

## Merton on War and Social Justice

“...I myself am responsible for this. My sins have done this. Hitler is not the only one who has started this war...  
 (“The Seven Storey Mountain” p248)

“To refuse military service when the time has come for it to be necessary, is to act after the time to combat the evil has run out”. (“Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander” p54: Gandhi according to Romain Rolland)

“To my mind there was very little doubt about the immorality of the methods used in modern war.” (ssm312)

“An H-bomb, I am told, costs only two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to make. Was there ever such a bargain? I ask you, who can give more destruction for your dollar? Is it believable that we can resist getting all that we have paid for?” (cgb218)

“In preparing for the worst he comes, in a way, to accept it, and in accepting it he desires it... This is the way the “nuclear realist”, for example, can be quite cool and deliberate in his games with his computer and his ladders of escalation... perfectly calm dementia...” (cgb209)

“...it appears that I am one of the few Catholic priests... who has come out unequivocally for a completely intransigent fight for the abolition of war, for the use of nonviolent means to settle international conflicts.” (“The Intimate Merton” p234)

Gandhi: “Truthfulness is even more important than peacefulness. Indeed, lying is the mother of violence. A truthful man cannot long remain violent” (cgb84)

“The mother of  
all other lies is  
the lie we persist  
in telling ourselves  
about ourselves.”  
(cgb84)

### Three Emphases for Social Action:

- 1...the **human** as distinct from the merely collective and technological. Affirmation of man and not of the process of production.
- 2...the **personal** - solitude, love, acceptance, freedom, friendship, creativity.
- 3...**wisdom and love** - life in its wholeness, with stability and purpose...rooted in the patterns of the cosmos itself.  
(cgb82)

