

Foreword

Concern for peace in the world at the national and international levels may have been long in the minds of many, dating back to or even beyond the 19th century when the colonial powers struggling for territories needed to avoid possible collision or use of lethal force against themselves by meeting in Berlin for a dialogue and legitimate sharing and acquisition. Nevertheless, there appears not to have been any parallel to the faith being demonstrated by Professor Paige in this book towards the attainment of a “nonkilling global society.” His conviction has stemmed from his personal experience as a soldier in the Korean war. He bares his mind in this book on the possibilities of attaining a nonviolent global society, which education has been given an exalted role.

As a higher education administrator and academic, my concern for a violent free school system in Nigeria is sometimes ridiculed by the incessant occurrences of violence among members of the university community. With this book, a fresh thinking on the possibilities of attaining a nonviolent society in Nigeria would have been ignited. To advance towards its realization, the author urges for the engagement of all academic fields of study, including the arts, technology, culture and region. The implied truth here is the redeeming role accorded the education sector for which it must also respond accordingly. The Centre for Global Nonviolence, a non-profit organization founded by the author, asserts that “everyone can be a centre for global nonviolence.” This, to me is what is required in the shaping of our society towards nonviolence. It means the commitment of all, including politicians, whose mode of acquisition and use of power sometimes have generated violence.

I am particularly grateful to the author of this book for giving Fidelis Allen the permission to re-publish the Nigerian edition of the *Nonkilling Global Political Science* and for appointing him as a Nigerian Associate of the Centre for Global Nonviolence Honolulu, Hawaii. It is my sincere hope that every Nigerian, indeed African, will read this book. Educational institutions and education planners should recommend it for students, as a good way to changing the thinking that violence has redeeming values in problem-solving. It can be incorporated as part of the peace education curriculum of countries, where the aim is to inculcate the culture of peace in society. Indeed, education as the most important instrument of social engineering reaches beyond the school to the home as much as the community. All three are interdependent and have the synergy towards cultivation in students the culture of peace. Professor Paige’s book is sure to help in this regard especially in the building of the values of peace which though have universal appeal have been undermined by actions and words of people.

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Introduction

Towards a Nonkilling Nigeria

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Is a nonkilling society possible? This is the question professor Glenn D. Paige addresses in this book. He quotes Nehru as saying, "the questions that a country puts are a measure of that country's political development. Often the failure of that country is due to the fact that it has not put the right questions to itself." This Nigerian edition of the *Nonkilling Global Political Science* is timely, in response to the various dimensions of violence already eating deep into the value system of Nigeria. No wonder, Robinson (2002) has admonished that this book, "when read widely and taken seriously will subvert certain globally prevailing values and the institutions that shape those values. Among such values, goals, preferences, demanded outcomes, events, and acts, as well as corresponding institutions are those relating to the acquisition and use of power."

It is perhaps the first time to find the word "nonkilling" in literature. Of course, this can create a problem of conceptualisation, but also, it points us directly to the need to rely on Paige for its meaning. According to him, "nonkilling" refers to the absence of killing, threats to kill, and conditions conducive to killing in human society. The emphasis here is on human beings even though it may be extended to killing of animals and other forms of life. As Paige(2005) notes:

Nonkilling encompasses the concepts of peace (absence) of war and conditions conducive to war), nonviolence (psychological, physical, and structural), and ahimsa (noninjury in thought, work and deed). In relation to killing of humans by socio-economic structural conditions that are the product of direct lethal purposes of lethality, *nonkilling* implies removal of lethality linked deprivations. In relation to threats to the viability of the biosphere, *nonkilling* implies absence of direct attacks upon life sustaining resources as well as cessation of indirect degradation associated with lethality. In relation to forms of accidental killing, *nonkilling* implies creation of social and technological conditions conducive to their elimination.

Some have noted that expansion of what actually constitutes *nonkilling* with its key concept of nonviolence is inevitable, given the nature of the universality of the problem of violence although the conditions are unique for each society today, where the state no longer wields monopoly of the use of force, but does so along with armed groups, in most cases up in arms against officials of the state or other rival groups. Writing concerning the Phillipine society on the above question, Dee (2004) has noted that "killing should not be limited to killing by weapons but should include killing by aggressive policies, practices, and prejudices that cause aggression and bring death." Paige's theory of a *nonkilling* society does not only meet the need for sound theories of governance, political change and social transformation to guide action in a depraved and unjust society as noted by Abueva (2004:27) in the case of the Phillipine, but sets the stage for a world-wide mental emancipation. Nigeria, of course, will be connected to this process by the publication of this economical English edition of Paige's book.

The absence of conditions of society that depend for maintenance or change upon the threat or use of lethal force in Paige's definition of the *nonkilling* society implies both negative and positive socio-economic, political and psychological conditions maintained by the use or threat of lethal force. There seems to have been an introduction of Paige's idea of the *nonkilling* society from what the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation (1992:13) has viewed as violence when a person uses fear, pain, or hurt to make somebody do something. As it notes, "violence is words and actions that hurt people." Paige has given education an exalted role in the achievement of a *nonkilling* society. Indeed, education, nurturing and socialization of the youth are basic to the *nonkilling* disposition (Morales 2004:79). Apparently, the education sector as much as political institutions that exist in Nigeria will have to appropriately respond to this need for subversion of values that have promoted violence. Youths in every society have high propensity for violence when compared with other class of persons. As such, any programme of change or theory of governance and social transformation without due regards for the role or place of the youth is bound to hit the rocks. The Nigerian population should by all means see the need for a new thinking on problem-solving without violence. It should go beyond the conference rooms in the hotels in Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt to reach to the classrooms of the primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Procedurally, access to public policy making should be part of the whole process by Paige's theory of nonkilling society as a framework for research and action.

As a teacher and keen observer of the Nigerian society, only a historicisation of the dynamics of its many sectors would bring us to the reality of the linkages between definite and episodic socio-economic and political conditions of Nigerians and their nature of violence. Experiments with the parliamentary and presidential systems of government at independence and after were punctured beyond measure by military coups at different times. Considering the impact of the military and the character of non-military regimes over the years since independence in Nigeria, the question, "is a *nonkilling* society possible in Nigeria?" cannot be a misplaced one.

Nigeria experienced a civil war between 1967 and 1970 in which thousands of people were killed. Ever since, religious and ethnic hostilities in different parts of the country have claimed several lives. In recent times, the Niger Delta region has been characterised by violence. Youth restiveness and violent crimes are commonplace. Criminal gangs have multiplied. Besides, electoral politics since 1999 have recorded several assassinations of actors. The question is "is a nonkilling Nigerian society possible?"

Every fragment of the Nigerian society, whether government officials, armed groups or political scientists involved in research and production of knowledge, manufacturers, and so on, implicates and is implicated by the use of methods that necessitates killing or threat to kill as in the repressive nature or actions of the government and violent response of civil societies (Robinson 2002:xx), as well as political scientists who do not challenge the notion of the inevitability of lethality for social transformation. It is not in doubt any more that his state of affairs now constitutes a problem for human advancement which Paige confronts in a most creative and scientific way, demonstrating how alternative problem-solving approaches can enhance the *nonkilling* capabilities of mankind and institutions in the power process at all levels. Is nonviolent democracy possible in Nigeria? This question is sure to emerge from Paige's theory of

politics and the nonkilling society. Obviously, this question will be necessary in the minds of many given the mode of acquisition and use of power among politicians in recent times in the case of Nigeria. Both the 1999 and 2003 elections in the country were characterized by massive incidence of violence. It actually, escalated to the levels of assassination of perceived political opponents with several politicians as victims.

Nigeria has great capabilities for nonkilling and the need for nonkilling research to support nonkilling education is now ripe. If truth be told, this book gives hope that Nigeria can and will make progress towards a nonkilling society for the well-being of our people and as an inspiration for humanity in the 21st century world.

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