasized the national character of the Archbishop and the Church.(1)

This enthusiasm for national affairs was tempered by a strong sense of caution. Davidson's biographer describes him as distrustful of the general and the vague, and reluctant to commit himself in advance to things which did not seem to him to be practical at the moment.[2] "Practical" meant

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[1] J.G. Lockhart, Cosmo Gordon Lang (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1949), p. 231-2.

[2] Bell, op. cit., p.590.

politically opportune; he rarely made statements of principle, or of a general nature, about situations which were not yet fully developed, and he tempered his statements according to his estimate of the various factors at work in a particular situation. Many of Davidson's opinions, and the manner in which he expressed them, were influenced by the frequent conversations which he had with men in public life, whether with close friends such as Asquith and Lansdowne, with members of the House of Lords, or with members of the Athenaeum Club, to which he had belonged since 1890. The value which Davidson placed on these contacts was described above by the Archbishop of York; another aspect was described by Canon Henry Scott Holland[1] at the time that Davidson was appointed to the Archbishopric:

> Bishop Davidson's point of danger is not the Court . . . . Rather it is to be sought at the Athenaeum. There dwell the sirens who are apt to beguile and bewitch him. They have ceased to be mermaids with harps and have adopted the disguise of elderly and excellent gentlemen of reputation, who lead you aside into corners and, in impressive whispers, inform you what will not do and what the intelligent British public will not stand. The Bishop has a deep veneration of the judgement and the wisdom of important laity of this type . . . .(2)

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[1] One of the founders of the Christian Social Union, and editor of the C.S.U. publication, Commonwealth.

[2] Bell, op. cit., p. 406.

Though Davidson and other Churchmen attempted to guide the nation's policy, in the final analysis the Established Church could not desire what the nation did not want -- that is, it could not stand in opposition to the Government. For an Archbishop to attempt to put the Church in such a position would wreck the Church both from within and without. By temperament and conviction, Randall Davidson was not the man to ever put the Church in such a position; he was a statesman, gifted at reconciling differences, and he practiced the art of the possible. The Church might do what it could to guide the nation's policy, but ultimately the Church would follow the policy which was determined by the Government.

Until war was declared in 1914, the Established Church regarded war, disarmament, and arbitration as being matters of concern to the State, not to the Church. The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw the movement for arbitration and disarmament become an integral part of international relations[1], and while individual Churchmen did participate in the movement, the Church as a corporate body did not. In the years 1894-97, there was a strong movement within the churches for disarmament, but it was primarily confined to the dissenting bodies.[2] Before the Hague Conference of 1899, the Foreign Office received more

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[1] Merze Tate, The Disarmament Illusion (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942), p. x.

[2] Ibid., p. 108.

than 750 resolutions welcoming the idea of such a conference, but Church of England congregations were conspicuously absent.[1] After this, generally speaking, the interest of the churches in the peace and disarmament movement seemed to lag, and was only revived in 1914 with the founding of the World Alliance for Peace through the Churches.[2] The Second Hague Conference drew little response from the Church of England other than a few sentences from Archbishop Davidson in an address to Convocation, when he urged the "systematic and recognized adoption of arbitration."[3] The Church's failure to participate in this movement for arbitration and disarmament reflects a combination of disinterest and a fear of embarassing the Government by giving strong support to a movement which the Government accepted with little enthusiasm.

During the Navy Scare of 1909, Davidson received a letter from the President of the Free Church Council, Scott Lidgitt. Lidgitt was passing on a suggestion made to him that the two Archbishops and heads of other churches might issue a message which, while avoiding party issues, would "state the importance of maintaining a peace-loving spirit, seeking harmonious relations with the whole

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[1]Barbara Tuchman, The Proud Tower (New York: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1962), p. 245.

[2]Tate, op. cit., p. 109.

[3]Bell, op. cit., p. 549.

world, and endeavouring to facilitate a speedy arrangement as to armaments." Davidson's reply provides a good illustration of what he thought churches could do in matters relating to war and peace:

> I think you and I are probably in full agreement as to what we want at present to impress upon the public mind, but I am afraid I cannot see that we could effectively or usefully put out at this particular moment such a manifesto as you refer to. If such a document is to have the character of a public pronouncement no amount of precaution on our part, or of protestation that we are not acting politically, would prevent the utterance from being twisted into a political declaration. On the other hand I think we ought as individuals holding responsible positions to be speaking strongly as to the need of such an attitude of mind as you describe . . .. After a little time, when the feverishness of to-day has calmed, we may perhaps find means of speaking together in some weighty way on the lines you advocate; but to do it at this moment would in my judgement be a blunder. (1)

Here, as elsewhere, political circumstances determined Church policy.

Though none were unaware that international tensions existed, the actual outbreak of war seems to have been unexpected by members of the Church of England, and several examples of this can be given. At the Pan-Anglican Congress of 1908, and the

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[1] Ibid., p. 590.

World Missionary Conference of 1910, "No-one . . . seems to have had any foreboding of what must happen in a very few years . . . . all alike spoke and planned as if they were the citizens of a secure world . . . ."[1] Rev. William Temple,[2] delivering the Bishop Paddock Lectures for 1914-15 in New York, spoke of the sudden and unexpected turn of events:

> I was myself one of those who had allowed concern for social reform, and internal problems generally, to occupy my mind almost to the exclusion of foreign questions. I was prepared to stake a good deal upon what seemed to me the improbability of any outbreak of European war.(3)

In September, the Archbishop of York was still trying to decide whether or not it had been right for Britain to enter the war.[4] As for the Archbishop of Canterbury:

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[1]Lloyd, op. cit., I, p. 198.

[2]Son of Archbishop Frederick Temple. Rector of St. James, Picadilly 1914-18, Canon of Westminster 1918-21, Bishop of Manchester 1921-29, Archbishop of York 1929-42, Archbishop of Canterbury 1942-44. Temple's was the greatest mind in the Church of England in the twentieth century, and he put the Church in the thick of the movement for a better social order.

[3]William Temple, Church and Nation: The Bishop Paddock Lectures for 1914-15 (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1915), p. vii.

[4]Lockhart, op. cit., p. 246.

> Certainly there were few leaders in English public life to whom the tragic event was more unexpected than Randall Davidson. As we have seen, he had friends in Germany, and on more than one occasion in recent years he had expressed the view that war between his country and theirs was unbelievable.(1)

However, while Davidson may have believed that, "War between two great Christian nations of kindred race and sympathies is, or ought to be, unthinkable in the twentieth century of the Gospel of the Prince of Peace"[2], he was not unaware of the circumstances which led up to the declaration of August 4th, and in the days preceeding the final decision it was his policy to say nothing until the soldiers and statesmen had spoken. Thus when Mr. Allen Baker, M.P., a leader in the formation of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches, came to see the Archbishop on behalf of a House of Commons Committee which was preparing a memorandum to Asquith in favour of non-intervention in the war, Davidson replied that he could not possibly sign it without assurance that it was on lines which the Government would find helpful and not harmful.[3] The next day (July 30th) Davidson saw Asquith, and their conversation

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[1]Bell, op. cit., II, p. 731.

[2]Letter dated July 17, 1914, to the Kaiser's Court Chaplain, Dr. Ernst Dryander, in Ibid., p. 733.

[3]Ibid., p. 733.

reaffirmed his decision to express no opinion for the present.

> Asquith was absolutely clear that for the next few days at least anything of the sort [a memorandum in favour of non-intervention] would be actively harmful. The position is this: That England is the one Power in Europe which has diplomatic weight at present, inasmuch as it has neither any axe to grind or any Treaty Alliances to hamper it, or any standing quarrel with any one of the great Powers. As a matter of fact the position, were it not so tragic, is almost ludicrous . . . . But though France and Russia, and still more Germany, are averse to going to War -- and Germany is actively eager to the contrary -- they are all more or less depending on one another . . . . We virtually hold the balance. For these reasons it would be most mischievous were the military party in Germany to be able to point out that England had shown such an expression of public opinion against intervention that it would clearly stand aloof, and therefore Germany need have no fear that its shipping would be interferred with in the North Sea . . . .
>
> All this being so, Asquith begged me to use my influence to prevent any demonstration or memorials in favour of our non-intervention finding expression at present in a manner which might mislead the Continent into thinking that England had popularly made up its mind to have nothing to do with the matter. He thought that the next few days would show what chance there is of localising the conflict and preventing any spread . . . . Asquith highly approved of my preaching if possible in the Abbey, with a view to saying something against the panic, and preventing a general sense of confusion and even panic.(1)

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[1] Ibid., p. 733-35.

These exchanges with Dr. Dryander and Asquith are interesting in the light of the way the Church came to view the war. In his letter to Dryander, the Archbishop referred to "two great Christian nations", but within a few months Churchmen were saying that Germany had never been more than Christian on the surface only, and that she was now under the influence of a philosophy which was the very antithesis of Christianity. As for his conversation with Asquith, Davidson presumably agreed with Asquith's assessment of the situation and his opinion that Germany, with the exception of the military party, was opposed to war; if Davidson held a contrary opinion he gave no sign. Throughout the war, Churchmen appeared to subscribe to this view, for they maintained that Britain was fighting against German militarism, and not against the German people. Yet, when peace was made, the Church believed that the German nation as a whole must be held responsible for the war.[1]

In the days preceeding the declaration of war, Churchmen other than the Archbishop of Canterbury also remained silent on the issues at stake. Two notable exceptions were the Bishops of Lincoln and Hereford, whose names appeared among the signatories of an appea l for British neutrality which appeared in the Daily News of August 3rd. War was declared on August 4th. Davidson was present at the Debate in the

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[1]See below, Chapter II and Chapter IV

House of Commons, and he returned to Lambeth Palace sad, but convinced that the Government had taken the only possible course.[1] The Archbishop of York reluctantly reached the same conclusion[2], and within a few days Churchmen were unanimous in giving their support to the nation's cause.

The actions of Archbishop Davidson on the days preceeding August 4th show the extent to which the Church continued to view matters of war and peace as lying within the province of politicians and soldiers. There were few pacifists within the Church of England; most men believed that under some circumstances it was necessary to resist evil with force, for otherwise one became an accomplice in that evil. But the Church did not presume to define the circumstances under which force might be used until the Government had expressed an opinion about these circumstances; consequently the Archbishop would make no statement urging the nation not to participate in war, nor would he presume to define under what circumstances British participation might be desirable. These circumstances lay in the realm of politics, not morality. They were circumstances to be judged by others. Once the decision to go to war had been made, the Church could either concur or demur; the fact that the Church of England was a national institution designed to express national sentiment, and the

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[1] Ibid., p. 735.

[2] Lockhart, op. cit., p. 246.

personal convictions of its members, resulted in complete endorsement of the Government's decision to declare war against Germany and her allies.

II

THE HOLY WAR

Within a few weeks of the declaration of war, the Church had done more than merely endorse the Government's actions; it had proclaimed that the war was a Holy War. The violation of Belgian neutrality by Germany, and the publication of the Government White Paper on August 6th, proved to be the rallying points for all who sought a meaningful cause and justification for the war : Britain went to war in defence of her honour, in defence of principles of international justice, and in defence of the weak against the strong, all of which were threatened by German militarism. These reasons were adequate, in the minds of Churchmen, to justify Britain's entry into the war. However, the military campaigns of August and September produced a stalemate from which it appeared likely that the nation would not soon emerge. By going to war, Britain had fulfilled her obligations but had failed to achieve her avowed objective of liberating Belgium from German occupation, and until this was achieved there was really no question, for the Government at least, of withdrawal from the war. For Churchmen, the question was of a different sort: obligations to "honour" and "justice" had been fulfilled, and now some objective other than the secular one of liberating Belgium had to be found

if continued participation in the war were to be reconciled with Christianity. The objective was readily at hand; through the medium of "honour" and "justice" the war was elevated from the level of the just war to that of the supreme moral crusade, the Holy War.

War presented an immediate challenge to Christian thought: how could an individual, as a member of a catholic church and as a believer in a gospel of love and forgiveness, participate in a national war? Much attention was given to this problem in books, pamphlets, articles, and speeches, especially in 1914-15. The justification for Christian participation in the war took two principle forms which soon blended into one; both were based on the premise of the non-pacifist Christians, that in an imperfect world force is an ever-present factor in the evolution of humanity, which may be used either to resist or to advance the cause of evil. The first argument used to justify Christian participation in the war was directed primarily against those who had scruples about taking up arms under any circumstances, and particularly in a national war; it maintained that nation-states form an integral part of God's plan for the world , are instruments of His purpose, and that therefore the individual serves humanity through the medium of the state. If states are instruments of God's purpose, then it is both necessary and proper for the individual to obey the state, even if this involves participation in a war.

This special position given to the nation

had ancient roots, whether in the Jewish tradition of the chosen people, or in the Christian tradition where Kings ruled side by side with Bishops, but always for the glory of God[1] and for the purpose of seeing justice done on earth.[2] The Establishment of the Church of England gave formal recognition to the close relationship which existed between Church and state, and Burke wrote, ". . . He who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue, willed also the necessary means of its perfection. -- He willed therefore the state -- He willed its connexion [sic] with the source and original archetype of all perfection [the Church] .[3]

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[1]Pope Gregory VII criticized "those kings and emperors who, too much puffed up by worldly glory, rule not for God but for themselves." "Gregory VII, Letter to Bishop Hermann of Metz" (1081), in Bryce Lyon, ed., The High Middle Ages 1000-1300 (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 99.

[2]And the religion of Christ makes of patriotism a positive law; there is no perfect Christian who is not also a perfect patriot. . . . Family interests, class interests, party interests, and the material good of the individual take their place, in the scale of values, below the ideal of Patriotism, for that ideal if Right, which is absolute . . . . and to affirm the absolute necessity of the subordination of all things to Right, to Justice, and to Truth, is implicitly to affirm God.

Cardinal Mercier, Pastoral Letter of His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, Christmas 1914 (London: Burns & Oates Ltd., 1914), p. 20.

[2]Burke, op. cit., p. 95.

The second and more important argument used to justify participation in the war also had its roots in Christian tradition, and especially in the writings of Augustine and Aquinas, whose justifications for the use of force were largely accepted by Protestant theologians. Essentially, the waging of war by one state against another was justified if the war were being fought for defensive or punitive reasons; it was thus analogous to, and had the same moral justification as, the steps taken by the state to punish criminals and to protect the community from them. Though the use of force might be regrettable, it might still be necessary, and the failure of individuals or states to employ it at all could only result in a further extension of evil. This view, while it allows a Christian to participate in war, carries with it the condition that he can participate in it only if it being fought on behalf of a righteous cause; thus in wartime the first task of any Church -- and especially of an Established church -- is to establish that the nation's cause is a righteous one, and that therefore Christians can rightly participate in the war.

After war was declared in August, the clergy of the Church of England agreed that Britain's cause was righteous[1], and that therefore every Christian could properly take up arms on behalf of Britain's

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[1] Supra, p. 24.

cause. From here, it was but a short step to combine a Christian's duty to fight for his state, with a Christian's duty to fight on behalf of a righteous cause, to produce a view which identified the righteous nation with the righteous cause -- in other words, the view that Britain was on God's side fighting God's war. Though the arguments used to support this statement were peculiar to the issues surrounding Britain's entry into the war, it should be noted that Holy War was inherent in the support which the Church gave to any war. "Honour" and "justice" were but milder forms of this doctrine, suited to a short, not a drawn-out conflict; when it appeared that the conflict would continue for some time it was raised from the level of the just war to that of the Holy War.

It was not a new phenomena for British wars to be given the sanction of religion; this was inherent in the nature of the Establishment. During the French Revolutionary Wars, it was assumed that God was partial to the British cause, and victories were regarded as a direct mark of His favour. This tendency to give religious sanction to wars was noticed by the French writer, Andre Chevrillon, and in his study of English opinion and the Boer War he remarked, "Un des traits particuliers à ce pays, c'est ce besoin de placer sous l'autorité de l'impératif catégorique ou du commandement religieux l'acte demandé par la passion ou l'intérêt."[1] Moreover, he noted, Britain's way of

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[1]Andre Chevrillon, "L'opinion Anglaise et la Guerre du Transvaal", Études Anglaises (Paris: Librairie Hachette Et Cie., 1901), p. 295.

life and her successes were regarded as marks of Divine favour; Englishmen believed of their country that, "Dieu l'a choisie pour l'instrument de ses volontés."[1] He had noticed this idea in numerous sermons and articles, and thought it was typically expressed in Kipling's Recessional.[2]

M. Chevrillon also tells of a sermon he heard preached by an Anglican clergyman; its theme is remarkably similar to those of the sermons preached in the period 1914-18, expressing as it does full confidence that Britain is on the side of God, fighting for righteousness and justice. The sermon attempted to vindicate British imperial policy in general, and the Boer War in particular, by showing that Britain did not conquer territory for the sake of territory, but to make its inhabitants free men; she did not rob colonies of their riches, but reinvested tax revenues in the colony from which they came, and she did not impose trade restrictions on her colonies, but allowed them to participate in the benefits of a free trade system. In the light of such knowledge, the clergyman asked, who could say that Britain was pursuing selfish ends? Who would deny that God was using England? Wherever England extended her empire, he said, the inhabitants of the conquered territories progressed

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[1] Ibid., p. 303.

[2] "Nos flottes, nos armées, nos capitaines, nos victoires, empêche-nous d'en sentir l'orgueil comme les empires d'autrefois, empêche-nous d'oublier que tout cela est pour ton service." Ibid., p. 303.

towards justice, truth, and happiness. The sermon was followed by a prayer which asked God to be the judge of Britain's motives and to grant victory if, as they believed, Britain's cause was His. [1] Despite a different set of circumstances, all these chords were to be struck again in the period 1914-18.

But before these chords of national self-righteousness could be struck, it was necessary to justify individual Christian participation in the war; though in general terms this justification would be built on the concepts of duty to the state and the obligation to defend a righteous cause, the specific justification had to be worked out on the basis of the particular issues surrounding the outbreak of this war. It was a more difficult task than it had ever been before: the slogan, "Business as usual", did not conceal the fact, even in 1914, that the days were gone when soldiers went to war and civilians carried on much as before. The most obvious manifestations of this fact in 1914 -- and, for the Church, the only manifestations which it ever understood -- were the need for a large army filled by voluntary enlistment from the nation at large, and the need for some sort of agreement with labour and the trade unions. This meant that virtually the entire nation had to be convinced that the war was righteous and necessary, and one which everyone should actively support.

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[1] Ibid., p. 355-6.

Bearing in mind the general terms in which support for the war would be expressed, and that the Holy War was inherent in the support which the Church gave to any war, this chapter will examine the specific arguments used by Churchmen to justify Christian participation in the war. In examining the process of justification, it will be seen how the war was elevated to the level of the Holy War and how Germany was found to be a threat to European Christian civilization.

One line of argument pursued by Churchmen in 1914 was to show that nations formed part of the Divine framework and were the medium through which the cause of humanity was served. Though it was inherent in the nature of the Establishment for the Church to give a place of special importance to the state, the unusual emphasis put on duty to the state in the period 1914-18 was the reflection of a noticeable trend in Victorian and Edwardian thought:

> [At the end of the Victorian age] . . . active political thinking at all levels was dominated by the presumption of the omnicompetence of the state. In the first place idealist social theory asserted the moral supremacy of the state over its citizens, as the incarnation of their best selves . . . . Secondly . . . a theory of bureaucratic statism in which the demands of rational economic effeciency overrode all traditional rights and limitations on government. At a more popular level . . . the successful carrying out of liberal constitutional reform seemed, by rendering the state truly democratic, to remove all need for its limitation . . . [and] patriotic enthusiasm, nourished by imperial expansion, weakened older and more particular loyalties

than that of devotion to the national state.(1)

And so it was stated that, "A nation has a real existence. It, as well as the individual, has a contribution to make to the Kingdom of God. The individual cannot live wholly to himself."[2] Thus service to one's country was to be viewed "as part of your service to God . . . . Love of our country is implanted in us by God, and if we look at our duty to our Country as duty to God we put it on the very highest ground."[3] And, in obeying the call of country, the individual was obeying an instinct planted in him by God.[4]

Did such a view set limitations to the rights of the individual conscience? Might a man claim that his loyalty was to humanity first, and to the state second, and that consequently he could not participate

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[1] Anthony Quinton, "Thought", in Simon Nowell-Smith, ed., Edwardian England, 1901-1914 (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 291-2.

[2] William Temple, "Christianity and War", in William Temple, ed., Papers for War-Time (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), p. 12.

[3] Bishop of London, "A Call to Arms", in A Day of God (Milwaukee: The Young Churchman Co., n.d.), p. 23. [First published London: Wells, Gardner, Darton & Co., Ltd., 1914.]

[4] Ibid., p. 25.

in a national war? The essay[1] by Hastings Rashdall[2] provides perhaps the best illustration of the attempts which were made to answer these questions.

Rashdall reasoned that states had a right and duty to make war only if, by so doing, they were fulfilling their right and duty to promote the true well-being of humanity.[3] But this did not mean that a citizen was released from his duty to serve in a war if he believed that these conditions were not present, for humanity could be served only through serving the state, and not by opposing it:

> ". . . the very first requirement of the general good is that each individual should obey his own State". And this requirement sets limits to the extent to which the individual can make the pursuit of universal Good his immediate end. As a citizen, it is his duty to do all that in him lies to prevent his State entering into unjust wars; but, when the legal authority has made its decision, and until it has altered its decision, it is his duty to support and do his utmost for his country . . . . And the ground of that duty is that such obedience is the first condition of social well-being for each State and for the

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[1]Hastings Rashdall, "Egoism, Personal and National", in Creighton and others, The International Crisis, op. cit., pp. 109-37.

[2]Hastings Rashdall, Dean of Carlisle. Rashdall was the most distinguished and active member of the modernist movement, and one of the two leading personalities among Anglican theologians of the period. (The other was Charles Gore, Bishop of Oxford.)

[3]Rashdall, op. cit., p. 129.

> community of States. He is not putting his country above Humanity when he acts upon this principle; he is serving Humanity by serving his country . . . . (1)

This view was accompanied by an exaltation of patriotic feelings. Though he was critical of what he regarded as the extreme form taken by German patriotism, the concept of patriotism nevertheless emerged from his work as a positive element:

> Patriotism does not attain its maximum development till it becomes an instinct, a passion, an enthusiasm. No community is in a healthy condition until every individual obeys the State from the same spontaneous and natural affection from which the best children obey the best parents. (2)

Such an instinct had to be cultivated, said Rashdall, if Britain were to find peaceful solutions to problems which would present themselves at the end of the war.[3] This was the spirit of the resolution on national duty passed by the Convocation of Canterbury in 1915,[4] as it was of a statement by the Bishop of Oxford, who

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[1] Ibid., p. 129-30.

[2] Ibid., p. 132.

[3] Ibid., p. 135.

[4] "That Christianity is concerned not merely with the private life of the individual, but also with the due discharge of national responsibilities. It is the function of the Church to aid in the cultivation of a higher sense of national duty." (The Times, July 7, 1915, p. 6.)

wondered if he would be saying too much if he said that "our salvation as a nation depends on our learning the lesson of national concentration and the subordination of the individual to the nation which the rise of Germany ought to teach us."[1]

This emphasis on service to the state justified individual Christian participation in the war and became, in effect, an appeal for recruits based on the concept of service to humanity through duty to the state; it was directed primarily against those who doubted the rightness of participating in a national war. But this appeal to duty also had the added advantage of quieting internal dissension by showing that a concerted national effort was necessary if the community were to survive the threat from the external enemy.

It should not be thought, however, that this emphasis placed on the value of patriotic feeling meant that Churchmen took Germany as their model. Quite the contrary. German patriotism was strongly denounced, and the nature of these denunciations was indicative of the growing tendency to regard Germany as the epitome of evil, while at the same time identifying Britain with everything that was righteous.

In the views of some, German patriotism was

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[1] Prestige, op. cit., p. 382.

excessive and misdirected. The state had been set up as an idol and as an end in itself, and Germans were no longer conscious of the fact that in serving the state they should be serving a higher humanity.[1] They thought that they could do nothing better than to Germanize Europe, and they deliberately planned such an event.[2] Soon after the outbreak of war, Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi were "discovered" by British writers to explain the prevailing spirit in Germany; yet it was always maintained that Britain's quarrel was not with the people of Germany, but with her leaders who had deceived the people with their false philosophy.[3] In October of 1914, the Bishop of Carlisle referred to Germany's leaders as "the enemies of Christian civilisation, of moral progress, of spiritual enlightenment."[4]

Numerous articles were written on various aspects of the German temper: its view of duty; of war and peace; of diplomacy, and its belief in the philosophy that might makes right. All seem to have been drawn together by the Bishop of Carlisle who, in one article, succeeded in expressing the general

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[1] Rashdall, op. cit., p. 132-3.

[2] W. Heaton Renshaw, "The Abomination of Desolation", in Christ and the War (London: Ruskin House, 1915), p. 13.

[3] Bishop of Carlisle, "The Inner Meaning of the War", The Nineteenth Century and After, LXXVI (Oct., 1914), 736.

[4] Ibid., p. 736.

view of the German character which Churchmen were beginning to propagate, and which was soon to become typical of the kind of popular hostility with which Germany was viewed.

The Bishop began by saying that in some ways the war was a civil war, for people of the same race and religion were engaged in it. However, it differed from all such previous wars, and he proceeded to explain why this was so:

> For there was no philosophy invented prior to those wars to give plausible colour to the pretence that they were an essential part of the constitution of the world; that might is a necessary accompaniment of right; that morality for States is altogether distinct from personal morality and may often be opposed to it; that what is virtue in the individual may be a vice in the State; that while the end seldom justifies the means adopted by the individual, it may, and often does, justify those adopted by the collective community; that individuals exist for the community and may be slaughtered without hesitation to carry forward its policy; that the community possesses the jus vitae necisque over all individuals, but no individual possesses any right, not even that of his own liberty or life, in respect of his personality; that statesmen -- i.e. practically a dominant bureau -- ought alone to decide when war should be declared, and that on their decisions depend the issues of life for the people, whether the people are in accord with those decisions or not; that it is a duty to bring about a war whenever a favourable opportunity occurs, without waiting for provocation; that all intrigues may be practiced to ensnare Great Powers and any brutality to overawe petty kingdoms; that terror is more fruitful than truth and imperial despotism than personal liberty; that the surest way to culture is through a wilderness of cruelty, over roads founded in death and cemented with blood.

> This apotheosis of strength, valour, and sway has been diligently cultivated in Germany for two generations. Its glorified gods are such as Clovis, Charles the Great, Otto, and Frederick. Its philosopher is Nietzsche . . . . Treitschke is its professor of history . . . . Among its most eminent prophets if General von Bernhardi . . . . (1)

Germany's aberrations, as described in the above article, seemed so severe that to some they appeared inexplicable unless it could be shown that Germany had never, in fact, been a true member of Christian civilization. And so it was stated that a nation which had passed among the nations of the world as one of the most religious had shown herself, under the stress of warfare, to be worshipping a false god.[2]

This argument received its fullest expression in a sermon which the Dean of Durham preached in Westminster Abbey in June, 1915. The Dean began by establishing the Christian basis for European civilization by showing that the growth, over nineteen centuries, of principles, assumptions, and implicit understandings which formed the essence of that civilization were also necessary to Christianity as a system of social life. It was therefore inevitable, he said, that the modern civilized world should be

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[1] Ibid., p. 731-2.

[2] Renshaw, op. cit., p. 16.

described as Christendom. But Germany, by her diplomacy and warfare, was directly challenging those principles, assumptions, and basic understandings which formed the basis of Christian civilization; in other words, said Henson, Christendom was being challenged by what had always been regarded as a Christian nation.[1]

How was the apparent paradox to be explained? The Dean's explanation consisted of three main points, which eliminated the paradox but which also eliminated Germany as a member of Christendom. Firstly, the policy and military procedure of the German Empire were determined by Prussia, and it was only "with certain important reservations that Prussia . . . can be called either Christian or civilized . . . ." The external symbols of civilization existed there "with an interior and essential barbarism . . . ." Secondly, the moral standards of the Prussian military caste had been extended over the manhood of the entire nation. Finally, there was an aberration of the national mind which was produced by fear, hatred, and official falsehoods: "The German People is, for the time being, morally insane."[2]

These views about the German character and

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[1]H. Hensley Henson, "The Kingship of Jesus", in War-Time Sermons (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1915), p. 203.

[2]Ibid., p. 204.

temper which were enunciated in 1914-15 remained virtually unchanged until the end of the war; the only apparent escalation occurred in the mind of the Archbishop of Armagh, who by 1918 had concluded that it was a duty to defeat Germany in order to save her from herself:

> . . . the very kindest thing we could do to Germany was to give her such a beating that she never again would think of changing the world into a hell and turning all the men and women on it into a purgatory that only a Dante could conceive.(1)

The condemnation of German patriotism and the German character went hand in hand with the process which identified Britain's cause with righteousness. To show that participation in the war was justified because the nation's cause was righteous was a more important and more fully developed argument than that which justified participation on the grounds of duty to the state: it appealed to moral principles; it had a wider audience, and it was, moreover, the only argument on which the Holy War could be based.

Though the argument that war was sometimes necessary and just was part of Christian tradition,[2] the case was presented once again in 1914 in order

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[1]Speech to his Diocesan Synod, as reported by The Times, Oct. 26, 1918, p.3.

[2]Supra, p. 27.

to justify participation in this particular war:

> To advocate war in the name of Christ is to adopt a position which looks self-contradictory and which certainly involves immense responsibility, and yet if our people can maintain the attitude of mind in which they entered on the war and can secure at the end a settlement harmonious with that frame of mind, I believe they will have served the Kingdom of God through fighting, better than it was possible to do at this moment in human history by any other means. (1)

And once again it was stated that it was sometimes necessary to use force in order not to succumb to a greater evil. A Christian might ignore wrongs done to him personally -- he might turn the other cheek -- but he could not so easily ignore wrongs which were directed towards him as a member of society, for such wrongs threatened public order. To tolerate these wrongs was not only to undermine the moral standards of the community, but it was tantamount to participating in the wrong itself. Not to come to the aid of one who was weak and in need of assistance (i.e. Belgium) was selfish and unchristian, and showed an unrealistic appreciation of the many factors at work in a society:

> Whatever may be said to the contrary by opponents of Christianity on the one hand, and by Quakers and Tolstoyans on the other hand, the Christian Church has always considered it to be

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[1]William Temple, Church and Nation: The Bishop Paddock Lectures for 1914-15, op. cit., p. xiii.

> a Christian duty, on the part of the community, to employ force in the defence of the weak when they are forcibly attacked. The real question is not whether force should be used, but under what circumstances it should be employed. To rule out altogether the employment of force, under any and under every conceivable circumstance, is to advocate the permission of anarchy and to hand over mankind, as a whole, to the tender mercies of the least desirable of men. (1)

The alternatives facing Britain in 1914, then, were "a most dishonourable, sinful, and cowardly peace at any price" and her "humanitarian and Christian duties."[2]

It was not only defence of the weak which made Britain's cause righteous and justified participation in the war. Britain was also fighting to defend the cause of might against might, and the cause of respect for the law of nations and the plighted word.[3] Under such circumstances, no one would have questioned Archbishop Davidson's remarks to the Upper House of Canterbury Convocation when he said:

> . . . he imagined that not one of their lordships entertained any doubt that our nation could not,

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[1] C.L. Drawbridge, The War and Religious Ideals (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1915), p. 101.

[2] Ibid., p. 104-5.

[3] "To the Christian Scholars of Europe and America: A Reply from Oxford to the German Address to Evangelical Christians", Oxford Pamphlets, 1914 (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), I, p. 13.

> without sacrificing principles of honour and justice, more dear than life itself, have stood aside and looked idly on at the present world conflict. Fearful, devilish, calamitous as a great war must be, there was something yet worse. To stand selfishly aside while vile wrong was perpetrated in a matter wherein they were concerned would, if he might use the phrase, debase the moral currency of a people far more than the joining in warfare, terrible as it was, for rolling the wrong back. (1)

The conviction that the nation's cause was righteous, and efforts made to convince the nation that its cause was righteous, were expressed in more concrete terms than speeches and writings about "honour" and "justice". The first example of this was the reply made in September to an "Appeal to Evangelical Christians Abroad"[2] from German theologians. The reply was an answer to the denunciations of German theologians, who charged that Germany was the victim of lies which made her appear as an aggressor, when in fact she had acted only in self-defence. The Archbishop of Canterbury contributed two sections to the reply, on the course of the negotiations prior to the outbreak of war, and on the neutrality of Belgium.[3] The reply was, in effect, a carefully reasoned document based on Government publications -- the White Book and material relating

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[1] The Times, Feb. 10, 1915, p. 5.

[2] The "Appeal" is printed at the end of "To the Christian Scholars of Europe and America, op. cit.

[3] Bell, op. cit., p. 741.

to the neutrality of Belgium -- which meant that Churchmen had involved themselves in giving a political justification for the actions of the British Government. It expressed "amazement" that the signatories of the Appeal should commit themselves to a statement of the political causes of the war "which departs so strangely from what seem to us to be the plain facts. . . ."[1] A summary of the facts from the official papers was provided, and the reply concluded:

> To have acted otherwise than we have acted would have meant deliberate unfaithfulness to an engagement by which we had solemnly bound ourselves, and a refusal of our responsibilities and duties in regard to the maintenance of the public law of Europe. We have taken our stand for international good faith, for the safeguarding of smaller nationalities, for the upholding of the essential conditions of brotherhood among the nations of the world.(2)

The reply was signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury, York, and Armagh, and by prominent Churchmen and Nonconformists.

Further defence of Britain's cause appeared in 1914-15, in a series entitled Oxford Pamphlets. This series was one of the means which was established by the Central Committee for National Patriotic

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[1] Ibid., p. 741.

[2] Ibid., p. 743.

Organizations for the dissemination of propaganda for domestic consumption.[1] Its efforts were directed "not towards the ignorant masses, but to educated doubters."[2] The Bishop of Lincoln, who had been completely converted from his anti-war position of August 3rd, and Dr. William Sanday were among Church of England contributors to the series; each sought to establish British righteousness by showing the moral threat which Germany posed to western civilization. The Bishop of Lincoln wrote from the point of view that the war was a challenge to the ideals of western civilization, and he described the German character in much the same terms as did the Bishop of Carlisle.[3] Britain did not want to go to war, but had been obliged to do so:

> . . . a war forced upon us by a nation gone mad, a nation possessed by a horrible idea, a nation that should be our friend but had become our bitterest foe. And therefore we have entered upon the war not only in self-defence but in defence of the old moralities, and to vindicate conceptions of national duty. (4)

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[1]Arthur Marwick, The Deluge (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1967), p. 45.

[2]Ibid., p. 45.

[3]Bishop of Lincoln, "The Church and the War", Oxford Pamphlets 1914-15, op. cit., XII, p. 6, and supra, p. 37-8.

[4]Bishop of Lincoln, op. cit., p. 7.

Dr. Sanday, after showing how Britain had been forced to participate in a war which she did not want and which had been planned deliberately by Germany, proceeded in an attempt to understand and explain the temper which prevailed in Germany. He examined Bernhardi's Book, Germany and the Next War, and concluded that it "really did represent the deliberate underlying policy of Germany as a whole."[1]

Papers for War Time[2] also appeared in 1914-15; it was a series of thirty-six pamphlets written by prominent clergy and laymen of various denominations. They were aimed at the educated public and were devoted to a serious study of the origins, nature, and likely outcome of the conflict. Their tone was moderate and suggested the spirit in which the issues of both the war and the peace settlement should be faced. Though they did not fail to point out that Britain, too, suffered from some of the moral sickness displayed by Germany, they reaffirmed that Britain had, nevertheless, gone to war on behalf of a righteous cause -- the defence of the weak against the strong, and the upholding of international pledges. But as the war went on, this conviction

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[1]William Sanday, "The Deeper Causes of the War", Oxford Pamphlets 1914, op. cit., I, p. 4.

[2]William Temple, ed., Papers for War Time (London: Oxford University Press, 1914).

that Britain had gone to war on behalf of a righteous cause was expressed in firmer tones. In 1914, the list of the general aims of the series began with the statement, "Great Britain is engaged in a war from which, as we believe, there was offered to our nation no honourable way of escape." In 1915, the list of aims began with the statement, "Great Britain was in August morally bound to declare war and is no less bound to carry this war to a decisive issue."

These two statements epitomize the Church's original and final views of England's role in the war. In August 1914, the war had been regrettable but necessary, and one from which Britain could not honourably escape. Within five months it had become a contest into which Britain was morally bound to enter because moral principles were at stake, and from which she could not emerge until victorious or defeated. It had been easy enough to elevate the war to this level of Holy War: Britain's cause had been shown to be righteous, with the corollary that Germany's cause was not; Britain had gone to war in recognition that a nation's obligation to be faithful to its promises was "fundamental to the maintenance of peace and progress among the Nations of the World"[1]; Britain had gone to war in defence of right, with the corollary that Germany was waging a war against right, and Germany's actions were

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[1]Bell, op. cit., p. 744.

explained by showing the perverted morality which had been imposed on that country by her leaders. The fact that Britain as a nation was fighting for a righteous cause, against a nation which embodied all the forces inimical to Christianity and to western civilization, resulted in the identification of the righteous cause with the righteous nation.

And so the nation was fighting God's war. Britain was fighting to eradicate evil; to vindicate Christian principles of morality; to end war by eradicating the spirit which produced it; to make the world safe for democracy, and to safeguard the rights of small nationalities. The tremendous sacrifice incurred could not be justified unless and until these aims were realized. It took two more years before politicians and Lord Northcliffe caught up to the Church in preaching a moral crusade against Germany and in painting a picture of the new world which would follow in the footsteps of victory.[1]

The Holy War was inherent in the just war; all that was needed to draw it out was the indication that the battle would continue to rage for a time. Thus hand in hand with the process which showed Britain's cause to be righteous went the process which proclaimed that the war was a Holy War.

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[1]For examples of the earliest remarks of such a nature editorials in The Times on Nov. 10, Dec. 13, and Dec. 14, 1916, and August 4, 1917. See also the report on Asquith's speech at Leeds in The Times, Sept. 27, 1917.

The trumpet call for the Holy War was first sounded by the Bishop of Carlisle in October 1914, when he accompanied his black portrait of the German spirit[1] with a look at the inner meaning of the war. He wrote that the "germinal essence and fundamental cause of the war" was due to the conflict between "two irreconciliable spirits: the spirit of faith in force and that of the force of faith."[2] He continued with an exposition of all the things that Britain was fighting for, and though he did not use the term "holy war"there was no doubt in his mind that it could be any other kind of war. His article gives the earliest and most complete summary of the way Churchmen soon viewed the war:

> Against this demoniacal spirit of force, with its doctrine of deceits, its philosophic frauds, and delusions of glory and debasement of religion, the spirit of faith has entered into firm and, I trust, final conflict. The real issues now at stake are not material and political, but moral and spiritual. It is a superficial view of this tremendous contest which limits it to territorial aggrandisement, and the opening of markets and the supremacy of the sea . . . . Deeper down at the root and source lies, couched and lurking for its prey, the Satanic spirit of force . . . . This is the most striking and awful characteristic of the present struggle. It is the death-grip of spirits: the spirit of force with the spirit of faith.
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> . . . . .
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> This war is a war of the spirit of peace against

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[1] Supra, p. 37-8.

[2] Bishop of Carlisle, op. cit., p. 730.

> the spirit of power; of sympathy against selfishness; of free civilisation against confederated tyranny; of love against strength; of right against might; of nationalism against imperialism; of an enfranchised democracy against oligarchic despotism; of faith against force; of God against the world.
>
> . . . . .
>
> . . . in any case the course of all those who believe in liberty, righteousness, and truth is plain. They could not have kept out of the war with honour; and until the spirit of immoral might is defeated they cannot without shame make peace. (1)

In another article, the Bishop speculated on the meaning of defeat and victory:

> If we are defeated in this conflict the moral loss to the world will be immeasurably vast. Tyranny will usurp the throne of liberty, a military caste will trample on equality, and the intriques of a bureaucracy will supplant the ideals of human brotherhood. But if we win, the whole world will be richer for our victory. Our success will secure the independence of small nationalities . . . . Democracy will not be plunged into the darkness of night. A lighter day will dawn for constitutional government.(2)

But there were others who used the phrase "holy war". Dr. Beeching, the Dean of Norwich, used the phrase in a sermon which he preached in 1914; he

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[1] Ibid., p. 734-6.

[2] Bishop of Carlisle, "The Deceitfulness of War, Contemporary Review, CVI (Oct., 1914), 498.

entitled the sermon "Armageddon" because he felt that the issues at stake were the final issues of good and evil, right and wrong.[1] He believed that Britain was on God's side and could claim Divine assurance of ultimate victory, and he gave three reasons for his conviction: Firstly, because it was, on Britain's part, "a war against war; a war on behalf of peaceful arbitration"; secondly, because it was "a war for truth, for the sacredness of pledges", and thirdly, because there had been "a definite renunciation of Christianity among the ruling classes in modern Germany."[2] He concluded by saying:

> . . . in the name of freedom, in the name of justice, in the name of truth, in the name of humanity -- which are all names of our God -- we will fight to our last drop of blood. . . . It is a holy war in which we have taken our part: a war of Christ against Antichrist. (3)

By 1915, this tone had become general throughout the Church. The Dean of Durham, preaching in Bristol Cathedral in May, described the morality which Germany had adopted, and said that this showed that the war was "really a conflict of Principles, by the issue of which the whole character of human

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[1]Dean of Norwich, "Armageddon", in Archbishop of Canterbury and others, War and Christianity (London: Jarrold & Sons, 1914), p. 19.

[2]Ibid., p. 21-4.

[3]Ibid., p. 27-8.

civilization must be determined . . . ."[1] In the light of this, he proceeded to define Britain's war aims:

> It is no mere platform orator's point to say that we are waging war against war; for we are fighting against the principles which prompt and justify such infamies as the sinking of the Lusitania in the name and power of the principles which root international relations in righteousness. We fight for a juster Europe, a more reasonably ordered world, a civilization which shall turn with loathing from the suicidal barbarity of international violence. (2)

At Whitsuntide, a pastoral letter was issued by the episcopate of the Canterbury diocese; it, too, expressed the conviction that the issues at stake were the final issues:

> After 10 months of war we see more clearly than at first the greatness and the severity of the ordeal which is putting the spirit of our nation to the test . . . . The spirit arrayed against us threatens the very foundations of civilised order in Christendom . . . . It can only be decisively rolled back if we, for our part, concentrate the whole strength of body, mind, and soul which our nation, our Empire, holds. (3)

It was no accident that the Church should

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[1]Henson, "Lessons of the Great War" in his War-Time Sermons, op. cit., p. 98.

[2]Ibid., p. 105-6.

[3]Bell, op. cit., p. 757.

view the situation in this light. The relationship of the Church of England to the state meant that the Church had to support Britain's entry into the war, and in August, 1914, this was done by showing that Britain's cause was a just one. But as the tempo of the war increased, so did the need for a greater cause. The greater cause was the Holy War; it was inherent in the concept of the just war and was easily arrived at through the process which identified Britain's cause with righteousness and Germany's cause with evil. By 1915, belief in the Holy War had become general throughout the Church, and it remained unchanged until the end of the war.

III

THE CHURCH AT WAR

The outbreak of war came at a critical time in British social and political history: suffragettes, the Irish question, and the rights of labour caused major cracks to appear in the texture of national life. In some ways, the war was a relief, for family feuds were temporarily put aside in the face of the greater threat presented to the community by an external enemy, and a spirit of national unity was fostered which had been sadly lacking on the eve of war. The Church of England was not unaware of the deep divisions within society, and of the danger they presented both to the conduct of the war and to the period of reconstruction which must follow. In the eyes of the Church, the war could be brought to a successful conclusion only if the country were united behind the Government, and if everyone were inspired with a spirit of dedication to, and self-sacrifice for, the cause for which Britain was fighting. The Church, therefore, felt that it was its duty to foster the spirit of national unity and to keep the rightness of the nation's cause constantly before the people.

All Churchmen shared a belief in the Holy

War, but the ideology of such a war prescribed no specific guidlines as to how the war should be conducted, and consequently a division existed within the Church as to how the national interest could best be served, and how the Church could best fulfil its role as the national conscience. On the one hand, there were those whose support of the war was tempered by the recognition that war unleashed destructive passions, even in a nation which was fighting on behalf of righteousness. With a view to post-war problems on both the national and international level, these men sought to inject a note of sanity into the war fever. They believed that post-war problems could be solved only in a spirit of moderation and tolerance, and that it was therefore vital not to lose sight of these qualities during the war itself. These men believed they could best serve the national interest if they maintained a critical attitude towards the course of events, with a view to what was to follow.

This position was complemented by the belief that the war was indeed a Holy War, and that consequently special things were demanded from the nation in the conduct of that war. The gospel of love and forgiveness required that war should not be waged in an unchristian temper of hatred and vengeance, for such a temper was morally and spiritually harmful to those who were motivated by it and made them unworthy to be God's instruments. Much was written and said about the dangers of this temper, and prayers requested that God grant the qualities which

should make Britain worthy of serving Him. Therefore a special obligation lay with the Church, as the guardian of the Christian Gospel, to see that the war was waged in a Christian temper and, in the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Church had a duty to uphold:

> the principles of stainless honour, of firm self-control, of fearless championship of what was true, of resolute clemency to the weak or the vanquished, and of abstention from everything that was merely vengeful or that could possibly degenerate into cruelty or hate . . . . They wanted to secure that the rally of their manhood, and their womanhood, should be a rally wherein there would be no cause for shame. (1)

Only if these ideals were kept before the public, said Davidson, could the Church justify its position of leadership and responsibility, its claim to be the conscience of the state, and its call to men to serve their country. Only if these ideals were maintained could a secure and lasting peace be made.

On the other hand, there were Churchmen who looked no further than the immediate issue at stake, which was winning the war. In the eyes of these men, not moderation and tolerance, but unquestioning support of the Government and Army were demanded if the war were to be brought to a successful conclusion as expressed in the word victory, and victory alone

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[1]Speech to the Upper House of Canterbury Convocation, as reported by The Times, Feb. 10, 1915, p. 5.

was regarded as the best guarantee for a harmonious post-war settlement. These Churchmen believed that the most important thing they could do was to encourage unity among the people in support of the Government and against the enemy, and consequently they believed that Churchmen should refrain from criticizing the Government on the conduct of the war. In this way, the Church could best serve the nation's interest. The Bishop of Worcester explained how the Church could encourage national unity:

> First, loyalty to our king and those in authority under him.
>
> Many of us desire to see progress or reform in this direction or that. It is no time now to press for those things.
>
> In my opinion, we are always in danger, under Party Government, of accentuating the matters in which we differ and forgetting the larger matters, which affect our vitality as a nation, in which we agree. To-day the larger issues should dominate the lesser. Parliament has given us a fine lesson of how to let the tongues of criticism and disagreement be, for awhile, still . . . . our first duty is to support now the Government and the King in the preservation of national honour and, as I think, of national position . . . . The way to peace, to-day, is by loyalty, and by something more, by refraining from unnecessary criticism, even if the Government should be led into mistake or disaster. A watchful criticism is for the moment a thing weakening to our own best interests.(1)

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[1]Bishop of Worcester, "The Nation's Duty", in Archbishop of Canterbury and Others, War and Christianity, op. cit., p. 55-6.

A certain ambiguity inherent in the nature of a Holy War tended to complement this view. As opposed to those who emphasized the special responsibility which rested with the nation to wage God's war in a Christian spirit, others emphasized that the war was a crusade against evil in which the principles of Christian civilization were at stake. Emphasis on this aspect of the Holy War meant that some Churchmen unconsciously inflamed the public passions of anti-Germanism and righteous exaltation, even when they warned against this temper. It led them, moreover, to argue that the most important thing at the moment was to win the war, not to discuss the spirit in which the war should be waged and the peace concluded. In the words of the Bishop of Birmingham:

> There seems to be in some people nowadays the idea that Christianity means the weak application of what is called the principle of Christian charity, but there is a forgetfulness that Christ advised strict dealing with, and strict punishment for, national unworthiness.
>
> Frankly, I think our duty at the present time is not so much to consider how to behave when peace comes as how we are to gain the victory which will bring peace.(1)

In effect, the differences between the two points of view which were discussed above might be described as the differences between those who tried

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[1]Bishop of Birmingham, letter in The Times, March 30, 1915, p. 11.

to combine their Christianity with their patriotism, and those who put their patriotism first and their Christianity second.

Though one might wish to show that a clear division existed among Churchmen with respect to these two attitudes, in fact no such division can be made. While some men can be identified as consistently holding one or the other of these views, the attitude of a great many with respect to what conduct should be followed by the Church and the nation depended on the particular issue under discission. Generally speaking, the Bishops as a group were more moderate than the clergy in the view they took of the war; that is, they looked beyond the immediate issues at stake and sought to preserve the spiritual qualities necessary for making the peace, and they maintained that a special kind of conduct was demanded from Britain in waging a Holy War. Accusations made after the war that the Bishops fed the fires of hatred, did nothing to restrain the nation from meeting atrocity with reprisal, gladly hounded conscientious objectors to prison, and used the safety of their own position to urge young men into the army[3] are generally unfounded, especially when it is remembered that during the war they were accused of refusing to fling themselves wholeheartedly into the national effort, of failing to rage against Germans with seemly fury, and of not

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[1]Lloyd, op. cit., p. 233-4.

having a righteous taste for blood.[1] However, it must be noted that a clear line cannot be drawn between Bishops and clergy; there were important individual exceptions among both Bishops and clergy, whether with regard to their general attitude or where specific issues were concerned. The most important figure in the national Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury, could be regarded as the leader of those who viewed the war from the first position described above; he had many important allies including the Bishops of Oxford and Winchester, Rev. William Temple, and Commonwealth, which was the publication of the Christian Socialists. But the Archbishop spoke for only one segment of Church opinion, and only in the matter of reprisals could it be said that the Archbishop spoke for the Church as a whole.

A study of Churchmen's attitudes towards recruitment, conscientious objectors, and prayers shows a Church divided by its own theory of Holy War. The voice of the moderates commanded more attention, though not necessarily more popular support, than the voice of those who became victims of their own propaganda and believed that the Holy War demanded only one thing from the nation -- victory. As a result, the Church was unable to follow any single line of policy. To study Churchmen's attitudes towards recruitment, conscientious objectors, and the nature

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[1] Ibid., p. 233.

of prayers is to study conflicting arguments based on two interpretations of how best to serve the national interest and the national cause during war-time, and of the place of Christianity in the national war effort. Only in opposing reprisals was there near-unanimity among Churchmen, partly because reprisals meant war against non-combatants, but more importantly because the adoption of reprisals would clearly destroy the basis of the Holy War. But by this time the public believed that the logical conclusion to the theory of Holy War was that the end justified the means, with the result that the Church and the nation were at odds over the issue.

The Church of England followed no single line of policy with regard to recruitment; it ranged through a whole spectrum, from the rather restrained remarks of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the enthusiastic recruiting activities of some other clergy.

Davidson was not averse to giving any assistance he could in the general appeal for recruits, but he was guided by Lord Kitchener's wish that the Church should not become merely another recruiting officer.[1] His remarks in the pamphlet issued by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee

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[1] Bell, op. cit., p. 739-40.

were confined to a general level: "Our country, at a great hour in her history, is calling on her sons. Let the answer be prompt and wide and sure."[1] The Archbishop of York was less cautious. If the war were just, he reasoned, then the Church should give its full support to the national effort. He "threw himself wholeheartedly" into the recruiting campaign, and addressed meetings in most of the cities and larger towns of his Diocese.[2] The Bishop of London, too, threw himself into the campaign for recruits, and the London Diocesan meeting of May 1915 unanimously agreed to "a rider to the effect that the Church should appeal to laymen of suitable age who have not enlisted to offer their immediate services in the present crisis."[3] The Dean of Durham toured the country with Lord Durham to appeal for recruits.[4]

Appeals made to men to enlist were usually based on the calls of honour, duty, patriotism, and the righteousness of the cause for which Britain was fighting. But stories about German atrocities and "barbarism" also found their way into appeals. A good example of this is provided by the impact

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[1] The Times, Nov. 20, 1914, p.5.

[2] Lockhart, op. cit., p. 248.

[3] The Times, May 6, 1915, p. 5.

[4] Lloyd, op. cit., p. 234.

which the death of Edith Cavell had in England. Not only was it described as "atrocious"[1] and a "foul outrage"[2] which hardened "the already immutable resolve of the country to make an utter end to this cancerous growth in human life"[3], but it also found its way into appeals for recruits. This "dastardly execution" and "tragedy of cowardice" rang out a challenge to the chivalry of young men of military age who had not yet enlisted.[4] The Bishop of London said that the cold-blooded murder of Edith Cavell would run the sinking of the Lusitania close as the greatest crime in history. He went on to say that it would finally settle the matter about recruiting in Great Britain: "There will be no need now of compulsion . . . : is it possible that there is one young man in England to-day who will sit still under this monstrous wrong?"[5]

There is conflicting testimony about the success the Church met with in its appeal for recruits. H.H. Malden, a Navy Chaplain, discussed

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[1]Bishop of Bath and Wells, quoted by Douglas Blackburn, The Martyr Nurse (London: The Ridd Masson Co., Ltd., n.d.), p. 56.

[2]Bishop of Barking, in Ibid., p. 56.

[3]Canon Alexander, in Ibid., p. 57.

[4]Letter from Canon Speck, St. Paul's Vicarage, Bedford, in The Times, Oct. 19, 1915, p.9.

[5]Blackburn, op. cit., p. 57-8.

the question of the so-called "failure of the Church" and remarked that to soom it seemed to mean that the clergy had not abandoned what they were ordained to do in order to become amateur recruiting sergeants, or that those who had done so had not met with overwhelmming success.[1] But Canon Welch said that in the days before conscription, "there were no voluntary unpaid recruiting agents more active or more successful than the clergy", especially those of the country parishes.[2]

Whatever the role played by the Church in the recruitment campaigns, the fact remains that it soon found itself under attack for not following the advice it so freely gave to tohers, for Anglican clargy were not permitted to enlist in any combatant capacity. Until 1918, the Government exempted the clergy from Military Service Bills, at which time the nation's position seemed so grave that the Bishops desired that the clergy should also be included under the provisions of the latest bill. Not all Churchmen were satisfied with the prohibition -- especially the younger clergy, and certainly to the minds of ordinary citizens the explanations offered for this state of affairs seemed entirely

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[1]R.H. Malden, Watchman, What of the Night? (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1918), p. 66.

[2]Canon Edward A. Welch, "Convocation, Church, and Critics", The Nineteenth Century and After, LXXXII (Oct., 1917), 82 4.

unsatisfactory. The Bishops[1] argued that the clergy should be exempt from military service because they were doing work of national importance at home, and because it was incompatible for a man in the holy orders of an international society to shed blood in a national war. But the question was often asked that if this war were indeed a Holy War -- if were necessary, righteous, and God's war -- then should not those priests who wished to enlist as combatants be allowed to do so? If the issues at stake were really the final issues, then was it right for the clergy to remain at home? Was it right for a clergyman to ask others to fight on behalf of a cause, while refusing to fight himself? The dilemna was never resolved, although the space devoted to it in articles, speeches, and Letters to The Times throughout the entire period of the war is indicative of its importance.

However, it strikes one as a very minor affair when compared with the matter of the conscientious objectors. The presence of several thousand conscientious objectors, of whom some fifteen hundred were "absolutists"[2] and refused to accept

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[1]The Bishop of Carlisle, speaking in the Upper House of the York Convocation, said that the war was a crusade and that therefore military service was compatible with the profession of the priesthood. Had he been of military age, he said, he would have enlisted as a combatant, despite the fact that he was also a Bishop. The Times, May 3, 1918, p.3.

[2]Marwick, op. cit., p. 86.

any alternative to military service, presented a challenge to the state and to the Church by claiming that conscience was supreme to any claims which the state might make over them. This matter showed wartime hysteria at its worst; the conscientious objectors were regarded as "shirkers" pure and simple, and were subjected to much abuse. The popular view of the treatment which should be accorded to all conscientious objectors was expressed by Lloyd George -- though he was referring only to the absolutists --when he said he thought their lot should be made a very hard one.[1] Tribunals rarely granted the exemptions to which conscientious objectors were entitled by law, and the absolutists found themselves on "a dismal treadmill of arrest, court martial, imprisonment, release, arrest, court martial, and so on."[2]

The cause of the conscientious objectors was defended by such groups as the Quakers and the No Conscription Fellowship; it also found its defenders in the Church of England, notably among the Bishops of Oxford, Ely, Truro, Exeter, Hereford, and Lincoln, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Commonwealth. It could not be said, however, that these men were sympathetic to the cause of the absolutists. They felt that the position of the absolutists was inconsistent with the obligations of citizenship, and

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[1] Ibid., p. 86.

[2] Ibid., p. 86.

showed a willingness to claim the protection of the community for one's self and property without offering anything in return. The Archbishop of Canterbury left no doubt about how he regarded them:

> . . . I have not only no sympathy with the convictions that these men hold, but that they seem to me to be absolutely intolerable and inconsistent with the ordinary working of a civilised community. They have put themselves outside the pale of the responsibility of a citizen. I do not want to say anything to add to the pain that is felt of men whom I believe to be acting on the dictates of what they would describe as conscience, but I would say that that conscience was both ill-informed and ill-applied, and that they are certainly suffering from an overwhelming sense of personal infallibility and Pharisaic self-righteousness and an attitude towards the nation's will which is as anti-democratic as anything could possibly be when the nation has declared itself as it has. (1)

The Archbishop and those who thought like him, however much they believed conscientious objectors were ill-informed, did believe in their sincerity, and they were consequently prepared to defend them. Efforts on behalf of the conscientious objectors were made through speeches, letters to the press, and private channels. They reveal an attempt to restrain public hysteria and rash actions: the rights of conscience, however serious

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[1] House of Lords Debates, 24 May 1917, p. 331-2.

the war, had to be respected.[1] Moreover, the treatment accorded to conscientious objectors was thought to be at best, useless, and at worst, harmful. Davidson regarded the policy of putting conscientious objectors under military rule as being "as irrational as it is cruel."[2] Instead, he suggested the exercise of arbitrary discretion in favour of men whose persecution was doing more mischief than would the relaxation of a technically defensible policy: "No mere insistence on a logical application of military law will, so far as I can judge, ever meet these cases . . . ."[3]

The clergy of the Church of England were by no means unanimous in their view of what treatment should be accorded conscientious objectors. While the Archbishop and others did their best to see that conscientious objectors received some measure of fair treatment -- usually in the face of popular opinion[4] -- many others placed the nation

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[1] "The nation would be in danger of losing sight of the heights and depths of the Christian religion if there were not men who were prepared to put Christian principles, as they conceive it, beyond every other consideration, including that of national interest." (William Temple, "Christianity and War", op. cit., p. 11).

[2] Bell, op. cit., p. 820.

[3] Ibid., p. 821-2.

[4] Towards the end of 1916, Davidson wrote to

before conscience and felt that conscientious objectors should meet with the harshest treatment. Their attitude shows the extent to which they were imbued with a belief in duty to the nation and belief in the Holy War: the claim of conscience viewed as a threat to the successful pursual of the war, and as a denial of the identity between the righteous cause and the righteous nation. On one side, then, was a group represented by the Archbishop -- supporters of the war, but seeking to preserve an air of moderation and tolerance, both of which were qualities which would be essential for the work of reconstruction after the war. On the other side were men who also supported the war, but who looked only to victory, not peace. For these men, victory could come about only through a united national effort, and all who did not contribute to this effort were worthy of no consideration whatsoever. These men had become

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W.H. Long of the Local Government Board, protesting the placement of conscientious objectors under military law. On December 4th, he received the following reply:

> If the matter had to be discussed again, I do not think the House of Commons, or the Country, would regard as tolerable the degree of latitude which we have allowed to all who allege a conscientious objection to military service. I am pretty sure that public opinion would demand much more drastic treatment of these people than the Government have been willing to mete out to them, and that in their own interest it is not desirable to disturb the present practice.

Ibid., p. 821.

victims of their own propaganda, for they were guilty of the very spirit of intolerance and worship of the state for which they had so roundly denounced the Germans.

A good example of this division within the Church is afforded by some correspondence which appeared in The Times in the spring of 1916. It began with a letter from the Bishop of Oxford, who remarked that much as he disagreed with the position of the conscientious objector, there could be no doubt that many were genuine in their convictions. In such cases, he said, the Tribunals should show more respect towards them and grant them the exemptions to which they were entitled. To do otherwise was to make conscientious objectors appear as martyrs.[1] This letter was followed by one from the Bishop of Lincoln, who also warned that the rights of conscientious objectors should be respected rather than trampled on, irrespective of what one thought of their opinions. The Bishop said that conscientious objectors were acting according to the dictates of their consciences, and that the rights of conscience must at all times be respected. Moreover, respect for the rights of conscience could not seriously be expected to affect Britain's war effort.[2] His opinions were subjected to much criticism from those who

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[1] The Times, March 16, 1916, p. 9.

[2] The Times, April 4, 1916, p. 9.

thought that absolute national unity was necessary for the successful conduct of the war. Canon Gregory Smith replied to the Bishop's letter by saying that there were limitations to the rights of conscience, but that the rights of citizenship were accompanied by certain responsibilities, one of which was supporting the nation's war effort. No citizen had the right to allow another to fight for him.[1] This view was shared by Rev. Hugh Legge.[2] The Dean of Chester suggested that the Bishop of Lincoln made too much of the majesty of conscience, and that "no one with a good conscience can refuse to fight in defence of his country, of his home, and for the righteousness of God"[3], the implication being that only men of bad conscience would refuse to serve the state. Another Churchman said that conscientious objectors, whom he called "egotistical decadents", could be tolerated only "if the State can be relieved of the indignity of their citizenship." But in the meantime they were being "screened from war risks and glorified by Bishops and their coteries . . . ."[4]

The attitude of men such as these was no

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[1] The Times, April 6, 1916, p. 9.

[2] The Times, April 6, 1916, p. 9.

[3] The Times, April 7, 1916, p. 9.

[4] Rev. A.W. Gough. The Times, April 8, 1916, p. 9.

more foregiving as the war drew to its conclusion. In May, 1918, the Lower House of York Convocation passed a resolution, moved by the Dean of Manchester, which disapproved of the conduct of conscientious objectors who enjoyed the rights and benefits of citizenship without giving service to the state in time of war. During the debate, it was implied that such men were friends of the Kaiser. A voice of moderation was heard from the Dean of Carlisle, who said that while he had no sympathy with the absolutists, the bona fide objectors were exempted by law, "and tribunals had acted outrageously in refusing to admit perfectly obvious bona fide objections." Archdeacon Lindsay asked for consideration for Quakers. But the resolution was carried, and a rider which questioned the wisdom of treating genuine conscientious objectors as criminals was defeated.[1]

After the Armistice, conscientious objectors were still subject to various forms of harassement, and fresh sentences were still imposed on them. The Bishops of Oxford, Ely, Truro, and Exeter made a public appeal on their behalf, describing the harassement as "needlessly vindictive."[2] The Archbishop of Canterbury, too, continued his efforts on their behalf. He learned that the Government was making it a policy to rehire personnel who had been

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[1] The Times, May 3, 1918, p. 3.

[2] Letter in The Times, Feb. 26, 1919, p. 12.

conscientious objectors, but only on a temporary basis. He protested to Austen Chamberlain:

> To me it seems that this is an indefensible position in the case of a man who has acted in strict accordance with what the law allowed. . . . We may, if we will, condemn or dislike or despise him and his works, but surely a man, when external work of National importance done in lieu of fighting is over, goes back to his former position unless Parliament has decided that he is to be permanently degraded and lose the right of pension belonging to Civil Servants. I cannot find that Parliament has ever so decided . . . . (1)

Davidson eventually won his point.

The problem of the conscientious objectors reveals war fever at its worst. Some efforts were made to direct the public conscienee by men such as the Archbishop, but they met with little success for, in effect, there was no public conscience. No course was open to moderately-minded Churchmen except individual appeals, for the Church was hopelessly divided on the issue. The attitude of some clergy towards conscientious objectors shows the extent to which war hysteria had penetrated the Church, and the extent to which they identified the British nation with righteousness. They refused to tolerate any opinion which suggested that the claims of the state over the individual were not absolute, and they thereby practiced the same intolerance of

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[1]Letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nov. 19, 1919, in Bell, op. cit., p. 953.

which they accused the Germans.

In keeping with the spirit of the Holy War, however, the Church constantly warned against letting the national temperament be dominated by an unchristian spirit of hatred and vengeance; if such a spirit were to dominate, it would not only destroy the basis of the Holy War and tarnish the cause for which Britain was fighting, but it would also impair the chances for arriving at a constructive peace settlement. In essence, the Church warned that such a spirit was as morally destructive as any philosophy which Germany might profess. This view found expression in sermons and prayers, and in the campaign which the Church waged against the adoption of a policy of reprisals for German atrocities. But, as in the matter of the conscientious objectors, cracks appeared, and the spirit of some Churchmen was not always moderate. Only over the question of reprisals was there anything approaching unanimity of view among Churchmen.

Many examples could be provided of the warnings which were uttered against the spirit of hatred, independently of those which had to do with the policy of reprisals. For example, on a National Day of Intercession in 1915, the Archbishop of Canterbury warned against:

> the peril of letting anger -- even if it be righteous anger -- be fanned and cherished into

> something like an un-Christian hate . . . . The despite done to international honour and good faith must, so far as they are remediable, be set right: but we have to be sternly on our guard lest, in setting right one great wrong, we drift into another . . . . (1)

The editor of Commonwealth noted that none should be stirred to hatred by German atrocities, but rather to anguish and humiliation because of "a great fear at what may be hidden in our own flesh and blood . . . . ."[2] A look to the future peace settlement and a warning for the present were provided by the Dean of Durham in a long preface to a published collection of his sermons preached to the troops:

> There is a real danger that so bitter a resentment against the deluded people will possess English and French minds, that the conclusion of the War will bring less peace than an armed boycott, which could only be the pledge of renewed conflict. It must surely be the true function of Christian Preachers to work against so terrible a catastrophe, to keep steadily before their congregations the intrinsic wrongness of mere revenge, the sacred duty of forgiveness, the necessity of so carrying through this conflict that the fellowship of mankind shall be strengthened and exalted, not permanently obstructed . . . . they will not make themselves the mouthpieces of that anti-German passion which (for

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[1]Preached at St. Paul's, Jan. 3rd. The Times, Jan. 4, 1915, p. 4.

[2]Henry Scott Holland, "Notes of the Month", Commonwealth, XX (Feb., 1915), 40.

> intelligible reasons) is running strongly among our people. (1)

That the danger was apparent is shown by the treatment accorded conscientious objectors and by the whole controversy over reprisals. As the war drew to its conclusion, the Archbishop issued a warning in a sermon he preached at St. Margaret's, Westminster, before the King and Queen and both Houses of Parliament. He warned that noble ideals may, through time and struggle and hardship and confusion, become confused with a temper of another kind. He spoke of righteous wrath, which may be of the essence of God-given impulses, but he also spoke of:

> a form of wrath, which may degenerate into a poisonous hatred, running right counter to the principles of a Christian creed . . . and which . . . may do worse than weaken, worse than coursen and lower our high aims: it may corrupt and defile them with a horrid miasma, transforming what was a righteous -- yes, a wholesome -- wrath against wrong into a sour and envenomed hatred of whole sections of our fellow-men. That peril is no mere vague possibility. It exists. (2)

These many warnings found more concrete expression in the nature of the official prayers

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[1]Henson, op. cit., p. xi-xii.

[2]Preached August 4, 1918. Bell, op. cit., p. 903.

issued for use during the war. No direct prayers for victory were composed, for there were ordinary prayers in daily use which asked for victory in general terms.[1] The Archbishop was reproached by some because there was no sharp, direct prayer for victory, and to one such correspondent he replied:

> . . . if there was one request which poured in more strenuously upon me than others from all quarters when we were compiling these prayers, it was that we should abstain from identifying ourselves with the Divine Will to such an extent as to claim that God is simply on our side, and this is a matter of course.(2)

In 1914, the Church of England said that Britain entered the war on God's side, in defence of God's cause against the militaristic, anti-Christian forces of Prussia; this was just the reverse of claiming that God was on Britain's side. The prayers asked for guidance in the removal of "arrogance and feebleness", and for the granting of "courage and loyalty, tranquility and self-control."[3] God was being asked to grant the qualities which would continue to make Britain able and worthy of being His instrument:

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[1] e.g. Second Collect at Morning Prayer, Prayer for the King's Majesty. (Letter dated Aug. 27, 1914, in Ibid., p. 736.)

[2] Ibid., p. 736.

[3] Ibid., p. 736.

> Let us give thanks to Almighty God for the mercies we have received during the war. . . .
> Let us pray that God will continue these blessings towards us; that He will grant to us and to our Allies the will to consecrate ourselves afresh to the cause of righteousness and freedom and peace; that He will strengthen us to meet with fortitude the duties and sacrifices which may yet be demanded of us; and that He may be pleased to shorten the time of our trial and to give such victory to our arms as may bring to the world the blessings of a just and lasting peace. (1)

This, indeed, is a prayer for victory, but not one which -- as the Archbishop said -- identifies Britain with the Divine Will to such an extent as to claim that God is simply on the British side. There certainly were many such prayers; as Henry Scott Holland wrote, one went to war because one believed in the righteousness of one's cause, and one could not desire righteousness to be defeated:

> To commit our Cause to God in prayer is to stake our lives on the conviction that we are fighting for the Truth and for the Right. If we had not this conviction, we could not commit our cause to God at all in prayer. To pray, then, at all, is to pray that the Right may win: and to pray that prayer in the passionate belief that we are concerned in the winning. (2)

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[1]Special prayer on a Day of National Prayer, Jan. 6, 1918. Reported in The Times, Jan. 7, 1918, p. 4.

[2]Henry Scott Holland, "Notes of the Month", Commonwealth, XIX (Nov. 1914), 327.

Not all were willing or able to make the distinction between Britain's being on God's side -- with the self-righteousness which that implied -- and God's being on Britain's side. The question might well be asked that if God were using Britain as His instrument, and if Britain were on His side, then was not God on the side of Britain? Thus the Bishop of Carlisle might say that the war would prove, not that God was on Britain's side, but "that we are on the side of God."[1] On the other hand, however, the Bishop of Newcastle could say, "nor can I entertain a moment's doubt but that, in the end, 'the Righteous Lord, Who loveth righteousness', will prove Himself to have been on our side."[2] And so, while prayer should be done in a spirit of humility, it was nevertheless right to pray for victory:

> I am certain . . . that we ought to pray for victory. Do not let us have any timidity or half-hearted hesitation upon the matter. We pray earnestly for the victory of the Allies, not merely because their defeat would mean a catastrophe to civilization and the world, but because we are convinced that they are fighting

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[1]Bishop of Carlisle, "The Deceitfulness of War", op. cit., p. 499.

[2]Bishop of Newcastle, "The Bishop of Newcastle's Letter to the People of his Diocese", in Archbishop of Canterbury and others, War and Christianity, op. cit., p. 50.

for the cause of righteousness. (1)

That not all preaching and prayer was done or received in a spirit of moderation is shown by the lively controversy which followed the Canterbury Convocation's recommendations regarding the Imprecatory Psalms. In July 1917, a committee on the use of the Psalter in public worship presented its report, and among its recommendations was one that Psalm 58 should be entirely omitted from public worship, as well as certain verses from Psalms 14, 55, 68, 69, 109, 137, 139, 140, and 143. This recommendation was made on the grounds that these Psalms contained statements not in accordance with the teaching of the New Testament, and that they seemed to encourage an unchristian spirit of revenge.[2]

This change in the Liturgy had been considered as far back as 1912, when it was admitted that many men, both clerical and lay, found it difficult to reconcile the tone of personal vindictiveness in these Psalms with their prayers to a God whose very nature was Love. Though it was charged that this revision of the Psalter was to

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[1]Bishop Ryle, Dean of Westminster, preaching at Westminster Abbey, Jan. 3, 1915. The Times, Jan. 4, 1915, p. 4.

[2]Report to the Upper House of the Canterbury Convocation, The Times, July 4, 1917, p.2.

to declare war on the Church and the Bible[1], defenders of the recommendations replied that the revisions applied only to the public worship, and that Psalm 58 and the offending verses of the other Psalms were not to be excluded from Holy Writ. Moreover, it was said, the Psalter had been in use in England only since the Reformation, and not everywhere, always, and by all Churches as part of the daily worship of the common people; it was therefore a rite ordained by man's authority which, according to one of the Thirty-nine Articles, " 'every particular or national Church has authority to ordain, change, and abolish . . . so that all things be done to edifying.' "[2]

It might well be asked why a problem which had arisen in 1912 was, at this particular moment in the war, given priority. The answer seems to be that in the early summer of 1917, German air raids on Britain were heavy, and there was a public outcry for the Government to adopt a policy of reprisals; this recommendation concerning the Imprecatory Psalms was, therefore a reaffirmation of the Church's objection to such a policy. As the Archbishop said during the debate on the recommendations, the time was opportune, for these Psalms had

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[1]H.F. Wyatt, "Convocation versus the Church and the Bible", The Nineteenth Century and After, LXXXII (Aug., 1917), 339.

[2]Canon Edward A. Welch, op. cit., p. 821.

been quoted as justifying reprisals.

However, the recommendations did not meet with whole-hearted approval and could not be enforced, for the Lower House of the York Convocation disapproved of the disuse of those Psalms.[1] The Dean of Canterbury wrote that he would regret their loss, for he felt they were more meaningful than the "mealy-mouthed prayers for the victories of our armies" which clergymen were obliged to use. He regarded Psalm 58 especially as "one of the grandest expressions of the righteous indignation by which we ought to be animated."[2] H.F. Wyatt, a speaker and writer on naval and imperial matters and himself the son of an Anglican clergyman, denounced the recommendations in two articles. In one, he said the Church was making the Christian religion that of the coward and the shirker[3], and that the resolutions against the Psalms set the seal on "that foul, bastard, and spurious version of Christian teaching . . . ."[4] In another article he referred to the "weak, unthinking, namby-pamby Christianity which led to the passing in Convocation of the resolutions against the Psalms. To

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[1] The Times, Nov. 22, 1917, p. 3.

[2] Letter in The Times, July 11, 1917, p. 7.

[3] Wyatt, op. cit., p. 342.

[4] Ibid., p. 344.

those who are friends of that Church . . . the men responsible for those resolutions must appear its direst foes."[1] Such reactions were fairly typical; they provide another illustration of the extent to which many Churchmen were out of step with the public temper.

There was, then, no unanimity within the Church on the type of prayer to be offered; nor was there a single representative opinion about what constituted righteous wrath and what constituted a spirit of hatred. The attitude that Britain was fighting a Holy War might have produced a spirit of moderation among some men, in keeping with the message of the Gospel, but among others it produced a certain feeling of self-righteousness which was the inevitable result of believing that one was fighting a war on the side of God. Moreover, many were led to the corollary that if Britain were on God's side, then God was on Britain's side. If some prayers and sermons were temperate, many were not, and the preachers who were filled with wrath had a receptive audience which easily transferred wrath into hatred.

The Church of England was prepared to admit that war was a fact -- a sometimes necessary fact,

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[1] H.F. Wyatt, "The Air War and the Bishops", The Nineteenth Century and After, LXXXII (Nov., 1917), 1073-4.

and that though it was an evil, it might be the lesser of two evils. But war, terrible as it was, was not a condition of anarchy, and the Church was not prepared to accept the view that if war itself were justified, then every act in war was also justified. This opinion involved the Church in a discussion over the adoption of a policy of reprisals for German atrocities -- a policy which the Church strongly opposed. In opposing reprisals, the Church emphasized their unchristian nature: they were born of a temper of hatred and vengeance; they involved the infliction of unnecessary cruelty, and the morally destructive effects of such a temper on the people who adopted a policy of reprisals far outweighted any advantage which might result from having inflicted some physical damage on the enemy. For Britain to adopt a policy of reprisals for atrocious acts meant more than adopting the methods of the enemy -- it meant sinking below his level, for while he denied that his actions were wrong, Britain maintained that they were wrong and yet proposed to do the same thing. What this line of argument really reveals, however, is that the adoption of a policy of reprisals would mean the complete destruction of the basis of the Holy War: a basis which put all the evil on one side and all the good on the other. If the Church of England could justify participation in the war only on the grounds that it was a Holy War, then it was essential that this illusion be maintained.

From 1914 until the end of the war, Churchmen maintained that a policy of reprisals was morally wrong and harmful, and official expression was given to this view by resolutions passed in Convocation. Because of the relationship of the Church to the state, Churchmen conducted their campaign by exhorting the nation to follow a particular line of conduct, or by recording their own opinions about the kind of policy which the Government should pursue. Only rarely did some Churchmen express outright opposition to Government policy. In the long run, the Church's campaign against the use of reprisals was ineffective: it was subjected to hostile criticism or indifference.

A letter from the Bishop of Winchester to The Times in November 1914 is an early indication of the opposition which the Church of England would take to any policy of reprisals. He argued that the adoption of such a policy would not only be deeply wrong because of the kind of acts which would be committed, such as war on non-combatants, but that it would also be self-defeating: "The strength of our case against Germany in Belgium is that she has acted in a way any civilized nation should and would repudiate . . . ."[1] Another indication came at the end of that year, when a special prayer was included in a Service of Intercession at St. Paul's,

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[1] The Times, Nov. 3, 1914, p. 7.

that Britain might be preserved from unchristian acts of retaliation.

In 1915, the Archbishop of Canterbury participated in a House of Lords debate on the matter of reprisals. He used the actual matter at hand -- reprisals against German prisoners in return for mistreatment of British prisoners in Germany -- as a means of introducing the broader and more serious question of reprisals as a policy. He made a strong plea for rejecting reprisals of any kind, under any circumstances: reprisals, whether as a spirit or as a fact, was antithetical to everything for which Britain was fighting.

> I hope that this country will not go one step forward in the direction of anything like reprisal or retaliation. To my mind, nothing could be more contrary to the honourable traditions of English history or more foreign to the principles which should actuate us in matters of this kind, principles both of religion and of civilisation generally . . . . If once we became infected with a lower spirit and adopted a lower ideal in these matters by imitating bad habits and bad ways of which we might hear elsewhere it would be the worst misfortune that the war could bring upon us . . . . I trust that whatever revelations as to the treatment of our own countrymen in Germany may come to light we shall resist with scorn the temptation to retaliate or to do anything which is unworthy of our traditions, unworthy of our ideals, or lowering to that self-respect, which is an honourable asset in our country's life.(1)

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[1] House of Lords Debates, 15 March 1915, p. 756-7.

He repeated many of the same arguments in a debate on April 27th, but this time he also appealed to history: "We want to go down into history absolutely unsullied in the records of our carrying on of this great war."[1]

The above remarks were very mild compared to what followed. To Davidson, the use of gas indicated a barbarous departure from accepted methods of warfare and, in a letter to Asquith, he vigorously protested its proposed use by the British Army. He said that a burning sense of indignation had arisen among all reasonable men because of Germany's use of the weapon, in defiance of every principle of international ethics, and that he was "profoundly disquieted" by indications that Britain might adopt the same measures. He asked why a method--the creation of fatal disease among the enemy through the use of gases --was now being considered, when a few months ago the use of such a method would have been regarded as "preposterous":

> What has happened to change our view? Nothing, so far as I know, except that our opponents have sunk to that level of misconduct in defiance of International Conventions and of the dictates of common humanity. Is the reason adequate? They have degraded the traditions of military honour and the good name of the German Army by adopting these vile practices. We can no doubt follow their example if we choose. If we

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[1] Ibid., 27 April 1915, p. 870.

> adopt that line of reprisal (and this is a really important point) how far will the principle carry us? If they are poisoning the wells in South Africa, and perhaps ultimately in Belgium, are we forthwith to do the like? If so, can we retain self-respect on the part either of the Army or the Nation? It seems to me that international agreements for securing the honourable conduct of war would then be obliterated in a brutal rivalry as to the horrors which can be perpetrated by both sides. The result would be such a tangle, that the world will soon be saying, and history will say hereafter, that there was nothing to choose between the nations who were at War, and it would become a matter of small importance, and probably of disputed fact, who it was who began the general course of adopting these vile usages . . . . (1)

A milder form of this correspondence between Davidson and Asquith was published[2] -- mild enough so that the strength ofDavidson's objection to the use of gas did not emerge. Instead, it was couched in general terms about descending to the enemy's level. The letter also contained an offer of the services of all Christians in whatever way they could be used; this was a public avowal that the Church was ready to help the war effort in any way it could. Asquith's reply welcomed Davidson's offer that the Church would contribute to keeping the concept of duty before the nation. His only

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[1]Letter to Asquith, May 7, 1915. Bell, op. cit., p. 758-9.

[2]The Times, May 17, 1915, p. 10.

comment on Davidson's plea about the use of gas was to remark:

> "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath" is a precept which rebukes the petty, personal, unreasoning quarrels of social and national life. But it has no application when the issue is such that freedom, honour, and humanity itself is at stake. (1)

The next day, Lord Kitchener announced that British troops had to be protected, even if this meant using German methods. Davidson's last protest was a letter to Asquith, asking for an assurance that gas would not be used, but the only reply he received was that its use was a military necessity for the protection and self-defence of the soldiers.

To many men who survived the war, the Archbishop's words had a ring of truth. Others contented themselves by saying that reprisals were justified if the rules of warfare were broken by the enemy; the stigma still attached to those who initiated the action.[2] But at the time, Davidson's

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[1] The Times, May 17, 1915, p. 10.

[2] See a letter from a Roman Catholic, Rev. F. Askew, in The Times, Oct. 19, 1915, p. 10:
"There are indeed rules to the game of war, but once these are flagrantly abused and infringed, reprisals become Christian and legitimate, lest the malefactor should have things all his own way,

words, mild as they were, aroused only hostility. Nevertheless, it is regrettable that Davidson did not see fit to have his original letter to Asquith published, for its argument was far more forceful and uncompromising than the generalities which appeared in the published correspondence. It is unlikely that his argument would have convinced many people, but it would have made more of an impact than merely putting the Archbishop on record as having issued a mild appeal, and then being silenced by a layman's quoting of Scripture. Moreover the offer, in the same letter, of the Church's support for the national effort had the effect of limiting the strength of public statements Davidson could afterwards make on the subject; to have pressed the point regarding the use of gas would have put the Church in the position of opposing what the Government had declared to be a necessary policy, and would have left the Church open to charges of weakening the war effort.[1]

In 1916, Zeppelin raids had increased in

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and a premium should be put on wrong-doing . . . . After all circumstances do alter cases, and prevention is still better than cure."

[1]The only other argument which might have been used against the employment of gas was its notable lack of success, but the Censorship kept that argument hidden from public view.

frequency, and a movement was afoot to urge the Government to adopt a policy of air reprisals. Archbishop Davidson proposed a motion which was unanimously carried in Convocation:

> That this House, while fully recognizing that it does not lie within its province to express any opinion on matters purely military, desires to record its conviction that the principles of morality forbid a policy of reprisal which has, as a deliberate object, the killing and wounding of non-combatants, and believes that the adoption of such a mode of retaliation, even for barbarous outrages, would permanently lower the standard of honourable conduct between nation and nation. (1)

In introducing the resolution, the Archbishop stated that there were ethical as well as military considerations attached to a policy such as air reprisals, and that it was necessary to warn of these before any such policy were adopted.[2] This resolution was the means by which the warning was conveyed, and is the expression of an official attitude. Dr. Davidson's biographer says that the resolution was effective at the time, though bitterly resented by many citizens.[3] However, the Government was probably motivated more by its own indecision than by advice from the Church.

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[1] Bell, op. cit., p. 777-8.

[2] Ibid., p. 777-8.

[3] Ibid., p. 778.

Following the British bombing of Freiburg on April 14, 1917, a House of Lords debate on the matter of reprisals was initiated by a question from Davidson. Once again he appealed to the judgement of history, to national honour, and to Christian honour:

> I do know that the Christian judgement of England . . . is that when we come out of this war . . . we mean to come out with clean hands and with the right to feel sure that in the coming years, whatever record leaps to light, we shall never be ashamed. (1)

And in some private correspondence he warned of the dangers of adopting a policy whose deliberate object was to harm or kill non-combatants, whether for reasons of vengeance, to promote terror, or to deter the enemy from continuing a similar policy. History, he said, would draw no distinction between nations who had all descended to the same level. Moreover, if there should ever be another war, it would begin with such atrocities, for they would no longer be regarded as beyond the pale. The whole moral currency of international life would be debased.[2]

At the same time, Convocation reaffirmed the resolution on reprisals which it had passed in

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[1] House of Lords Debates, 2 May 1917, p. 1018.

[2] Letter to Sir Thomas Barlow, June 21, 1917, in Bell, op. cit., p. 833-4.

1916. Not all were certain that the policy should be reaffirmed: the Bishop of Exeter said that while he did not approve of reprisals against non-combatants, he did not wish to say anything which might hamper the Government in the matter.[1]

After a heavy series of air attacks on London in the early summer of 1917, the correspondence columns of The Times received many letters on the subject, most of which, according to The Times, demanded retribution in kind.[2] By October, The Times wished to close its columns on the subject, on the grounds that the discussion was academic, for by that time the Government had adopted a policy of bombing German towns declared to be of military importance, in reprisal for raids on Allied towns. The newspaper defended the policy by arguing that there was no essential difference between bombing certain towns in Germany, and bombing behind the German lines in Flanders, and that there was no reason to suppose that the Government meant to wage war on women and children rather than on armies.[3] This statement did not go unchallenged. The Bishops of Ely and Oxford once again expressed their regret at the Government's decision, along with their conviction that a policy

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[1] The Times, May 2, 1917, p. 3.

[2] The Times, June 16, 1917, p. 7.

[3] The Times, Oct. 15, 1917, p. 6.

of reprisals was "essentially and deeply wrong." They said that Britain would sacrifice the advantage of entering peace negotiations with clean hands, and that such terrible behaviour would become the accepted standard of conduct if there should ever be another war.[1] The Bishop of Winchester pointed out that it was not always possible to distinguish between war against non-combatants and war on military objectives, as The Times was attempting to do.[2]

It is to the credit of the Church that it tried to give moral leadership to the nation by taking an early, clear, and unequivocal stand against reprisals. Although on this subject there was general agreement within the Church, there was no agreement between the public conscience and the Church and, as with the problem of the conscientious objectors, the public conscience was not prepared to be led. It accepted that part of the Holy War propaganda which identified Germany with evil, but not that part of it which demanded that Britain should not be guided by an unchristian temper. Archbishop Davidson's stand against reprisals was unpopular, and he was the recipient of many letters from people who disagreed with him and said that, in fact, they did want Germany to suffer the horrors Britain was suffering, and they

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[1] The Times, Oct. 15, 1917, p. 6.

[2] The Times, Oct. 19, 1917, p. 9.

did want to see the streets of Germany run red with blood.[1] In a letter to Dr. Horton, Davidson wrote:

> I am regarded apparently as the representative mouthpiece of those who object to reprisals undertaken with the deliberate object of injuring non-combatants, and I am in consequence the recipient of a continuous shower of protests, denunciations, and often virulent abuse, from every part of England, especially from London. I am said to be the cause of the Air Raids, to be in league with the Germans, and to be responsible for the death of those who have suffered, and so on . . . . (2)

The Corporation of London and the mayors of metropolitan boroughs passed resolutions "calling for retaliatory air attacks on German towns." At the meeting of the former, Mr. Cuthbert Wilkinson said that, considering the statements of the Bishops on the matter, he did not wonder that there was talk about the Church losing its hold on the people.[3] H.F. Wyatt launched a strong attack against the Bishops of Oxford and Ely; he said that their letter to The Times furnished "a perfect illustration of

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[1]Speech to the Upper House of the Canterbury Convocation, The Times, July 4, 1917, p. 2.

[2]Letter dated Oct. 11, 1917, in Bell, op. cit., p. 837.

[3]The Times, Oct. 5, 1917, p. 10.

the weak, unthinking, namby-pamby Christianity which led to the passing in Convocation of the resolutions against the Psalms . . . ."[1] He went on to say that the Bishops did not understand the military situation, and that to follow their advice would cripple Britain: "As children told to say something about a theme of which they know nothing, they placidly remark that they think it would be very wrong to act like the Germans."[2]

Perhaps public feeling about the Church's stand against reprisals was best summed up in an article which appeared in the National Review in 1918:

> For acts directly tending yet further to accentuate the severance of the Church from the people, the Archbishops must, I fear, accept a heavy responsibility . . . . His Grace of Canterbury, after our men had been overwhelmed by the first gas attack, is reported to have begged Mr. Asquith . . . not to sanction the use of gas by British troops . . . . Dr. Davidson has gone further than this and has consistently opposed those who advocate reprisals as the only means by which the German can be restrained from raining bombs on helpless non-combatants. It does not impress the average man as particularly Christian to acquiesce in the slaughter

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[1]Wyatt, "The Air War and the Bishops", op. cit., p. 1073-4.

[2]Ibid., p. 1073.

> of someone else's wife and children in order that, by refusing to take stern measures calculated to save them, any taint of personal blood-guiltiness may be escaped. (1)

The Bishop of Ely was much closer to the truth when he said all that would result from the adoption of such a policy would be a "campaign of frightfulness, for Germany would care nothing for the loss of a few civilians."[2] But the words proved to be true for both sides.

The controversy over reprisals shows how the one institution which could claim to be the moral voice of Britain was, in the end, disregarded. In the minds of politicians and soldiers, expediency determined what was "right" or "wromg". But for Churchmen, the war was a Holy War. For Britain to adopt a policy of reprisals would destroy the assumption on which the Holy War rested -- the assumption that all the good was on one side and all the evil on the other. Generally speaking, Churchmen were united in their opposition to the use of reprisals: disagreements within the Church over the treatment of conscientious objectors and over the nature of prayers were concerned with how best to guide the national temperament

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[1]M.H. Temple, "The Failure of the Church", National Review, LXX (Jan., 1918), 575.

[2]Letter in The Times, April 23, 1917, p. 9.

and for what end, but the use of reprisals threatened to destroy the only reason on which the Church could build a case for entering and remaining in the war, and therefore Churchmen were led inevitably to oppose their use. The predictions which Churchmen made -- campaigns of frightfulness, a decline in the standard of conduct among nations, the corruption of the very cause for which Britain was fighting -- all proved accurate. But at the time, all that the nation saw was the importance of winning the war-- a war which the Church itself had defined as one in which everything for which Britain stood was at stake. The nation created its own logic about the war, which was that the end justified the means; this was a logic which the Church could not accept. But under the circumstances, the Church was expected to support Government policy; if it could not do this, then it was expected to be silent. The Church did neither, and was merely ignored.

IV

THE CHURCH, THE PEACE, & LOST OPPORTUNITIES

The inevitable corollary of waging a Holy War was that there could be no peace until one side or the other had been decisively defeated. In a Holy War, principles were at stake, and for the Church to advocate a negotiated peace would be to abandon the principles for which the nation was fighting. Moreover, the Church drew a distinction between peace which was the mere absence of armed conflict, and true peace which was the absence of evil or the permeation of the national life with Christian principles of conduct. Until this latter kind of peace was assured, the Church viewed any cessation of hostilities with Germany as being, at best, an armistice; unless the evils which prevailed in Germany were eradicated, they would be sure to emerge again. This was the view which the Church adopted in 1914, and this was the view which it kept before the public until the end of the war. The decision of the Government to adopt a policy of reprisals put the Church in a delicate position, for it seemed to repudiate the Church's claim that all the good was on one side and all the evil on the other. But because the Church had to maintain that the war was a Holy War if it were to continue to support it, and because the Church could not disassociate itself

from the national effort -- nor even from a policy which it believed was morally wrong, it ignored the indications that the Government was no longer fighting a Holy War, swept its shattered illusions aside, and remained one with the Government in preaching the necessity of continuing the battle.

To wage war for the eradication of evil is nebulous in meaning; to determine when that objective has been reached is almost impossible. The Church of England could offer no solution to this problem and so, just as the matter of when to make war was left to politicians and soldiers, so was the matter of when to make peace. Churchmen accepted the Government's view that peace would be made when victory, as determined by armed might, was realized; in terms of the Holy War this meant that military victory would serve as the indication that good had triumphed over evil. Because the Church of England believed that there should be no peace of compromise, it would not embarass the Government by suggesting compromises or negotiations which the Government would be unwilling to accept. But because the Church would accept military victory as the measure of moral victory, it would support peace negotiations whenever-- but not before-- the Government saw fit to enter into them.

Exhortations to continue fighting were expressed either by themselves, or as part of general statements about the cause for which Britain was fighting. Thus the Bishop of Carlisle concluded his

article, "The Inner meaning of the War", by stating that it would be shameful if peace were made before "the spirit of immoral might" were defeated[1]; and the Dean of Norwich's sermon trumpeted, "in the name of freedom, in the name of justice, in the name of truth, in the name of humanity -- which are all names of our God -- we will fight to our last drop of blood against you, and may God defend the right!"[2]

This same determination was expressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury in a letter to Dr. Söderblom, the Archbishop of Upsala. Dr. Söderblom had written to Church leaders in Europe and America, asking them to sign an appeal "to all those who have power or influence in the matter . . . seriously to keep peace before their eyes in order that bloodshed may soon cease."[3] In refusing to sign the appeal, Davidson said:

> You may be certain, however, that at the first moment when it seems to me that an opening is presented for securing a righteous and enduring peace, I shall do my utmost to urge it, but I am clear that that moment, greatly as we long for it, has not yet come.
>
> The conflict which has been forced upon Europe (I impute no motive but merely state a fact) must I fear, now that it has begun, proceed for the bringing to an issue the fundamental moral

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[1]Bishop of Carlisle, "The Inner Meaning of the War", op. cit., p. 736. See also supra, p. 37-8, p. 59-60.

[2]Dean of Norwich, "Armageddon", op. cit., p. 27. See also supra, p. 51.

[3]Bell, op. cit., p. 743.

> principle of faithfulness to a Nation's obligation to its solemnly plighted word. The recognition of the moral validity of such an obligation is fundamental to the maintenance of peace and progress among the Nations of the World.(1)

But "that moment" never came; as the tempo of the war increased, so did the size of the moral committement to the issues at stake, and the consequent determination of Churchmen to see the war through:

> Anything in such a war is better than a premature peace; anything is better than leaving it all to be done over again by our children; anything is better than that sons and husbands should have died in vain.
>
> We have got to come back to God ourselves and bring the whole world back to God; it would be in vain for the war to end before we had learn its lesson. (2)

The year 1915 saw the appearance of two books which were written by clergymen to forestall expressions of opinion that Britain should withdraw from the war as soon as possible; both argued that the cause at stake was so great that British participation was essential. Rev. E. Lyttelton, the Headmaster of Eton, wrote that while such a body of opinion had

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[1]Letter to Dr. Soderblom, Oct. 9, 1914, in Ibid., p. 743-4.

[2]The Bishop of London's New Year's Letter to his Diocese, The Times, Dec. 31, 1915, p. 6.

not yet expressed itself, it would when "the shoe begins to pinch", and that it must be resisted for it "undermines the unity of the country."[1] Rev. C.L. Drawbridge wrote that the war had to be fought "to such a finish that Germany and Austria will find it impossible to engineer the recurrence of such a World War for at least a generation." He stressed the importance of national unity if the war were to be conducted successfully, and he warned against the peace at any price advocates who would become more vociferous as the war went on.[2]

Archbishop Davidson was still more certain in 1916 than he had been in 1914 that the moment to make peace had not yet come. He was the recipient of many appeals for peace, and in a speech to the Canterbury Diocesan Conference he sought to make his position clear:

> . . . I find as yet no basis on which to encourage or justify our approaching with proposals of peace those with whom we are at war. So long a s they assure us that they are committed irrevocably to principles which I regard as absolutely fatal to what Christ has taught us -- the very principles surely on which all sound national or international life must stand -- I should look on it as flimsy sentimentalism were I to say that I want immediate peace. Of course, with our whole hearts we want peace, we pray for peace . . . . If God grant us, in

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[1]E. Lyttelton, Britain's Duty To-day (London: The Patriotic Publishing Co., 1915), p. 6.

[2]Drawbridge, op. cit., p. xii.

> answer to our prayers, the sight, ere long, of some opportunity of moving peacewards without sacrifice of principles which the whole Empire has by its deed declared to be dearer far than life itself -- once let that gleam, that loophole, appear, and then in the very earliest cohort of those who strive to make the hope a reality I shall crave the privilege of any place or voice that may be allowed me.(1)

1916 and 1917 were important years in terms of the possibilities for a negotiated peace. The sincerity of German peace overtures in 1916 is still a matter of controversy; what matters is that they were not tested. Churchmen met the German advance with silence or hostility; they repeated that there could be no compromise with principles, and hence no negotiated peace, and that a peace of compromise with an undefeated Germany would not be a real peace, but an armistice. The German peace note was followed by an offef of mediation from President Wilson; this prompted the Archbishop of York to devote his last sermon of 1916 to the necessity of continuing the war:

> . . . if our struggle in the war was really one between right and wrong, it demanded no compromise until a decision had been reached . . . . we were not manoeuvring for a bargain; we were contending for moral right. Our concern was not to secure markets, territory, or some new arrangement of the map of Europe: it was to break the spirit which had shown itself to be

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[1]As reported in The Times, June 23, 1916, p. 5.

> inconsistent with freedom and justice and the peace of the world. To bargain with that spirit while it was still vaunting its strength and when our own strength, in spite of all our sacrifices, was only reaching its full effect, would be to surrender the moral convictions which sent us into the war. It was this moral obligation which we had to remember when calls reached us on behalf of peace from enemies and neutral nations.
>
> Peace gained by moral surrender; peace which meant acquiescence, through weariness of the struggle, in moral wrong, was not sacred but base. Peace in the true sense -- the establishment of the life of nations upon a basis of public right and mutual justice -- was the true peace which the Allies had set before themselves to gain. No peace could be assured while the will to war in one great nation was unbroken. . . . A peace arranged with that will unconquered would not be peace but an armistice.in war, a breathing-space in which to enable the old bad spirit to recover its strength and to wait for its chance. (1)

Certainly there was no room here for a peace of compromise. Archbishop Lang's comments on the note from President Wilson[1], however, were less hostile than those from the Dean of Westminster. The Dean maintained that the President's note implied that the objectives of the two groups of belligerents were the same, and after repeating some of the British grievances against Germany, he concluded by

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[1]Preached at York Minster, Dec. 31, 1916, as reported by The Times, Jan. 1, 1917, p. 6.

[2]A request sent to the belligerent governments on Dec. 18th, that they state their respective aims. Wilson hoped to arrange a peace of negotiation, with himself acting as the mediator.

saying, "President Wilson has either in a fit of mental aberration sent the wrong note, or he had [sic] enirely mmsapprehended the European situation."[1]

The same arguments used by the Archbishop of York were developed in greater detail by the Bishop of Carlisle. He argued that for the Germans, peace was not a condition of righteousness, but merely the "cessation of active hostilities" which were "but the seed-plots of future wars."[2] There had been no change of heart in Germany -- the state was only requesting a breathing-space:

> What is changed is not the selfish will-to-power in the Kaiser and his allies, but the straitened power behind their will. The perils, therefore, which would have been active in foes victorious are still dormant in foes that have failed: and to make peace with such foes before either their will is purified, or the power to work their will is taken from them, would be to render frustrate all the sufferings and sacrifices of this War, to patch up an artificial and dangerous treaty which, like so many of its forerunners, would be the precursor and cause of future, and perhaps more terrible, wars. (3)

The Bishop also took the argument one step further than did the Archbishop of York, by attempting to show that out of war may come good: "Neither war nor peace is always good and necessarily good in

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[1]Dean of Westminster, as reported by the Literary Digest, LIV (Jan. 6, 1917), 23.

[2]Bishop of Carlisle, "'Is it Peace, Jehu?' ", The Nineteenth Century and After, LXXXI (Feb., 1917), 253.

[3]Ibid., p. 254.

itself. The character of each, for good or evil, depends on its origins and aims."[1] He went on to show that the peace which characterized the latter part of the nineteenth century had been a bad peace because of the prevalence of abuses such as slums, sweating in industry, the divorce between political economy and morals, gambling, extravagance, waste, and decline in traditional duties such as home and duty.[2] This peace of "physical security and protected sloth and bodily ease" had menaced the modern world; there were "hopeful signs" that the war, despite its wickedness, "may achieve our deliverance."[3] For all these reasons, then, the Bishop said that the note from the Germans -- and, by implication, the American offer of mediation -- had to be rejected:

> [It is] . . . fraught with perils of several kinds: military perils because obviously intended as a preparation for future wars: political perils because the result of mere diplomatic compromise: moral perils because based on the will-to-power and not on the will-to-right. If we and our allies agreed to such a peace we could not reasonably hope to escape from the perils inevitably involved in it. (4)

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[1] Ibid., p. 255.

[2] Ibid., p. 256.

[3] Ibid., p. 258.

[4] Ibid., p. 259.

There was only one corner from which a more moderate view emerged -- and also a more realistic one -- and that was from Commonwealth. While it cannot be said that Commonwealth put peace above every other consideration, its voice seems to have been the only one which maintained that peace would result from ending the hostilities, not from continuing the conflict.[1] It took the eminently sensible view that no opportunity for peace should be ignored, and that no harm could come from discussing the matter with the enemy. The British public and Government should not be afraid to look beyond the language in which the German note was expressed:

> But the proposal for negotiations has been seriously made: there can be no doubt of that. And it must be seriously considered. The howls and screams with which the general Press has received it are as absurd as they are wicked, if it is once remembered that they began long before anything was known of the language of the Note itself, or of the terms to be suggested. Moral decency required of us at least enough self-control to wait until we knew what it was we were talking about. We are bound to give a hearing to whatever it is that can be said on behalf of the one blessed hope which we all so passionately desire. (2)

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[1]Until 1918, when Dean Inge of St. Paul's said it was hopeless and absurd to think that the war could be ended by destroying Prussian militarism. Britain could not even destroy the German Army, and even if it should ever succeed in doing this, the spirit of a people could not be broken by destroying its troops. (Reported in "Notes and Comments" in War and Peace: The Nation Supplement, Jan.,1918, p. 165) But Churchmen generally continued to believe that the battle had to go on; as the stakes grew, so did the impossibility of making peace.

[2]Henry Scott Holland, "Notes of the Month" in

But Commonwealth's circulation was small and chiefly among the already converted; its views were unlikely to influence many, and would certainly not embarass the Government.

No comments were forthcoming from Churchmen on the Reichstag Peace Resolution of July 1917, and at this point it might be asked whether Churchmen believed that an expression of opinion concerning peace negotiations would be contrued as political interference. Judging from the Bishop of Carlisle's comments on the Pope's Peace Note, this was, indeed, true:

> In what capacity has the Pope intervened at this critical juncture in the titanic struggle of the great world-Powers? . . . If he has intervened politically he must submit to be judged politically; if spiritually he ought surely to have restrained his counsels to spiritual things. His Divine Master resolutely refused to intervene in political or financial matters . . . but limited Himself to the proclamation of moral laws and spiritual principles . . . . (1) The Pope has confounded these separate functions in his recent Note. His spiritual injunctions, therefore, are devitalized by his worldly politics; and his worldly politics are out of harmony with his spiritual claims. Hence the obvious and pathetic impotence of his Note . . . . To sit and

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Commonwealth, XXII (Jan., 1917), 6.

[1]Surely a rather unusual comment on the teachings of Christ by a Bishop of the Church of England.

> speak from the stool of politics and the stool of piety in one and the same utterance cannot but involve a fall in value and a declension in influence . . . . the fate of the counsels, though sincerely well-intended, of an advocate sitting on two stools at once must be the inevitable fate of all who try to look and speak in two directions simultaneously . . . . (1)

From this comment, and from the silence maintained by other Churchmen, it would appear that in a matter where things spiritual could not be divorced from things political -- i.e. the making of peace -- Churchmen preferred to remain silent rather than to lay themselves open to the charge of political interference. This, however, is but one side of the question, the other being that Churchmen generally were so imbued with the concept of the Holy War that their immediate aim was not peace but victory; the "moral and spiritual principles" which were at stake meant that the war must go on until evil were defeated and righteousness vindicated, and thus the great sacrifice of life made worthwhile.[2]

November 29, 1917, saw the publication of Lord Lansdowne's Peace Letter, which was the last appeal of that year for a rational reconsideration of war aims. While the letter was viewed with favour

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[1]Letter in The Times, Sept. 4, 1917, p. 4.

[2]The problem of justifying the sacrifice was common to everyone. As the slaughter increased, so did the impossibility of compromise; anything less than decisive victory would make the whole agony futile and would be a betrayal of those who had already been sacrificed.

by many important papers, including the Manchester Guardian, the Nation, and the Saturday Review, it met with hostility, and in some cases with vehement repudiation, from the Northcliffe, Rothermere, and Hulton press, and from sections of the public.[1] Once again the Church of England was silent. Lord Lansdowne said that the Archbishop of Canterbury was on his side,[2] and Davidson himself privately noted that the letter was "a reasonable plea for a quiet restatement"[3], but no public sign was given.[4] Was this another lost opportunity for the Church? It is only speculation to suggest that public endorsation of the Letter from the Archbishop might have encouraged more serious consideration being given to its proposals, but Davidson, in view of Government hostility to the Letter, deemed it more prudent to remain silent. Victory, apparently, was still the aim, and peace was subordinated to politics.

Though the Archbishop of York, too, was not moved to say anything about the Letter, he later wrote that one of the things which troubled his conscienee was that "perhaps more heed should have been paid to the proposals of the famous Lansdowne letter . . . ."[5] But probably most of the clergy

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[1]Lord Newton, Life of Lord Lansdowne (London: Macmillan and Co., 1929), p. 472.

[2]Ibid., p. 472.

[3]Bell, op. cit., p. 847.

[4]Ibid., p. 848.

[5]Lockhart, op. cit., p. 262.

believed what he believed at the time: armed victory was necessary to ensure a lasting peace, and only politicians and soldiers could decide when that victory had been achieved.

1918 began with a repetition of the exhortations to continue the war until Germany were defeated. The Archbishop of Canterbury, preaching on a National Day of Prayer, said:

> Remember, peace is not in itself an ideal. Peace is a condition wherein ideals can be attained. The ideal is not peace, but freedom and liberty to satisfy human aspirations, in joint loyalty to our living Lord. In war with its rampant horrors that liberty is impossible. It is because we were convinced by daily evidence that the mind of our enemies still turns against liberty that we persist and must persist in our task. If the mind of the enemy were to be changed, the whole conditions would be new . . . . (1)

And, just as the adoption of reprisals by the British Government did not diminish the Church's support for the war, neither did the publication of the "secret treaties" when the Russian archives were opened, despite the fact that the Bishop of Oxford was so scandalized by them that they stuck in his gizzard[2], and that Commonwealth saw the destruction

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[1] As reported in The Times, Jan. 7, 1918, p. 4.

[2] "They stick in my gizzard." Prestige, op. cit., p. 405.

of almost the entire British case against Germany:

> The secret treaties! What then of all our high words about righteousness, about justice, about freedom, about annexations? These treaties fling the words back in our very teeth . . . . It is an ugly and cynical chapter even in European diplomacy. But the moral sin of these secrecies is the worst of all. It leaves us almost without a decent leg to stand on. (1)

Though other Churchmen may have reacted to the treaties in the same way as Commonwealth, no comments were forthcoming. What might Churchmen have done? There was really very little they could do, for they were trapped by their own position. To denounce the treaties was to put the Church in the role of Government critic -- a role in which few Churchmen would have been comfortable, and certainly not one into which the Archbishop, as a staunch believer in the Establishment, was ever prepared to even attempt to lead the Church. To acknowledge and accept the treaties would have forced Churchmen to reconsider the whole nature of the war, and to admit that perhaps it was not a Holy War after all; this would have put the Church in an equally difficult position. National unity and the illusion of the Holy War had to be maintained for both political and ideological reasons and so, publically at least, the treaties went unnoticed.

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[1]Christopher Cheshire, "Notes of the Month", Commonwealth, XXIII (July, 1918), 189.

Though Churchmen did not respond to any of the peace overtures, they were very active in supporting and in encouraging support for an instrument to prevent the occurrence of future wars. Churchmen believed that wars --even the Holy War-- had their origins in the evil passions of man, and that this would be a war to end war only if a man-made instrument were devised to prevent these passions from ever again plunging the world into war.[1] This instrument was the League of Nations, and Churchmen maintained that provision for its creation should form part of the terms of peace with Germany. A special role was envisaged here for Christianity, for regardless of how good was the League's machinery, it would work only if all men wanted it to work. In effect, what was needed was a change in the hearts of men -- a sort of mortification of national pride -- and the Church believed it had a special mission to try and bring about this change.

Churches of all denominations began to give public support to the idea of the League of Nations in 1918.[2] In January of that year, a committee of

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[1]The Holy War did not mean the eradication of original sin; thus however successful Britain might be in this war, she could not hope to permanently eradicate the temper which produced war.

[2]In Nov. and Dec. 1917, the Nation supplement, War and Peace, was critical of "the absence of any general concerted and public action by the Churches in support of a League of Nations, calculated to create a definite political opinion of which statesmen would have to take cognizance."

clergy from the principal churches of the United Kingdom was formed as an auxiliary to the Executive Committee of the League of Nations Society,[1] and in February the Canterbury Convocation made it its official policy to support the League of Nations and to see that provisions for its establishment were included in the peace settlement. By July, it had become official Church of England policy to give support to, and to promote, the League of Nations. During the debate on the question in the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, the opinion was expressed that the Church must give a lead in supporting the League and in keeping it before the public eye for the League, accompanied by a change in the hearts of men, was the best way to guarantee peace. The resolution which embodied this support for the League stated:

> That this House notes with especial satisfaction the prominent place recently given by prominent statesmen among the Allies to the proposal of a League of Nations. We desire to welcome in the name of the Prince of Peace the idea of such a League as shall promote the brotherhood of man, and shall have power at the last resort to constrain by economic pressure or armed force any nation which should refuse to submit to an international tribunal any dispute with another nation. Further, we desire that such a League of Nations should not merely be regarded as a more or less remote consequence of peace, but that provision for its organisation should be included in the conditions of a settlement. (2)

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[1] The Times, Jan. 26, 1918, p. 3.

[2] Bell, op. cit., p. 891.

A similar tone prevailed in a manifesto which appeared in The Times of February 23rd: the League "should be put in the very forefront of the peace terms as their presupposition and guarantee."[1] It was signed by Davidson and other members of the Church of England, as well as by prominent clergy and laymen of the Church of Scotland, the Free Churches, and the Roman Catholic Church.

As the war drew to what appeared to be a successful conclusion for the Allies, there was some fear that the idea of the League would be lost beneath the general satisfaction with a military victory. President Wilsom himself was apprehensive, and in a speech on September 27th he appealed for support for the League. The next day, Archbishop Davidson received a letter from Lord Robert Cecil, who said that there was a very real danger that the arguments in favour of the League of Nations would be lost as military victory came nearer. It was important that Wilson's challenge to the Allied Governments should not fall flat, said Cecil, for if it did, and "if in consequence this Government returns the ordinary kind of non-commital reply, a priceless opportunity will have been lost. Now is the time for a real lead from the Church."[2] Davidson immediately responded with a letter to The Times, in which he reaffirmed the need for a

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[1] The Times, Feb. 23, 1918, p. 5.

[2] Bell, op. cit., p. 910-11.

League of Nations,and Christian support for that League:

> I can speak for no Government, but I am convinced that the mass of thoughtful Christian folk in England feel with an earnestness beyond words the force of his [Wilson's] contention that for reasons not of policy but of principle, not of national interest but of righteousness and justice and enduring peace, we want a League of Nations on the very lines which he has drawn. Details there may be in his description which need elucidation or development, but his outline has our unhesitating support. We are not afraid of such items of self-surrender as may here and there be involved for this nation or that. The issues are world-wide. Our vision and our purpose must be world-wide too . . . . The Churches in our land have spoken with no uncertain voice. The responsible vote of our Bishops, given eight months ago, was deliberate and unanimous. We not merely welcomed in the name of the Prince of Peace the idea of such a League, but we desired that provision for it should be included in the conditions of settlement when it comes. Other Churches agreed or followed suit. We have not spoken lightly or without assurance of the width and warmth of the support on which we count. We give no mere lip-adherence to a great ideal. We mean that the thing shall come to pass. (1)

Although this "lead" was the repetition of a previously stated position, and was made at the request of a member of the Government, it committed Christian opinion to support of the League in the most unequivocal terms possible. By giving their support to the League, Churches of all denominations helped to create popular support for the idea.

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[1]Letter in The Times, Sept. 30, 1918, p. 7.

At the same time as Churchmen campaigned for the League of Nations, they continued to warn against the spirit of hatred, but this was now done with reference to its possible effects on the Peace Treaty. For example, the editor of Commonwealth noted that while Britain did not need to be remined that she had fought on the side of right, she did need to be reminded that her enemies were still men, and that she shared more in common with them than against them:

> No peace of a permanent kind can possibly come about if a vast and powerful population is deliberately shunned, curtailed, provoked by its near neighbours . . . . Yet, unless we are to exterminate them root and branch, the only possibility of recovering them is by recreating in them their lost sense of proper manhood. After defeat -- conversion . . . . Restoration by recrimination is inherently impossible. That is why these vows of vengeance hold so dismal a promise for the future. (1)

Warnings from other quarters were expressed in far more general terms, and no one suggested what practical application these words might have on the Treaty. Archbishop Davidson's comments on his sermon of August 4th[2], in which he warned against the rancour

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[1]Christopher Cheshire, "Notes of the Month", Commonwealth, XXIII (Sept., 1918), 244.

[2]Supra, p. 76.

of public feeling, are revealing:

> It was not an easy sermon to preach, for the very reason that political questions in the controversial sense had to be avoided, and, on the other hand, one wished to avoid, and I think I did avoid, the comparatively easy and certainly popular course of beating the big drum, and simply belauding ourselves and our cause. I tried to say some things which are not politically controversial, but which cut at the root of our religious attitude and temptations. (1)

True, the Archbishop did not take the popular course, but neither did he take the unpopular course. Davidson spoke in generalities, and though privately he was convinced that "any attempt to rule Germany outside the pale of civilised nations after the war, is as impolitic as it is unworkable",[2] the growing hostility of public feeling towards Germany was never balanced by more specific suggestions from him as to what would constitute an acceptable peace.

What, in fact, did constitute an acceptable peace to the Church of England? Though there were many indications from Churchmen that the Treaty of Versailles did not fulfil their expectations, during the actual course of the negotiations Churchmen gave next to no indications of what their expectations were. Moreover, though there were opportunities for

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[1]Bell, op. cit., p. 904.

[2]Conversation with Haldane, in Ibid., p. 905.

the Archbishop to tender the hand of reconciliation, he held back until such time as Germany had "repented" -- though no one seems to have known quite this meant. In effect, the Church abdicated its responsibilities: it proclaimed the Holy War, but offered no suggestions as to how such a war should be concluded. Churchmen once again left matters to the politicians, and only tried to pick up the pieces.

A role for the churches in the peace settlement was proposed by the Archbishop of Upsala. In February 1918, Dr. Söderblom invited Davidson to send representatives to an Oecumenical Conference of all churches to be held at Upsala, its object being to proclaim to mankind the uniting power of the Cross and to call the churches themselves to labour together in the application of Christian principles to relationships among nations and to the regeneration of society. It would also discuss the churches' task in the settlement of international controversies and the support of international justice.[1] Davidson was aware that such a conference would be platitudinous if it did not talk about terms of peace, and politically dangerous if it did discuss such terms without the support of the Government and the country.[2] The Archbishop was nothing if

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[1] Ibid., p. 885.

[2] Ibid., p. 885.

not sensitive to political considerations, and he declined the invitation on the grounds that the conference would be regarded as an attempt to intervene in the negotiations themselves. He suggested, instead, that "Christian Churches and communities will be able to speak both more freely and with greater weight after the conclusion of Peace, when the process of reconstruction under new conditions is going on . . . ."[1] The conference did not take place, the Church of England left peace negotiations in the hands of the Government, and thus it never did speak "more freely" for it was bound by what the Government did.

A far more important correspondence concerning a possible role for the Church in the peace settlement was the exchange between Professor Deissmann, a noted German theologian and religious leader, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. It reveals that despite what was said before November 1918 about reconciliation with Germany and the German people when the Holy War should end, this reconciliation would occur only when Germany had shown repentance and had made good this repentance in political and economic terms -- the terms of the old order, not the new.

On November 15, Professor Deissmann sent a telegram to the Archbishop of Upsala, which he asked

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[1] Ibid., p. 941.

him to transmit to the Archbishop of Canterbury. It read:

> Christian circles of all belligerent nations desire, after the agonies of the struggle, an age of mutual forgiveness and conciliation, in order to fight in unison against the terrible consequences of the war, and to serve the moral improvement of the nations and of mankind. The German people having declared its readiness to make extensive sacrifices, and to make good again [reparations] sees, however, in the conditions of the truce now imposed a presage of a peace which would not mean reconciliation but an aggravation of the misery.
>
> After a four years' war of starvation, millions of the weakest and innocent would once more be endangered for incalculable time, and the deep bitterness thereof would prevent for generations the fulfilment of all ideals about Christian and human solidarity [a reference to the blockade.] But the state of mind among us has never been more favourable for a conciliation between the peoples than now . . . .
>
> Standing from the beginning of the war in the work for international Christian understanding, I now find it my duty at the end of the war to make an appeal to the Christian leaders, whom I know in the belligerent countries to use all their influence so that the approaching peace may not contain the seed of new universal catastrophes, but instead release all available conciliatory and rebuilding powers between the nations. (1)

After receiving the telegram, Davidson wrote to a friend, "When once Peace terms have been decided upon and accepted by Germany . . . the whole situation will in my opinion be changed. But until that

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[1] Ibid., p. 934-5.

time I cannot confabulate with Germany on mere terms of Christian amity."[1] And he replied to the Archbishop of Upsala, saying that he could not accept Professor Deissmann's assessment of the present situation as correct. Professor Deissmann, said Davidson, wrote as though "mutual forgiveness and conciliation" were all that was necessary to serve the future well-being of mankind, but this ignored the historic origins of the war and the way in which Germany conducted it. He repeated that Britain had been forced into a war she did not want, and that, "Our object was the vindication of freedom and justice, and the ultimate securing of a righteous peace, which should make war with all its horrors impossible of recurrence." He then proceeded to answer Deissmann's appeal:

> We have fought without hatred, and, so far as possible, without passion; and . . . we desire to be equally free from hatred and passion in the course which we follow as victors. But we cannot forget the terrible crime wrought against humanity and civilisation when this stupendous war, with its irreparable agony and cruelty, was let loose in Europe. Nor can we possibly ignore the savagery which the German High Command has displayed in carrying on the war . . . . all these things compel the authorities of the Allied Powers to take security against the repetition of such a crime. The position would be different had there been on the part of Christian circles in Germany any public protest against these gross wrongs, or any repudiation of their perpetrators.
> The conditions of the armistice offer the

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[1] Ibid., p. 935-6.

> best preliminary guarantees against a renewal of hostilities and a consequent postponment of peace. There is, I firmly believe, no spirit of mere bitterness or vindictiveness in the hearts of those who are imposing these conditions . . . . But righteousness must be vindicated, even although the vindication involves sternness. And the making good (Wiedergutmachung), to which Professor Deissmann refers, must be genuine, and, so far as is possible, complete. There is, however, as I need hardly say, no wish on the part of the Allied nations to crush or destroy the peoples of Germany . . . . it is my hope and prayer, that when the right and necessary reparation has been made, we may be enabled once more to lay hold of that [Christian] fellowship, and to make it mutually operative anew. (1)

The Archbishop's biographer says that to Davidson it was "obviously clear" that Deissmann's appeal was "political rather than ecclesiastical, though I do not question the sincerity of Deissmann's desires for religious intervention in favour of gentleness and peace."[2]

The exchange of views is interesting for several reasons. In Davidson's reply, the assumption is obvious that Britain did not conduct the war in any spirit of bitterness or hate; he apparently ignored the various warning he himself had uttered during the course of the war about the temper which was part of a policy of reprisals, and about the very real danger that righteous wrath would give way to

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[1] Ibid., p. 936-7. His reply to Deissmann also appeared in The Times of Nov. 27.

[2] Bell, op. cit., p. 939.

hatred. Deissmann feared that the terms of the Armistice were indicative of the nature of the peace terms which would be drawn up, and he appealed for a treaty whose tone would be one of fellowship and reconciliation, not stern justice. Davidson replied that fellowship and reconciliation were possible only after Germany had repented. The first mark of this repentance was for Germany to accept the peace terms; if she proved her good faith by accepting them, fellowship and reconciliation could then be discussed. What Davidson was actually saying was that although this war was supposed to usher in a new era of fellowship and good will among nations, it would not begin until reparations had been made in the traditional terms of politics and economics. This statement was also a reversal of statements made during the war to the effect that Britain was fighting the rulers of Germany and not the deceived people; now that the war was over, the German people were no longer regarded as having been deceived, and they were expected to repent for their errors.

Davidson's belief that there was no spirit of "bitterness or vindictiveness" among those who were to impose peace terms on Germany was severely challenged by the decision to hold a General Election in December. Public feelings ran riot, and the Government found itself committed to making a more severe peace than it had originally contemplated. Privately, Davidson noted:

> Every day has added, in my judgement, to the evidence that the holding of a General Election is in the highest degree harmful, for the heckling of candidates for Parliament about indemnities, expulsion of aliens, trial of the Kaiser, and many other things, is beyond measure mischievous, as those who have to make answer have given no study whatever to those exceedingly difficult subjects, and yet may be committed to making promises for votes. And all this before the Peace Conference has begun to sit. (1)

Now was the time for Davidson to act. He recognized that the assurances which he gave Deissmann about the British attitude towards peace were being quickly destroyed -- that, in fact, Deissmann's apprehensions about the terms of the treaty might well be realized, and yet he still refused to respond to Deissmann's appeal that Christian leaders should use their influence in an attempt to moderate the terms of the peace. Is it possible to find anyone who was more fearful of the political consequences of his words? Dr. Bell says it was a "misfortune" that the Archbishop did not publically express his views about the election. Certainly as leader of an important national institution he would have been assured of a wide audience; a statement from him might have introduced a note of reality into discussions of what could be exacted from Germany. A comment to this effect was later made by William Temple: he believed that the country would have responded to a call from its leaders for continued self-sacrifice in order to realize the kind of peace for which Britain had fought.

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[1] Ibid., p.942.

But the call was not sounded and instead the General Election, with its slogans such as "Hang the Kaiser", only aroused national selfishness and vindictiveness.[1]

Archbishop Davidson's New Year's Message (1919) contained an appeal for national unity; he said that the character and permanence of international peace would depend on the character of national plan, national coherence, and national resolve. "Let those who have to speak for us in the most momentous Conference the world has ever known do it with the knowledge that we at home are set upon making and keeping our country fit for its place in a trust, divinely given for the whole world's good."[2]

In keeping with the tone of this plea, he himself made no comment on the course of the negotiations. But occassionally the negotiations elicited remarks from other Churchmen. In March, the Bishop of Oxford appealed against the blockade, and said that while Germany must be punished, it was "criminal and impolitic to starve her into hopeless anarchy, despair, and permanent ruin."[3] The Bishop of Winchester wrote that although Germany was "the greatest international criminal" and justice should be dealt to her

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[1]William Temple, "The Moral Foundation of Peace", Contemporary Review, CXVIII (July, 1920), 69.

[2]The Times, Jan. 1, 1919, p.2.

[3]Letter in The Times, March 11, 1919, p. 9.

and she should be made to lift as much as possible of the burden of war costs from the Allies, he was fearful that the continual insistence on justice and punishment would only have the effect of hardening British hearts and make the nation meet hate with more hate. Something more was needed than righteous anger and a demand for justice:

> I am sure that unless we have in our hearts something more than this we shall be unthinkingly poisoning our own spirits, and making the great name of Justice cover disloyalty to the simple, human, Christian instincts of generosity and compassion. Yet I hear hardly a note of the latter kind in what is daily put before our people. (1)

When the actual terms of the proposed Treaty of Versailles were published, they met with a mixed reception. The Archbishop of Canterbury was not happy with the terms[2], and acting on the advice of friends who advised him not to attack the terms publically for fear of giving Germany some excuse for not signing, he wrote to Lloyd George to express his misgivings:

What my friends to whom I refer keep saying is,

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[1]Letter in The Times, May 1, 1919, p. 8.

[2]Referring to the problems of making the peace, Davidson had once noted "that we have no statesmen big enough to handle these problems . . . certainly not Lloyd George." Bell, op. cit., p. 947.

> that while presumably each item may be plausibly justified, the cumulative effect is to ask impossibilities. It is perfectly certain that this view is entertained . . . by a great many people who have no sort of wish to minimise German wrong-doing and its necessary outcome, and who are patriotic to their own land and absolutely loyal to the victorious Allied cause and its necessary expression in action. (1)

Lloyd George replied that the fullest consideration would be given to the German reply to the proposed terms, and that the statesmen would not be influenced by public clamour if they thought further concessions should be made to Germany. But the fundamental principles underlying the Peace should not be weakened, for:

> It will not make for lasting peace, for early appeasement, nor even for the future well-being of the German people themselves and their future position in the world, should we refrain from imposing on their country the conditions which justice demands. (2)

The Archbishop was now making the very plea which Professor Deissmann had made to him months ago; Lloyd George's reply was couched in the same terms in which Davidson had replied to Deissmann. In view of the widespread public reaction against the Treaty which began almost as soon as it was signed, it is interesting to speculate what might have been the

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[1]Letter to Lloyd George, May 24, 1919, in Ibid., p. 948.

[2]Reply from Lloyd George, May 30, 1919, in Ibid., p. 949.

result had the Archbishop publically voiced his opposition to its terms. Might a word from the Primate of All England have found enough popular support to give Lloyd George a lever to use against Clemenceau and his Unionist colleagues? It is uncertain what support a statement from him would have found, but it is clear that Lloyd George would not have welcomed that particular lever.

Hostile criticism of the Treaty terms was expressed from other quarters, however. The I.L.P. manifesto said that the Treaty "contains the germs of new conflicts, arising out of the grievances of the peoples ruled by alien Governments," and it called for revision of the Treaty at the earliest possible moment. The Manifesto objected that the Treaty was drawn up through closed diplomacy; that the settlements of the Saar basin, Poland, and other areas had been made without consulting the populations of those areas; and it objected to the attempt to bring economic ruin to Germany, to German exclusion from the League, to Germany's loss of her colonies, and to the unilateral disarmament of Germany.[1]

Much the same kind of criticism was voiced by Commonwealth. The Peace Conference was viewed as

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[1]The Times, May 22, 1919, p. 14.

a confrontation between the old order, which was dominated by fear and hatred and greed, and the new order, which looked to a future of peace and forgiveness. War was the final expression of a vicious circle of fear and mistrust and revenge; the only way of breaking from this circle was "if the victor waives his 'rights' and applies himself to constructive justice in a society of nations where liberty is defined by responsibility, power is subordinated to the purpose of co-operation, and national integrity is covered by mutually pledged recognition." Thus mere victory was not enough to secure peace, and Commonwealth objected to continuous reminders that Germany was not repentant; repentance was only possible if justice, tempered by mercy, held out the hope of a renewed fellowship. Because Commonwealth felt that the Treaty emphasized justice at the expense of mercy, it did not approve of the terms. The old order had won against the new: the financial terms seemed aimed at crippling Germany rather than reestablishing general credit; the occupation of the Rhine area would produce as much impatience in Allied countries as in Germany; the Saar arrangement confused a legitimate claim to coal supply with an illegitimate design of annexation; the Polish settlement boded no good for Poland itself, and the conflict between the Italians and the Yugoslavs remained unsolved. The article concluded with an expression of faith in the League as the only hope for securing peace in the future, for preventing erruptions of

violence, and for revising the Treaty. It was therefore essential that Germany be admitted to the League as soon as possible.[1]

No major revisions were made in the terms of the Treaty, and it was signed on June 28, 1919. The Archbishop referred to the event as the "most notable hour in the whole world's history, excepting always the Gospel story. It was the greatest passing from war to peace that the human race had ever seen . . . ."[2] Churchmen said nothing more about the actual terms of the Treaty, and they turned all their attention to the League of Nations. This great stress put on the importance of the League is an indication that the Treaty itself was a disappointment to many, but the Archbishop of Canterbury only hinted at this during the debate on the Treaty in the House of Lords. Instead, he emphasized that the future peace of the world would depend on the working of the League of Nations, and that the League would only work successfully if the people were committed to supporting it:

> The danger lies, I suppose, in the possibility that the provisions of the Treaty might here and there be so worked as to endanger the very principle which underlies the League of Nations. Against that peril we as a people, and not our statesmen only, have all to be watchful. The

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[1]Christopher Cheshire, "Notes of the Month", Commonwealth, XXIV (June, 1919), p. 142-3.

[2]Preached at Lambeth Parish Church. As reported in The Times, June 30, 1919, p. 14.

> responsibility is shared by us all, for the peoples are now enlisted . . . . It is that which differentiates this effort, this pact of the peoples, from any that has ever gone before, and it is that which, above all, justifies us, as we peer forward into the future, in making it a part not only of our hopes but . . . of our prayers as well as of our thanksgivings, offered in confident expectation of the fruit that is to come. (1)

July 6, 1919, was proclaimed a National Day of Thanksgiving, and the next day The Times[2] contained extracts from many sermons which had been preached across the country. Their tone was one of thankfulness, not exaltation, that the British cause was vindicated. Expressions of confidence in the League of Nations formed a prominent part of many sermons, as did expressions of hope that the war had ushered in a new era of fellowship and good will both within and among nations.

The tone was set by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The nation, he said, was doing more than rejoicing that the war had ended in success for the Allies, but it was also giving "definite, thoughtful, loyal recognition to the Lord God Almighty for what he has done for us in the years of war, and their issue in a victorious peace. Britain was thankful

> . . . not only for the peace which has been won,

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[1] House of Lords Debates, 3 July 1919, p. 185-6.

[2] The following extracts are all from The Times, July 7, 1919, p. 17-18.

> but for the price at which we won it. The glad self-sacrifice of those among our best in power and promise . . . is an enduring asset in the treasure-house of what we reverently hold most dear . . . . peace means, not simply the ending of strife, but the spirit, the conditions in which whatsoever things are just and clean and wholesome can flourish and abound.

But, he said, peace needed more than prayer and vision -- it required effort and resolve, and this was important if the League were to be a success:

> To that resolve, that effort, we have as a people set our hand. A League of Nations must be no mere theory of statesmen. It is to be the peoples' pact.
>
> With chastened and yet eager heart we are thanking God to-day for what these five years have brought us, for the trust of championship on behalf of what is just and of good report, for the ready self-offering of our worthiest, and the dauntless valour of their gift, for the intrepidity and resource of our high command. For the victory that has been won.

The Archbishop of York said the League would be a "mere baseless fabric" unless it were founded on a new spirit of brotherhood. All men must work together for the sake of their country and for all mankind. "That lesson of peace would be a harder strain even than the strain of war."

The Dean of Westminster also stressed the importance of national unity if the problems of peace-time were to be solved. In discussing the Treaty, he said that it did not undo German war crimes, and that until Germany repented, and that repentance "found expression in something more than ambiguous generalities",

Germany should not be a member of the League of Nations. This was also the theme of sermons preached by the Bishops of Birmingham and Southwell. The Bishop of Carlisle and the Bishop of Ely stressed the importance of the Christian spirit if the League were to succeed. The Bishop of London held a service in Trafalgar Square to commemorate what he regarded as one of the greatest days in history: "A united Christendom had come out to thank God together for the greatest victory ever won by freedom over tyranny, and right over wrong . . . . The victory had been won, not by their own might or their own powers, but by the help of God. . . ." The best part of the Treaty was the provision for the League of Nations, and "the duty devolved upon all Christians to create an atmosphere in which the League could work."

Though there had been many indications that Churchmen generally were not satisfied with the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the only real criticism which later appeared was in an article by William Temple.[1] His theme was that peace could be maintained only if men looked forward into the future towards welfare for all, and not backward to claims which arose from the violation of justice in the past. "If a man, or section, or nation, has been injured, the injured party has a just claim to redress. But if the claim is pressed, it may lead only to a sense of injury on the other side."[2] This was the basis of

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[1]Temple, "The Moral Foundation of Peace", op. cit.

[2]Ibid., p. 70.

his criticism of the General Election in December: it inflamed passions and concealed the fact that justice was not enough to secure peace. Similarly with the economic terms of the Treaty:

> . . .while it may have been right to present to Germany the whole bill . . . yet, whether we persist in demanding payment to the full must depend on quite other considerations. Those who are now children did not make the war. The children still unborn did not make the war. We cannot desire that their lives should be warped and stunted by any consequences of the war that we inflict. Our thoughts must be fixed, not on satisfying an abstract justice, but on promoting the highest welfare of humanity in the days to come.(1)

A postscript was added by the Archbishop of York who, some years later, noted privately that his conscience was troubled, that "like others, I was too blind to the character of the final Versailles Treaty, its lack of true wisdom of magnanimity, its obsession with the past, its failure to foresee the future."[2]

The role which the Church of England played in the peace negotiations once again reflects the extent to which Churchmen were imbued with the concept of the Holy War. The waging of a righteous war meant there could be no peace until such time as righteousness

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[1] Ibid., p. 69.

[2] Lockhart, op. cit., p. 262-3.

were vindicated, and thus no voice in favour of a negotiated peace -- with the possible exception of Commonwealth -- was raised from the Church of England. Military victory was to be the measure of moral victory.

The role played by the Church also reflects the special relationship which existed between Church and State. When a military victory was achieved, and the time came for conducting peace negotiations, Churchmen were prepared to revert to the view which they held before August 1914, which was that matters of war and peace were best left to politicians. Though Churchmen themselves had proclaimed that the war would usher in a new era of international fellowship and good will, they offered no suggestions about how to make this a reality. The period November 1918-June 1919 is a period of lost opportunity for the Church; its responsibilities for the construction of the peace settlement were subordinated to the fear of being charged with political interference. When the terms of the Treaty turned out to be somewhat harsher than Churchmen had expected, they did not criticize, but instead they intensified their support for the League of Nations; it enabled them to believe in the future, though they lived in the past. So much emphasis was put on the League that it would almost appear that Churchmen regarded the League as the purpose for which the war had been fought, and not as the instrument by which the peace which followed the war was to be maintained. But the provisions of the League of Nations for keeping the peace were weak, and within twenty years the Church of England was once again engaged in a Holy War.

CONCLUSION

The attitude of the Church of England towards World War I was largely shaped by the special relationship which existed between the Church and the English State. The Church, in answering the fundamental questions about the war, found that in this great crisis, the intimacy between an Established Church and a state believing itself to be fighting for its existence was so close that there could be few theological reservations about the political and military policies of the state. Moreover, the Church was instinctively aware of the fact that during the period 1914-18 the population was so deeply committed to the national cause that even if serious consideration had been given to a stand critical of Government policies, such criticism would most probably have wrecked the unity of the Church and destroyed its efficacy among its adherents.

Perhaps it was inherent in the structure of an Established Church that it could do no more than to try to act as the conscience of the nation without seriously challenging the policy of the state -- most especially in times when that policy had the almost unanimous approval of the people. Moreover the leadership of the Church was, as has already been shown, so closely related in social structure and value systems to the leadership of the state that serious opposition was unthinkable.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, was clearly in this position, and his every decision concerning the Church's relationship to the war was governed by a consideration of the political implications of his actions and words. Moreover, he was the leader of an institution, the great majority of whose members gave their whole-hearted support to the war and the way in which the Government conducted it; consequently criticism of the Government also had to be tempered by consideration of the effects which this would have within the Church, not only on the Government and public.

Before war was declared, Churchmen had not played a significant role in that part of state policy which was concerned with matters of war and peace. When the possibility of war became a reality in 1914, Churchmen apparently had no policy of their own; they regarded the problem as one which lay in the province of politicians, and their only contribution to the crisis was to refrain from interferring in the process which finally led the British Government into its decision to go to war. Those few Churchmen who were critical on the eve of war were soon convinced that the Government had made a morally correct decision.

Once war was declared, the Church, as the Established Church, thought itself to have no alternative but to support the war and, in accordance with tradition, it set out to justify its support for the war on the grounds that the cause was just. Christian participation in the war was defended on two

grounds: that of duty to the state, and of duty to fight on behalf of a righteous cause. The latter argument was the more important one, for on it was based the concept of the Holy War.

In 1914, the righteous cause which proved to be the rallying point for British participation in the war was the violation of Belgian neutrality by Germany; Churchmen could say that Britain had responded to the call of honour and justice in the face of a wrong committed against the principles of international morality. However, the call had been met by entering the war, and as the tempo of the war increased, so did the need for a greater cause if continued participation were to be justified. The greater cause was the Holy War; it was inherent in the just war and differed from it only in so far as the nation's just cause was shown to be God's cause. The Holy War took form by the simple expedient of extending the very arguments which had been used to show that Britain's cause was just. Thus the more Churchmen expounded on the righteousness of Britain's cause, the more did Germnay's cause become identified with evil; the more Churchmen showed how essential it was that a nation be faithful to its promises, the more did Germany appear as a threat to the international order, and the more study was given to the writings of Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi, the more was it shown that the prevailing spirit in Germany was a threat to Christian civilization.

Though the difference between the just war

and the Holy War was seemingly small -- the identification of the just cause with God's cause -- the implications were enormous. Britain was not only fighting for God's cause, but she was fighting His war; she was on His side, and soon He joined hers. Britain was waging war against a country which embodied all the forces inimical to Christian civilization, to eradicate evil, to vindicate Christian morality, to end war by eradicating the spirit which produced it, to make the world safe for democracy -- a form of Government to which God was partial -- and to safeguard the rights of small nationalities. This tone had become general throughout the Church by 1915, and remained unchanged until the end of the war.

The theory of the Holy War involved Churchmen in some difficulties about how best to serve the nation's war effort; it was compounded by reluctance to arouse Government or popular opinion against the Church. On the one hand were those who believed Britain was fighting not only for a national, but for a Christian ideal, and they sought to keep these ideals alive during the war; on the other hand were those who emphasized only that the nation was engaged in a war from which it must emerge victorious, and that all other matters would take care of themselves. All Churchmen believed in the Holy War, but while some emphasized that a special kind of conduct was demanded from the nation there were those who, my emphasizing the magnitude of the issues at stake, only contributed to the violence of war-time feelings.

These difficulties were well-illustrated by the attitudes which various Churchmen took to recruitment, conscientious objectors, and the nature of the prayers which should be offered. In no instance was there agreement among Churchmen. The contribution which Churchmen made to recruitment campaigns varied; clearly it was a role which the Church could play, but there was some doubt as to whether it was a suitable role. While some Churchmen believed that it was not the Church's duty to act as a recruiting sergeant, others believed that if the war were just and one in which everyone should participate, then it was quite proper for the Church to contribute to the national effort in this way.

The problem posed by the conscientious objectors was a more serious one, and it shows the extent to which war fever had entered the Church. The traditional answer of Christian moralists was that the rights of conscience were supreme, and this was the view of the Archbishop of Canterbury. But this opinion, clearly, was not widely shared, whether among other Churchmen or the public; most men put duty to the state first -- a view which, in effect, represents the complete identification of the righteous cause with the righteous nation. Conscientious objectors appeared to deny this connection, and while the Archbishop of Canterbury and some others were prepared to accept this possibility, the great majority of British citizens were not. If the Church aspired to be the conscience of the nation, here was a case where a conscience was badly needed. But the Church was powerless to act constructively,

for it was hopelessly divided on the issue; even had the Church been united, it is highly unlikely that its voice would have made much of an impact, except to arouse hostility towards the Church. Whatever moderation which there was in the treatment accorded conscientious objectors depended on the personal influence of men such as Davidson.

Though warnings against hatred and vengeance found frequent expression during the course of the war, most citizens found it difficult to wage a war against evil and at the same time to keep before their eyes the principle of Christian charity. The clergy were no exception to this; the controversy over the Imprecatory Psalms is but one example of the way in which Churchmen were divided over what constituted righteous wrath and what constituted hatred. One is led to the conclusion that in the mouths of many clergymen the prayers and warnings against a temper of hatred were nothing more than platitudes, which this clergy was no more ready to follow than anyone else.

The extent to which Churchmen believed in the nation's cause, and their desire to keep that cause pure, were manifested in the steady campaign which the Church of England waged against the adoption of a policy of reprisals. Churchmen were practically united in their agreement that Britain must not adopt such a policy, for it was inherently immoral and would destroy the entire basis of the Holy War. Although the campaign perhaps met with temporary success in the case of air reprisals, in the long run it was ineffective and met with only hostility or indifference.

In waging a campaign against reprisals, the Church of England took its stand on the principle that the waging of war against non-combatants was an inherently evil act, out of which no good could come. It appealed to Christian morality, to the judgement of history, and to traditions of national honour, and it made several predictions -- campaigns of frightfulness, a decline in the standard of conduct among nations, and the corruption of the cause for which Britain was fighting. In terms of the ideology of the just war, these things all proved to be true. But by 1917, the ideology of the just war was irrelevant: Britain was no longer fighting a Holy War for the vindication of a cause; she was fighting a total war for the survival of a political unity.

In terms of the warfare of the twentieth century, the voice of Christian morality had ceased to play a meaningful rôle. The nation accepted only that part of the Holy War propaganda which identified Germany with evil, and which -- it therefore believed -- allowed it to use all weapons and virtually all means in bringing that war to a successful conclusion. It did not accept that part of the Holy War propaganda which demanded that Britain should fight in a Christian temper, for the realization of a Christian end. The Holy War no longer had any relevance to a war which was fought with ever more increasing violence and with ever more terrible weapons -- weapons which, in the final analysis, seemed to dictate the military behaviour of the state (such as the German submarines) and thus determine, ultimately, the political outcome of the war.

The Church of England resolutely refused to accept this aspect of total war, and as a result it was ignored by the Government and resented by the public; the hostile attacks to which Archbishop Davidson was subjected because of the stand he took against reprisals, provide the best illustration of the public temper in the matter. The war continued, but in a manner which the Church could not approve. Yet within the Church there was no one who could have found much support for the view that because principles of morality must come before military necessity, the Church should consequently disassociate itself from the Government's policy. The Church waged its campaign against reprisals and lost. It could not approve of the Government's policy or reconcile it with the Holy War nor, as the Established Church , could it disassociate itself from that policy; consequently it remained silent, pretended that the illusion had not been shattered, and continued to support the war.

The Church's failure to play any sort of role in bringing about an end to the conflict again shows how the Church was compromised by its position as the Established Church and by its own theory of Holy War. Had Churchmen been fighting only for "honour" and "justice", and had they not been overly sensitive to the Government's attitude towards negotiations, they would have advocated -- as Commonwealth did-- that the sincerity of German peace overtures had to be tested for Britain had, after all, entered the war on behalf of Belgium, and the nation should therefore be willing to sound out German intentions with respect to that country. But no important voice was raised from

within the Church on behalf of peace, unless and until the principles of the Holy War had been vindicated. The Church, like the state, was fighting for total victory, but the similarity ended here, for the Church was fighting for the victory of God's cause and was unwilling to compromise His principles through a peace of negotiation, while the state believed itself to be engaged in a life and death struggle in which its own existence was at stake.

Nevertheless, these two aims ran complementary to one another, and this was furthered by the fact that the Church had no way of determining just when righteousness had finally been vindicated and thus that the moment for making peace had finally arrived. It therefore accepted the criterion of the state, which was that a decisive military victory would signify that the time had come to make peace. Thus the Church believed that the peace of the spirit could be imposed by the sword, and that military victory was to be the measure of moral triumph.

The exhortations to fight on continued, and Churchmen of importante did not embarass the Government, nor risk compromising their own righteousness, by suggesting negotiations; the German and American notes of December-January 1916-1917, the Reichstag Peace Resolution, the Pope's Peace Note, and the Lansdowne letter were either indignantly rejected or went virtually unnoticed. Archbishop Davidson's private reaction to the Lansdowne letter and his public silence, moreover, must surely stand as one of the greatest examples of the extent to which he was motivated by a consideration of the political

consequences of his statements.

The actual negotiations surrounding the drafting of the Treaty of Versailles represent another series of lost opportunities for the Church. The Church abdicated its responsibility to see that the war was concluded in terms that were consonant with the idealism of the Holy War, and thus it would appear that the Church regarded the doctrine of Holy War as only being meaningful during the hostilities themselves; for the armistice it was prepared to revert to its pre-1914 position and disassociate itself from matters involving the making of war and peace. This, however, is but a partial analysis of the situation for, in fact, Churchmen had great expectations for the new order which would be inaugurated by the Treaty of Versailles, and after the war was over they did not disassociate themselves from matters of war and peace, but through themselves enthusiastically into working for the League of Nations.

Why, then, were most Churchmen silent during the course of the negotiations themselves, and on the terms of the proposed Treaty? Why did they not try to make their expectations a reality? It cannot be said that in this case -- and here we are especially interested in the Archbishop of Canterbury -- Churchmen believed in the absolute righteousness of Britain's cause and conduct in the war, and that those who negotiated the Treaty would be guided by the same righteousness. Time and again Davidson had been forced to admit that the nation's righteousness was not

absolute: the adoption of reprisals, the publication of the secret treaties, and the election campaign are the outstanding examples. A voice from the Church would not have been out of place; the Church, in fact, had a duty to see that the peace was made in a Christian temper. But the voice was never raised, and opportunities -- such as the Deissmann letter-- to extend the hand of reconciliation were ignored. Once again we are confronted by the fact of Establishment. Criticism of the Treaty would have been regarded as criticism of the Government -- an attitude which no Established Church was likely to adopt, let alone sustain; it would, moreover, have undermined the Holy War by suggesting that there was no connection between the righteous nation and the righteous cause.

The failures of the period 1914- 1918 -- failures due to an overriding consideration for the Establishment of the Church, to an overstrong belief in the Holy War, and divisions within the Church itself as to how best to serve the national interest -- meant that the Church was ineffective and that, in the final analysis, it could be used by the state as an instrument in the waging of its kind of warfare. When the war was over, Churchmen tried to pick up the pieces. If they were bitter and disappointed with the terms of the Treat, they did not show it; they channelled their frustrations elsewhere. This explains their enthusiastic support for the League of Nations, as the only instrument which could prevent the recurrence of another catastrohic war. The League seemed to offer a special opportunity for the Church,

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for the League would work only if men wanted it to work -- if they were inspired with the courage and honesty and good faith to make it work, and if all men, not just Governments, wanted it to work. Churchmen made it their mission to see that this so.

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