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## **PACIFISM VARIOUSLY UNDERSTOOD**

*The analysis of the safety issue, as a social phenomenon of a varying size and range, is sensible only if its threats are taken into account. Personal security underlies all forms of safety and its dangers. Avoiding this context means that the considerations devoted to this become pointless and do not give an indication of actual security hazards. One of the manifestations of this approach is pacifism. Exposing peace as the global value and its involvement in this case, it does not take into consideration the realities of the modern world. As a result, slogans and actions recommended by pacifists, pointing to real problems and ways to remedy them, rather than serve the safety, explicitly and implicitly lead to destabilization.*

**Key words:** *pacifism, security*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Beyond all doubt peace is the global, regional, internal of states and personal value as well. Endeavours to make peace a universal phenomenon should be the individual, group and global target. Peaceful coexistence, in all possible dimensions, ensures security, a basic human need, without which the superior human value - self-development - cannot be realized.

### **1. DEFINITION OF PACIFISM**

One of the proposals to ensure universal peace is pacifism. The problem is that its essence is perceived differently. In broad terms, making a generalization, the name 'pacifists' is often referred to all people for whom peace is the superior value, and thus they take a variety of activities fixing the global value. Pacifists are, therefore, all persons actively proclaiming slogans of peaceful coexistence in regional and global scales, and taking actions to consolidate peace. Such broad understanding permits, if a given situation requires that, the use of force solutions aimed at consolidating and restoring peace. In opposition

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to this understanding of pacifism, there is a position, followers of which are adopted to be called pacifists in the strict sense, accepting only those working for peace, which excludes any use of force. The circles postulate the liquidation of all the force structures, primarily military ones, but also to a limited extent the police, the municipal police, etc. Proponents of this option show the movement and ideology to justify it, as opposition to violence, as eliminating the use of force in dissolving antagonisms, and claiming their rights, even if as a result of an act of aggression we are deprived of valuable goods, values, etc. While looking for arguments pacifists, in the narrower meaning, evoke the figure of Jesus Christ and the contents of the Bible. Frequently, as a model of the pacifist attitude the person of Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup> and effectiveness of his strategy of passive resistance are indicated. The reference to the biblical argumentation serves both the supporters of extreme pacifism and their opponents as well. Some pacifists cite statements and reveal Christ's behavior as an example of a pacifist stance, the others refer to these passages of the Old Testament, in which the Israelites are ordered to participate in the war<sup>2</sup>. It happens that in the search for authorities to justify their reasons pacifists refer to the statements and practical actions of people who are classified as those ones by them. Such an action is evoking the person of John Paul II. Beyond doubt is that the Pope was a champion of peace, as a global value, as a state that lets the personal values and the main human purpose - salvation to be fulfilled. The Pope may therefore be counted among the pacifists, if we comprehend him in the mentioned above broad sense. But there are statements of John Paul II, which exclude him from the circle of extreme pacifists. It was him who rated pacifism as the ideology of illusions, hopes impossible to be met, the flight trying to drown out fear, as well as implement private interests<sup>3</sup>. This evaluation of pacifism is shared by other confession authors, for example I.M. Bocheński states: *'The claim that peace can be maintained by liquidating military potentials is one of the superstitions associated with pacifism'*<sup>4</sup>. Similarly, the feasibility of pacifism is doubted by Fr. Prof. Tadeusz Ślipko: *'The will to preserve peace is absolutely right, but I do not think it is pacifism. Pacifism appealing for waiving any defence is not correct. I condemn such pacifism, which has not any reasons for the conduct of the war. I do not know whether it would be possible to eliminate all the military potentials, but it seems to me that this is*

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<sup>1</sup> Zob. J. Narveson, *Pacyfizm analiza filozoficzna*, Ch.C. Ryan, *Obrona własna, pacyfizm a możliwość zabijania*, w: T. Żurawski, T. Kuniński, *Etyka wojny. Antologia tekstów*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 35-66.

<sup>2</sup> *'The Old Testament does not condemn war or soldier's service. Israel conducting military operations is aware that fights for the issues of Yahweh. Great leaders who led the Chosen People for the war (Joshua, Saul and David) are praised by God. Many warlords have a reputation of sanctity.'* J. Szyran OFMConv, [online] [dostęp: 14.04.2010]. Dostępny w Internecie: <http://mateusz.pl/pow/060502.htm>

<sup>3</sup> John Paul II, 'Peace a gift of God entrusted to people', Message for the XV World Day of Peace from 01/01/1982, n. 12: *'The Christian knows that in the human heart there are lying dormant propensities for aggression, for reigning, for manipulating others, he/she knows that the motives of actions, in spite of the declarations or attitudes aimed to provide a pacifist attitude, the Christian knows that human society on Earth, completely pacifist, is an illusion, and that the ideologies that appear them as easy ones to be implemented raise hopes impossible to meet as they have erroneous conception of the human condition, do not include the issue in its entirety, using the escape in order to drown out anxiety, or, in other cases, acting in their own interests.'*

<sup>4</sup> I. M. Bocheński, *Sto zabobonów. Krótki filozoficzny słownik zabobonów*. Copyright by PHILED 1994.

*unrealistic*<sup>5</sup>.' Thus, invoking the authority of the Catholic Church and taking into consideration the above examples and the contents of 'The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World' of Vatican Council II is unauthorized and in some cases has a meaning of a deliberate manipulation. Something different is spreading the idea of peaceful coexistence and inducing one to take actions excluding aggression and military measures, and another matter is denying the right to defend one's values through military operations when all attempts of negotiation and resolving conflicts without the use of force fail.

## 2. PACIFISM AS A GLOBAL VALUE

Pacifism exposing peace as a global value, definitely excludes resolving conflicts with the participation of armed forces, and thus by various forms of military operations, considering them to be morally unacceptable. Proponents of this option emphasize that in the civilized world all sorts of contentious issues should be resolved through negotiations and settlements of international arbitration institutions, existing or appointed ad-hoc. Among the pacifist postulates the repair of the world there are demands of the liquidation of armed forces as a means of waging wars (armed conflicts). The arguments supporting this reasoning are to be social problems at the micro and macro, global and regional scales, requiring an urgent solution, which, however, cannot be realized, since the measures that could be used for this purpose are absorbed by the armaments and the maintenance of armed forces. That belief is relevant to pacifist circles.

It sometimes happens that the pacifist message finds supporters. Therefore, regardless of the extent of this recognition, the social risks associated with this ideology need to be shown. There must be arguments provided indicating that the pacifist activity is promoting the ideology impossible to be implemented, showing the distorted image of social and international relations, the ideology aiming to achieve the particular objectives of its proponents. The historical example of the disastrous consequences of applying pacifist solutions and reluctance to take responsibility for the problem is the policy of appeasement towards Hitler in the late thirties of the twentieth century. It is the lack of reaction to the Anschluss of Austria and the Czech Sudetenland occupation in 1938. Not only did these concessions fail to save peace, but they were read as permission to put forward the following demands, which finally led to the outbreak of World War II. Countries dominated by the pacifist ideology, like France and Great Britain, advocated concessions towards the aggressive ambitions of Nazi Germany and also suffered from the tragic consequences of the war. France experienced the occupation, and the United Kingdom air raids.

The literature concerning pacifism also emphasizes that its followers avoid difficult problems and difficult solutions. *'They confine themselves to appealing to conscience and going home with a sense of the well-fulfilled task. For them, the most important rule is not to do anyone harm. But sometimes it must hurt first, so as it will be healthier then, or so that the disease will not be life-threatening. Pacifists are simply lazy - it is easier to go on a demonstration than go to war, as well as it is faster to come*

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<sup>5</sup> T. Ślipko, *Wojna, moralność i zdrowy rozsądek*, [online] [dostęp: 17.04.2010]. Dostępny w Internecie: [http://www.katolik.pl/index1.php?st=ksiazki&id\\_r=192&id=609](http://www.katolik.pl/index1.php?st=ksiazki&id_r=192&id=609)

*back from it. It is worse that by their activities they undermine the will to fight and the faith in its sense at others who want to lead it, but they are attacked for it*<sup>6</sup>.

### 3. NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF PACIFISM

While promoting pacifism, the commitments of each country to ensure the safety for citizens are deliberately ignored as an irrelevant problem. The elements of the security are: internal stability, territorial integrity of the country, good relations with neighbours, participation in international security organizations, etc. The armed forces are one of the groups to ensure the implementation of the obligation. Postulating the liquidation of the army is an action aimed at depriving the country of the possibility of realizing one of its most important functions, at the same time the basic duties. Perversity, and also resulting from the inappropriate perception and description of reality, referring to populist arguments the activity of pacifist circles, as socially harmful, requires disclosure and making the public and all groups of soldiers aware of it.

On the other hand, not accepting pacifism cannot be the basis for revealing those for whom these attitudes and actions are characteristic, as people who do not believe that peace is the supreme personal and global good. This also applies to soldiers involved in stabilization, peacekeeping, disengagement, etc. operations. Just these soldiers carrying out entrusted tasks, both within the country and beyond its borders, act in the interests of the international community creating conditions for peaceful coexistence between countries<sup>7</sup>. Apart from not numerous exceptions, peace is regarded as the highest universal value of the international community. That implies duty to do everything to stabilize international relations, to create peace all the time, and if necessary defend it with weapons. Such reasoning, contrary to the views of the pacifist, is appropriate because it envisages the creation of permanent peace and its defence, including military operations, if it is threatened. It is important to understand that peace is not a state but a process and, what is more, it is a complex process, because it requires a good will, concessions, the trust of parties, and sometimes the abandonment of rapid and spectacular benefits.

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<sup>6</sup> W. Tasak, *Dlaczego pacyfizm jest złą odpowiedzią na zło?*, [online] [dostęp: 14.04.2010]. Dostępny w Internecie: <http://dlajezusa.pl/dj/content/view/651/99/>.

<sup>7</sup> Konstytucja Soboru Watykańskiego II „O Kościele w świecie współczesnym”, n. 79: ‘But the war has not been eliminated from human affair. As long as there is a danger of war and, at the same time, the lack of the international authority acting within the necessary competencies and equipped with the sufficient force, governments cannot be denied the right to the necessary defence, provided that they exhausted all means of peaceful negotiations first. States leaders and other factors sharing responsibilities for the fate of the country are, therefore, obliged to uphold the security of the peoples entrusted to them, treating so serious matters seriously. Something different is dealing with military affairs for the purposes of legitimate defence of nations, but something else –of the desire for the subjugation of other peoples. Neither the military might legalizes any use of itself for war or political purposes, nor, if the war unfortunately happened, everything becomes permissible between the warring parties. However those, who are committed to the mother country, serve in the army, can consider themselves as servants of the security and freedom of nations. Indeed, if they fulfill this task properly, they really help to consolidate the peace.’

The activity of pacifist circles is a consequence of not taking into account realities of the modern world and treating peace in the orthodox way, as the value and the social relationship of internal, local, regional and global character. The negation of any combat activity even that which serves creating and strengthening peace, cannot gain universal acceptance of local and global communities. No one, no ideology, no political power or organization, can deprive people of the right to defend their values and goods, when they are threatened or if an act of aggression was committed on them. In history there have been several examples that submission and passivity are not the best methods of solving controversial problems that they being read as a weakness of one of the parts, aggravate the conflict rather than alleviate or liquidate it.

## CONCLUSION

Even if the ideology and practice recommendations of pacifist circles are not accepted, their efforts in highlighting numerous very important scarcities in the contemporary world, as the areas of poverty, illiteracy, hunger should be appreciated. But the problem is that these phenomena of the contemporary world are also perceived by other circles and social forces whose inspiration is not derived from professing the pacifist ideology.

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## PACYFIZM ROZMAICIE ROZUMIANY

### Streszczenie

*Analiza problemu bezpieczeństwa, jako zjawiska społecznego o różnym wymiarze i zasięgu, jest tylko wtedy sensowna, jeśli uwzględni jego zagrożenia. U podstaw wszelkich przejawów bezpieczeństwa i jego zagrożeń znajduje się bezpieczeństwo personalne. Unikanie tego kontekstu powoduje, że rozważania temu poświęcone stają się jałowe i nie pozwalają na wskazanie rzeczywistych zagrożeń bezpieczeństwa. Jednym z przejawów takiego podejścia jest pacyfizm. Eksponując pokój jako wartość globalną i swoje zaangażowanie w tej sprawie, nie uwzględnia realiów współczesnego świata. W konsekwencji hasła i działania zalecane przez pacyfistów, wska-*

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*zujące na rzeczywiste problemy i sposoby zaradzenia im, zamiast bezpieczeństwu służyć, wiedzą explicite i implicite do destabilizacji.*

**Słowa kluczowe:** *pacyfizm, bezpieczeństwo*

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