

Summary of :
*George Fox's Attitude
Toward War*
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GEORGE FOX'S ATTITUDE TOWARD WAR Summary

Fox's Own Conduct and Responses to Force, Violence and War

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What Fox Said and Believed about War in his Epistles and Polemical Tracts

Fox's Own Conduct and Responses In Situations Which Threatened him with Force or Violence

George Fox never resisted personal attacks or threats of violent death.

he might rebuke or stare down his persecutor
or overcome his assailants by an appeal which shamed them or made them loving.

he might evade his pursuers or rely on the non-violent help of Friends.
When forcibly attacked, he always allowed the attackers to do their worst.

" I stood stiff and still and let him strike."

Although some early Friends remained in the armed forces after their conversion, Fox refused to get involved in such professions. In his personal life Fox never relied on the use of force or physical violence. In many cases he was beaten mercilessly but he never resisted or struck back. At Mansfield in 1649 he stood up to speak to a congregation in church after the minister had finished. But the people fell upon him with their fists, books and without compassion or mercy beat him down and almost smothered him. After this terrible beating, they set him in the stocks and threw stones at him. They also threatened to kill him with pistols.

Another time he was beaten with a pulpit Bible until the blood gushed from his face. He was stoned, thrown back and forth over a hedge, beaten with fists and sticks. Sometimes people ran at George Fox with drawn swords, naked rapiers, knives, or with pistols cocked. On one occasion, Fox had just prayed by the bedside of a prominent man who was ill when one of the man's servants ran at him with a naked sword and set it to his side and held it there. Fox looked the man in his face and said, to him, "Alack for thee, it's no more to me than a straw." Then the servant went away in a rage and Fox left.

Once a friendly soldier with a naked rapier intervened on Fox's behalf. Several days later, seven men fell upon this soldier and beat him cruelly because he had taken Fox's part.

Fox had great physical strength and courage but his reaction to all this was that the Lord's power and immediate hand would protect him. Although he was often bloody, sore and bruised, he was by the power of the Lord he was refreshed again, and made quick recoveries from the beatings.

Members of a congregation fell upon him after he stood up to preach. The justice ordered him whipped and put out of town. He was led to the town common and many people followed. Constables beat him over the shoulder with their willow rods and then pushed him into the crowd. They fell upon him with their hedge stakes, clubs and staves and beat him about the head, arms and shoulders for a long time. Finally he fell to the wet common. He lay there for a long time and when he recovered, the power of the Lord sprang through him, and he was refreshed. He stood up and stretched out his arms amongst the crowd. Then he said in a loud voice. 'Strike again. Here is my arms, and my head and my cheeks.' So a mason gave him a blow with all his might just on the top of Fox's hand with his staff. This numbed and bruised the hand so badly that Fox could not pull it back. After a while the Lord's power sprang through him again, and he recovered the use of the hand. It was as well as it had been before the beating. So the crowd stopped beating him.

The Ground and Sinfulness of War

Why does war occur? Fox maintained that the root and origin of war was

the lust, covetousness and disobedience of men
the treason of men to Jesus Christ
the design of the Devil

George Fox saw the origin of war in the lusts of men and in their disobedience and treason toward Jesus Christ. This lust to possess characterizes unredeemed, disobedient natural men and nations.

Lusts cause wars and strife but also other evils, such as

envy
contention against the spirit of God
unchaste acts

The Devil, Satan, is also a major cause of war and strife. He incites men to the desire for power and aggrandizement, to which war gives expression. Fox was convinced that Christ Jesus destroys the devil. But his conquest must begin in the hearts of individuals.

Disobedience, inspired by the devil, is a cause of murder and war. He causes people to destroy one another, to murder one another about earthly things. This prince of darkness rules in the hearts of all the children of disobedience.

What is the solution?

All Friends are to speak the Truth and mind that which is pure, the Light of God in them. They are to love Christ and walk in the Light. Then there will be no occasion of stumbling.

The great act of betrayal which led to war and every other evil occurred, said Fox, "When man went from that of God in himself."

The Life and Power that Takes Away the Occasion of all Wars.

As a corrective to the lusts and disobedience of men which caused war, Fox sought to live in *the power that takes away the occasion of all wars*. He first used this distinctive phrase when he refused a commission as an officer in the Parliamentary army; he stopped using this phrase after 1659. In his later life he used many equivalent phrases such as, "Christ the new Adam ends all war," "Come to the inward war," "Walk in the light of the Lamb which was before enmity was," "In the power of the Messiah there is no War," or "The power of the Gospel doth pluck up the Roots of War.

Friends were to stand in the fear and dread of the lord God, his power, life, light, seed, and wisdom, by which *ye may take away the occasion of wars*,

to know a kingdom which hath no end,
to fight for that with spiritual weapons, which takes away the occasion
of the carnal.

Fox lived in that life and power which *takes away the occasion of all wars*. He believed that Quakers had been called to a covenant of peace, to use only legitimate spiritual weapons: persuasion, propaganda and non-resistance.

Fox's claim that he lived in that *life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars* was central to his attitude toward war. Although the precise phrase does not occur in Scripture, Fox intended it to represent the doctrine of the Epistle of James.

Friends were accused of raising up a new War. Fox wrote that this is false for we dwell in the Word, which takes away the *occasion of wars*. Friends gather their Hearts together to God, and unto one another. This brings us to the Beginning before there were any wars, for the Ministers of God have the Word of Reconciliation to draw them from the *occasion of all Wars*.

Saints, i.e., Friends, are more than conquerors, for they will see the end of all wars, and that which causes wars. Saints are in that *which takes away the occasion of wars*, and is come to that which was before wars were. And they have this hope, which is Christ Who purifies them as He is pure and come to witness the kingdom of God that stands in joy, peace and righteousness.

The Apostles preached a message which brought men out of the occasion of wars. In addressing officers and soldiers, Fox insisted that the inward wars *take away the occasion of the outward* and that Christ ends all wars and reconciles all things in heaven and in earth.

The Covenant of Peace or the Royal Law to Love Enemies, Accept Suffering and Bless Persecutors

From a life which takes away the *occasion* of war Fox next calls men and women into a covenant of peace which means obedience, to "the royal law of love."

<p>The Royal Law of Love, called this since it is the commandment of Christ, teaches men to love all enemies, accept suffering as God's gift and the price of faithful witness and to bless and pray for those who persecute.</p>

Fox told Friends to be confident for God will only permit persecution and suffering to last as long as is needed for truth's sake. For those who suffer will gain the victory which brings in the eternal covenant of Christ's peace.

Fox exhorts soldiers to rule in power and love and to do violence to no man.

Fox wrote a very pungent condemnation of those who break the royal law of forgiveness and loving enemies by persecuting men about religious beliefs.

Obedience to the royal law further requires that if a conflict occurs between obedience to the commands of men and the higher law of God, the Christian must obey the command of God.

One of the important signs that men have obeyed the royal law to love their enemies is their willingness to accept suffering and persecution, loving the oppressor, praying for him and thereby having fellowship with Christ in his sufferings.

Fox produced a barrage of tracts confronting persecutors to change their minds.

During the period of severe persecution after 1660, Fox maintained that Christ's command to love enemies was not only a test of obedience but a requirement for membership in Christ's kingdom. He continued to exhort Friends to take seriously the counsel of Jesus and Paul to pray for and bless those who persecuted them. If they curse and hate you, you are to bless them, and do good to them. Overcome evil with good.

Friends should be meek, not high, bless and not curse, love, and not hate, do good, and not evil, live in the will of God, and mind the religion of Christ, and not your own.

Fox wrote frequently to Friends in prison reminding them that Christ suffered with them and that God would not lay on them burdens heavier than they could bear. The time would seem short in the light of Christ's eternal rule which was being set up. Christ is the strong tower in whom those who suffer may find refuge.

The faithful were not to mind the cords of the ungodly for the cords of love are stronger. The faithful in all ages have suffered, wrote Fox in 1675, which suffering, was a gift of God, for God upheld them through it.

In one of Fox's finest tracts, "Concerning Persecution," written 1682 he quotes Jesus' words, "You shall be hated of all Men for my Name sake; But he that endures to the end shall be saved."

In 1675 Fox assured those in prison that Christ would save them to the uttermost and in their sufferings, He suffers with them. More remarkable than his exhortations to patience are Fox's affirmations that he who suffers conquers and finds victory. For those who suffer with Christ shall reign with him. Prisoners to stand fast because none could pluck them out of the Lord's hands.

In 1686 King James II set free a large number of Friends, many of whom had been in prison for years. Fox wrote in jubilant thanksgiving for the deliverance: Praise God through him who was dead, and is alive again, who reigns over all, and liveth evermore, blessed for ever; Hallelujah. Amen!

Rely on Spiritual Weapons and the Armor of Light, not on Carnal Weapons

The royal law of love to enemies and persecutors leads directly to George Fox's next major emphasis. Spiritual weapons are the only kind of weapons that can be used by a Christian in resisting or overcoming evil. Fox denied any personal reliance on material or carnal weapons. He insisted that his weapons were strictly spiritual, that carnal weapons were illegitimate. Individuals who use carnal weapons throw away the spiritual ones.

In distinguishing spiritual weapons from material ones Fox relied heavily on the description of the whole armor of God found in Ephesians 6:10-17 and in 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, which describe the nature of spiritual weapons.

The weapons of the Spirit are

- kindness
- unfeigned love
- power of the truth
- persuasion
- rebuke of sin in high places
- fearless preaching.

In the language of Ephesians, the weapons of a Christian are the armor of light or righteousness including the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, having the feet shod with the gospel of peace and above all the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

Men are called above all to allegiance to God and his kingdom and the only weapons which will promote its coming are the weapons of the Spirit. Such a spirit meant that Friends were not against any man but sought only to bring them blessing.

The distinction between the physical sword and the spiritual weapons and the superiority of the latter was drawn sharply by Fox. For that which is set up by the Sword, is held up by the Sword, and that which is set up by Spiritual Weapons, is held up by Spiritual Weapons.

Fox declared that Jesus Christ ends outward and carnal weapons and that he slays only with the sword of the Spirit. He came to save men's lives not to destroy them. See Luke 9:54-55:

Fox called all Friends to "wait to receive the love of God which bears all things; and so come to receive the armor of righteousness, which quenches all the fiery darts of Satan, that the patience that bears and suffers all things may be witnessed."

Fox frequently protested the use of carnal weapons to promote or protect the cause of religion. He usually drove his point home with the words of Jesus: "He that killeth with the sword must perish by the sword. To the Emperor of Austria Fox wrote of apostasy from the spiritual weapons with obvious reference to the Thirty Years War which had just concluded in 1648:

There hath been a mighty breach in Germany, about Religion, and much killing and slaying one another, and that is because they have been out of the Patience, out of the Life of the Prophets, of Christ, and the Apostles, whose weapons were not Carnal, but Spiritual; which life did not lead to kill men, but to save men's lives. The Apostle saith they warred not with Flesh and Blood, Their Weapons were not Carnal, but Spiritual, might through God to the plucking down of strong holds. Let the Mind of Christ be in you, and the Apostles that followed Christ did not kill the Creatures: So all the wrestlers with Flesh and Blood and killing Creatures, hath been learned from the Devil.

Fox often cites 2 Corinthians 6:3-10 as an example of the way a Christian warrior, who relies solely on spiritual weapons, should conduct himself:

And the Apostle saith to the Corinthians, 'give no offence in anything but in all things approving yourselves as the Ministers of God by Kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the Power of God, by the Armour of Righteousness; as Chastised,

and not killed; as Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.

In one of his latest tracts Fox declared that outward war is a blind man's war which brings only spiritual defeat:

If you do pretend a Warfare, without the Light of Christ, and his Spirit of Grace; then you may War all your Life time 'till you go to the Grave in your own Wills, and not overcome, nor have the Victory; and that is the Blind Man's War and Warfare, without the Light of Christ and Faith, which is the Victory and the Spirit of Grace, which brings salvation.

Fox appealed to men to rely solely on the armor of light which will defend them against Darkness and the Prince of the Power of it, and their Weapons, and all such that hate the Light of Christ, and are against it. Saints have the Victory with the Shield of Faith. As the Apostle said, be sober, put on the Breastplate of Faith, and Love; for a Helmet the Hope of Salvation.

The Magistrate and the Ways in which His Use of Force May Be Legitimate

Fox approves of the office of magistrate with the physical power, authority and coercion which that office may involve. He follows the counsel of Paul in Romans 13:1-7 that the powers that be are ordained of God to cherish those in the state who do well. They bear the sword to punish evil doers. So Fox believes in physical police power but with some important qualifications.

Rulers are to keep the peace. But they are not to bear carnal weapons and fight with the men of peace (*which live in that which takes away the occasion of wars*).

These men of peace

do not pay taxes to them
do not worship as the magistrates dictate
do not bear arms for them,
but do pray for their welfare

The fact that Fox granted earthly police power to magistrates is an important demonstration that he was not so spiritual in the power and

weapons he called for as not to be connected in a practical way with the human institution of magistracy.

In 1657 Fox exhorts the Magistrates to

be awake to righteousness
heed the measure of God in themselves and in others.
answer that of God in every man.

He continued in a negative vein. None is worthy to have the name of a Magistrate that is

proud, peevish, selfish
wilful, wicked, or high minded
incapable of feeling the burden of the oppressed
or practices preemptive strikes

All Magistrates are to keep in the fear of God, and, in true wisdom, which is pure, gentle, from above. They are to instruct others in the ways of God: Peace Righteousness, Truth, Meekness and Patience. They are to order and govern to the glory of the Lord God.

Fox frequently addresses magistrates in terms of Romans 13:3-5 reminding them that their sword should be a terror to evil doers but a praise to those that do well. For that which is a terror to the evil doers keeps peace, and is for the praise of them that do well. For the law was not made for the righteous, but for transgressors

From the beginning, but especially in the later period when persecution increased, Fox firmly protests that the magistrate has no right to persecute anyone about matters of religious faith. Religious protesters should not be punished and beaten, knocked down and tumbled up, and struck with cudgels and fists. Although they do not lift up a hand against their persecutors, these protesters are imprisoned as peace breakers.

Fox appeals to magistrates to set prisoners free and in the future to use only spiritual weapons. All the jails should be opened and the prisoners brought out of the nasty holes and dungeons. For the Lord hath overturned the power that imprisons. Magistrates should not concern themselves about religion.

In 1669 Fox published a leaflet called, *The Quaker's Testimony Concerning Magistracy*. In it, he maintained that Friends should

support magistracy in the fullest sense by calling men out of the misconduct which made them run afoul of the law into a life of righteousness which will merit the praise of the magistrate.

Fox made a distinction between what belongs to God and what to the magistrate in the tract *Caesar's Due Rendered*. In it Fox insisted that the things of God and the things of Caesar must be rendered to each. Caesar must have his things, and God must have his. So Caesar's things are kept in their place for him, and God's things must be kept in their place. The work of Christ is to order his church and instill it with His Power and Spirit, while Caesar's work is to punish evil doers and praise those who do well.

Fox accused the state of usurping functions that rightly belong to God. "Where does God have His due?" he asks. "when Caesar will have all? For if anyone walk contrary to your commands in things of God, which do not belong, you will whip, banish, hang, cut off their ears, and brand them with your hot-irons, persecute and spoil their goods.

Friends on the West Indian island of Nevis who had been asked to help stand watch against Spanish attacks on the island wrote to Fox for advice. Both his attitude toward war and his attitude toward the responsibility of Friends towards the magistrate can be seen in this advice. The governor of the island had agreed to let Friends stand watch unarmed but some doubted if this action was right. So Fox advised them:

Friends it is a great Mercy of the Lord that the governor will permit you to watch in your own way, without carrying arms. For, could Friends obtain the same in Jamaica, and other places, they would willingly have done it.

As for the watching itself. Don't you watch your plantations against thieves in the night? And are not common watches, set to discover house-breakers, or such who might set fires. Such civil things we are subject to. And won't you watch against such evil things in the Power of God in your own way? You cannot but tell such things to the Magistrates, who are to punish them. By declaring against such evil doers, you clear yourselves, and demonstrate that your testimony is against such things.

For Christians must *live in that life and power which takes away the occasion of laws*. The fact that men are evil occasions the passage of laws.

Living righteously takes away the occasion. Fox tells Friends that they are those who are dead to all carnal weapons. They *stand in that which takes away the occasion of wars*, in the power which saves men's lives, and destroys none. All men are to live in the seed that gets rid of war.

The Sovereign Rule of Christ, King, Governor and Judge of All Men

For Fox, Jesus Christ is sovereign Lord of the earth and universe, has authority, jurisdiction and power over all men and therefore all of them owe him allegiance. His belief in the universal kingship of Christ is the keystone of his faith and also of his attitude toward war. .

Fox believed that Jesus Christ rules universally over all the earth because he has both power and authority from God to do so. Christ begins his rule in the hearts of his saints and through them he will reign over all the world. God has put all kingdoms both spiritual and physical under the Son's dominion.

Christ, as king, has come to judge all nations, to punish them if they be wicked and reward them if they be righteous. Christ's righteous ones have nothing to fear from his kingly rule or judgment. Because Christ, the sovereign ruler, has overcome the world and is establishing his kingdom among men.

The sovereign rule of God in Christ is come and he has set up his kingdom in power and authority, and majesty. He exercises his kingship in and through his saints.

Christ, the king, is the second Adam who overcomes the first Adam in the fall and rules as Lord from heaven. Christ, the king, is exalted above spiritual principalities and powers of sin

A chief function of Christ's kingship is the promise that he shall

come on the great day of the Lord to judge all nations
rule them with a rod of iron
send the wicked to eternal torment
bring immediate joy and deliverance to the righteous

Fox believed that God's judgement would come on England for killing their king and on the sins of the parliaments which followed. He also believed in the Second Coming, so could promise that the Lord Jesus would come to rule immediately and forever. Because of this, some royalists and conservative Puritans believed that Quakers believed in the radical overthrow of the government.

Vengeance belongs solely to God but Fox believed that He will repay those who had harmed Friends. Fox promises that persecutors will be "ground to powder." The vengeance of Christ is a Flaming Fire that devours the Stubble. The flames of the fire described is not a process of oxidation of flesh but a vivid simile for a process of spiritual judgement, spiritual punishment and spiritual destruction.

Not only the disobedient or persecutors but those who fail to do works of mercy to their fellow men, Fox felt sure would suffer punishment. In 1661 Fox asserted there were no wars in Christ's kingdom, because he has subdued all kingdoms under his feet and his kingdom is over all and will last forever.

In his later years Fox continued to exalt the power and kingship of Christ and the day of his power which was both come and still to come. Christ, said Fox, "is King of Kings and Prince of Princes, the only Potentate reigning over all, whose dominion is an Everlasting Dominion blessed for Evermore." The focus of Christ's reign is within the heart of every man and woman. Christ's government shall be by light and by life and it shall have no end.

For Fox, Christ is the answer and he tells all dear friends and brethren in the world that they should be of good cheer for Christ hath overcome the world. In him you all overcome the devil and his works, and without him you can do nothing; but through Christ, and his power and strength, you will be able to do all things.

The Lamb's War and the Final Victory of God Over All Evil

The Lamb's War

This concept of the Lamb's war is unique to Fox and the early Friends. It represents a universal extension to all nations, to all strata of human society and throughout all history of the sovereign rule of Christ the king which we have discussed in the preceding section.

The Lamb's war is concerned with death, judgement and destiny. It is a program of social and religious revolution in the name and through the power of Jesus Christ.

All obedient followers of Christ the King enlist in a total unending struggle against evil.

Ultimately the Lamb and his army will win victory and history comes to an end with the triumph of good over evil and the coming of God to dwell with men.

WHO IS THE LAMB?

Fox uses the suffering lamb image based on the Suffering Servant passage in Isaiah Chapter 53. Christ was

oppressed and afflicted
yet opened not his mouth,
brought as a Lamb to Pilate's slaughter
as a Sheep before the Shearers
taken from Prison, and from Judgment
the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the World
for the Transgression of his people
the stricken Lamb of God.

The Lamb of God in the book of Revelation

The active conquering Lamb
An alter ego for Christ, the universal king

mounted on a white horse with eyes like flames of fire
ready to tread out the winepress of his wrath.

What will this conquering Lamb do?

He is come to reign.
His everlasting Kingdom and Sceptre is set up
He calls all before the Bar of Judgment.
the Marriage of the Lamb is come
The Bride, the true Church is known again.
The Man-child, the Lamb, is brought forth who will rule all
Nations with a Rod of Iron.
He makes war in Righteousness and will conquer.
The Saints shall have the Victory over the Beast. Blessing and
Honour will be given to the King of Kings, and the Lord of
Lords, who is Lord Omnipotent, and Everlasting.

The origin of the nature of the conflict which the Lamb's war represents

It originates in an inward dimension. Early Quakers refused to take off their hats, bow or scrape or say "you" to single persons regardless of their social station. This was part of the Lamb's war. In order to be inwardly pure of motive in leveling down the socially mighty by the means mentioned, a Friend had to first have purged himself of all inner desire to be honored by others. When the Lamb had won this inward victory then the Quaker was ready to witness against the shallow niceties of courtly courtesy. "Hat honour," and insisting on "thee and thou" to all men were relatively minor outgrowths of a total change of the inner life and allegiance of Quakers.

The Lamb must have the Victory over all the Wild Beasts, Heifers, Dogs, Wolves and Horses for He takes away our Sins.

For the clean and Holy Lamb must have the Victory; therefore join to him that hath the Victory. For He is Captain of your Salvation and breaks the Serpent's Power.

The conflict of the Lamb's war assumed many social dimensions.

Since Christ forbade it, Friends refused to swear oaths. More Friends went to prison for refusal to swear that they were not Roman Catholic agents or for refusing the oath of allegiance to the crown than for any other cause. This was part of the Lamb's war.

After the penal laws of 1661, every time Friends held meeting for worship, soldiers barred the doors against them. This was a campaign in the Lamb's war. In the economic sphere Friends invented the fair price for articles on sale as a testimony against the cheating involved in much common haggling over prices. This was a function of the Lamb's war. Fair treatment for the insane, just treatment of Indians and Negroes, as also men for whom Christ died, were other aspects of the Lamb's war.

But Christ is come to end war.

The redeemed of the Lord shall reign upon the earth.
Now is Christ come who will make war in righteousness.
The everlasting gospel, shall be preached again to all nations.

Since Fox and the Quakers believed so firmly in the judgment and final victory of the Lamb, they could suffer violence and imprisonment confident that the Lord would soon remedy their grievances. They expected to see the Lamb

cut down all false justice which is not justice.
cut down all powers of the earth
all false justices, rulers and magistrates will be unseated
and the Lamb alone will place His law in the hearts of His people
true justice and true judgment will stand.

One of the compelling facts about Fox's vision of the Lamb's war was his confident expectation that this widespread overthrow of social and ecclesiastical evil was not only imminent but that it was already happening and the Quakers were the spiritual revolutionaries to speeding it along.

All the weapons of the Lamb's war are spiritual. For example the armor mentioned in Paul's writings, the sword of the Spirit, which is the tongue of the majestic figure on the white horse in Revelation 19.

With the Lamb's war it is hard to avoid the mistake that physical punishment and carnage are being described. The victory of faith and the triumph of the Spirit over spiritual evils is being described. Fox drives this point home by showing that the rod of iron described in Revelation is that by which Christ rules the nations. It is a spiritual weapon wielded in a spiritual conflict.

Christ leads the army of the Lamb to victory.

Christ and his followers make war against the Beast and overcome him.

Christ and His Army, seated on White Horses, do not wield outward weapons to overcome the Beast.

The unavoidable implication that Fox and his followers drew was that the same heavenly conflict was going on here on earth and that they were called to fight in the Lamb's army with the weapons of the Lamb. To such warriors victory comes by faith and obedience to the mind of Christ. Thus they will participate in his eternal victory. Fox expressed it: "By faith the holy men of God had victory. So let the same mind be in you as was in Christ Jesus; for the apostle said that they had the mind of Christ, and the Lamb overcame and had the victory; and his sanctified ones, that follow him, are partakers of it.

One characteristic of Fox and the early Friends lay in their attempt to redress injustices by going directly and in person to the leaders of governments to expostulate with them or failing that sending them massive letters or manifestoes. Fox went to see Cromwell, Penn to Charles II and James II for this purpose. Characteristic of this strict sense of justice was the refusal of Fox and other early Friends on several occasions to leave prison, even when invited to, until the judge who had committed them under a false charge had publicly admitted his error. All this was part of the Lamb's war.

Another phase of the Lamb's war was universal mission to bring all men to an inward knowledge of Christ and his power. Early Friends were convinced that they lived in the same life and power in which the Prophets of the Old Testament and the Apostles of the New Testament lived. They sent missionaries to try to convert the Sultan of Turkey, King Louis the XIV of France, and even the Pope in Rome. This struggle was part of the Lamb's war. Each of the early Friends was fired with zeal to remake all of Christendom and if possible non-Christendom, over into a very-similitude of the peaceable gospel kingdom of the Lamb.

Four Quakers were hung on Boston Common by the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay. They had been whipped out of the colony tied to carts' tails and banished on pain of death. But they refused to stay

banished and so upon their return were hung. This, again, was another phase of the Lamb's war.

Friends spoke with enthusiasm of the coming victory of the Lamb. They were seeing it happen all around them, were helping bring it about and were confident that the victory of the Lamb is assured and that it will bring in the reign of virtue, love and peace.

The results of the Lamb's War will be

a new heaven,
a new earth,
a new covenant with mankind,
a new Jerusalem coming down from heaven to earth,
a lifegiving tree planted by living waters whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations

When this cosmic and universal victory in the Lamb's war is consummated with its remarkable results there is nothing left but to sing praises to God who is bringing it about.

George Fox's Personal Statement

I told them I was brought off from outward wars. They came down again to give me press-money (to serve in the military) but I would take none. After a while at night the constables fetched me up again and brought me before the Commissioners, and they said I should go for a soldier, but I told them I was dead to it. They said I was alive. They offered me money twice, but I would not take it. Then they were wroth and I was committed close prisoner without bail.

I, who am of the world called George Fox, do deny that the carrying or drawing of any carnal sword against any man. I stand a witness against all violence and against all the works of darkness. My weapons are not carnal but spiritual.

All Friends everywhere, this I charge you

keep out of plots and bustling for you are called to follow peace that is in Christ
all that pretend to fight for Christ are deceived
for his kingdom is not of this world,
therefore his servants do not fight.
when you are stricken on one cheek, turn the other.
love one another, love your enemies.

With the restoration of Charles II to the throne in May 1660 the dream of a Puritan Commonwealth was shattered. Quakers and other radical groups quickly became suspect. As a defense against these suspicions the Friends peace testimony crystallized into a uniform witness supported by all Friends in opposition to the government and its reestablished Anglican uniformity.

In the late spring of 1660 persons whose loyalty to the new regime was suspect were rounded up. George Fox was arrested for this reason. He would be tried and sentenced to be imprisoned until released by order of the King and Parliament. He would write to the King declaring his innocence and denying that he had drawn a carnal weapon against him or any man upon earth, for his weapons were spiritual. He was not a part of any plot or insurrection and was never an enemy to the King nor to any man's person upon the earth.

Fox professed his innocence. I am innocent as a child of all these things,

I do not fight with carnal weapons
I do not fight, with flesh and blood
my weapons are spiritual,
I seek the peace of all men

When Fox was remanded to the King's bench in London by a writ of *habeas corpus*, he posted bond that he would appear and plead his innocence. Reluctant to incur the expense of sending him up under guard the court agreed to Fox's proposal that he go up unguarded and at his own expense.

Within three months of Fox's release the Fifth Monarchy Uprising against the new regime occurred in London, January 1661. On January 10 by proclamation the King forbade all meetings of Quakers. Suspects were proffered, for acceptance or rejection, the oath of allegiance to the crown. They were jailed if they refused to swear allegiance. Within a few days over 4200 Friends were in prison. When they came to arrest Fox, he told them that they knew that he did not carry a pistol for he was a peaceable man. For his weapons were spiritual and his principles were peaceable.

Declaration of 1660 to King Charles II.

This statement has been the standard of the Quaker peace testimony ever since.

Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace and ensue it, to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God, seeking the good and welfare and doing that which tends to the peace of all.

We know that wars and fightings proceed from the lusts of men (Jas. iv. 1-3), out of which lusts the Lord hath redeemed us, and so out of the occasion of war.

All bloody principles and practices, we do utterly deny, with all outward wars and strife and fighting with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretense whatsoever. And this is our testimony to the whole world.

For this we can say to the whole world, we have wronged no man's person or possessions, we have used no force or violence against any man, we have been found in no plots, nor guilty of sedition. When we have been wronged, we have not sought to revenge ourselves, we have not made resistance against authority, but wherein we could not obey for conscience' sake, we have suffered even the most of any people in the nation. We have been accounted as sheep for the slaughter, persecuted and despised, beaten, stoned, wounded, stocked, whipped, imprisoned, cast into dungeons and noisome vaults where many have died in bonds, shut up from our friends, denied needful sustenance for many days together, with other like cruelties.

And the cause of all this our sufferings is not for any evil, but for things relating to the worship of our God and in obedience to his requirings of us. For which cause we shall freely give up our bodies as a sacrifice, rather than disobey the Lord who has commanded us that we shall not kill (Matt. v. 21), so that we can neither kill men, nor swear for or against them. So that if we are suspected of making war, it is without any evidence.

THE QUAKER ACT became law in May 1662. This act provided that refusal of the oath of allegiance was unlawful and that no more than four Quakers at anyone time could meet for any purpose. Fines, imprisonment and finally transportation to a penal colony were the penalties.

A storm of persecution broke over Friends. By 1672 over 6000 Friends had served prison terms under King Charles, 450 of them died in prison. An ancient fourteenth century law of Praemunire was revived to deal with those who refused the oath of allegiance. Under its provisions the accused was

- 1) declared an outlaw
- 2) his property forfeit to the crown
- 3) imprisoned at the King's pleasure, i.e. indefinitely.

This law accounts for the fact that many Friends were confined for such long terms. George Fox's longest imprisonment, January 1664-September 1666, was such a praemunire for refusing the oath.

In the face of these penal laws it is surprising how much traveling and preaching Fox accomplished. Authorities all across the country sought to arrest him. After 1663 there was a price of five pounds on his head. With the exception of the imprisonment just mentioned Fox was able to evade or talk his way out of dozens of arrests.

During Fox's long imprisonment he suffered terribly from exposure. He describes his condition after his release in 1666:

But I was so weak with lying about three years in cruel and hard imprisonments, my joints and my body were so stiff and benumbed that I could hardly get on my horse. Neither could I well bend my knees, nor hardly endure fire nor eat warm meat: I had been so long kept from it.

G.F.

In a letter written during the last decade of his life Fox reiterated that "The children of God are peace-makers, and strive to make peace in the truth; and to live in peace with all men, if it be possible."

Just a little less than two years before the death of George Fox there was a great persecution of Nonconformists by the state Lutheran church in the free city of Dantzic among whom were many Friends. This weighed heavily on Fox's mind and he wrote to the magistrates of Dantzic in 1689 pleading with them to cease.

What Fox Said and Believed About War in His Epistles and Polemical Tracts

This material covers most of the period of Fox's life as a publishing

author from 1652 until 1689 two years before his death. The Journal of George Fox, which has been the chief resource thus far, was actually written as Fox dictated it to Thomas Lower, his step-son-in-law, during 1675-1676 with an ending written by Thomas Ellwood after Fox's death except The Short Journal of 1664. Thus much of the material we are about to consider goes back farther in time of composition and publication than the Journal and may therefore reflect different emphases and developments than those found in it. In point of fact we find all of

the same themes in Fox's attitude toward war but in greater depth and with several new points of emphasis.

After 1660 Fox used different phrases to express the same life and power which takes away the occasion of war while apparently no longer using the phrase itself. In 1661 he wrote of the power of the Messiah in which is no war or strife and the law of the gospel which plucks up the roots of war. In the following decade Fox called men to a spiritual struggle which is 'the moral equivalent of war.' He called them to be valiant for God's truth upon the earth, and fear him, that can break their fetters, their jails, and their bonds in sunder. And now for you who have been partakers of Christ's power, and are sensible of it in this day of his power, that is over darkness and its power; by whose power the hearts of the king and rulers have been opened, and your outward prison-doors set open for your liberty, my desires are, that all may be preserved in humility and thankfulness, in the sense of the mercies of the Lord; and live in the peaceable truth, that is over all; that ye may answer God's grace, and his light and Spirit in all, in a righteous, godly life.

Wars originate among Christians when they act as traitors to Jesus Christ.

Fox tried to live that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars. Quakers' job is to be reconcilers, answering that of God in everyone. We are to be valiant for truth and fighters in an inward war which plucks up the roots of outward wars.

We are to live in a covenant of peace or obedience to the royal law of love to enemies, acceptance of suffering and prayer and blessing for those who persecute.

Fox insisted as early as 1650 that it was against his principles to serve in the army, and by implication against Friends principles.

Spiritual weapons are the only ones legitimate for the use of a Christian warrior. Spiritual Weapons are: kindness, unfeigned love, propaganda, persuasion, fearless preaching and rebuking of sin in high places.

Fox discusses spiritual weapons and their source in a higher power to which all men owe obedience:

our weapons are spiritual
our shield is our faith, by which we have victory over all that
which separates from God,
our sword is the word of God
and our baptism is that of the spirit
our swords are broken into ploughshares
warring with the devil, and his works
loving all the creation of God, obeying Christ's commands, who
said, 'love your enemies' □

Fox called on men to don the armor and weapons of the spirit - the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith and above all the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. Then in the spirit we will worship God, and have fellowship and spiritual weapons, and come to be spiritual men. The purpose of the inward war fought with inward weapons is to bring the truth and blessing of God to men.

Summary

In attacks or threats of violence on his own person he never resisted by violence or by force.

He stared down a man who set upon him with the naked rapier.

He rebuked those who snapped their pistols at him intending to kill.

When possible, he escaped.

He reasoned with his attackers and sometimes offered them his head, his hair and his back, standing still to let them strike. In many cases his attackers were shamed into desisting by his naked courage.

At others times Fox soon rallied from the stoning or the beating "through the power of the Lord."

Fox's personal conduct may be characterized by the phrase, "But I stood stiff and still and let him strike."

Fox turned down efforts to recruit him into the army in vehement terms declaring that he lived "in that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars."

Fox felt that both he and his followers lived in a covenant of peace whose only weapons are the spiritual weapons of the Lamb's war.

Fox had a change in attitude concerning Friends serving in the armed forces of the Commonwealth. There were at least ninety-one members of those forces who became convinced Friends and that most of them resigned from the forces by 1657. They resigned, however, from a refusal to obey orders and observe military discipline not because of opposition to military service. Some converts to Quakerism left the service when they found they could no longer kill other men.

George Fox's attitude toward all this had been thus far permissive. It was only with the imminent demise of the Commonwealth in 1659 and the suspicion and persecution of Friends under the restored king, Charles II, that Fox insisted in his epistle of 1659 to Friends and his declaration to King Charles of 1660 that all Friends everywhere must never under any circumstances serve in the armed forces or in occupations to which violence was necessary.

What would Fox's attitude toward modern protest marches and picketing be?

He would oppose any protest which involves either explicit or implicit recourse to violence as contrary to the weapons and the warfare of the Spirit. On the other hand Fox saw the spiritual war to bring in the kingdom of God as a cosmic and titanic struggle. Therefore, peaceful demonstrations and protests both by individuals and large groups are legitimate weapons for furthering the cause of Christ and his kingdom. Fox was a crusader of the Spirit and a great protestor in the name of justice and religious liberty, not just for Friends but for all.

Magistrates are officers ordained by God to punish evil doers and cherish those who do well. The magistrate must be subject to a higher power and a higher law of God and Christ. He has no right to call upon Christians to bear arms or to force them in matters of worship or religious faith.

Christ is sovereign Lord of the universe. By Him the worlds were created and all things are upheld by his word and power and to him all authority on earth and heaven have been given to Him. So He had authority, jurisdiction and power over all the nations of men who owe him both allegiance and obedience.

Through the power of his resurrection Christ is now the prophet who rules and commands from heaven and spiritual judgement and punishment are the lot of men who do not heed Him.

On the other hand His kingdom has already come and is coming to those who give him first place in their lives and loyalties. Christ the conquering King of judgement to the evil doer becomes Christ the conquering Lamb who at the head of his army of faithful lambs is going out to conquer all evil whether individual, social or cosmic and bring into existence a new heaven, a new earth and a kingdom of eternal peace among men.

George Fox opposes participation by Christians in any earthly war for any cause, whether for the kingdom of Christ or for the kingdoms of this world. But he sublimates human conflict into the great cosmic war of the Lamb in which all Christians must fight until every evil on every level of human existence be exterminated and Christ reigns transcendent, surrounded and supported by the army of the Lamb, and he shall reign forever and ever!

God is equal and righteous, and commands nothing but what is equal and just, according to that which men may perform; and such as he gives the law to, he gives power. The Lord that gave man the law, gave him power and ability. Not only to obey the Law but to live in the Life and Spirit that brought forth the Law.