

From Harm to Hope

Standing with Cluster Bomb Survivors

STUDY GUIDE

CONTENTS

Page	
2	DVD contents
3	Introduction
4	Bible study 1
6	Handout: Role play cards
7	Handout: If this were a cluster bomb
8	Bible study 2
9	Activity: Connecting the dots
12	Activity: Cluster bomb attack simulation
14	Reflection questions: Personal stories
15	Reflection questions: Short film clips



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mcc.org/clusterbombs

DVD CONTENTS

● = A video contained on the DVD

• = Pieces found in this study guide are in italics

The Bible studies, activities and handouts can be found by placing your DVD into your computer's DVD drive and accessing the Documents file. For a Windows computer, this can be done through the My Computer button. On a Mac, you will want to use the Finder.

● **What is a Cluster Bomb?** [8:18]

An overview of cluster bomb development and use, featuring the voices of cluster bomb survivors and cluster bomb producer/users.

- *Bible study 1*
- *Handout: Role play cards*
- *Handout: If this were a cluster bomb*

● **The MCC Story** [8:09]

MCC's 30-year journey with cluster bombs, from the fields of Vietnam and Laos to advocacy in the U.S. and international contexts.

- *Bible study 2*
- *Activity: Connecting the dots*

● **How You Can Help** [4:25]

A description of two MCC partners— Lao Disabled Women's Development Center (Laos) and Philanthropic Association for Disabled Care (Lebanon)—that assist cluster bomb survivors and an invitation to support them through giving to MCC.

- *Activity: Cluster bomb attack simulation*

SPECIAL FEATURE: PERSONAL STORIES

- *Reflection questions*

● **Raed Mokaed** [4:43]

A young father from Lebanon describes the loss of his 5-year-old son Ahmad to a cluster bomb and the pain this has brought to his family.

● **Phounsy Phasavaeng and Lasee Phetsavong** [4:47]

Two Lao women describe their troubling encounters with cluster bombs in their lives and communities.

● **Lynn Bradach** [8:30]

Lynn Bradach, mother of Travis Bradach-Nall, a U.S. soldier who was killed by a U.S. cluster bomb in Iraq, talks about how his death has changed her.

● **Scott Calkins** [6:00]

A Mennonite minister who fired cluster bombs during the Gulf War reflects on cluster bombs, security and empire.

SPECIAL FEATURE: SHORT FILM CLIPS

- *Reflection questions*

● **Oslo Process** [7:47]

This short film features cluster bomb ban advocates at the Vienna Conference on Cluster Munitions in November of 2007. MCC worker Titus Peachey and MCC consultant Virgil Wiebe, talk about the importance of the international treaty.

● **Unacceptable Harm** [6:00]

A short film by Chris Anderson featuring cluster bomb survivors from around the world.

- *Bible study 2*

● **Bombies**

A documentary for public television that tells the story of the U.S. air war in Laos and the ongoing work to clear them from villages and fields in Xieng Khouang Province. These four clips include:

—Bounthavi and family: [2:00] farmers from Ton Neua Village preparing the soil for planting.

—Nyommala: [3:00] leader of a demining team who shows how she destroys cluster bombs

—Women of Houa Phan: [2:00] two women from Houa Phan Province remember their experience living in caves during the air war

—Puppet Show: [1:17] Children watch an educational puppet show that warns them not to touch or play with cluster bombs.

INTRODUCTION

This DVD and study guide, combined with additional materials on the MCC cluster bomb website (mcc.org/clusterbombs) provide the information you need to:

- Learn about cluster bombs and their long-term affects around the world through the voices of survivors, demining agencies and activists.
- Assist the survivors of cluster bomb attacks through the work of MCC partners in Laos and Lebanon.
- Add your voice to the growing movement for a U.S. ban on the production, sale, and use of cluster bombs.
- Reflect on the values and assumptions behind weapons such as cluster bombs and consider how your faith calls you to respond.

While the focus of this DVD and study guide is a cluster bomb ban, our concern is broader than one single weapon system. Behind the cluster bomb are values and assumptions about enemies, power and the path to security. Behind the cluster bomb are economic systems, military technology and political decisions. These are present in all weapons systems and challenge Christians to reflect seriously on the call of Jesus to be peacemakers and hunger and thirst for justice.

So we encourage you to allow your mind, heart and spirit to also be drawn to the deeper issues behind cluster bombs. What is our role when government military operations consistently hurt and kill civilians, especially children? Can goodness really overcome or transform evil? If so, how? What happens to our own moral compass if our country engages in war but we do not speak or act on behalf of the people who will suffer, including our own soldiers?

To help us think about some of these questions, the study guide includes several Bible studies. These Bible studies include the voices of people most directly affected by cluster bomb use. Even as Jesus spent time listening to those who were excluded by the religious and political power structures of his day, so it is important for us to listen to those harmed by the power structures of our day. In listening to their voices we can better understand the meaning and the breadth of Jesus' teaching.

These Bible studies also help us acknowledge that violence and evil can be found in systems and structures, including some that are "respectable" and legal.

This is an important moment in history. Nearly 100 countries gathered in Oslo, Norway in December of 2008 to sign an agreement banning the production, use and export of cluster bombs. The United States which is the world's largest producer and user of cluster bombs opposed the negotiation process and did not sign the treaty. We are now faced with a significant opportunity to call our nation to join the world community in ending this form of indiscriminate warfare.

Please make use of the many additional resources and links on the cluster bomb web site.

mcc.org/clusterbombs

We welcome your questions and feedback.

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BIBLE STUDY 1

PREPARATION (10 minutes)

(1-2 weeks in advance of the Bible study)

1. Print the handout **📄 Role play cards**. Distribute a role play card to each participant.

(If there are not enough participants for the roles below, choose several roles from each grouping. If there are more participants than roles, invite several participants to play each role).

Group 1 Roles:

- Phou Vieng—survivor of cluster bomb accident
- Mai Ma—Phou Vieng’s wife
- Boua Van—surgeon in local hospital
- Nyommala—deminer from local community

Group 2 Roles:

- Weapons manufacturer
- Congressperson
- Deployed U.S. soldier
- Taxpayer

Each person should take their role description home and practice getting into their role for the Bible study.

2. To help participants understand how cluster bombs work, and to prepare for their role in the Bible study, print the handout **📄 If this were a cluster bomb**. Print the cards on yellow cardstock to resemble the yellow Blu-97 bomblets that are common in the U.S. arsenal. There are 3 cards per sheet. Cut them with a paper cutter or scissors and give each person a card to take with them.

Ask participants to hang the card up where they will see it every day. Ask them to think about how the person in their role views the cluster bomb.

3. After everyone is assigned a role, view the video **🎥 What is a Cluster Bomb?** and tell them to take special note of the information and perspectives related to their role.

BIBLE STUDY (50 minutes)

Part I (10 minutes)

1. Before the Bible study, take an empty soda can and wrap yellow construction paper around it, so that it resembles a Blu-97 bomblet. At the Bible study place it in the center of your study circle so that everyone can see it clearly.

(If you wish to add a bit of drama to the study, note that if anyone picks up the bomblet, touches it, or bumps the table so that the “bomblet” falls over, they will suffer fatal injuries and must leave the room. This introduces the uncertainty and potential loss present in many daily activities in areas where cluster bombs have been dropped. Your own assessment of group dynamics will determine whether or not you wish to introduce this into the exercise. Only do it if the group is cohesive and you think it will be a valuable learning tool).

2. Ask each participant to introduce themselves to the group, stating who they are and what their connection is to cluster bombs (*two sentences!*).

3. Ask each participant to express one emotion or thought about the injury to Phou Vieng (*one sentence*).

4. Ask each participant to state the value or the purpose of a cluster bomb from their perspective (*one sentence*).

Part II (15 minutes)

5. Break into two groups. Explain that Group 1 is made up of people whose lives have been directly affected by the use of cluster bombs in their community, and that Group 2 is made up of people directly involved in the production, funding, or decision to use cluster bombs.

Group 1: Phou Vieng, Mai Ma, Boua Van, Nyommala
Group 2: weapons manufacturer, Congressperson, U.S. soldier, taxpayer

a. Invite Group 1 to read Romans 13:1-6 while playing the role of those whose lives are directly affected by the cluster bombs in their community.

- What do these verses teach about the role of government? When the U.S. government dropped cluster bombs on your community, was it acting as God’s servant?

- How would you apply these verses to your situation?
 - According to Romans 13, what expectations does God have of government?
 - Do you think it is possible to overcome evil with good? Why/why not? In this case, what would that look like?
- (Participants should talk directly to one another as if they actually were the people whose roles they are playing.)*

b. Invite Group 2 to read Romans 12: 1,2; 14-21, while playing the role of those with direct connections to the production and use of a cluster bomb. Discuss the following questions:

- What does this passage suggest about the use of weapons such as cluster bombs?
- If you applied these verses to your work, what would you do?
- What factors encourage or discourage you from allowing this passage to affect your work?
- Do you think it is possible to overcome evil with good? Why/why not? In this case, what would that look like?

(Participants should talk directly to one another as if they actually were the people whose roles they are playing.)

Part III (10 minutes)

6. Invite the groups to report their discussion to one another. The following questions might be helpful:

- Briefly summarize the biblical passage that you read.
- Describe what you understood the passage to mean in relation to your life situation and work. *(This can be a group summary, but significant individual differences should be noted.)*
- How do you think a person's role or life situation influences the way they read and understand scripture?
- Describe what lingering questions you still have.

Part IV (15 minutes)

(If someone has been dismissed from the Bible study because they touched or knocked over the "bomblet", bring them back to the group and ask them to talk about how it felt to be excluded. Note that this exclusion happens in all families that have experienced

death due to cluster bombs. Even family members that are injured are sometimes abandoned or divorced because they are thought to bring bad luck to the family. The emotional impact from exclusion is often as devastating as the physical injury itself. Invite the group to respond with thoughts of their own about the exercise. Emphasize that this is just a very small simulation of the loss and pain that comes to families when cluster bombs blow up while they are pursuing normal daily activities.)

7. Invite the group to discuss how each person's different role might have influenced the way each person understood their scripture passage. What would have happened if the groups had been assigned the scripture passage from the other group? Should survivors of war be involved in helping us understand what the Bible teaches about war and peace today? Why/why not?

8. Invite each participant to note how they keep the value of peace alive and growing in a world that often jumps immediately to confrontation and violent responses to conflict.

▣ HANDOUT (Bible study 1): Role play cards

Phou Vieng: Before the accident with the cluster bomb, Phou Vieng raised cattle, but since he lost one arm and one leg, his ability to work and earn income for the family is severely limited. When the bomb exploded, shrapnel from the bomb pierced a fuel container in the house, which caught fire and burned to the ground. Rather than being able to support his family, Phou Vieng has to rely on others for help.

Mai Ma: Mai Ma has a job with the local electric company. In addition to earning money for the family, she had to care for her husband through his long recovery from his severe injuries. Every day she is reminded of the U.S. air war and the cluster bombs in her village because her husband is missing an arm and a leg.

Boua Van: Boua Van is the first woman surgeon in the country of Laos. As a child she lived through the US bombing, but her grandparents and her mother were killed by the bombs. She now gives emergency medical treatment to the many people in her province who are injured by cluster bombs each year.

Nyommala: Nyommala is a deminer on one of the roving teams. She and her workers go from village to village to destroy the cluster bombs that villagers have found. Her uncle was killed by a cluster bomb while weeding in his field. She wants to help her community by getting rid of this terrible danger.

George, weapon's manufacturer: George has a good job with a strong benefit package as manager of a weapons manufacturing plant. George is proud of his opportunity to contribute to the national defense of the country he loves. He works hard to assure precision and high quality production of fuzes used in cluster bombs. These contracts allow him to keep his workers employed. He stays out of politics.

Samantha, congressperson: Samantha represents a conservative district in Texas that has a large weapons manufacturing contract. Samantha does her best to steer government contracts to her district. She is troubled by the post 9/11 threats to US security and is pleased that the production of fuzes for cluster bombs occurs in her district. This helps ensure jobs and a strong economy.

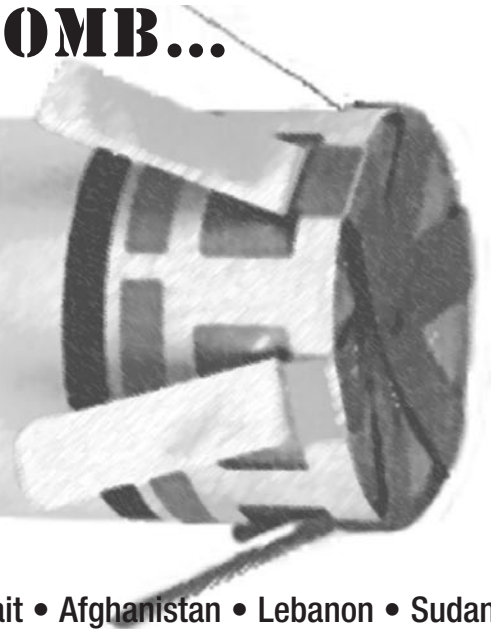
Tammy, taxpayer: Tammy is concerned about the amount of money being withheld from her paycheck. She believes our country is spending too much money on wars of aggression and not enough on health care, low-income housing and education here at home. She believes attention to these domestic needs will make our communities and our nation strong. She believes military aggression just breeds more terrorism.

Ron, deployed US soldier (medic): Ron's unit participated in the invasion of Iraq. On several occasions they fired cluster munitions (from artillery guns) at advancing enemy soldiers and tanks. The cluster bombs worked superbly, killing and driving back the enemy. However as his unit moved forward, they got into an area that had lots of unexploded cluster bombs. Ron gave medical treatment to a young Iraqi child who was injured and later died from a cluster bomb. Ron is haunted by this memory and many other things that he saw. He doesn't want anything else to do with war.

IF THIS WERE A CLUSTER BOMB...

...a child's touch could make it explode.

This card is roughly the size of just one bomblet contained in a common U.S. cluster bomb. A typical air strike of several bombs may spread hundreds of bomblets over a square kilometer. Each bomblet is designed to blast over 300 metal fragments up to a radius of 180 yards. Ten to 30 percent of the bomblets fail to explode immediately, but may remain dangerous for decades. These bomblets often maim or kill civilians, including curious children who may not know that they are dangerous.



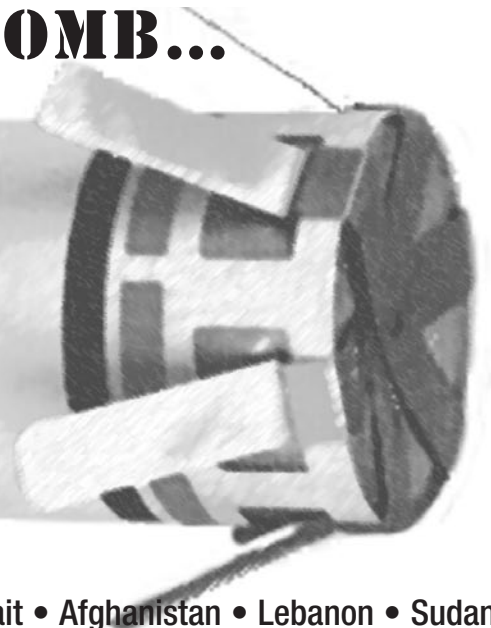
Today, cluster bombs are causing injury and death in many countries, including:

Laos • Vietnam • Cambodia • Kosovo • Serbia • Chechnya • Iraq • Kuwait • Afghanistan • Lebanon • Sudan

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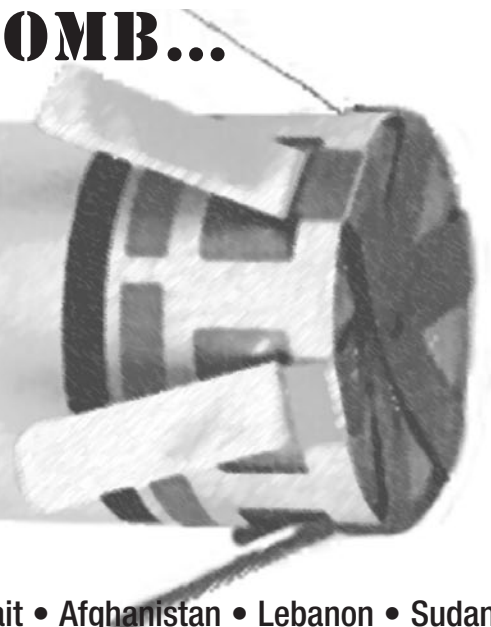
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BIBLE STUDY 2

BIBLE STUDY (50 minutes)

In advance of this Bible study, read through all the instructions.

1. View the short film clip ● **Unacceptable Harm.** (6 minutes)
2. Ask, “When you see something like this, what is your first reaction or response?” *Collect responses from everyone. Responses may include words expressing emotions, impulses to action or thoughts of indifference (it doesn’t concern me).* (3 minutes)
3. Invite participants to talk in pairs (or as a large group) about any experience they have had trying to change something. It could be a rule at home, a school policy, patterns or norms in society they found objectionable, a government law, etc. (10 minutes)

Invite participants to share some of their stories with the group. Ask them to respond to the following questions:

- What was their motivation?
 - What change tools and strategy did they use?
 - Who else did they involve in the effort?
 - What kind of opposition did they encounter?
 - What emotions did they feel along the way?
4. Read Luke 4:18,19 as Jesus’ mission statement. Note that this was a huge change agenda. (2 minutes)
 5. Assign the following passages to groups of 2 or 3. Ask them to read the passage to themselves and report back. What change did Jesus seek or initiate in this story? What change strategy did Jesus use? (10 minutes)
 - Luke 6: 1-11 (breaking the law)
 - John 8: 2-11 (reinterpreting the law)
 - Luke 19:1-9: (personal relationships/ conversion)
 - Mark 9:33-37 (teaching/example)
 - John 13:2-17 (example/breaking social norms)
 - Matthew 23: 23-28 (prophetic voice)
 6. Are cluster bombs and the political/military structures that produce and use them things that Christians in the 21st century should try to change? Why/why not? (10 minutes)

Read Romans 13: 1-5 and Ephesians 1: 9, 10 and 21-23.

Note that some Christians believe that it is not appropriate to speak to government about participation in war since God has given government “the sword.” To oppose the government’s use of the sword is therefore to oppose God’s instituted order.

Others believe that since God is above all earthly powers, even governments are accountable for justice and the well-being of people. So when governments wage war or enact oppressive policies, it is the duty of Christians to call on governments to act justly and refrain from violence.

For example, in the year 390 AD, Bishop Ambrose of Milan refused permission for Emperor Theodosius to enter the church because of his massacre of more than 7,000 citizens of Thessalonica, saying,

How could you lift up in prayer hands steeped in the blood of so unjust a massacre? Depart then, and do not by a second crime add to the guilt of the first.

Only after repenting and repealing unjust laws was Emperor Theodosius restored to full fellowship with the church.

What do you think? Should Christians call on governments not to wage war?

7. Show the video ● **The MCC Story.** (10 minutes) Invite responses to MCC’s role in the cluster bomb ban movement. Is it in keeping with the biblical examples above? Why did this change take more than 30 years?

Distribute sample letters urging the U.S. government to ban cluster bombs (mcc.org/clusterbombs) or postcards that participants can send to their Senator or Representative. Be sure to provide participants with addresses. Postcards can be ordered from the MCC store (www.mccstore.org). For a description of the cards, see www.mcc.org/clusterbombs/PostcardCampaign.html

Close by re-reading Luke 4:18, 19 as a prayer, noting that the change we seek in the world depends on the work of God’s Spirit inside each one of us.

ACTIVITY: Connecting the dots

In the video ● **The MCC Story**, Titus Peachey talked about connecting the dots between the suffering caused by cluster bombs in Laos, and the company in Lancaster, Pa., that was producing new cluster bombs. From the time any weapon is designed until it actually explodes during or after a war, there are many individuals and groups that enable its production and use such as: researchers, designers, engineers, ordnance specialists, assembly line workers, corporate leaders, military strategists, politicians, religious leaders, taxpayers, field commanders, targeters and pilots.

With so many players in the continuum who is responsible when Lao villagers die while planting gardens? Does this system of production and political decision-making make everyone feel responsible or does it effectively shield everyone from accepting responsibility? Where in the continuum do you find yourself? Where might you have opportunity to add your voice of peace or withhold your support from the violence?

We can also connect the dots between cluster bombs and the values imbedded in their purpose and function. If we look deeply enough, we will find that weapons systems are spiritual in nature, as they can destroy life itself or injure the bodies and souls of individuals. A structure for understanding violence, developed by Dorothy Van Soest and Shirley Bryant¹ can be helpful as we look specifically at the violence inherent in cluster bombs.

VIOLENCE ICE BERG

Using the analogy of an iceberg, Van Soest and Bryant describe three levels of violence. The individual level which represents the very tip of the iceberg, includes harmful actions against individuals or property. These are the acts of violence we see on the news or read about in the daily newspaper.

The institutional level which represents the middle of the iceberg that is under water, includes policies and structures that are harmful and may lead to violence at the individual level. This could include laws that discriminate on the basis of race or gender, or abusive relationships within a family power structure.

Finally the structural-cultural level which represents the broad base of the iceberg deep under water, includes basic values and assumptions that form the spiritual roots of violence. This would include beliefs about the nature of power and security, concepts of justice, understandings of God and assumptions about evil.

Violence is thus much more than an individual act. If we use the story of the Lao woman who was killed by a cluster bomb in her garden as described by Linda Gehman Peachey, the different levels of violence inherent in a cluster bomb might look something like this.

Individual Level

(harmful actions against individuals or property)

- One Lao woman killed by a cluster bomb
- Eleven children lose a mother; a husband loses his wife
- Soil becomes a place of fear and death
- An entire community experiences loss and greater insecurity
- Agricultural production and economic development suffer

Institutional Level

(Institutional policies and structures that produce or enable the violence in the individual level)

- Weapons research, design and development
- Government contracts and cluster bomb production by arms industry
- Tax structure and legislative process that provide funding for arms production/war
- Political decision to wage war (president/congress)
- Media support for war; media characterizations of the enemy
- Religious leaders and institutions that bless war as just
- Military recruitment and training
- Entertainment industry dehumanization of the enemy and projection of evil onto the “other.”
- Targeting decisions
- Bombing campaign

Structural-Cultural Level

(values and assumptions that provide the philosophical roots of violence)

- Peace/security are achieved through the projection of military power
- Collateral damage and civilian deaths are an inevitable part of war
- Our nation has the right to protect our access to essential resources by waging war
- Oppression and evil can be overcome by identifying and killing evil people
- God blesses the use of violence for self-protection and the protection of neighbor
- God uses warfare as a way to punish evil and

establish justice

- Non-violent options are weak and ineffective
- The enemy is evil and can only be controlled through violence or the threat of violence

The violence iceberg helps us understand the broad base and the deep roots that were present in the single cluster bomblet that blew up in the Lao woman's family garden in 1981. In reality, this was not an accident at all, but something that could happen only as a result of meticulous and deliberate planning.

What would you add or subtract from the different levels of the violence ice berg as it applies to cluster bombs? Where do you see violence at the institutional level in your daily routines? Where do you encounter violence at the level of values and assumptions (structural-cultural level)? What connections do you have to these different levels of violence?

CREATE A PEACE TREE

On large newsprint, draw a tree with branches, a trunk, and a well-developed root system. The task is to create a structure for peace that parallels the violence ice berg. A peace tree can be created to parallel any story of violence, but for the purposes of this exercise, use Linda's story of the Lao woman killed by a cluster bomb. At the top of the tree, you will want to create a peaceful outcome. You may want to write things like: productive soil, gardening without fear, and family/community security. This can be a whole group exercise.

As you create the peace tree, work through the reflections and questions provided for each stage. You may want to divide up into two groups, with one group concentrating on the institutional level and the other group focusing on the cultural-structural level. Once you have worked through the questions, come back together and add your ideas to the peace tree so that it parallels the ice berg of violence.

Individual Level

- Productive soil
- Gardening as a peaceful activity, without fear
- Family and community security within the natural environment

Cluster munitions not only injure and kill human beings, they also rob people of a secure and productive environment in which to live and provide for themselves. It is interesting to note that visions of security and blessing in the Hebrew Bible are filled with very clear references to physical well-being and environmental wholeness. Several examples include:

"but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid, for the Lord of hosts has spoken." (Micah 4:4-5)

"And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together unto the goodness of the LORD, to the corn, and to the wine, and to the oil, and to the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all." (Jer. 31:12)

There is also the example of creation and the Garden of Eden, where human life and the natural environment lived in security and harmony with God. Surely, to preserve a natural environment that is safe and capable of nurturing life is to participate in God's vision of wholeness for our world.

In what ways do our lives respect or disrespect the abundant, life-giving nature of the natural environment? In what ways do our lives violate the security and well-being of the human community?

Institutional Level

In the area of the tree trunk, write words that describe the policies, institutions or patterns that will create an environment free of unexploded weapons. In essence, the task is to envision policies or institutions that will create peaceful environments.

The Hebrew prophets give powerful voice to the oppression of human systems and structures. From God's deliverance of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 1), to Isaiah's plea for justice (Isaiah 1:16, 17), to the prophet Amos' call for just economic patterns (Amos 8:5-7) it is clear that God cares deeply about the human systems that shape our lives. The

practice of Jubilee as described in Leviticus 25 is a clear call to create economic and social relationships that nurture life, community and wholeness.

Jesus also demonstrates this passion for systems and patterns that are just and nurturing. He deliberately breaks a Sabbath law that had become burdensome and oppressive (Mark 3:1-6), and in Matthew 23 Jesus rails against the power structures that exploit and cheat the poor. And from the very outset of his ministry (Lk. 4:18), Jesus declares that he has come to bring good news to the poor and liberty to the captives. In his sermon on the mount (Mt. 5-7), Jesus presents a veritable social revolution, calling on his followers to end the cycle of violence and revenge by loving the enemy, even as God sends rain on the just and the unjust.

Envisioning policies and structures that promote justice and nurture peace in our world is not a partisan political exercise. Rather, it is a spiritual calling, a holy task. As you look at the policies and structures in the institutional level of the violence ice berg that led to the production of cluster bombs, what alternatives can you imagine that will contribute to a tree of peace? Make a list.

Structural-Cultural Level

In the area of the tree roots, write words or phrases that describe the values and assumptions that will lead to policies that nurture peace. In essence, describe the spiritual roots of peace.

Just as a cluster bomb and other weapons systems carry within them the spiritual roots of violence, so acts of peacebuilding or relationships of justice also have spiritual roots.

We can find references to these roots in many places throughout scripture. II Kings 6 tells the amazing story of how exercising the spiritual gift of hospitality resulted in a time of peace between warring parties. The book of Jonah points to the possibility of spiritual transformation, when it tells the story of Israel's mortal enemy, the Ninevites, repenting of the violence that was in their hands (Jonah 3:8). Luke 9 and 10 present a fascinating sequence of events involving the disciples' hatred of Samaritans, and Jesus' offering a story where a Samaritan is the instrument of grace and healing. This was a dramatic humanization of the enemy, a necessary feature of any effort to make peace. The Apostle Paul also proclaims the power of hospitality by inviting us to feed our enemies and offer them drink.

He then turns our common understanding of power on its head by suggesting that evil can indeed be overcome by good (Romans 12:20, 21).

Perhaps one of the more troubling questions faced at this level is that of our allegiance to God, and how it impacts our relationship to government. The Apostle Paul addresses this in Romans 13, but does not speak to the question of war directly. But, if the passage were interpreted as a call for Christians to go to war on behalf of nation, it is important to remember that this could readily result in Christians killing one another on the battlefield. Surely this is not what Paul's admonition to love enemies and overcome evil with good had in mind. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul notes that we have been given the "ministry of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:16-18). Clearly, followers of Jesus have a strong mandate to create communities of peace as an alternative to the nation's call to arms.

Where do you see the spiritual roots of peace active in your community? What specific beliefs or assumptions can you name that directly challenge the values and assumptions present in a cluster bomb?

SUMMARY

We must acknowledge that not all acts of violence are based on evil intentions. Sometimes people resort to violence in order to provide for basic human needs such as food, security, respect or peace. Soldiers in combat sometimes carry out selfless acts of heroism as they try to protect their comrades or civilians in the line of fire. However the choice to use violence in pursuit of noble causes is not inevitable, it is a choice with risks and uncertain consequences. The same selfless acts of heroism committed by soldiers in battle can also be carried out through courageous non-violent action. The choice is not between the use of violence for a noble cause and a passive response to oppression or evil. The choice is about what in the long term will nurture a more just and peaceful world into existence. It is about how we align our own souls and actions with the movement of God's Spirit in our world.

How do you view this choice? Discuss any experiences you have had in choosing a violent or non-violent responses to a situation of injustice.

Endnotes

1 Violence Reconceptualized for Social Work: The Urban Dilemma, Social Work, July 1995, pp. 549-557.

ACTIVITY: Cluster bomb attack simulation

Purpose

- To draw people's attention to the tragic impact of cluster bombs on civilian life in a dramatic and compelling way.
- To provide an opportunity for people to add their voice to the call for the United States to ban cluster bombs.

Materials needed

- soda cans
- yellow paper or paint

Background

There are many types of cluster bombs. They can be delivered by a traditional bomb dropped from an airplane or fired from artillery shells and rockets. The number and sizes of these bomblets vary greatly. The following exercise is based on the CBU-87 cluster bomb in the U.S. arsenal which dispenses BLU-97 bomblets. These bomblets resemble the size and shape of a soda can, although they are just a bit longer.

Each CBU-87 cluster bomb contains 202 bomblets. It is inevitable that a percentage of these bomblets will fail to explode as designed. The failure rate depends greatly on the battlefield conditions such as altitude, wind, angle of descent, tree cover and the condition of the soil (soft/hard).

SIMULATION

1. Method

Determine the method of simulation. We suggest one of the following options:

- a.** Simulate a cluster bomb attack that uses 2 CBU-87 cluster bombs, or 404 Blu-97 bomblets. You can distribute all 404 bomblets in the area you have chosen or distribute only the 20%-30% (80-120 bomblets) that typically do not explode on impact and present a long-term danger to civilian life.

The size of the area which 2 cluster bombs would cover in an attack will vary based on the altitude from which they were dropped, the amount of wind and other battlefield conditions. At a minimum, however, the primary concentration of bombs in the attack would cover an area the size of two football fields.

In this scenario, you would distribute either 404 or 80-120 yellow soda cans in an area you have chosen.

Some of the cans would be in plain view while others would be hidden by grass, leaves, bushes or other plant life.

Collect the number of used soda cans you need and paint them yellow or cut yellow paper to wrap around them. The paper can be held in place with a rubber band.

- b.** Simulate a cluster bomb attack that equals the concentration of cluster bomblets dropped on Laos, which suffered through the heaviest cluster bomb attacks in history. Over a 9-year period, the U.S. dropped more than 260 million cluster bomblets on Laos, equaling 1,098 bomblets per square kilometer. A 30% failure rate would result in 329 live bomblets in a square kilometer, while a 20% failure rate would yield 219 live bomblets.

If this scale is too large, you may bring it down to a smaller level. The calculations for various cities and towns in the U.S., as well as Mennonite college campuses can be found on the web at: www.mcc.org/clusterbombs/survive/

These calculations are for the total # of bomblets dropped. To simulate only the live bomblets left behind, multiply these figures by 20%-30%.

If you wish to do your simulation in a smaller area such as a church property, the following figures may be helpful.

500 x 500 meters (250,000 sq. meters)	= 544 bomblets
400 x 400 meters (160,000 sq. meters)	= 439 bomblets
300 x 300 meters (90,000 sq. meters)	= 329 bomblets
200 x 200 meters (40,000 sq. meters)	= 220 bomblets
100 x 100 meters (10,000 sq. meters)	= 110 bomblets
50 x 50 meters (2,500 sq. meters)	= 55 bomblets

These figures represent the total # of bomblets dropped into the respective areas. Multiply these figures by 20% or 30% to find out the likely number of live bomblets remaining on the ground.

Collect the number of used soda cans you need and paint them yellow or cut yellow paper to wrap around them. The paper can be held in place with a rubber band. Some of the cans would be in plain view while others would be hidden by grass, leaves, bushes or other plant life (if outside), or in corners, under benches/chairs or other furniture (if inside).

c. For a very effective simulation of a cluster bomb attack on your neighborhood or town, see: www.fcnl.org/weapons/cluster_attack2.htm. This web site will overlay a cluster bomb attack on any specific address you type in, so that you can see the size of the footprint and envision the presence of unexploded bomblets. This site uses conservative estimates of failure rates, so the actual impact is likely worse than what is portrayed. If you have the technology, you can project this site onto a screen and allow an audience to discuss the implications while viewing the map.

2. Education

You will need to decide what level of surprise works best for the simulation above. At some point, however, it will be important to follow up the simulation with a place where people can get more information. The additional information can be presented in a number of ways:

- The many video clips on this DVD can be used either as part of a large-screen public presentation or on a monitor that is set up in a high-traffic area.
- MCC brochure *Daily Terror: Walking in War's Aftermath* Contact MCC at: (717) 859-1151 or order online at: mcc.org/catalog This is a good hand out or take-home item for any event.
- MCC Exhibit, *Daily Terror: Walking in War's Aftermath*. This 16-panel exhibit features images and stories from people around the world who have suffered from cluster bomb attacks. Available from MCC for a \$50. rental fee plus shipping. See contact information under #2, and view online at: <http://mcc.org/clusterbombs/resources/display/index.html>
- *Bombies* film: Borrow the *Bombies* film from the MCC audio-visual library using the contact information under #2. This hour-long documentary presents the impact of the US air war in Laos and the MCC-initiated cluster bomb removal project.

3. Action

Check the MCC website (www.mcc.org/clusterbombs) for sample letters that you can e-mail to your representative or senator, or to participate in the MCC cluster bomb postcard campaign.

You may also write your own letter emphasizing two actions that the U.S. government should take:

- Sign the Oslo Treaty that bans the production, use and sale of cluster bombs. Help repair the US image abroad by agreeing to stop the use of these weapons.
- Accept full responsibility for past use of cluster bombs. The US dropped more than 260 million cluster bombs on Laos, but has provided only minimal assistance compared to the need. Provide \$100 million in clearance assistance over the next 10 years for Laos.

You can also make a visit to your congressional office, write letters to the editor of your local newspaper, contact MCC for potential speakers, and keep in touch with new developments and suggested actions via the U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines website at: <http://www.fcnl.org/weapons/clusters/>.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: Personal stories

● Raed Mokaied

Raed said, “whoever produced a cluster bomb has touched evil.”

- Do you agree with this statement? Why, why not?
- If Raed’s statement is true, what is the evil that can be found in the production of cluster bombs?
- How is touching evil different from being evil?

The violation that is present in the story of the death of Raed’s 5 year-old-son Ahmad is not something that any normal human being would intend. Yet the technology of death and the structures that enable it are meticulously researched, funded and promoted by powerful people and forces in our society. In the book of Jonah, we read that the people of Ninevah repented of the violence that was in their hands (Jonah 3:8).

- If the people of the United States repented of the violence that is in our hands, what would this look like? Can you imagine this happening? Why/ why not?

● Phounsy Phasavaeng and Lasee Phetsavong

These two Lao women both describe the tragic impact of cluster bombs on children in their country. Lasee’s story notes that many Lao villagers whose families have suffered from US-made cluster bombs want the US to accept responsibility for their loss.

- How might this happen?

Phounsy recounts the story of how her nephew and childhood playmate, Pha, was killed by a cluster bomb while they were playing. This remains a very painful memory for Phounsy, even as an adult. Like Raed from Lebanon, she has turned her pain and trauma into positive action by helping to clear cluster bombs and warn others about the danger.

Not everyone who suffers from US cluster bombs is able to respond with the same grace as Phounsy and Lasee. The presence of cluster bombs from the US in communities like Laos and Lebanon helps to form negative perceptions about our country and about Christians. This is especially true at times when US presidents and other US officials speak openly about their Christian faith while initiating bombing campaigns and wars.

- In this context, what responsibility might US Christians have in creating relationships of justice at both the national and personal level?

● Lynn Bradach

Lynn Bradach is the mother of a US Marine who was killed by a US cluster bomb in Iraq. After listening to her story, discuss the importance of “paying attention” to events that may seem far away.

- In what ways do you identify with her story?
- How do information overload and comfortable lifestyles affect our ability to pay attention and respond to other people’s pain?

The story of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) is a disturbing commentary on our human tendency to ignore the suffering of others.

- What habits or routines can we develop to help us overcome this pattern?

● Scott Calkins

Scott Calkins fired cluster bombs as a member of an artillery unit during the first Gulf War (1991). He is now a Mennonite pastor fully committed to the way of peace and nonviolence. Scott states that we are addicted to militarism in our culture.

- Do you agree with this statement? Why/why not?
- If the statement is true, what are the signs that you see of this addiction?
- What can you do to help our society overcome the addiction?
- If you believe the statement is not true, how would you describe our nation’s use of military force and the tendency of most Christians to support it?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: Short film clips

● Oslo Process

The activists in this film clip have all put energy into creating a new international treaty that bans the production, transfer, stockpiling and use of cluster bombs.

- What is the basic motivation of those who were interviewed?
- Is it appropriate for Mennonites who are committed to Christ's way of peace to engage in advocacy about weapons systems and the rules of war? Why/ why not?

● Unacceptable Harm

How do the voices of those who suffer from the long-term impact of war enter our consciousness and help inform our actions? In some ways, these voices serve as a mirror, as they help us see our country and our policies from a new perspective. One of the remarkable aspects of both the Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Oslo Process that resulted in the treaty to ban cluster bombs, was the participation of cluster bomb survivors. Their presence and their voices gave both motivation and urgency to the deliberations.

Jesus spent a lot of time with those who were excluded or harmed by the powerful systems of his day. In Matthew 23 he speaks in detail and with great passion to those in power about the harm their actions have caused. Clearly Jesus had intimate knowledge of the injustice present in his society.

- What can we learn from the voices of cluster bomb survivors about ourselves and the systems to which we belong?
- How might this influence our voice and our actions?

● Bombies film clips

The Bombies film clips introduce us to the harsh reality of cluster bombs in Laos through the voices of cluster bomb survivors, deminers, doctors, villagers, farmers and bomb clearance agencies. The clips help us understand the long-term impact of war and unexploded ordnance on a people and their land. These clips form the backdrop for the story of MCC's advocacy work.