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War

Just after World War I, US essayist Randolph Bourne wrote, "War is the health of the state." This statement captures key insights about patriotism: war is a means of both strengthening state power and stimulating loyalty to the state.

An ultimate test of loyalty is willingness to die for one's group. The key question is, "what group are you willing to die for?" Some parents are willing to die for their children. But why should young men be eager to risk their lives for an abstract entity called a country? That is a mystery. An even stronger test of loyalty is willingness to kill for one's group. Why should anyone offer to kill a stranger on behalf of an abstraction?

At a general level, war functions to accentuate group identification. There is a threat to the group, so members rally in defence. The threat is from the "enemy": to safeguard the group, the enemy must be defeated, even destroyed. This impulse is deeply rooted in human evolution. But this still doesn't explain why such strong loyalty can be attached to the country and government rather than to some other entity, such as the family. After all, in modern warfare, defeat does not necessarily mean destruction for families or individuals—just a new set of rulers, perhaps more benevolent ones. Why would a mother or father expect a son to risk his life for a country?

Part of the answer is that governments use a number of techniques to foster identification and loyalty.

In Europe in the late 1800s, the socialist movement gained great strength. It was epitomised by the slogan "Working people of the world, unite!"—though in practice the actual slogan referred to working men, with women left out of the picture. The idea was that the working class would stand together against the ruling class. As political crises hit Europe in the early 1900s, with the possibility of war, socialist leaders called on workers to refuse to fight each other. But then came the so-called Great War beginning in 1914—today called World War I but perhaps more accurately called a European war—and most workers rallied not against the ruling class but in support of their governments, to fight and kill each other, sacrificing their lives for their states. This was the context in which Randolph Bourne said that war is the health of the state. World War I stimulated patriotism, strengthened European states against their own populations, and undermined hopes of a peaceful transition to socialism.

In his famous novel *1984,* George Orwell envisaged a world divided into three competing superstates, Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia, constantly at war with each other. War provided the pretext for dictatorship, including pervasive surveillance of citizens, including the novel's protagonist, Winston Smith. The novel was completed in 1948, and it can be argued that Orwell was portraying not a future dystopia but rather elements of contemporary reality, in the Soviet Union and other repressive communist states of the time as well as aspects of so-called western democracies, just emerging from years of total

warfare in which citizens were subordinated to the common struggle against the enemy, and about to plunge into a struggle called the cold war in which there was the potential of destruction by nuclear weapons.

PROMOTING PATRIOTISM

Efforts to promote patriotism are especially prominent in relation to wars. To illustrate some of the methods used, I will use a range of examples, especially from World Wars I and II, which involved unprecedented mobilisation of societies for war.

Exposure

A crucial technique is *exposure*: war receives high visibility. Governments naturally want to highlight their efforts against the enemy. The mass media, with their preoccupation with conflict and emphasis on proximity and local relevance, give saturation coverage of war-related stories. During wartime, governments and mass media operate together to highlight relevant issues, for example that sacrifices are needed, that resources for war-fighting are top priority and that troops are putting their lives on the line.

Valuing

Exposure usually operates in conjunction with *valuing*: the war effort is seen as worthy. Supporting the government is patriotic. Troops are glorified. This can occur in the media, but is even more potent within families and local communities. In Australia during World War I, men who volunteered for the army were seen by many as brave, loyal and indeed everything a man should be. For many women, a man in a uniform was far more desirable than one not in the military. Supporting the troops became a test of loyalty.

The glorification of troops continues after wars are over. After World War I, monuments were constructed throughout Australia in memory of the soldiers who died in the war. In Canberra, the national capital, the War Memorial is an impressive building with the name of every Australian soldier who died in any war engraved on a wall. In small towns and local suburbs throughout the country, there are smaller memorials to soldiers.

This glorification of Australian soldiers occurred despite the fact that Australia was not even under attack in World War I: soldiers were sent to Europe to fight on behalf of Britain, the home country. Australia had been a British colony, only becoming an independent country in 1901. So Australian nationalism was subordinated to British agendas.

The glorification of Australian soldiers occurred despite World War I being a massive sacrifice of lives for little purpose. Anzac Day, 25 April, is an Australian public holiday in honour of military personnel who served in wars. Anzac stands for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. The year 2015 was the one hundredth anniversary of the landing of Australian and New Zealand soldiers at Gallipoli, in Turkey, where they futilely tried to advance against Turkish troops. A bloodbath resulted, with high casualties on both sides.

Even supporters of the war might say that this episode in Australian history was an absurd waste of lives and that British commanders were incompetent. Furthermore, some Australian soldiers at the time said they respected their Turkish counterparts. Yet the overwhelming sentiment remains that these Australian soldiers were brave, advancing in the face of almost certain death. Sacrificing their lives for their country was noble. All those who "served their country" in uniform are honoured today, but especially those who lost their lives in battle. Death is thought to have brought them a type of greatness.

Critics of war might harbour different thoughts, for example that these soldiers were naive and foolish pawns in an insane, purposeless conflict, that they would have been braver to have not joined the army, or that as members of the working class they should have been fighting against their upper-class commanders rather than other working men. But such thoughts usually remain private. Articulating them in public is to transgress against a ritual that retains the full endorsement of the political establishment.

Explanation

A third technique to promote patriotism in relation to war is *explanation,* namely providing plausible reasons why military defence is necessary. In many cases, formal explanations are not needed, because of underlying assumptions: there is an enemy, actually or potentially dangerous, and the threat must be countered by lethal force. Note that there are several assumptions involved in this seemingly simple proposition: (1) there is an oppo-

nent; (2) the opponent is dangerous: an enemy; (3) the way to counter this dangerous enemy is through military means.

The first assumption—there is an enemy—appeals to the idea that *we* are a group and *they* are not part of the group, and hence *they* are an enemy. The essence of fostering patriotism is the ensure that the in-group is thought of as the country or state or nation, and not some other grouping such as an extended family, business, sporting club, social class or network of like-minded individuals.

The second assumption, that the opponent is dangerous, grows out of a common expectation that out-groups are a threat to the in-group. An alternative is that the out-group is actually more desirable. Maybe the so-called enemy is actually a friend bringing salvation. This, to a patriot, is treason, discussed later. For the purposes here, the assumption of an enemy is part of the rationale for the military.

The third assumption—that military defence is necessary to counter the dangerous enemy—builds on the common belief that the only way to oppose violence is through superior violence. Defenders of military defence hardly need to argue that the only way to stop an invasion is through military means.

The rationale for military forces can sometimes require dubious logic. A classic example is the theory of nuclear deterrence touted during the cold war. From the side of the US government and its allies, the Soviet bloc was the enemy; it was dangerous because of its armed forces, especially its nuclear weapons; and the only way to

counter this threat was through superior force, including a superior nuclear arsenal. The Soviet government was told that if they attacked, they would be met by an overwhelming counter-attack, destroying them. This threat was supposed to deter them from attacking. The Soviets were assumed to think in exactly the same way, so the result was deterrence via mutually assured destruction or MAD.

This rationale contained several flaws. Because of secrecy about the capability of nuclear arsenals, it was easy to exaggerate the threat. In the 1960 election campaign in the US, John Kennedy campaigned on a claim that there was a "missile gap," namely that the Soviet nuclear arsenal contained more missiles, even after being informed by military figures that no such gap existed.[1] In fact, the US nuclear arsenal was far superior, so it was the Soviet missile forces that suffered from inferiority. Threat exaggeration has been a recurrent feature of US strategic nuclear policy-making.

Another flaw in the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is its selective application, which operates with thinking like this: "It's good for us to be strong to deter the enemy, but some enemies are so dangerous they should not be allowed to deter us." In the 1970s, most of the world's governments signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The governments of existing nuclear weapons states—US, Soviet Union, Britain, France, China—pledged to reduce their arsenals, while other governments pledged not to

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1 Gary A. Donaldson, *The First Modern Campaign: Kennedy, Nixon, and the Election of 1960* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), p. 128.

acquire nuclear weapons. The idea of the treaty was to stop "proliferation" of nuclear weapons capabilities, namely to stop additional governments getting their own arsenals. But what does this say about the doctrine of deterrence? If governments are deterred from attacking by nuclear weapons in the hands of enemies, then surely more governments should have their own arsenals, and eventually military aggression, or at least nuclear aggression, would cease.

The double standard in reactions to nuclear weapons arsenals is sometimes acute. The US government has repeatedly raised the alarm about weapons programmes in other countries, notably North Korea, Iraq and Iran, all the time sitting on its own arsenal of thousands of nuclear weapons with sophisticated delivery mechanisms. The US government claims it needs the weapons to deter attackers, but desperately wants to stop other governments acquiring their own deterrents. The 2003 invasion of Iraq was launched on the pretext of stopping the threat of Iraqi nuclear weapons, a threat that turned out to be non-existent.

Then there is the case of Israeli nuclear weapons, an arsenal thought to number dozens or hundreds, about which US policy makers never raise any concern. The implication is that deterrence doctrine involves an implicit double standard: nuclear weapons are a deterrent, or just not even mentioned, when they are in the hands of the good guys, but are a grave threat to world peace when in the hands of bad guys.

The case of nuclear weapons and deterrence theory is just one example of the rationale behind military races.

The enemy's military threat is misperceived, almost always by being exaggerated, thereby justifying a military build-up that is seen as entirely defensive and used to maintain peace. In blunt terms, *our* military is for peace, *theirs* is for war. Deterrence theory and related logical-sounding rationalisations serve to hide or sugar-coat this basic assumption.

Another common explanation of the need for military force is to defend against attack. However, in many cases there is no credible threat, yet threats are still invoked. One of the arguments is that a threat may arise suddenly, so military preparedness is required just in case. Think of New Zealand, thousands of kilometres away from other major population centres and of no strategic significance. Yet the government of New Zealand maintains military forces, allied to the US government.[2] The argument about the need for defence is plausible when there actually is a threat, but when there is no threat but no major reduction in military preparedness, this exposes the argument as hollow.

Endorsements
Another key method of promoting group loyalty to the state and its military forces is *endorsement*. In most countries, nearly all prominent individuals—politicians,

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2 The New Zealand government is not as tied to the US military as the governments of Australia, Britain or Canada. For example, in the 1980s the New Zealand government refused to allow visits of US nuclear ships, much to the annoyance of US political leaders.

religious leaders, business executives, heads of government departments, and others—endorse the troops. There may be disagreements about particular wars, weapons systems or levels of military expenditure, but very few people of significance question the basics about military forces. To the contrary, many of them state their commitment: supporting the military is a test of loyalty, to the extent that anyone who is seen as too weak in their enthusiasm may be accused of being unpatriotic.

Rewards
Rewards are another method of promoting patriotism in relation to war. In Palestine, Hamas provides financial support to families of suicide bombers. To some, this is outrageous, but most other governments give extra benefits to at least some of those involved in war-making. Veterans may have special hospitals and medical services, and may receive special pensions. In the US after World War II, the GI Bill gave veterans special access to higher education. Many veterans and their families say not enough is done for those who risk their lives on behalf of their countries. However, many others commit their lives to helping others—nurses, teachers and fire-fighters, for example—but do not receive special benefits.

Far more than material benefits are the psychological rewards, with soldiers being treated as heroes. Some who display special valour receive citations.

Then there are the rewards for those at the top of the hierarchy: commanders, generals and top politicians. Wartime leaders who perform well are commonly seen as exceptional individuals and greatly admired. A classic

example is Winston Churchill, Britain's prime minister during World War II. Outside of this war, his record was far less noteworthy. The cult of the leader is found in many dictatorships; war, requiring mobilisation of a society to defend against the enemy, exalts leaders even in systems of representative government. This is because uniting in a cause encourages individuals to put their trust in the leader, and project their own sense of agency to the leader.[3]

National leaders thus have much to gain from fostering conflict. An enemy is, in a sense, a leader's ally in building support for the state.

In summary, there are five main ways to promote patriotism and state-centred thinking in relation to war: exposure, valuing, explanations, endorsements and rewards. When these work effectively, they become part of the culture, adopted by individuals as part of their thinking and overriding other loyalties. This is most dramatically demonstrated when individuals are willing both to kill and to sacrifice their lives for their country and when family members are proud they have done so.

CHALLENGES

Not everyone goes along with the glorification of war and the patriotic duty to support the state against its alleged enemies. Indeed, in many places opposition to war has been vociferous and sustained. There is nothing natural in war-related patriotism: support for the country, and for its

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3 See chapter 12.

military forces, is only one way in which loyalty can be assigned. The existence of alternative loyalties is why continued efforts are exerted to promote patriotism and to hide or discredit alternatives.

The next step in analysing tactics of patriotism in relation to war is to examine direct challenges, taken separately from promoting alternatives to war, which I address later. Each of the five main methods of promoting patriotism can be countered. This is a huge topic. For example, peace movements have used a wide variety of methods, including advertisements, petitions, rallies, marches, refusal to join the military, and blockades. Many of these actions are in relation to particular wars or weapons systems, for example nuclear weapons.

Only some of these challenges to war present themselves as direct challenges to patriotism. Indeed, some peace activists are careful to portray themselves as true patriots, serving their country's interests by opposing disastrous policies that lead to death, destruction and loss of civil liberties. Furthermore, peace activists are often quite respectful of the troops, emphasising that their opposition is to policies and practices, not individuals. In this section, I present a few examples of challenges that more directly target the promotion of patriotism in relation to war. Many of these confrontations involve presenting alternatives to war, for example diplomacy or nonviolent action; I will address these later.

Challenging pro-military messages
First consider the high visibility of war stories, war reporting and war memorials. Many challenges to the

exposure of war occur out of sight. For example, a local government might be planning to build a memorial to war dead, and some staff members argue that the funds could better be spent elsewhere, or that a memorial be built in honour of peace campaigners. Librarians might choose to order books on peace rather than war. Panels in charge of the syllabus for a school district might prefer a text that gives less prominence to war. There are many such quiet battles over the visibility of war.

Most reporting on conflicts gives a one-sided perspective, with emphasis on violent acts and on simplistic storylines involving good guys and bad guys. Watching the news, it is very hard for viewers to appreciate the sources of conflict, to understand the complexities involved, or realise that nonviolent methods are being used. For example, news about the Israel-Palestine conflict seldom gives any indication that nonviolent methods— such as protests, strikes, boycotts and occupations—are regularly used.

Critics of this usual approach to reporting conflicts have called it "war journalism" and have proposed an alternative, "peace journalism."[4] It involves offering a broader, more in-depth treatment of conflicts, including driving forces, historical context, different participants, options for resolution, long-term impacts and so forth. To the extent that journalists—both professionals and citizens—take up the principles of peace journalism, reporting of conflicts is transformed: a different sort of picture is

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4 Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick, *Peace Journalism* (Stroud, UK: Hawthorn Press, 2005).

presented, with less emphasis on the latest violent clash and more information about causes, motivations, multiple players, precedents, initiatives, options and solutions. Peace journalists, rather than racing to the scene of some new atrocity, will be investigating ongoing conflicts— often ones invisible in war journalism—probing the back stories and exposing dimensions normally ignored.[5]

Devaluing war and the state

Given that glorification of troops and their noble cause is standard in the usual war-linked patriotism, one option for challenging war and the state is to do the opposite: treat them as misguided, worthless, counterproductive, reprehensible or criminal. This is risky territory for opponents of war, because defenders of the faith are very sensitive to any criticism—especially criticism of soldiers.

On Anzac day, 25 April, in all parts of Australia there is a dawn service to remember soldiers who lost their lives in war, and a march in which veterans participate, some wearing their uniforms. The annual Anzac Day march is not a promising time to challenge any part of the Anzac legend. In 1980 in Canberra, the national capital of Australia, a group of women attempted to join the Anzac Day march in memory of women raped in war.[6] They carried placards including "Rape is war against women," "Soldiers are phallic murderers" and "Women are always

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5 Virgil Hawkins, *Stealth Conflicts: How the World's Worst Violence Is Ignored* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008).

6 This information is drawn from articles and letters in the *Canberra Times*. Copies available on request.

the victims." They planned to lay a wreath with a sign saying, "In memory of women raped in war." This protest action was a direct challenge to the mythology of the noble Anzacs: it suggested that some of them might have been rapists. It is well documented that rape by soldiers is a frequent occurrence: women in conquered territories are prime targets. Sometimes rape is a conscious tool for subjugating populations; more often it is an act in which men take advantage of their power and the absence of any policing of their crimes.

Police arrested 14 women, alleging there was an imminent breach of the peace. (It is ironic when protesters against war are charged with breaching the "peace.") In September, a special magistrate convicted the women. Most received fines; three were jailed for a month. According to a newspaper story, the magistrate said they were "social mutineers" who were involved in "wilful and collective defiance of authority, of a sort which in a military sense would be called mutiny." The three who were jailed were said to have a "tendency to become social anarchists."

The attitude of the police and the magistrate—shared by many of the veterans marching on Anzac Day—reflects an extreme antipathy towards any action that devalues soldiers, in this case by pointing to actions by soldiers that are usually ignored in remembrances of a glorious past. It is unthinkable that the troops were anything less than noble.[7]

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7 The magistrate's comments stimulated a storm of protest. Dozens of women prepared for civil disobedience at the following

In many parts of the world, it remains risky to show disrespect towards veterans. Lindsay Stone discovered this the hard way. She liked to take photos of herself making provocative irreverent gestures, as a way of having fun. One photo she posted on social media was of herself making a rude gesture in front of a military cemetery. This was taken up by critics, and Stone was inundated with hundreds of thousands of abusive comments. As a result, she lost her job.[8] This illustrates that many people continue to be very upset by anyone showing disrespect for soldiers. It also suggests that challenging the glorification of troops is risky.

It is far safer to criticise political leaders who take countries to war. The troops, after all, are just doing their jobs.

With the abolition of conscription in many countries and the rise of professional armies that use economic incentives for recruitment, is it safer to challenge the reverence associated with being a soldier? Professionals are volunteers, to be sure, but no longer in a sacrificial mission as in World War I. There are many others who volunteer for dangerous occupations, such as fire fighting and coal mining. Furthermore, the risk to many members of military forces in western armies is minimal. Those who sit in bunkers in Nevada and pilot drones on the other

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year's Anzac Day march. Meanwhile, the government passed a new law against such protests. In the end, hundreds of women were allowed to join the march.

8 Jon Ronson, *So You've Been Publicly Shamed* (London: Picador, 2015).

side of the world are not risking their lives, though their jobs require skill and dedication.

Then there are mercenaries, a category of soldier different from volunteers or conscripts: mercenaries are soldiers for hire. In the US, mercenaries are called contractors, a euphemism. Rather than being front-line soldiers, contractors more commonly fill support roles such as driving vehicles, and undertake unsavoury operations such as interrogations, renditions and assassinations. Few members of the public realise that in the Iraq war beginning in 2003, there eventually were more US contractors than US troops. Though most contractors are highly professional and motivated by wanting to help others, nevertheless to be seen as a "gun for hire" is not nearly as glorious as being a regular soldier. So it is not surprising that the US government plays down the role of contractors and emphasises the contribution of its regular armed forces.

In many wars, some politicians and soldiers are guilty of war crimes. This might be waging an unjust war, killing civilians, torturing enemy troops and committing or tolerating atrocities. Exposing these crimes is a powerful way to discredit those involved.

After World War II, leading Nazis were charged with war crimes and brought to trial in Nuremberg, Germany. This was a more civilised way of addressing war crimes than the more common approach of summary execution. Nevertheless, what is striking about responses to war crimes is that nearly always it is the enemy that is targeted. Making a case that the victor, or the more powerful side, was guilty of war crimes is a potent way to discredit

war-makers, but it is difficult to get many people to pay attention. During World War II, the Allies carried out extensive bombing of civilian targets in Germany and Japan, yet few called this a war crime.[9]

Challenging justifications for war

Part of the connection between war and patriotism lies in the official justifications for going to war and continuing in war. Challenging the official rationales thus plays a role in challenging the patriotism-war link. Doing this is an important task, and one often done extremely well. There are numerous speeches, articles and books that question particular wars, or war in general, with careful arguments and ethical considerations.

Prior to the US-government-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, there was a massive protest movement. As part of this movement, various writers challenged the official rationales for the war. After the invasion, the intellectual questioning of the enterprise continued.[10] However, this level of questioning is unusual. US military involvement

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9 Eric Markusen and David Kopf, *The Holocaust and Strategic Bombing: Genocide and Total War in the Twentieth Century* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995).

10 See for example Michael Isikoff and David Corn, *Hubris: The Inside Story of Spin, Scandal, and the Selling of the Iraq War* (New York: Broadway Books, 2007); Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber, *Weapons of Mass Deception: The Uses of Propaganda in Bush's War on Iraq* (New York: Tarcher/Penguin, 2003); Norman Solomon, *War Made Easy: How Presidents and Pundits Keep Spinning Us to Death* (New York: Wiley, 2005).

in Vietnam began in the 1940s with support for French colonialists, and continued through the 1950s and 1960s. The US movement against the war gradually developed in the 1960s, along with the escalation of the war itself. Noam Chomsky's trenchant criticisms of US policy, for example in *American Power and the New Mandarins,* played a significant role in stimulating opposition.

Going back to earlier wars, well-articulated opposition sometimes took quite some time to develop. More important, in many countries, was the fact that governments suppressed criticism. In Nazi Germany, there might have been critiques of Hitler's war plans, but they did not have a high public profile.

Challenging justifications for war can also be done retrospectively, in histories. Very few histories of the US offer comprehensive critiques of the war of 1812 or the Mexican war, for example.[11] Challenging pro-war and one-sided histories is important in countering the usual justifications for war.

Challenging endorsements
When national leaders and other high-profile figures say they support greater military expenditures and greater preparedness for war, this gives greater legitimacy to the military and the state. Many people do not examine the

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11 The classic source is Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980). See also Mark Cronlund Anderson, *Holy War: Cowboys, Indians, and 9/11s,* (Regina, Saskatchewan: University of Regina Press, 2016).

arguments themselves, but rather base their views on those in authority or who they respect.

There are several ways to counter endorsements. One option is counter-endorsements: find some prominent individuals who will make statements challenging the military. If they are military figures, it's even more effective.[12] Just a few counter-endorsements can be effective, especially when they change a monopoly of elite opinion in a contested domain. This can make some people unsure of what they should think.

Another approach is to expose something wrong with those making the endorsements. Perhaps they have made rash or inaccurate claims in the past. Perhaps they have been guilty of electoral fraud. Maybe they have received donations (bribes) from vested interests. They may say one thing and do another. Exposing mistakes, corruption and hypocrisy can be effective but carries the usual risks of attacking the person and not their arguments: it can be seen as underhanded.

Usually, most of those clamouring for war are not the ones whose lives are at stake. Many of them are politicians, media commentators or public figures. A possible retort is to ask why they aren't going to the front lines or making any of the sacrifices they are expecting of others.

More generally, it is possible to question whether opinions or decisions should be made on the basis of endorsements. This is an attempt to turn the discussion

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12 A US general often quoted for his anti-war views is Smedley D. Butler, *War Is a Racket* (Los Angeles, CA: Feral House, 2003, originally published in 1935).

from the status and prestige of people involved to a consideration of the arguments.

Challenging rewards
Questioning or opposing rewards given to war supporters is a delicate business: it can easily go wrong. Consider, for example, health and other benefits provided to veterans. Saying that these should be reduced is likely to generate hostility. More promising is to say that every injured person—whether from battle, construction work or domestic violence—should receive the same benefits and support.

Then there are the rewards for valiant acts on the battlefield, such as the Victoria Cross or Medal of Honor. For outsiders to say these are inappropriate or that they glorify killing would likely create antagonism. However, it could be effective if some of the award *recipients* question recognition of bravery.

Easiest to criticise are corporations that make huge profits from war-making. Another target is politicians who instigate or prosecute military build-ups or wars. Politicians appreciate recognition and praise for their acts; if instead they are met with protests and ridicule, they will not be pleased.

In challenging rewards, it is those whose patriotism and sacrifice are least questionable who can have the greatest impact. For example, militaristic politicians are in the best position to cut back financial benefits to veterans. In general, though, challenging rewards for those involved in war seems to be one of the least promising ways of opposing the patriotism-war connection.

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So far, I have outlined five types of tactics for promoting patriotism in relation to war—exposure, valuing, positive interpretations, endorsement and rewards—and five corresponding counter-tactics for challenging the military-patriotism complex. Now it is time to turn to another set of tactics, involving alternatives to war. Instead of directly questioning, devaluing or confronting the system, the idea is to propose and promote a different way of doing things. An example is diplomacy. As well as saying "This war plan is foolish and likely to be disastrous" it is possible to say, "Diplomacy should be the first option."

To discuss alternatives to military preparations and war is a big task. As well as peacemaking through the efforts of professional diplomats, possibilities include reducing military expenditures, converting military production to production for civilian purposes, relying entirely on defensive-only military equipment and strategy (for example, fortifications but not tanks), using foreign aid to overcome poverty and inequality, building greater understanding of other societies (to reduce fear of foreigners) and promoting education and journalistic approaches that foster peace.

SOCIAL DEFENCE

Here, I will look at a specific alternative: defending communities through popular nonviolent action—such as rallies, strikes, boycotts and occupations—and getting rid of military defence. This is called various names: social

defence, civilian-based defence, nonviolent defence and defence by civil resistance. I'll usually refer to it as social defence.[13]

Converting to social defence would involve a range of transformations. Instead of relying on troops and weapons to deter and defend against attack, people would

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13 Anders Boserup and Andrew Mack, *War Without Weapons: Non-violence in National Defence* (London: Frances Pinter, 1974); Robert J. Burrowes, *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996); Antonino Drago, *Difesa Popolare Nonviolenta: Premesse Teoriche, Principi Politici e Nuovi Scenari* (Turin: EGA, 2006); Theodor Ebert, *Gewaltfreier Aufstand: Alternative zum Bürgerkrieg [Nonviolent Insurrection: Alternative to Civil War]* (Freiburg: Rombach, 1968); Gustaaf Geeraerts (editor), *Possibilities of Civilian Defence in Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Swets and Zeitlinger, 1977); Stephen King-Hall, *Defence in the Nuclear Age* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1958); Bradford Lyttle, *National Defense Thru Nonviolent Resistance* (Chicago, IL: Shahn-ti Sena, 1958); Brian Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change* (London: Freedom Press, 1993); Johan Niezing, *Sociale Verdediging als Logisch Alternatief: Van Utopie naar Optie* (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1987); Michael Randle, *Civil Resistance* (London: Fontana, 1994); Adam Roberts (editor), *The Strategy of Civilian Defence: Non-violent Resistance to Aggression* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967); Gene Sharp, *Making Europe Unconquerable: The Potential of Civilian-based Deterrence and Defense* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1985); Gene Sharp with the assistance of Bruce Jenkins, *Civilian-Based Defense: A Post-Military Weapons System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Franklin Zahn, *Alternative to the Pentagon: Nonviolent Methods of Defending a Nation* (Nyack, NY: Fellowship Publications, 1996).

need to take responsibility for defence themselves. This would involve developing and practising skills in nonviolent action, planning for threats and contingencies, and designing technological systems so they are unattractive to enemies but instead can serve the resistance. For example, people might learn the language and culture of potential enemies, build links with opposition groups in potential aggressor states, and set up resilient communication systems.

In 1968, Soviet and other Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia. At that time the Soviet government dominated Eastern European countries. In Czechoslovakia, there was a reform movement in the ruling Communist Party, moderating some of the harsh controls previously imposed. This was called "socialism with a human face." These developments were threatening to the Soviet rulers, hence the invasion.

Czechoslovak military commanders decided not to resist the invasion, recognising that armed resistance would not succeed. Instead, there was a spontaneous nonviolent resistance by the Czechoslovak people, involving rallies and noncooperation.[14] The radio network broadcast messages advocating resistance and advising against any violence. The network received information that Soviet

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14 H. Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution (*Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976); Joseph Wechsberg, *The Voices* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969); Philip Windsor and Adam Roberts, *Czechoslovakia 1968: Reform, Repression and Resistance* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969).

troops were bringing jamming equipment in by rail. After broadcasting this information, workers shunted the rail car to a siding. Meanwhile, people removed street signs and house numbers so the invaders could not easily track down individuals.

Perhaps the most effective part of the resistance was talking to the invading troops and convincing them that they were doing the wrong thing. The invading Russian troops had been told they were there to stop a capitalist takeover. Czechoslovak resisters, who spoke Russian, told them "No, we support socialism, Czechoslovak-style." Many of the troops became "unreliable" and were replaced by ones who could not speak Russian.

The active phase of the resistance lasted just a week, after which Czechoslovak political leaders made unwise concessions. However, the Soviet rulers were not able to install a puppet government for eight months. The invasion and the nonviolent resistance discredited the Soviet government around the world, especially among communist parties in the west, causing many members to question Soviet leadership of the communist movement and to form independent parties. Undoubtedly the fact that resistance was nonviolent helped reduce the legitimacy of the invasion. The Czechoslovak resistance foreshadowed the Polish Solidarity movement in the 1980s and the nonviolent movements that overthrew Eastern European communist governments in 1989, including in Czechoslovakia.

The 1968 Czechoslovak resistance to the Soviet invasion was spontaneous, yet it was remarkably successful. No form of resistance had much chance of success

against the overwhelming Soviet military superiority; nonviolent resistance maximised the cost to the Soviet rulers. And this was without any preparation.

Military defence is not guaranteed to be successful. Military planners recognise that to increase the prospects of success, planning, preparation and training are essential. A spontaneous armed resistance cannot be expected to succeed. The same applies to nonviolent defence: it is more likely to be effective with comprehensive training—and much else.

For example, building links with people in places where a threat might arise is valuable. In Australia, for decades some politicians and commentators drummed up a fear of an invasion from "the north"—variously Indonesia, China or Japan—used as a pretext for greater military expenditures. (In recent years, this has been superseded by alarm over terrorism.) Assuming, for the sake of argument, there was some actual threat from Indonesia (especially prior to 1998, when it was a military-based regime), social-defence preparation in Australia would involve building links with pro-democracy and anti-war groups in Indonesia. The idea is that if the Indonesian government launched an invasion, it would provide a stimulus for a challenge to the Indonesian government.

Technology is also relevant. Secure communication systems are essential to coordinate resistance and to contact allies in other parts of the world. This might involve making encryption standard, and designing systems so that no one—including the government—can monitor the content or pattern of communication. This goes right against new Australian laws that require tele-

communications providers to save metadata so it can be used by security agencies in anti-terror investigations. Any system that enables centralised control is a vulnerability in the case of a foreign invasion, because it can be taken over and used by the invaders.

There is much else that could be done to build a social defence system: renewable, decentralised energy systems; factories in which workers can shut down production; resilient agricultural and transport systems.[15] Most of all, a society prepared and designed for non-violent resistance needs to be united in its goal, and in this there is a similarity with conventional patriotism. The difference is that social defence involves solidarity in defence of community, not government, and is not tied to the military.

This brings up an essential difference between social and military defence. Militaries can be used to defend against foreign enemies but are regularly used as tools by governments to defend against "internal enemies," which is code for any citizen threat to the government or the military. There are many military regimes around the world, and in most countries the military, or a militarised police, is the ultimate defender of government.

With social defence, citizens are empowered with the skills and tools to challenge repressive rulers. This means that preparations for social defence necessarily promote skills and tools that can be used to challenge the government and other powerful groups, or at least any of its

15 Brian Martin, *Technology for Nonviolent Struggle* (London: War Resisters' International, 2001).

policies that are unwelcome. For example, if workers have the capacity to shut down production and resist efforts to force them to get it going again—a very useful capacity in the event of a takeover—then they can use their capacity against bosses and owners. In fact, the ideal organisational form for production in a social defence system involves worker-community control, in a decentralised, cooperative arrangement. This makes it difficult for any oppressor to simply come in, replace the bosses and run the operation for their own benefit.

During the Nazi occupation of Europe, in most occupied countries the Nazis did not aim to exterminate everyone—their targets for this were Jews, Gypsies, gays and a few other groups—but rather to exploit the population and resources for their own benefit. Rather than destroy a factory, they would rather take it over and keep it operating. But the Nazi occupiers did not have the personnel and skills to replace all the managers of factories, businesses and government departments across Europe, so they relied on collaborators: citizens in the occupied countries who would serve the Nazi cause. Two prominent collaborators were Marshal Pétain in France and Vidkun Quisling in Norway; officially they were government leaders but in practice they were puppets of the Nazis. But further down the pecking order, acquiescence was also essential to Nazi rule. Business managers and government officials needed to keep doing their jobs.

In the Netherlands, there had been limited preparation in government departments for resistance to occupa-

tion.[16] Officials were supposed to do their job if it served the people but to resign if forced to implement unethical policies. However, in practice this plan was not carried out. Most Dutch government employees continued to work as usual. However, in other countries there was not even any thinking about preparing to resist.

In a social defence system, planning, preparation and training for resistance would be routine, in the same way that fire brigades plan for emergencies and run fire drills in workplaces. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a network of a dozen social defence groups in the Netherlands, addressing different issues. One of them sought to formulate principles and plans for resistance by government employees, so they would be better prepared than they had been against the Nazis. In the 1970s and 1980s, the primary foreign threat was from the Soviet Union: there was serious concern about a Soviet invasion of Europe, and indeed the rationale for the military alliance NATO was to deter and defend against such a threat. With the end of the cold war in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the threat evaporated and interest in social defence dissipated.

Yet the same issues remained relevant. To develop an alternative to military defence based on nonviolent resistance requires extensive planning, preparation and training. Most of all, it requires people to understand and

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16 A. H. Heering, "Het openbaar bestuur onder vreemde besetting," *Bestuurswetenschappen*, nr 4, april/mei 1983, ("Public administration under foreign occupation," http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/peace/83Heering.html).

be committed to unarmed resistance to aggression and oppression. This would have implications for nearly every aspect of society. The general direction for a transformation towards social defence is self-reliance, self-sufficiency, decentralised decision-making, and empowerment of citizens through skill development and training.

A society organised for social defence would be a society resistant to any form of domination—including by its own government. What this means is that if people have the understanding and skills to resist an invader, they can use the same understanding and skills to challenge the government itself, if it becomes oppressive in some way. This, in my view, is the primary reason why few governments are keen to promote social defence.

Governments are protected from internal challenges by their own systems of organised violence, primarily the military and police. In practice, most of the time these systems are not needed. Most people cooperate with laws, and support enforcement of laws. When someone steals a car or assaults a stranger, most citizens cooperate with police in tracking down the culprit. But sometimes there are serious challenges to the government or to other powerful groups, especially corporations, and so force is used to protect the system. When people refuse to pay their taxes, then the courts, and the police if necessary, are invoked to force compliance. If workers go on strike or occupy the workplace, troops are sometimes brought in to break the resistance.

Completing the picture is selective enforcement of the law: when governments break their own laws, there is seldom any penalty, and when big companies flout the

law, they often get away with it or suffer only a small symbolic penalty.[17] The point is that the police and military nearly always support those with more power. Governments write laws that benefit those with power and wealth and then enforce the laws in a selective fashion, with those with little power or wealth receiving most of the blame for law-breaking.

In a society with a social defence system, ordinary members of the public would be empowered. A government that lost the trust of significant portions of the population would have a difficult time surviving. To reiterate: empowering the people to resist oppression is threatening to most governments, so social defence is unlikely to be supported. It might be okay to support people power movements in other countries, to challenge enemy regimes, but promoting equivalent movements at home is another story.

With this background, it is useful to look at tactics used by governments to oppose the option of social defence. This assessment offers some clues about how to promote this alternative.

Cover-up
Few governments give any attention to social defence. "Cover-up" is not quite the right word for this treatment, which might better be called neglect or lack of interest. The social defence option is not on the government agenda, and there are no obvious means to raise it. When

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17 See chapter 4.

was the last time that a government sponsored a major public investigation into modes of defence?

The mass media usually follow government cues, and have given little attention to social defence. Peace movements often don't promote alternatives as much as oppose wars and weapons systems: they are better called antiwar movements.

There has been interest in social defence in a few parts of the world, including Australia, Britain, Canada and the US, but most progress in this direction occurred in Europe. This makes sense. European peoples had experience in being conquered and occupied by powerful regimes—Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union—or, if spared themselves, seeing their near neighbours being subjugated. Military defence against a much more powerful opponent was pointless or worse, except as part of an alliance with a powerful ally (the US military, via NATO). But with the collapse of the Soviet Union, much of the incentive to explore social defence evaporated. No threat, hence no need for an alternative. Of course this didn't mean governments dismantled their military systems. It meant that civil society groups became less active as the official rationale for military forces became less salient. Indeed, it might be said that governments became less active in raising alarms about invasion, and hoped that few would notice that the rationale for standing armies and advanced weapons systems was gone. Then, conveniently, terrorism apparently provided a new pretext for military preparedness. Social defence provides a template for a citizen-based alternative to conventional anti-terrorism, but this was undeveloped and never captured much

interest among peace groups. After all, anti-terrorism was a pretext, and terrorism a minor problem, compared to the real possibility of nuclear attack during the cold war.

Devaluation
Governments and their apologists, on the few occasions when they took notice of social defence, could easily dismiss it as impractical—it simply wouldn't work against a determined invader. Their assumption has always been that a ruthless aggressor will always be victorious over nonviolent opposition.

This sort of dismissal by governments wouldn't matter so much except that it has long been shared by a large proportion of the population. Most people have been convinced, somewhere along the line, that violence is superior. Hollywood films assist in this: the good guys always win against bad guys by using violence, either greater force or force used in a smarter way. Few mainstream films show the power of collective nonviolent action. Despite dozens of repressive regimes having been toppled through mass citizen resistance over the past century, this has not become the stuff of Hollywood scripts. Instead, superheroes are a popular genre.

The glorification of violence as the antidote to threats to the citizenry contains an implicit devaluation of popular nonviolent action, which is assumed to be ineffectual and hence easily dismissed.

Reinterpretation
Another response to the idea of social defence is to provide arguments about why it won't work. A typical one

is to say, "It wouldn't work against the Nazis." This is less an argument than an assertion that operates by appealing to unarticulated assumptions, in particular that ruthless violence will always triumph over nonviolent action. The argument about the Nazis has been countered in several ways, for example by noting that nonviolent action was used against the Nazis in some countries, with a degree of success,[18] and more generally that nonviolent action was not even tried systematically, and certainly not as a strategy by governments.[19]

There have been few serious critiques of social defence. One of them was a study by Alex Schmid, who analysed opposition to a potential Soviet occupation of Western Europe.[20] Schmid, to his credit, also analysed armed resistance to Soviet domination, for example in Lithuania from 1944 to 1952, and found it too was ineffective. Schmid's arguments were questionable at the

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18 Jacques Semelin, *Unarmed against Hitler: Civilian Resistance in Europe, 1939-1943* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993).

19 For a careful response to the argument about ruthless violence, see Ralph Summy, "Nonviolence and the case of the extremely ruthless opponent," *Pacifica Review,* Vol. 6, No. 1, 1994, pp. 1–29.

20 Alex P. Schmid, with Ellen Berends and Luuk Zonneveld, *Social Defence and Soviet Military Power: An Inquiry into the Relevance of an Alternative Defence Concept* (Leiden: Center for the Study of Social Conflict, State University of Leiden, 1985).

time.[21] Their weakness was shown more dramatically a few years later with the collapse of Eastern European communist regimes in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, triumphs of people power against repressive regimes.[22]

Careful arguments against social defence have not played a major role in its dismissal apparently because it is easy to dismiss the option on the basis of simplistic assumptions about the superiority of violence and appeals to the Nazi example and other assumed refutations.

Official channels

Attempts to convince governments that social defence is a viable option, indeed a superior alternative to military defence, have made little progress. Gene Sharp, the world's most prominent nonviolence researcher, wrote two books about civilian-based defence and spent considerable effort seeking to convince the US government to adopt the option.[23] The US-based Civilian-Based Defense Association, which largely followed Sharp's approach, also made efforts, all to no avail. The US government never even initiated a major public investigation into civilian-based defence. Seeking change via appealing to elites turned out to be a dead end.

A few governments have looked seriously at social defence. Sweden has a "total defence" system incorporating conventional military defence, civil defence (bomb shelters, underground factories and other preparations to survive attack), psychological defence (preparation for the possibility of war) and social defence. The idea is that in case of invasion, if military defence fails, civil defence can provide protection and the population will be psychologically prepared and able to use nonviolent means to resist. This is not the same as a social defence system, especially considering that mixing violent and nonviolent methods can undermine the effectiveness of nonviolent resistance. Still, the Swedish system nominally includes nonviolent options, though they are subordinated to conventional military means. It should be mentioned that Sweden has a well-developed arms manufacturing industry, and its arms exports are the largest in the world on a per capita basis: it is not a model for fostering nonviolent alternatives.

As mentioned, in the Netherlands in the 1970s and 1980s there was considerable grassroots interest in social defence, as well as a number of articles and books exploring and promoting this option.[24] Nevertheless, the government was not much interested, until a minor party was able to use its pivotal role to push for a dozen social defence research projects.[25] But this was reduced to a

21 Brian Martin, Review of Alex P. Schmid, *Social Defence and Soviet Military Power*, in *Civilian-Based Defense: News & Opinion*, Vol. 4, No. 4, May 1988, pp. 6–11.

22 Michael Randle, *People Power: The Building of a New European Home* (Stroud, UK: Hawthorn, 1991).

23 Sharp, note 13.

24 J. P. Feddema, A. H. Heering and E. A. Huisman, *Verdediging met een Menselijk Gezicht: Grondslagen en Praktijk van Sociale Verdediging* (Amersfoort: De Horstink, 1982); Niezing, op. cit.

25 Giliam de Valk in cooperation with Johan Niezing, *Research on Civilian-Based Defence* (Amsterdam: SISWO, 1993).

single study—the Schmid study discussed earlier—which turned out to be more critical than supportive of social defence.

In Austria, conscripts are taught about social defence for part of their training. In Italy, individuals who were conscripted could opt for alternative service, and one option was being involved with an organisation promoting social defence.

Slovenia was formerly part of Yugoslavia. Around the time of the Balkan wars, Slovenia sought independence, and obtained it without any fighting. At that time, there was support for social defence. It was an optimal time for changing, especially for a small, weak state with no serious prospects of being able to defend militarily against an aggressor. But the interest in social defence faded and Slovenia ended up with a conventional military system.

The Baltic states—Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia—were independent countries when, in 1940, they were incorporated into the Soviet Union. The next year they were conquered by Nazi Germany, and then reconquered by the Soviet Union in 1944. After 1989, with the collapse of Eastern European communist regimes through mass citizen action, people in the Baltic states used nonviolent means to agitate for independence, and were successful in 1991. It was a classic case study of a nonviolent challenge to an oppressive ruler. So, some leaders thought, why not change to a social defence system and thus institutionalise this form of citizen resistance? There was interest—but only in Lithuania did interest continue. In 2015, the

country's Ministry of Defence produced a manual for citizens on how to nonviolently resist an invasion.[26]

Various lessons can be drawn from these examples. One is that more pressure is needed to get governments to take social defence seriously. Another is that governments are the least likely group to make moves towards social defence. After all, if the state is built on a claimed monopoly over the legitimate use of violence in public, then social defence is a direct challenge to the state. Only the most enlightened leaders are likely to take it seriously.

Intimidation and rewards
It's possible to imagine that proponents of social defence might be subject to threats and attacks, perhaps losing their jobs or being arrested and assaulted. So far, there seems little evidence of anything like this. It would be ironic should this occur, because the methods of social defence are designed to deal with attacks.

The other side of the coin is rewards for those who support military defence, and there are plenty. Promoters and supporters can obtain careers in the military or supporting agencies, such as arms manufacturers, and bask in the recognition that comes with being part of a country's defence establishment. The entire military-industrial complex—a complex to which can be added science, education and other sectors—is built around rewards for

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26 Maciej Bartkowski, *Nonviolent Civilian Defense to Counter Russian Hybrid Warfare* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Center for Advanced Governmental Studies, 2015), http://www.advanced.jhu.edu/nonviolent

those contributing. To promote social defence instead is, most likely, to forgo such rewards.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Social defence, as an alternative to military defence, thus faces quite a few obstacles, classified here into the categories of cover-up (though neglect is a better description), devaluation, reinterpretation, official channels and lack of rewards (whereas there are considerable rewards for supporting military defence). The next question is, how can they be countered?

Exposure

The first and essential step in promoting social defence is to make more people aware of this option. This can be done via articles, blogs, talks, debates and media coverage. This seems obvious enough. Indeed, it is far easier today to make information available than it was in the 1980s, before the Internet. Despite the apparent ease of making the concept of social defence more visible, it has not been happening. It is worth considering some factors.

One problem today is information overload. Decades ago, the main challenge was gaining access to information about social defence, which meant finding out about a newsletter, article or book and obtaining it. Today, much of the same information—in books for example—is readily available for those who want to pursue it, but it is drowned in masses of other information. This is nothing new, but the factor of overload is much more significant today.

Another problem is that information needs to be made relevant to today's circumstances. Warfare is different today than in the 1980s, and likewise social defence needs to be updated. Reading books written in the 1950s or 1980s is informative, but to engage more people in the ideas, contemporary relevance is vital. A big component of social defence today is likely to be online. Tactics, strategies, logistics and skills need updating.

Then there is the question of who is going to lead a resurgence of interest in social defence. It is all very well to talk about making the concept visible, but who will do this? In analysing tactics to promote an alternative to the war-state nexus, there need to be individuals and groups who will pursue them.

There is yet another consideration. Perhaps it is unwise to advocate directly for social defence, as this may only stimulate opposition by those committed to military defence. Another option would be to join campaigns that increase the capacity for social defence, even though that is not their purpose. Skills and strategies for overthrowing dictators are highly relevant. So are skills and strategies for challenging online surveillance, for developing local energy self-reliance, for building transport systems not dependent on imports of fuel, and a host of other areas.

Any centralised system is vulnerable to takeover. Think of transport, for example. If most people can get around by walking or cycling or vehicles powered by locally produced energy, then the transport system is resilient. Hence, the population cannot easily be subjugated by cutting off imports of oil or by occupying refineries or power plants. The same applies to communi-

cations. If a government can monitor everyone's calls and Internet usage, then the population is vulnerable to oppression by the government itself or by any aggressor that takes over the system. The implication is that efforts to build resilient transport systems and secure communication systems can make a community less vulnerable to control. This is a contribution to the capacity for social defence, even if no one ever thinks about defending nonviolently against aggression.

Social defence through changes that pass unnoticed? Is this better or worse than making more people aware of the option?

Valuing

A second aspect of promoting social defence is to increase its credibility by association with things people value. This might include endorsements by high-status people or associations with valued symbols.

Stephen King-Hall, a British naval officer in World War I, later became a prominent social commentator and an advocate of social defence. His book *Defence in the Nuclear Age,* in which he recommended abandoning military defence and defending Britain through citizen nonviolent resistance, was one of the earliest full-scale proposals for nonviolent defence.[27] For respected military personnel to give credence to social defence is a potent endorsement, because it can make people think the option is worth considering. So far, however, very few prominent

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27 Stephen King-Hall, *Defence in the Nuclear Age* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1958).

people in any sphere of life—politicians, celebrities, business executives, religious figures, famous scientists—have endorsed social defence.

Some respected figures have endorsed nonviolence, especially those who have led campaigns: Martin Luther King, Jr, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Aung San Suu Kyi. However, no such figure has paid much attention to social defence.

Endorsement can also come from respected organisations, but few have taken any notice of social defence, much less given it their backing. The Green Party in Germany, from its beginnings, endorsed social defence. Although green parties are often associated primarily with environmentalism—via the symbolic colour green—in principle they are built around four principles: ecological wisdom, social justice, grassroots democracy and nonviolence. However, whatever the formal policies of green parties, in practice few of them have done much to promote social defence. Perhaps this is a good thing, because it can be risky for an alternative to be identified with a political party, because then it may be more strongly opposed by members of other parties.

So far, the principal endorsements of social defence have come from those who have written about it and advocated for it. Most of those in this category have been peace researchers, such as Johan Niezing, Theodor Ebert, Gene Sharp and Johan Galtung. They add credibility to social defence in part through their status within the field, but perhaps more on the basis of what they actually write. Furthermore, most of their support for social defence was during the cold war. Johan Galtung, the world's leading

peace researcher, wrote insightful essays on social defence in the 1960s,[28] but has not given the option much attention in more recent works. Gene Sharp, the world's most prominent analyst of nonviolent action, wrote two important books about civilian-based defence in the decade before the end of the cold war. Since then, Sharp has received quite a bit of mainstream recognition for his work on nonviolent action, especially in the wake of the Arab spring, but this has not had much spin-off for civilian-based defence.

In summary, social defence has received few endorsements outside of small community of scholars and activists who study and support it. This no doubt has contributed to its marginalisation.

Interpretation
Social defence, when it is raised with audiences unfamiliar with it, receives a variety of responses. Some people dismiss it out of hand; a few are intrigued and want to know more. However, these responses are mostly at the gut level, based on emotions and assumptions. At the intellectual or cognitive level, though, there can be a calm, logical engagement with arguments and evidence. At this level, advocates of social defence can make quite a few points.

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28 Johan Galtung, *Peace, War and Defense: Essays in Peace Research, Volume Two* (Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers, 1976), pp. 305–426.

• Military defence cannot easily be separated from military offence: systems nominally set up for defence can be used for aggressive or interventionist purposes.

• Arms manufacture and sales underlie a huge amount of killing and suffering throughout the world.

• Military forces, in many countries, are used to support authoritarian governments.

• Social defence is based on methods of nonviolent action that have been shown to be more effective than armed struggle against repressive governments.

• Social defence is a system in which the means reflect the ends: if the goal is a world in which conflict is carried out without violence, then it is desirable that the methods to achieve such a world should not involve violence. (In contrast, military systems use the threat of violence to pursue "peace.")

• Social defence can build a sense of solidarity among people, because preparations require this.

• Social defence systems promote skills throughout the population, including skills in persuasion, communication, decision-making, protest, noncooperation, and self-reliance in energy, transportation, agriculture and other arenas.

• People who learn the skills for social defence can use those same skills to pursue social justice, for example to challenge government repression and corporate abuses.

However, such arguments are unlikely to win over anyone who is not already sympathetic.

Mobilisation of support

Gene Sharp, who wrote important books about civilian-based defence, believed that governments could be convinced to switch to this alternative after they were shown it was more effective, but his efforts were unsuccessful. Indeed, although he received some polite hearings, the US government made no significant initiatives towards civilian-based defence—not even an official investigation—meanwhile spending hundreds of billions of dollars every year on the military. This is a telling example of how logic and evidence cannot make much headway in the face of deeply held beliefs linked to vested interests. It might also indicate that the real driving force behind US military preparedness is not defence against foreign enemies but rather protection of US state and corporate interests.

Trying to convince government and military leaders about the effectiveness of social defence is to use official channels to bring about change. This is unlikely to be successful, and indeed official channels such as government inquiries or expert panels often serve to give the appearance of dealing with concerns while actually nothing much happens. My view is that governments are the least likely to take the initiative to introduce social defence, because they have the strongest stake in having military forces to protect their own interests.

Instead of appealing to governments, the alternative is to mobilise support. For promoting social defence, this means building popular support via a mass movement, in the spirit of previous movements: anti-slavery, labour, feminist, peace, environmental, animal rights and other

movements. A movement for social defence could start out as a subset of the peace movement, but to have any chance of success it needs to have a wider base. The labour movement is important because, in a social defence system, workers need to be prepared and skilled in withdrawing and/or using their labour to resist impositions by an aggressor. Social defence is also relevant to most other movements, via the skills needed for resistance and via reorganisation of society to have the solidarity to oppose aggression and repression.

In relation to patriotism, there is a complication. Civilian-based defence, as presented by Sharp and others, is seen as national defence, namely defence against foreign aggressors. The idea is to replace one form of national defence by another: military defence becomes nonviolent defence. Much of the advocacy for civilian-based defence is built around this assumption. This has the advantage of conforming to the usual thinking about defence, and drawing on assumptions about nationalism and patriotism. It does not question conventional government-promoted views about the military and its purposes.

Treating civilian-based defence as national defence is at the same time a disadvantage. It assumes that state and military leaders are the ones who will make decisions to switch to a different form of defence, when they are the least likely to want to make such a change.

Another way to think of social defence is as defence of a community by its members. The word "community" is vague and makes assumptions about relationships between individuals. The idea, though, is that the state or nation is not necessarily the unit being defended. A more

likely possibility is that people defend themselves against their own government, including against troops or militarised police. "Social defence" in this formulation is defence against government repression. This is actually the usual meaning of social defence in some European countries. It makes sense in relation to the dual purpose of military forces: to defend the state against external and internal enemies. The internal "enemies," in many cases, are simply citizens who are challenging abuse of power by the government. This is another way of seeing why few government leaders are likely to be convinced to switch from military to social defence.

Mobilisation of support for social defence means getting individuals and groups to support and take action to strengthen people's commitment and skills to resist aggression and repression and to develop plans and build infrastructure to enable this. Since the 1990s, only a few groups in a few countries have been advocating for social defence, so most of the progress is happening in indirect ways.

• The spreading of skills in nonviolent action against repressive governments. This is ideal preparation for social defence. In fact, people power movements are social defence in action. What they lack is any sustained way of creating a system for nonviolent resistance as an alternative to military defence.

• Network communication systems, using phones, texts, Facebook, Twitter and other social media. Repressive governments can more easily control one-directional media such as television and newspapers; networked media are more readily used for resistance. However,

governments are increasingly collecting data from social media to monitor dissent, so methods of opposing surveillance, such as encryption, are important to enable resistance.

• Technological self-reliance. Movements for local food production, decentralised energy production, and transport by walking and cycling help to make local communities less dependent on centralised facilities that can be controlled by governments.

• Protest movements—against poverty, exploitation and a host of other injustices—can provide experience and understanding in how to oppose repression, especially when the movements involve mass participation using methods of nonviolent action.

These and other developments are building capacity that can be used against foreign aggressors and against home-grown repressive governments. Whether this is an adequate substitute for a social defence system is another matter. Almost certainly it is not.

Governments continue to develop their capacities to control their own populations, for example through monitoring of dissent through mass surveillance and targeted intelligence operations, sophisticated public relations operations, suppression or cooption of initiatives for worker self-management and participatory democracy, and promotion of high-tech infrastructure—large power plants, industrial agriculture dependent on pesticides, high-rise buildings—that is high cost, potentially vulnerable to disruption and amenable to centralised control. In the context of defending against aggression, campaigns

against this type of infrastructure contribute to making communities less vulnerable to attack and domination.

Resistance to intimidation and rewards
Supporters of military systems, to oppose critics and challengers, can intimidate them and/or offer rewards to tempt them to change their views or actions. A typical sort of intimidation is the surveillance, infiltration, disruption and repression of peace groups. Typical rewards include jobs and funding for supporters of the military, including individuals, companies and sectors of the population. These methods are likely to be used against promotion of social defence, at least if this promotion gains traction.

Promoters of social defence therefore need to be prepared to resist intimidation. This is a perfect example of methods reflecting and serving goals: the goal is a system for citizens to nonviolently defend against aggression and repression, and to promote this goal it may be necessary to defend against repression. At the moment, advocacy for social defence scarcely exists, and the risk of repression is not so great. It can be expected that if a significant movement develops and starts making progress promoting and implementing social defence, elements within the military may take serious steps to subvert or crush the movement.

Countering rewards often can be more difficult than countering intimidation. There are vastly more research grants and career opportunities for military-related projects than ones involving nonviolent action. Promising nonviolence practitioners and researchers may be attracted to jobs in the system that seem worthwhile but restrain

activism. Resisting temptations is part of promoting alternatives to the military. The bigger task is to change the incentive structure. This is a huge challenge. Imagine the hundreds of billions of dollars now spent on military systems every year being redirected to the building and maintenance of social defence systems. This would indeed be a revolution in defence affairs.

Conclusion
There are two main ways to challenge state-centred thinking linked to military systems. One is to directly respond to the war machine, addressing the massive attention to war, the glorification of military sacrifice, the rationales for military forces, the institutional legitimation of "defence," and the intimidation of critics. Antiwar movements have made an enormous difference in deterring or helping halt particular wars and opposing particular weapons systems. Even so, the war system remains central to the world order, because military forces serve a dual role, protecting the state against both external enemies and internal challenges.

A second way to challenge military nationalism is to propose alternatives to military defence. I examined one particular alternative, social defence, that involves preparations for citizens to resist aggression and repression, through understanding, training and choice of appropriate technological systems. This option has been almost completely marginalised. Nevertheless, an analysis of tactics can be helpful in seeing ways to promote social defence and the barriers likely to be encountered. In order to be a challenge to state-based defence, social defence

needs to be conceptualised as community defence, in many cases against the state. This potential for undermining state power is probably a primary reason why few governments have made any steps towards converting from military to social defence, or even investigating the possibility.