

# **The Paris Peace Conference 1919 Remembered... 100 Years on 18 January to 28 June 2019**

Sponsor: Peter M. Southwood (Dr)  
[www.directionofconflict.org](http://www.directionofconflict.org)

## **PUBLIC BENEFIT NOTICE: For release on Sunday 9 June 2019**

### Open Letter to:

Archbishops of Canterbury and York  
Bishops of the Church of England  
House of Lords  
London SW1A 0PW

7 June 2019.

Dear Lords Spiritual

### **Re: The Theological Basis for a State of Peace on Earth**

I am writing to bring to your attention a matter of the highest importance that remains unresolved. My first attempt to draw it to the attention of an Anglican audience was an article in the Church Times of 3 June 2011 which began with a formula and continued:

Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace, but his Church is not the supreme authority on this subject which he meant her to be. This is reflected in the dominance of just-war theory in the Church of England, which, as even many of its proponents acknowledge, is not so much Christian doctrine as expediency.

I went on to present a biblical theology of peace, explaining how it emerged and can be applied. It is fair to say that this article drew only one substantive response (not through the newspaper) from an atheist friend of mine who appeared to be generally in agreement. However, the Court of history did not ignore this article for since then we have had:

- The independence of South Sudan on 9 July 2011, advocated by the bishops there and supported by the Church of England, that was followed by the civil war from December 2013.
- Two more wars between Israel and the Palestinians in Gaza (in 2012 and 2014) as foreseen in the International Peace Project Briefing no. 1 (January 2006).

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### **Sponsor's Purpose:**

**To forewarn the public one more time that the world is heading for another Great Power war.**

As in 1919, the reason is the failure of political institutions to apply 'an irenic perspective' even-handedly. Post-Cold War, the term was first defined in English charity law on 9 October 1998, drawing on a United States case of 1917, and affirmed by the Court of Appeal on 28 June 2000.

110 Purves Road, London NW10 5TB, England. Email: [consultant@directionofconflict.org](mailto:consultant@directionofconflict.org)

### God's Kingdom

What that Church Times article did not go into was the underlying court case I initiated and the judicial definition of an 'irenical perspective' it produced, i.e. one aimed at promoting peace and therefore emphasising peaceful, rather than military, means of resolving international disputes. If you are interested, this has been dealt with comprehensively in earlier articles in this Paris Peace Conference Remembered series, especially Article no. 2.

The purpose of my Article no. 6 is to demonstrate that an irenical perspective is the outward and secular sign of the inward and spiritual grace that is the perspective of God's Kingdom whose cornerstone is Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace and Saviour of the world. It is this theological perspective, which Christ Himself set above all else and commanded His followers to do likewise (Matthew 6: 33), that even unbelievers can come to know through the public benefit of that secular perspective whose object is also international peace.

Conversely, the longer the Church continues to rely on a non-gospel of political expediency the more its own authority will be undermined by the Court of history whose judgments reflect the understanding of the prophets of old and supremely of Christ Himself, whose 'weakness' or humility turned out to be the true reflection of Almighty God. That shows how God not the State controls the destinies of nations and whether there will be peace or war.

The instrument to help accomplish the Church's mission in friendly competition with all comers lies ready and waiting in the legal framework created on 28 June 2000 to hold the 'Peace Games', that are indisputably educational in the charitable sense involving competing academic or policy analyses tested against the subsequent course of events in the conflict area concerned. This is the true, nascent 'peace movement' which can never be political because, as Jesus' own mission on earth showed, there is no policy which, of and by itself, can secure a state of peace. Anyone disagree? Good – play the Peace Game with me! IPP's trial Peace Games on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict showed it can be done well.

### Advice to Her Majesty

On 31 October 2010 I wrote to the Queen, as a life-long member of the Church of England to the Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor, drawing her attention to:

the invasion from within - a moral and spiritual crisis without precedent in our history. *The nation has been acting since 9/11 as though it believed there is a future without God; that His laws are for individual consciences only and have no corporate effect.* [Emphasis in the original.]

My proposal to address this crisis drew a gracious response from Her Majesty which, while expressing appreciation for the thought given, stated that the time for it was not right. By contrast the response of the Archbishops, though polite, was dismissive.

When the time is ripe, I pray for a more discerning response from the Lords Spiritual for the children's sake throughout the world (especially in South Sudan and the Holy Land) and that any advice to Her Majesty will be consistent with our Gospel of peace.

Be assured that I remain obedient to your authority in all things lawful and honest.

Yours faithfully,

Peter M. Southwood (Dr)

Signed: 7 June for public release *on 9 June 2019 when it will be uploaded to the website.*

N.B. The author is also a lay minister in the Church of England but writes here in a personal capacity.

#### Linked to Article No. 6: 'The Theological Basis for a State of Peace on Earth'

Having revealed the irrational basis of State policy in opposing an 'irenical perspective', this article now seeks to demonstrate the Christian theological foundation upon which a state of peace will be achieved through the building of God's Kingdom on earth. Thereby to contend that the only genuine 'peace movement' is educational and/or religious, in the legally charitable sense, working in harmony with the laws of God, summed up in the Golden Rule, as the ultimate determinant of peace or war, whatever public opinion and politics may say.

This Article no. 6 will be found at [www.directionofconflict.org](http://www.directionofconflict.org) where there is also a provisional timetable for the remaining letter and article in this series up to 28 June 2019.

References in this letter are to be found in Article no. 6 *to be published on 9 June 2019.*

#### Notes for Editors and Correspondents

Responses/questions invited to: [consultant@directionofconflict.org](mailto:consultant@directionofconflict.org) for written reply, if any.

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