

**Editorial for “USA Today,” August 20, 1998,  
“Bombings Do Not Stop Terrorism”**

“Returning violence for violence multiplies violence,” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. taught, “adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

We could add today: bombings do not prevent further bombings. Terrorism does not solve terrorism. Only nonviolent means can stop the cycle of violence and cut it off at the root.

We unequivocally condemn the terrorist bombings which killed 247 people in Kenya and 10 people in Tanzania, and injured more than 5,500, mostly Kenyans. Together with people of faith and conscience across the nation, we also condemn the Clinton Administration’s bombings of Afghanistan and the Sudan. We object because we take our humanity seriously and we object because we are practical people.

These bombings will not build peace and security in Africa or anywhere. They increase the danger of further terrorist attacks and even more death and destruction down the road.

Indeed, as the Secretary of Defense admitted, they “will not eliminate the problem.” They will only inflame the existing hatred, instead of removing it.

Yes, we have to respond to terrorism. But not by using our own brand of terrorism. The Fellowship of Reconciliation, the oldest, largest interfaith peace organization in the US, together with many grassroots allies, calls for creative, nonviolent means to solve international conflict.

Such means are available.

They work.

It is time to learn the lesson of Dr. King: to fight fire with water, not fire.

We can build a world without bombing raids, weapons of mass destruction, war, starvation,

injustice, executions, nuclear weapons, or terrorism at any level, including the government level.

We *can* address the underlying economic, political, and social causes of terrorism.

We *can* create genuine cultures of peace.

All it takes is leadership, heartfelt commitment, and faith.

In the name of the God of peace, let's learn the wisdom of nonviolence.

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