



26.10.07
FRIDAY

The Work of Fethullah Gülen and the Role of Non-Violence in a Time of Terror

by T. Steve Wright

We are living in dangerous times. We can anticipate further polarisation between Islam and the West as the official line becomes more focused on achieving military solutions to what are essentially political and cultural issues.

Fethullah Gülen is unusual in adding a distinctly Islamic voice to the calls for a non-violent approach to conflict resolution. The notion of peace through peace has a rich Western tradition from Tolstoy to Martin Luther King. In the East, all of those active in peace movements today acknowledge a debt to Mahatma Gandhi. These writers continue to influence peace activists such as Gene Sharp, whose work was directly channelled to assist in the recent, relatively peaceful, revolutions in former Soviet states such as the Ukraine.

This paper examines the peace-building work of Gülen within wider concepts of non-violence in order to explore their lessons for modern Islam's transition. It is important for the conference to hear something of past voices and experiences, and the lessons learned from them, which can further inspire those in Islam who wish to move towards future peace using peaceful, non-violent activities.

This goal is particularly pertinent in a time of terror when existing counter-insurgency methods readily provoke a violent response, which justifies more violence and repression.

The paper is illustrated to ensure accessibility of the examples for those less familiar with non-violent action dedicated to achieving social change.

Panel:
Civility and Non-Violence
in Gülen's Thought and
Practice

Venue:
B202,
Brunei Gallery, SOAS

26.10.07 Panels	Parellel Session 1	Parellel Session 2
9:30-11:30		
13:00-15:00		Presentation 06
15:10-17:00		

Steve Wright (PhD on 'New Police Technologies and Sub-State Conflict Control', Lancaster University): Senior Lecturer in the School of Applied Global Ethics and an Associate Director of the Praxis Centre, Leeds Metropolitan University. For almost thirty years, Dr Wright has lectured extensively across five continents on the social implications of new internal security tactics and technologies. His most recent work covers new border control technologies and the climate change crisis. Concerned that the US 'War on Terror' may be masking new and unsustainable global security agendas, his ambition is to evolve human security programmes based on mutual respect which put the well-being of people first.

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