

The logic of Niebuhr's argument against pacifism seems to me essentially identical with the logic of the argument against the pretended neutrality of Christians vis-à-vis the class struggle. Certainly, Niebuhr so regarded the matter (cf., espec., *Love and Justice*: 33 f.).

But, more than that, Niebuhr's analysis of the "social struggle between entrenched and advancing social classes" anticipates every single bit of wisdom in the analyses of theologians of liberation—and then some. In fact, he is much more forthright and clearheaded in recognizing the unavailability of coercion and violence, and in understanding the moral justification therefor. "We are all involved in the violence of life," he insists, and he expressly distinguishes "covert violence," specifically, "the covert violence of the privileged" (42, 45).