



Pacifism as Pathology: Reflections on the Role of Armed Struggle in North America

Ward Churchill

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"This extraordinarily important book cuts to the heart of one of the central reasons movements to bring about social and environmental justice always fail. The fundamental question here is: is violence ever an acceptable tool to help bring about social change? This is probably the most important question of our time, yet so often discussions around it fall into clichés and magical thinking: that somehow if we are merely good and nice enough people, the state will stop using its violence to exploit us all. Would that this were true."—Derrick Jensen, author of *Endgame*, from the introduction.

Pacifism, the ideology of nonviolent political resistance, has been the norm among mainstream North American progressive groups for decades. But to what end? Ward Churchill challenges the pacifist movement's heralded victories—Gandhi in India, 1960s antiwar activists, even Martin Luther King's civil rights movement—suggesting that their success was in spite of, rather than because of, their nonviolent tactics. *Pacifism as Pathology* was written as a response not only to Churchill's frustration with his own activist experience, but also to a debate raging in the activist and academic communities. He argues that pacifism is in many ways counterrevolutionary; that it defends the status quo, and doesn't lead to social change. In these times of upheaval and global protest, this is a vital and extremely relevant book.

Ward Churchill is a prolific writer and lecturer, having authored, co-authored, or edited over twenty books. He is a member of the leadership council of Colorado AIM (American Indian Movement).

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