HOW NONVIOLENT STRUGGLE WORKS

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Gene Sharp

The Albert Einstein Institution

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Layout and design by Eben Sorkin

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Printed in the United States of America.
August 2013

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ISBN 1-880813-15-7
ISBN 978-1-880813-15-7

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PREFACE
Gene Sharp

This small book offers the principal contents of the 902 pages of the original 1973 *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* to anyone who wants to learn the substance of how nonviolent struggle works.[1] That is, how the nonviolent technique can operate in conflicts, even when strong opponents are willing and able to impose harsh repression.

There are almost no historical examples presented in this abridged text. They can easily be found elsewhere.[2]

This distilled text is amazingly faithful to the original lengthy complex analysis published in 1973. The full *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* did not appear ready-made that year. That book was the result of years of efforts to understand, describe, and present the technique of nonviolent action.

That work was done as several distinct sections of the whole. These sections were: under-

1 Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1973. Available at http://www.extendinghorizons.com.

2 See, for example, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* and Gene Sharp, *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential*. Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 2005.

standing of political power, methods of action, and dynamics of change. When put together these components reveal the essence of this technique. Not perfectly, for the final text left room for corrections and improvements. Not completely, for the knowledge of the operation of this technique was and is in a continual process of growth and development.

Depending on what sections are counted and at what stage of their development, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* required about fifteen years. That does not count more than a year of editorial work with Dr. Marina Finkelstein at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs, where I had been invited from Norway in December 1965 by Professor Thomas C. Schelling.

The earlier work was conducted at the Institute for Social Research, Oslo, the University of Oslo, Norway, and St. Catherine's College of Oxford University, where Alan Bullock was Master.

Before the final editorial work, a draft of T*he Politics of Nonviolent Action* was accepted in 1968 in partial fulfillment of requirements for my Doctor of Philosophy degree (D. Phil.) at Oxford University. My advanced studies in Oxford, 1960-1964, were supervised by John Plamenatz.

The Politics of Nonviolent Action is currently published in three volumes: *Part One: Power and Struggle, Part Two: The Methods of Nonviolent Action, and Part Three: The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action.*

The present text is an extreme abridgement of the published *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. The original condensation was prepared by Jaime González Bernal in Spanish in Mexico and published as *La Lucha Política Noviolenta*. Jaime González Bernal told me that his condensation required a full year of work. It was published in Spanish in Mexico in private printings under the title *La Lucha Política Noviolenta: Criterios y Técnicas*. The first printing was in March 1988 (© Gene Sharp, 1988 and © Jaime González Bernal, 1988). González Bernal's condensation was used by groups in Mexico that were struggling for fair elections.

The same edition was published in October 1988 in Santiago, Chile, under the title *La Lucha Política Noviolenta: Criterios y Métodos* by Ediciones ChileAmérica CESOC. It was copyrighted by Gene Sharp, Jaime González Bernal, and Ediciones ChileAmérica.

A revised expanded Mexican edition was printed in 1991 (© Gene Sharp, 1991 and © Jaime González Bernal, 1991) by Epessa.

Revisions of the translated passages in Spanish were made in 1993 and 1994 by Sandra Denisse Herrera Flores.

A new revised and expanded edition was printed for Cuba in 1997 (© Gene Sharp, 1997) by Hermas al Rescate. The most important addition was the expansion of the number of mechanisms of change from three to four, adding "disintigration" of the oponents' regime.

(These terms are defined in this text.)

I produced an English language text from the Spanish in 1996. Sections of that English text were incorporated in my *The Power and Practice of Nonviolent Struggle*, which has been published in Arabic, Dutch, Hebrew, Portuguese, and Tibetan. It was never published in English.

The chapters on the dynamics of nonviolent conflict in my *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential* draw heavily on González Bernal's format and text, but are considerably different in content.

The English language text here is primarily Mr. González Bernal's condensation returned to English. It has been evaluated and edited with the important assistance of Caridad Inda. She has made major contributions to this text from 1987 to this edition in 2013.

I have made limited recent changes and additions to both the English and the Spanish texts, and have changed the title to *How Nonviolent Struggle Works*.

Jamila Raqib provided editorial suggestions, consulted on the merit and usefulness of this text, and managed production. Jessica Drawe and Michael Levy also provided final editing and assisted with production.

After re-reading both the English and the Spanish texts, I was amazed at the quality of the condensation made by Mr. González Bernal. This concentrated version of *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* provides the essence of

the nonviolent technique. I decided that this English text must be published, both for use by English readers and to facilitate future translations. This is the first printing of the English language text.

Major efforts in July and August 2012 to locate Jaime González Bernal were unfortunately unsuccessful.

This book will have diverse readers: the general public, faculty and students, protesters, social change activists, police and military officers, developers of political policies, religious thinkers, journalists, people of diverse political views, and many more.

Although this condensation is extremely good, I hope that many of its readers will later go to the complete *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* for more information, details and many historical examples. My other writings in the field are also relevant. Several are listed at the end of this publication.

BACKGROUND

Jaime González Bernal

The Politics of Nonviolent Action was the result of a research project carried out by Gene Sharp from 1958 to 1964 in Oslo, Norway; Oxford, England; and from 1965 to 1973 under the auspices of the Center for International Affairs of Harvard University. Its comprehensiveness and technical and historical clarity make it an excellent primary framework for the technique of political struggle chosen by many "people power" movements in recent years.

In his own preface, Sharp wrote that "some conflicts do not yield to compromise and can be resolved only through struggle."

"Regular institutional procedures are rarely available" to solve "conflicts that, in one way or another, involve the fundamental principles of a society, of independence, of self-respect, or of people's capacity to determine their own future."

Traditionally, it is believed that in those conflicts there exist only two alternative ways of acting: passive submission or violent action. There is, however, a third alternative: struggle by means of nonviolent action.

The basic concept and the foundation for political struggle by means of nonviolent action rest on the belief that "*the exercise of power depends on the consent of the ruled who, by*

withdrawing that consent, can control and even destroy the power of their opponents."

"Nonviolent action is a technique used to control, combat, and destroy the opponents' power by nonviolent means of wielding power.

The Politics of Nonviolent Action is a major exploration of the nature of nonviolent struggle." The complete work is now presented in English in three volumes: *Power and Struggle*, *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*, and *The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action*.

The first volume, *Power and Struggle*, begins with an analysis of the nature of political power. Frequently it is presumed that "power flows from violence and can only be controlled by greater violence." In fact, "power derives from sources within society that people can restrict or cut off by withdrawing their cooperation.

The political power of governments can indeed be very fragile. Even the power of dictatorships can be destroyed by the withdrawal of the human help that makes the existence of the regime possible."

Political struggle by means of nonviolent action is based on this observation. In this work, "the basic characteristics of nonviolent struggle are described, misperceptions are corrected, and there is an account of some of the features of its vast history. It is the history of actions performed by ordinary people—not pacifists or saints—struggling imperfectly for a variety of causes.

Using nonviolent action, people have achieved higher wages, broken social barriers, changed government policies, frustrated invaders, paralyzed empires, and dissolved dictatorships."

The second volume, *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*, "examines in detail 198 specific methods of this technique," which are classified as nonviolent protest and persuasion; social, economic, and political noncooperation; and nonviolent intervention.

The final volume, *The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action*, "examines the complex operation of this technique against violent and repressive opponents."

The analysis examines the infrastructure which can precede the struggle, as well as the basic prerequisites for the participants. It then focuses on "the initial impact of the nonviolent challenge."

"Repression is probable." A strong but nonviolent resistance effort is necessary to combat the repression. "The opponents' repression can be made to work against them by means of 'political *jiu-jitsu*.'" This process weakens the opponents' power by reducing or severing their sources and increasing the sources of power of the resistance.

"Four mechanisms are explored by means of which nonviolent action can bring about victory: conversion (the least frequent), accommodation, nonviolent coercion, and disintegration. Massive noncooperation can paralyze and disintegrate even systems of oppression."

A resistance group using nonviolent action also undergoes changes. Its "self-respect, confidence, ability to act, and power all tend to increase."

"The growth in the power of the struggle group, the strengthening of nongovernmental institutions, the ability to defeat repressive elites, and the ability to increase the capacity for nonviolent struggle within the population all contribute to long-term change as power is redistributed."

This study is an effort to search for alternatives to violence when confronted with tyranny, aggression, injustice and oppression. It is clear that simple moral repudiation of violence, denunciation of one's enemies, and exhortations to love and be peaceful have contributed little towards doing away with wars and other political violence. Only by adopting peaceful but efficient forms of sanctions and struggle, that constitute a real alternative to violence, will we be able to reduce political violence in a manner compatible with liberty, justice, and human dignity.

Believing in nonviolent alternatives and promoting them alone will not necessarily lead us to the change we seek. That will not happen unless these nonviolent alternatives are perceived to be at least as effective as violence. Neither is it enough to preach and make declarations to achieve the rational adoption of nonviolent struggle. A careful and objective study of the

nature, capability, and requirements of this nonviolent type of political struggle is required.

The Politics of Nonviolent Action by Gene Sharp focuses only on the technique of nonviolent action. It does not examine the relation of this technique to ethics, nor of the relation of the nonviolent technique to prevailing psychological or religious beliefs. Nor does it include an analysis of the political implications of the nonviolent technique, nor of its potential for social change or national defense.

In his introduction to the book, Harvard Professor Thomas C. Schelling wrote that "violence gets plenty of attention, but purposive violence, violence for political effect, rarely is examined with" the precision given to nonviolent action in this book. We should compare violent action and nonviolent action in terms of "the achievement of political purpose and the costs of the achievement."[3]

Schelling continued, saying that the difference between violent action and nonviolent action "is not like the difference between prayer and dynamite." Political violence, like political nonviolence, usually has as its purpose making somebody do something or not do something or stop doing something. "The aim is to influence behavior," he wrote.

3 A 2011 study seriously attempts to correct that need. See Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.

Schelling pointed out that violent action attempts to influence behavior "mainly by intimidating people—large numbers or a few, followers or leaders, common citizens or officials… The violence does not directly make people behave or perform or participate; it can only make it hurt if they don't."

"Violent action and nonviolent action are different *techniques* of trying to make it unrewarding for people to do certain things, and safe or rewarding to do other things. Both can be misused, mishandled, or misapplied. Both can be used for evil or misguided purposes," the professor added.

In both cases, Schelling wrote, "*discipline, command and control; intelligence about the adversary; careful choice of weapons, targets, terrain and time of day; and, especially avoiding impetuous recourse to provoked or purposeless violence, are critical to success.*"

PART ONE

POWER AND STRUGGLE

Chapter One

THE NATURE AND CONTROL OF POLITICAL POWER

An understanding of the nature of political power will help us to understand how to conduct struggle effectively.

The central importance of power

- Power is inherent in practically all social and political relationships
- Its control is the basic problem in political theory and in political reality
- It is necessary to wield power in order to control the power of threatening adversaries
- Social power is the totality of all influences and pressures which can be used by and applied to groups of people, either to attempt to control the behavior of others directly or indirectly, or to accomplish a group objective by group action.
- Political power is that kind of social power which is wielded for political objectives, especially by governmental institutions or by people in opposition to or in support of such institutions. Political power thus refers to the total authority, influence, pressure, and coercion which may be applied to achieve or

prevent the implementation of the wishes of the power-holder.

The basic nature of political power

There appear to be two main views of the nature of power.

The *monolithic view of power* sees people as dependent upon the goodwill, the decisions, and the support of their government or of any other hierarchical system. It perceives power as emanating from the few who stand at the pinnacle of command. It considers power to be self-perpetuating, durable, not easily or quickly controlled or destroyed.

The *social view of power* sees governments or other systems to be dependent on the people's goodwill, decisions and support. It sees that power as continually rising from many parts of the society. It views political power as fragile, always dependent for its strength and existence upon a replenishment of its sources by the cooperation of a multitude of institutions and people—cooperation which may or may not continue. Therefore, political power can most efficiently be controlled at its sources.

Social roots of political power

The persons, group, or regime which occupies the highest position of command in the society and government, especially the State, are here called "the rulers."

Rulers have no power intrinsic to themselves.

Such power must come from outside themselves. Their power is therefore variable. How much power they have depends on how much power society will grant them. Political power has identifiable sources.

A. Sources of political power

1. **Authority**: Defined by Jacques Maritain ". . . the right to command and direct, to be heard or obeyed by others." Authority is voluntarily accepted by the people and therefore is present without the imposition of sanctions. It is enough that the persons or group be perceived and accepted as superior. While not identical with power, authority is clearly a main source of power.

2. **Human resources**: The power of rulers is affected by the number of persons who obey them, cooperate with them, or provide them with special assistance, as well as by the proportion of such persons in the general population, and the extent and forms of their organizations.

3. **Skills and knowledge**: The power of rulers is also affected by the skills, knowledge and abilities of such persons, and the relation of their skills, knowledge, and abilities to the rulers' needs.

4. **Intangible factors**: Psychological and ideological factors, such as habits and attitudes toward obedience and submission, and the presence or absence of a common faith, ideology, or sense of mission

5. **Material resources**: The degree to which the rulers control property, natural resources, financial resources, the economic system, communication and transportation, etc., helps to determine the limits of their power

6. **Sanctions**: Defined by John Austin as "an enforcement of obedience." The type and extent of sanctions or punishments at the rulers' disposal, both for use against their own subjects and in conflicts with other rulers. Sanctions are used by rulers to supplement voluntary acceptance of their authority and to increase the degree of obedience to their commands. The sanctions may be violent or not. They may be intended as punishment or deterrence. Violent domestic sanctions, such as imprisonment or execution, are commonly intended to punish disobedience, not to achieve the objective of the original command.

It is always a matter of the degree to which some or all of these six sources of power are present. Their availability is subject to constant variations; only rarely are all of them completely available to the rulers or completely absent.

B. These sources depend on obedience

The sources of the rulers' power depend intimately upon the obedience and cooperation of the subjects. Let us, for example, consider **authority** from this point of view.

Authority is necessary to the existence and operation of any regime. All rulers require an acceptance of their authority; their right to rule and command and be obeyed. *The key to habitual obedience is to reach the mind. Obedience will scarcely be habitual unless it is loyal, not forced. In essence, authority must be voluntarily accepted.*

- The weakening or collapse of that authority inevitably tends to loosen the subjects' predisposition toward obedience. Then the decision to obey or not to obey will be made consciously, and obedience may be refused. *This loss of authority sets in motion the disintegration of the rulers' power. That power is reduced to the degree that they are denied authority.*
- All rulers must depend upon the cooperation and assistance of their subjects. The more extensive and detailed the rulers' control is, the more such assistance they will require from individuals, groups, organizations, and subgroups. If the multitude of "assistants" reject the rulers' authority, they may then carry out their wishes inefficiently, or may even flatly refuse to continue their usual assistance. When this happens the total power of the rulers diminishes. Sanctions may be applied, but

the rulers need more than reluctant outward compliance. Sanctions will be inadequate as long as acceptance of the rulers' authority is limited. Because of dependence on other people to operate the system, the rulers are continually subject to influence and restriction by both their direct assistants and the general populace. This control will be greatest where their dependence is greatest.

- A special relationship exists between sanctions and submission. First, the possibility and capability to impose sanctions itself derives from the obedience and cooperation of at least some subjects. Second, whether these sanctions are effective *depends on the response of the subjects against whom they are threatened or applied*. The question is to what degree people obey without threats, and to what degree they continue to disobey despite punishment.

The capacity of rulers to detect and punish disobedience depends on the existing pattern of obedience; the greater the obedience, the greater the chances of detection and punishment of disobedience. The weaker the obedience, the less effective will be the enforcement.

The rulers' power depends on the continual availability of all this assistance. This assistance comes not only from individuals, officials, employees, and the like, but also from the subsidiary organizations and institutions which compose the system as a whole. These may be

departments, bureaus, branches, committees, and the like. Just as individuals and independent groups may refuse to cooperate, so too these unit organizations may refuse to provide sufficient help to maintain effectively the rulers' position and to enable them to implement their policies. "Thus no complex can carry out a superior order if its members (either unit organizations or individuals) will not enable it to do so," wrote Chester I. Barnard.

The internal stability of a regime can be measured by the ratio between the strength of the social forces that it controls and the strength of the social forces that it has against it.

Obedience is the heart of political power

The relationship between command and obedience is always one of mutual influence and some degree of interaction. That is, each influences the other. Without the expected conformity by the subordinates (whether in the form of passive acquiescence or active consent) the power relationship is not complete, despite the threat or infliction of sanctions.

The same type of interaction also takes place between institutions and between the various units of a complex organization. This is because the superordinate body depends on its subordinate members or suborganizations to carry out orders and tasks. The same type of interaction also takes place within the State: commands and orders are not automatically obeyed.

The degree to which the rulers succeed in wielding power and achieving the objectives depends upon the degree of obedience and cooperation emerging from the interaction of the rulers, the subjects, and the situation. A regime's power is in proportion to its ability to make itself obeyed and to win from that obedience the means of action.

Why do people obey?

From a psychological point of view the crux of the problem of determining the rulers' power rests in understanding the origin, constitution, and maintenance of obedience.

A. There are multiple reasons to obey

Actually there is no single self-sufficient explanation for why people obey rulers. The reasons are multiple, complex, and interrelated. These reasons include:

1. Habit
2. Fear of sanctions
3. Moral obligation
4. Self-interest
5. Psychological identification with the rulers
6. Indifference
7. Absence of self-confidence among subjects

B. The obedience of the rulers' functionaries and agents

All rulers use the obedience and cooperation they receive from part of the society to rule the whole. The motives of this sector of the population are similar to those we just cited with an emphasis on moral obligation and personal interest.

C. Obedience is not inevitable

Obedience always varies in degree with the individual concerned and with the social and political situation. Most people obey from habit. However, at any particular point in a given society there are limits within which rulers must stay if their commands are to be obeyed. Under certain circumstances subjects may be willing to put up with inconvenience, suffering, and disruption of their lives rather than continue to submit passively or to obey rulers whose policies they can no longer tolerate.

Having long been accustomed to receiving widespread obedience, rulers do not always anticipate generalized disobedience.

The role of consent

Each reason for obedience, including sanctions, must operate through the will or volition of the individual subject to produce obedience. If the subject is to obey, the current reasons for obeying must be seen as sufficient grounds to obey. However, the will or volition of the

subject may change with new influences, events, and forces. In varying degrees, the individual's own will may play an active role in the situation.

The political obedience on which the power of rulers ultimately depends is a result of a combination of fear of sanctions (or intimidated consent) and free consent (offered on perceived merits). Both operate through the will of the subject.

A. Obedience is essentially voluntary

Obedience is not automatic, nor uniform, nor universal, nor constant. Despite the strong pressures for submission and obedience, sanctions do not *always* produce obedience.

The personal choice between obeying and disobeying will be influenced by an evaluation of the consequences of obeying and disobeying. If the subject perceives the consequences of obedience to be worse than the consequences of disobedience, then disobedience is more likely.

Obedience only exists when one has complied with the command. If I walk to jail, I have obeyed. If I am dragged there, I have not obeyed.

Physical compulsion affecting only the body therefore may yield some results but it does not necessarily produce obedience. Only certain types of objectives can be achieved by direct physical compulsion of disobedient subjects—such as moving them physically, preventing them from moving physically, or seizing their

money or property. But this does not necessarily result in obedience. The overwhelming percentage of the commands and objectives of rulers can only be achieved by inducing the subject to be willing for some reason to carry them out. (The ditch remains undug even if the men who refused to dig it have been shot.) *It is not the sanctions themselves which produce obedience, but the fear of them.*

However, most people in most situations are quite unwilling to suffer the penalties for disobedience, except for very special cases in which feelings are very intense. In such cases, disobedience sometimes occurs despite sanctions.

In summary, the power of rulers is dependent upon the availability of its several sources. This availability is determined by the degree of obedience and cooperation given by the subjects. Despite inducements, pressures, and even sanctions, such obedience and cooperation are, however, not inevitable. Obedience remains essentially voluntary. *Therefore, all government is based upon consent.*

This does not mean that the subjects of all rulers prefer the established order. They may consent because they positively approve of it. But they may also consent because they are unwilling to pay the price for the refusal of consent. Refusal requires self-confidence, motivation to resist, and may involve considerable inconvenience and suffering.

The degree of liberty or tyranny in any gov-

ernment is, to a large degree, a reflection of the relative determination of the subjects to be free and their willingness and ability to resist efforts to enslave them.

Three of the most important factors in determining to what degree the rulers' power will be controlled or uncontrolled therefore, are:

- the relative desire of the populace to control their power.
- the relative strength of the subjects' independent organizations and institutions.
- the subjects' relative ability to withhold their consent and assistance.

Freedom is not something which rulers "give" their subjects. It is something achieved in the interaction between society and government.

B. Consent can be withdrawn

The reasons for obedience are always variable. The degree of the rulers' authority will vary. Other reasons for obedience may also increase or decrease. Obedience, therefore, varies, leading the rulers to seek to counteract that loss, as by harsher sanctions or increased rewards. The change in the subjects' wills may lead to their withdrawing from the rulers their service, cooperation, submission, and obedience.

Gandhi emphasized the importance of a change of will or change of attitude as a prerequisite for a change in patterns of obedience and cooperation. There was, he argued, a need for:

- A psychological change away from passive submission to self-respect and courage.
- Recognition by the subjects that the subjects' assistance makes the regime possible.
- The building of a determination to withdraw cooperation and obedience.

This withdrawal of cooperation and obedience may also occur among both the rulers' agents of repression and their administrators. Their attitudes are especially important. Without their support, the oppressive system disintegrates.

Gandhi was convinced that these changes could be consciously influenced.

The answer to the problem of uncontrolled political power may therefore lie in learning how to carry out and maintain withdrawal of cooperation and obedience despite repression.

The structural basis of resistance

Withdrawal of consent becomes politically significant, and the rulers' will is thwarted, in proportion to the number of disobedient subjects and the degree of the rulers' dependence upon them.

The key question then becomes *how* to implement this insight into political power. Clearly people must refuse cooperation and obedience. Very importantly, in order to have maximum impact, this noncooperation and disobedience must take the form of mass action. While in-

dividual acts may at times be scarcely noticed, the defiance of organizations and institutions—churches, trade unions, business organizations, the bureaucracy, neighborhoods, villages, cities, regions, and the like—may be pivotal.

The ability of the population to wield effective power and to control that of its rulers will be highly influenced by the condition of these non-State organizations and institutions. It is these "places" where power operates that provide the structural basis for the control of the rulers. Where these independent bodies are strong, the capacity to control the rulers will be strong. When these are weak, so will be the controls over the rulers' power. It is through these bodies that people can collectively offer noncooperation and disobedience.

Chapter Two

NONVIOLENT ACTION: AN ACTIVE TECHNIQUE OF STRUGGLE

A simple postulate

In political terms, nonviolent action is based on a very simple postulate: people do not always do what they are told to do, and sometimes they act in ways that have been forbidden. Subjects may disobey laws they reject. Workers may halt work, which may paralyze the economy. The bureaucracy may refuse to carry out instructions. Soldiers and police may become lax in inflicting repression; they may even mutiny. When all such events happen simultaneously, the persons who have been "rulers" become just other persons. This dissolution of power can happen in a wide variety of social and political conflicts.

When people refuse their cooperation, withhold their help, and persist in their disobedience and defiance, they are denying their opponents the basic human assistance and cooperation which any government or hierarchical system requires. If people do this in sufficient numbers for long enough, that government or hierarchical system will no longer have power. This is the basic political assumption of nonviolent action.

A way to wage conflict

Nonviolent action is a generic term covering dozens of specific methods of protest, noncooperation, and intervention, in all of which the resisters conduct the conflict by doing—or refusing to do—certain things without using physical violence. As a technique, therefore, nonviolent action is *not* passive. It is not inaction. It is *action* that is nonviolent.

Whatever the issue and whatever the scale of the conflict, nonviolent action is a technique by which people who reject passivity and submission, and who see struggle as essential, can wage their conflict without violence. Nonviolent action is not an attempt to avoid or ignore conflict. It is *one* response to the problem of how to *act* effectively in politics, especially how to wield power effectively.

The motives for using nonviolent action instead of some type of violent action differ widely. In most cases, violence may have been rejected because of considerations of practical effectiveness, and rarely for religious, ethical, or moral reasons. Or, there may be a mixture of motivations of various types.

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, nonviolent action has risen to unprecedented political significance throughout the world. People using it have amassed major achievements. Higher wages and improved working conditions have been won. Old traditions and practices have been abolished. Government

policies have been changed, laws repealed, new legislation enacted, and governmental reforms instituted. Invaders have been frustrated and armies defeated. An empire has been paralyzed, seizures of the State thwarted, and dictatorships disintegrated. Nonviolent struggle has been used with power against both Nazi and Communist regimes. Sometimes, too, this technique has been used to block or delay changes and policies.

Refining the technique

Extensive use of nonviolent action has occurred despite the absence of attention to the development of the technique itself. Its practice has been partly spontaneous, partly intuitive, partly vaguely patterned after some known case. It has usually been practiced under highly unfavorable conditions and with a lack of experienced participants or even experienced leaders. Almost always there were no advance preparations or training, little or no planning, and no, or limited, prior consideration of strategy, tactics, and possible methods. The people using it have usually had little real understanding of the nature of the technique which they sought to wield and were largely ignorant of its history. There were no studies of strategy and tactics for them to consult, or handbooks on how to organize the "troops," conduct the struggle, and maintain discipline.

Under such conditions it is not surprising that there have often been defeats or only par-

tial victories, or that violence has sometimes erupted—which, as we shall see, helps to bring defeat. With such handicaps, it is amazing that the practice of the technique has been as widespread, successful, and orderly as it has.

Some men and women are now trying to learn more of the nature of this technique and to explore its potentialities. Some people are now asking how nonviolent action can be refined and applied in place of violence to meet complex and difficult problems. These intellectual efforts are a potentially significant new factor in the history of this technique. The development of nonviolent action of various types continues throughout the world, arising from different roots, and taking numerous forms in response to a multitude of situations and problems.

PART TWO

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

The many specific methods, or "weapons," of nonviolent action are classified in three groups:

- Protest and persuasion
- Noncooperation
- Nonviolent intervention

It is desirable to be familiar with the full range of nonviolent methods. This listing of 198 methods is far from complete.

More complete definitions of each method and historical examples of its use are available in Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Part Two: The Methods of Nonviolent Action.*

Chapter Three

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT PROTEST AND PERSUASION

Nonviolent protest and persuasion is a class that includes a large number of methods which are mainly symbolic acts of peaceful opposition or of attempted persuasion. These extend beyond verbal expressions but stop short of noncooperation or nonviolent intervention. The use of these methods is a way to show that the resisters are against or for something, the degree of opposition or support, and the numbers involved.

The message may be intended to influence the opponents, the public, the grievance group, or a combination of the three.

The intention of the users of the methods of this class is to convince the opponents to correct, to stop doing, or to do what the grievance group wants. Fifty-four methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion are included in this listing, grouped here in ten sub-classes.

Formal statements

1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public statements

5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petition

Communications with a wider audience

7. Slogans, caricatures and symbols (written, painted, drawn, printed, gestured, spoken, or mimicked)
8. Banners, posters and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, television and video
12. Skywriting and earthwriting

Group presentations

13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

Symbolic public acts

18. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
19. Wearing of symbols (advocacy buttons, patches)
20. Prayer and worship
21. Delivering symbolic objects

22. Protest disrobings

23. Destruction of own property (homes, documents, credentials, etc.)

24. Symbolic lights (torches, lanterns, candles)

25. Displays of portraits

26. Paint as protest

27. New signs and names and/or symbolic names

28. Symbolic sounds ("symbolic tunes," using whistles, bells, sirens, etc.)

29. Symbolic reclamations (takeover of land or buildings)

30. Rude gestures

Pressures on individuals

31. "Haunting" officials (constantly following them, silently, respectfully)

32. Taunting officials (mocking and insulting them)

33. Fraternization (subjecting persons to intense direct influence to convince them that the regime they serve is unjust)

34. Vigils

Drama and music

35. Humorous skits and pranks

36. Performances of plays and music

37. Singing

Processions

38. Marches
39. Parades
40. Religious processions
41. Pilgrimages
42. Motorcades

Honoring the dead

43. Political mourning
44. Mock funerals
45. Demonstrative funerals
46. Homage at burial places

Public assemblies

47. Assemblies of protest or support
48. Protest meetings
49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
50. Teach-ins (with several informed speakers)

Withdrawal and renunciation

51. Walk-outs
52. Silence
53. Renouncing honors
54. Turning one's back

All of the above are symbolic actions. Greater power is wielded by the methods of noncooperation and nonviolent intervention.

Chapter Four

THE METHODS OF SOCIAL NONCOOPERATION

The classes of noncooperation are social, economic, and political noncooperation.

Fifteen methods are listed in three subgroups of social noncooperation.

Ostracism of persons

55. Social boycott
56. Selective social boycott
57. Lysistratic nonaction (sexual boycott)
58. Excommunication (religious boycott)
59. Interdict (suspension of religious services)

Noncooperation with social events, customs and institutions

60. Suspension of social and sports activities
61. Boycott of social affairs
62. Student strike
63. Social disobedience (of social customs or rules)
64. Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal from the social system

65. Stay-at-home

66. Total personal noncooperation

67. "Flight" of workers (fleeing elsewhere)

68. Sanctuary (withdraw to a place where you cannot be touched without violation of religious, moral, social or legal prohibitions)

69. Collective disappearance (the population of a small area abandons its homes and villages)

70. Protest emigration (*hijrat*: a deliberate permanent emigration)

Chapter Five

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION: 1. ECONOMIC BOYCOTTS

An economic boycott is the refusal to buy, sell, handle, or distribute specific goods and services.

In this list are twenty-five methods divided into six sub-groups of economic boycotts.

Action by consumers

71. Consumers' boycott of certain goods or services

72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods (already in one's possession)

73. Policy of austerity (reducing consumption to an absolute minimum)

74. Rent withholding

75. Refusal to rent

76. National consumers' boycott (refusal to buy products or use services from another country)

77. International consumers' boycott (operating in several countries against the products of a particular country)

Actions by workers and producers

78. Workmen's boycott (refusal to work with products or tools provided by the opponents)

79. Producers' boycott (refusal by producers to sell or otherwise deliver their own products)

Action by middlemen

80. Suppliers and handlers' boycott (refusal by workers or middlemen to handle or supply certain goods)

Action by owners and management

81. Traders' boycott (refusal by retailers to buy or sell certain goods)

82. Refusal to let or sell property

83. Lockout (the employer initiates the work stoppage by temporarily shutting down the operation)

84. Refusal of industrial assistance

85. Merchants' "general strike"

Action by holders of financial resources

86. Withdrawal of bank deposits

87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments

88. Refusal to pay debts or interest

89. Severance of funds and credit

90. Revenue refusal (refusal to provide the government with revenue voluntarily)

91. Refusal of a government's money (demand alternative ways of payment)

Action by governments

92. Domestic embargo
93. Blacklisting of traders
94. International sellers' embargo
95. International buyers' embargo
96. International trade embargo

Chapter Six

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION: 2. THE STRIKE

The methods of the strike involve the refusal to continue economic cooperation through work. Strikes are collective, deliberate, and normally temporary suspensions of labor designed to exact pressure on others. Twenty-three types of strikes are listed here in seven sub-groups.

Symbolic strikes

97. Protest strike (for a preannounced short period)

98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike: short, spontaneous protest strikes)

Agricultural strikes

99. Peasant strike

100. Farm workers' strike

Strikes by special groups

101. Refusal of impressed labor

102. Prisoners' strike

103. Craft strike

104. Professional strike

Ordinary industrial strikes

105. Establishment strike (in one or more plants under one management)

106. Industry strike (suspension of work in all the establishments of an industry)

107. Sympathetic strike (to support the demands of fellow workers)

Restricted strikes

108. Detailed strike (worker by worker, or by areas; piecemeal stoppage)

109. Bumper strike (the union strikes only one firm in an industry at a time)

110. Slowdown strike

111. Working-to-rule strike (the literal carrying out of regulations in order to retard production)

112. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)

113. Strike by resignation (a significant number of workers resign individually)

114. Limited strike (workers refuse to perform certain marginal work or refuse to work on certain days)

115. Selective strike (workers refuse only to do certain types of work)

Multi-industry strikes

116. Generalized strike (several industries are struck simultaneously)

117. General strike

Combination of strikes and economic closures

118. *Hartal* (economic life temporarily suspended on a voluntary basis)

119. Economic shutdown (workers strike and employers simultaneously halt economic activities)

Chapter Seven

THE METHODS OF POLITICAL NONCOOPERATION

Political noncooperation may be practiced in order to express protest, to halt the functioning of the political unit, or to contribute to disintegration of the government. This list includes thirty eight methods divided up into six subgroups.

Rejection of authority

120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance

121. Refusal of public support (for the existing regime and its policies)

122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Citizens' noncooperation with government

123. Boycott of legislative bodies by its members

124. Boycott of elections

125. Boycott of government employment and positions

126. Boycott of government departments, agencies and other bodies

127. Withdrawal from government educational institutions

128. Boycott of government-supported organizations

129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents

130. Removal of own signs and placemarks

131. Refusal to accept appointed officials

132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

Citizens' alternatives to obedience

133. Reluctant and slow compliance

134. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision

135. Popular nonobedience (not publicized, semi-concealed)

136. Disguised disobedience (looks like compliance)

137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse

138. Sitdown

139. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation

140. Hiding, escape, and false identities

141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

Action by government personnel

142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides (to carry out particular instructions, informing superiors of the refusal)

143. Blocking of lines of command and information

144. Stalling and obstruction

145. General administrative noncooperation

146. Judicial noncooperation (by judges)

147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective non-cooperation by enforcement agents

148. Mutiny

Domestic governmental action

149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays

150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

International governmental action

151. Changes in diplomatic and other representation

152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events

153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition

154. Severance of diplomatic relations

155. Withdrawal from international organizations

156. Refusal of membership in international bodies

157. Expulsion from international organizations

Chapter Eight

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT INTERVENTION

These are actions which intervene directly to change the situation. Negative interventions may disrupt, and even destroy, established behavior patterns, policies, relationships, or institutions. Positive interventions may establish new behavior patterns, policies, relationships, or institutions.

The methods of nonviolent intervention pose a more direct and immediate challenge. They are harder both to sustain and to withstand. They may bring speedier and more severe repression.

The methods of intervention may be used defensively: to maintain behavior patterns, institutions, independent initiative, etc., or they can be used offensively to carry the struggle for the actionists' objectives into the opponents' own camp, even without any immediate provocation.

This list includes forty methods divided into five sub-groups.

Psychological intervention

158. Self-exposure to the elements

159. The fast

160. Reverse trial (defendants become unofficial "prosecutors")

161. Nonviolent harassment

Physical intervention

162. Sit-in

163. Stand-in

164. Ride-in

165. Wade-in

166. Mill-in (gather in some place of symbolic significance and remain mobile)

167. Pray-in

168. Nonviolent raids (march to designated key point and demand possession)

169. Nonviolent air raids (perhaps bringing leaflets or food)

170. Nonviolent invasion

171. Nonviolent interjection (placing one's body between a person and the objective of the work or activity)

172. Nonviolent obstruction (generally temporary)

173. Nonviolent occupation

Social intervention

174. Establishing new social patterns
175. Overloading of facilities
176. Stall-in
177. Speak-in
178. Guerrilla theater (improvised dramatic interruptions)
179. Alternative social institutions
180. Alternative communication systems

Economic intervention

181. Reverse strike (working to excess)
182. Stay-in strike (occupation of work site)
183. Nonviolent land seizure
184. Defiance of blockades
185. Politically motivated counterfeiting
186. Preclusive purchasing
187. Seizure of assets
188. Dumping
189. Selective patronage
190. Alternative markets
191. Alternative transportation systems
192. Alternative economic institutions

Political intervention

193. Overloading of administrative systems
194. Disclosing identities of secret agents
195. Seeking imprisonment
196. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws
197. Work-on without collaboration
198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

PART THREE

THE DYNAMICS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

This part explores more about how nonviolent political struggle "works." The operation of nonviolent struggle is a fluid, changing, interacting process; never static. Its workings are also very complicated, more so than the operation of conventional war or guerrilla warfare.

Chapter Nine

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION

Confronting the power of the opponents

Nonviolent action is a way of controlling and wielding power without using violence. The nonviolent group must be able to use its power against the power of the opponents. It uses completely different methods from those of political violence.

Frequently, the opponents are a government. If they are not, the opponents often have the support of the State, with its courts, police, prisons, and military forces. In nonviolent action, there is no attempt to confront the opponents with the same weapons they are using. Instead, in strategic terms, the nonviolent group counters that violent expression of the opponents' power *indirectly* in various ways. It does this principally by using a totally different technique of struggle. This is one that is designed to operate to the resisters' advantage. This produces an asymmetrical conflict, with the two sides fighting by different means.

Nonviolent action operates to weaken the opponents' power position, aiming to alienate the institutions and groups which supply the sources of power of the opponents, to frustrate

the effective utilization of their forces, and to weaken their will to use their available capacities. Because the sources of their power are reduced or removed, the result is to reduce or eliminate the opponents' capacity to continue the struggle.

Risks and variations in nonviolent action

As with all struggles, nonviolent action involves risks. There is the risk of defeat, for example. There is no guarantee of success. There is also insecurity and danger for participants during the conflict. In all types of struggle people can be wounded, suffer economic losses, be imprisoned, and even be killed. These risks tend to be significantly reduced in nonviolent struggles compared with struggles in which both sides are using violence. There is also a risk of an outbreak of political violence. Even to do nothing in a situation of oppression is to invite violence for certain.

The variety in resistance movements is enormous. No two cases are exactly alike. To facilitate the analysis of the dynamics of nonviolent action, however, certain assumptions are made here.

- Methods from all three classes of protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and intervention are used.
- Large numbers of people are participating, mostly acting under a nonviolent discipline for the duration of the struggle.

- Some civil liberties are present, although they may be sharply reduced during the conflict.

Casting off fear

A prerequisite of nonviolent struggle is to cast off or control fear of acting independently and fear of the sufferings which may follow.

- Cowardice and nonviolent struggle do not mix.
- Cowards seek to avoid the conflict and flee from danger, while the nonviolent resister faces the conflict and risks the dangers involved.
- There is hope that violent persons may become nonviolent, but no such hope for the cowards, according to Gandhi.
- Fear arises from the assumption of one's weakness.
- Civil resisters ought to have confidence in the justice and force of their cause, principles, and means of action.
- Casting off fear, or controlling it, is closely tied to gaining confidence that one possesses power and can act effectively to produce changes. Participation in struggle helps to remove fear in stages.
- Bravery in this technique of struggle is not only moral valor but a practical requirement.

- The types of action proposed ought to be determined according to the degree of bravery of the participants.
- The most rapid manner to end brutality is demonstrating that it does not help to achieve the opponents' objectives.

Social sources of power changes

The power of both groups is variable. The variations in the respective power of the contending groups in this type of conflict are likely to be more extreme, to take place more quickly, and to have more diverse consequences than is the case in a violent conflict. Furthermore, the nonviolent group may, by its actions and behavior, help to cause an increase or decrease in the relative power of the opponent group. This happens to a much greater degree than could occur in a struggle conducted by violent means by both sides.

The first source of the constant variation in the power of each side is that both the leaders of the resistance and also of the opponents depend on the degree and quality of the support and participation they receive on the one hand (1) from their group or (2) from the bureaucracy and agents of repression. It is more likely—but no guarantee—that the bureaucrats and agents of repression will reduce their efficiency and increase their noncooperation with their own officials when the opposition uses nonviolent means.

The second source of variations in power of the two groups is the degree to which the general population gives sympathy and support to the opponents and to the opponents' policies and measures, or instead gives sympathy and support to the nonviolent resisters. The latter is more probable if the movement is nonviolent than if it is violent.

The third source of variations in the power of each side is the opinion and support given to one side or the other by the national and international communities. The effects of public opinion and external support will contribute to strengthening or weakening one group or the other but their impact cannot be relied upon as the major force for change.

Leadership in nonviolent struggle

We assume the existence of a leadership group which understands and directs the action. However, it is important to spread knowledge about nonviolent struggle widely. The more people who know and understand this nonviolent technique, the more difficult it will be for the opponents to "behead" the movement by imprisoning or killing the leaders. To be a leader is to serve as spokesperson, and to offer, organize, and implement solutions to problems. There can be leadership by group, committee, individual, or a combination of these.

Preparing for nonviolent struggle

In all campaigns, small or large, careful planning and preparations are essential. The following types of preparations can be considered.

A. Investigation

Determine the causes of the conflict, list the grievances, formulate desired changes, give the widest possible publicity to causes, facts, and goals, and generate "cause-consciousness"—awareness of the grievances and of the justification for the coming conflict.

B. Assessing the grievances and situation

Very early, it is necessary to determine what the problems are and to evaluate how serious they are. What are their causes, and in what ways might they be resolved? Is it realistic to think that a satisfactory resolution can be reached without an open conflict? If so, that would be preferable.

If not, the reasons that a conflict is required will need to be explained for all to understand. Also, it is necessary to explain that violence will not be used, but that nonviolent action will be. Very careful attention to the grievances and issues from the perspective of the grievance group is essential in order to determine the stated objective of the coming nonviolent struggle.

One ought not, in Gandhi's view, to launch a struggle for a very general objective, such as "world peace," "freedom," "independence," or "brotherhood." The avowed campaign objective

must be more specific. It needs to be within the capacity of the opponents to grant and within the power capacity of the resisters to take if need be. Extreme abstractions are not.

Instead of attacking with equal force on the whole conflict front simultaneously, it is wiser to concentrate resistance forces on what are believed to be the opponents' weakest points in their case, policy, or system with the resisters' greatest strengths.

C. Negotiations

The nonviolent group should make, and be seen to make, every effort at a settlement before launching direct action. This greatly increases its moral position. Once the demands are set, it is generally recommended that they be kept unchanged.

Preparation for nonviolent action during the negotiations is helpful and realistic. Negotiations are not a substitute for open struggle. There is always the possibility, even the probability, that the conflict will not be resolved at this stage. A prerequisite for negotiations is a determination and ability to struggle. The nonviolent army, said Gandhi, should be so well-prepared as to make nonviolent war unnecessary. One ought to demand of the opponents not only promises but some advance deeds as proof that their promises will be kept later.

One ought not to agree to the opponents' demands for a major restriction of the resisters' activities before negotiations. For example,

some opponents may demand a halt to protests or resistance, or even to calls for resistance, as a pre-condition for negotiations. However, as long as the opponents do not impose such unreasonable preconditions for negotiations, the nonviolent group should be willing to negotiate in order to seek a solution prior to an open struggle.

D. Sharpening the focus for attack

It is essential for the success of the campaign to find the correct point or points of attack. It is not wise to try to win several major objectives at the same time. At times student protesters in campus demonstrations have even listed as many as eight or ten diverse demands on behalf of the several organizations participating in the protest. That makes achieving them almost impossible.

The nonviolent leadership will do better if it concentrates action on the weakest points in the opponents' case, policy, or system. It is necessary to have a pivot point on which to place the lever. The issues must be precise, capable of being clearly understood, and recognized as justified.

Success may depend on phasing the strategy in such a way as to score a series of minor gains in order later to secure a single major victory. The struggle likely will require concrete stages.

Concentration of one's strength on a clearly unjustified specific aspect of the general problem increases the resisters' ability to achieve

their larger objectives. One should seek to control the link that guarantees the possession of the whole chain. Repression against nonviolent resisters who are concentrating on such a point of attack is likely to strengthen their cause, as discussed with the topic of political *jiu-jitsu*.

E. Determining the goal of the struggle

In nonviolent struggles the resisters are able to advance their cause in proportion to the degree to which the opponents' desire and ability to maintain the objectionable policy are weakened and to which the nonviolent resisters are able to generate sufficient will and power to effect the change.

In unusual situations it may be good thinking to aim to bring down the whole oppressive regime. That will be extremely difficult to achieve. Generally it may be wiser to plan for a series of victories on limited issues, each nonviolent victory weakening the opponents and progressively strengthening the nonviolent resisters.

Aiming for a series of limited victories is not a matter of being moderate in one's aims. It is concentrating one's strengths in ways that will make victory more likely. Success in limited campaigns will increase self-confidence and the ability to take effective action to achieve the larger objective.

F. Generating "cause-consciousness"

At this early stage it is necessary to publicize the facts, the issues, and the arguments advanced by the nonviolent group by means of pamphlets, leaflets, books, articles, papers, radio, television, public meetings, songs, slogans, and other means. Quality in these communications is important. Hatred or intolerance should not be aroused. It is also important to limit antagonism from potential allies.

Arousing "cause-consciousness" may be divided into several phases. These include activities intended to:

- develop understanding of the issues.
- inform the population of the contemplated action, the requirements for its success, and the importance of engaging or not engaging in particular acts.
- justify the resort to direct action.
- warn of the hardship and suffering which will be incurred during the struggle.
- arouse confidence that those penalties will be worth incurring because this type of action is more likely than any other to bring victory.
- believe that in the long run the combination of a just cause, use of this technique, a wise strategy, and skilled disciplined behavior will ensure victory.

G. Quantity and quality in nonviolent action

Careful consideration must constantly be given to the relationship between the number of participants in the conflict and the quality of their participation. The best balance between numbers and high quality of the action will vary with the situation. Certainly in a technique of action which to a large degree depends for its effectiveness on the withdrawal of consent, cooperation, and obedience, the numbers of participants are important to its relative impact. The genuineness of its strength is also related to such factors of quality as fearlessness, discipline, and willingness to persist despite repression. Also, the wisdom shown in the choice of strategy, tactics, and methods of action is extremely important.

In general, quality is more important than quantity. Lowered standards to obtain large numbers can be counterproductive, and lead to a weaker and smaller movement. High standards of nonviolent behavior are very important to produce a strong movement in both quality and quantity.

H. Organizing the movement

Sometimes an existing organization—or several organizations—may conduct the nonviolent struggle. At other times, a new organization may be required. The organization should be efficient, honest, able to operate under voluntary discipline, and have effective

communication within it. It should also have planned in advance how to communicate with its own supporters in case the opponents break its normal lines of communication.

The organizational efforts should focus on:

- **The public**; publicizing the facts and grievances, promoting sympathy, and spreading information.
- **The volunteers**; recruiting, training, and incorporating participants; and promoting commitment.
- **The leadership**; preparing replacements for arrested leaders, setting procedure for further selection of leadership, and supplying information to the leaders
- **The movement in general**; supporting morale and discipline, preparing participants to act without leaders in times of severe repression, and maintaining communications.

Openness and secrecy in nonviolent struggle

Secrecy, deception, and underground conspiracy pose very difficult problems for a movement using nonviolent action. When operating under a political dictatorship, secrecy may be required at times. Elsewhere, it can be very obviously a serious danger. The reason for secrecy is fear and secrecy contributes to fear—which must be abandoned or controlled if nonviolent struggle is to operate effectively.

The following discussion assumes that the struggle is taking place in a political system which permits significant civil liberties. Where this is not the case, very careful attention is required to determine what knowledge and activities need to be kept secret and what can be made fully open.

Nonviolent struggle is based on bravery and discipline. Openness—that is, being truthful in statements and frank with the opponents and the public concerning intentions and plans—appears to be a corollary of the requirements of fearlessness and nonviolent discipline. Only in openness can there be liberation from the fear of arrest, disclosure of intentions, breaking of the organization, and imprisonment. A mass movement needs to be open. Nonviolent discipline is best achieved in the light of day rather than clandestinely. On the other hand, secrecy contributes to a smaller movement and to the potential resort to violence.

In the struggle to attain freedom, it is necessary to behave like free people. Speaking about psychological liberation when one acts openly and without secrets, on the basis of the Indian struggles for independence, Jawaharlal Nehru (later Prime Minister) wrote:

> *Above all, we had a sense of freedom and a pride in that freedom. The old feeling of oppression and frustration was completely gone. There was no more whispering, no roundabout legal phraseology to avoid getting into*

trouble with the authorities. We said what we felt and shouted it out from the house tops. What did we care for the consequences? Prison? We looked forward to it; that would help our cause still further. The innumerable spies and secret-service men who used to surround us and follow us about became rather pitiable individuals as there was nothing secret for them to discover. All our cards were always on the table.

Effects of the openness on the opponents

Openness will facilitate (but not ensure) that the opponents will come to understand the nonviolent group's motives, aims, intentions, and plans correctly. Direct contact with the opponents may be repeatedly sought as a means to avoid or correct distortions in perception which would seriously affect the course of the conflict. Advance notice to authorities of demonstrations, for example, may not only help to reduce brutalities by surprised police, but may be interpreted as "clean fighting" and chivalry.

Revealing material that is ordinarily kept secret may be interpreted by the opponents in contrasting ways: the opponents may think that something more important is being kept secret, or they may become much more respectful of the sincerity of the group. The opponents may see admission of one's plans as a sign of weakness and ineptness, or, to the

contrary, as a sign of an exceptionally powerful movement capable of being successful without secrecy.

Basic elements in nonviolent strategy

The principles of strategy and tactics of war have been carefully developed and studied. However, in the field of nonviolent action, no comparable development has yet occurred.

It is important to be very clear about the terms associated with strategy. Grand strategy is the broadest conception which serves to coordinate and direct all the resources of the struggle group toward the attainment of the objectives of the conflict.

It is important not to confuse grand strategy with analysis of strategy. Strategy is a more narrow term. It is the plan of action for a conflict including when to fight and how to utilize various specific actions to advance the goals of the grand strategy. Strategy operates within a grand strategy. Tactics refers to plans for more limited conflicts within the selected strategic plan. These use the specific methods listed above in Part Two.

A. The importance of strategy and tactics

Strategy is at least as important in nonviolent action as it is in military action. It is important to choose the course of action and carry it out carefully and intelligently. It is quite inadequate simply to say that one will be moral and

do what is right. There may be several courses of action which are all morally "right." What is "right" may involve maintaining or creating maximum opposition to "evil." If so, the problem is how to do this in order to meet one's moral responsibility and maximize the effects of one's actions. Those actions must be carefully chosen and carried out at the right time.

The better the strategy, the easier you will gain the upper hand, and the less it will cost you. As in war, strategy and tactics are used in nonviolent action so that the courage, sacrifice, and numbers of the nonviolent resisters may make the greatest possible impact.

The specific acts of protest, noncooperation and intervention will be most effective if they fit together as parts of a comprehensive whole, so that each specific action contributes to success. It is also important to have acceptance by the grievance group of the strategy for the struggle in order to avoid divisions.

B. Some key elements in nonviolent strategy & tactics

Certain fairly clear general strategic principles have taken concrete form in particular struggles.[4]

(1) **The indirect approach to the opponents' power.** Even in military conflicts, argued Liddell Hart, generally effective results have

4 For a more complete discussion of the same strategic analysis presented here, see Gene Sharp, *Waging Nonviolent Struggle*.

followed when the plan of action has had "such indirectness as to ensure the opponents' non-readiness to meet it."

It is important "to nullify opposition by paralyzing the power to oppose" and to make "the enemy do something wrong," Liddell Hart wrote.

Against opponents using military means, always confront them indirectly by nonviolent means, so that their repression can be made to rebound against them to undermine their power position. Finally, the sources of the opponents' power are reduced or removed without being confronted by military means.

(2) **Psychological elements.** These operate both within the opponent group and among the resisters. The effect of surprise in war is the incapability of the opponents to react effectively. In nonviolent struggle this incapability is produced not by secrecy but instead by the nonviolent resisters' reliance on nonviolent means. At times, surprise in nonviolent action may weaken its effectiveness. Open announcement of the intention to use nonviolent methods may reduce nervousness among troops, make more severe repression less probable, and increase the chances of inducing disaffection.

Morale among the resisters is also important. It is crucial that the population understands that the opponents' military might does not give them either control or victory. The resisters' confidence in nonviolent action is fundamental, along with skill, endurance, and enthusiasm.

(3) **Geographical and physical elements.** The physical possession of particular locations is of secondary importance to the fulfillment of the conditions which make possible the operation of the mechanisms of change in nonviolent action. Neither possession of, nor gaining of control over, particular places is regarded as extremely important because the operation of the technique of nonviolent action depends primarily upon the will and actions of human beings. Particular places may become important if they have high symbolic value. In such cases, the methods of nonviolent obstruction, nonviolent raids, and nonviolent invasion are possible methods to be applied. The place at which a crucial resistance action is to be taken will need to be chosen carefully. At times it will also be necessary to arrange places to hold support services, such as hospitals, camps, kitchens, and the like.

(4) **Timing.** The timing of the implementation of tactics can be extremely important in nonviolent action. Timing may be of various types. For example, it is necessary to judge when the people are ready to take direct action and when a call to resist would produce only a weak reaction or be ignored. Timing needs to be considered in light of the whole situation. Sometimes, action may be planned to take place on important dates or occasions. In cases in which the opponents are attempting to increase their control over a whole society, resistance at key points may be required.

(5) **Numbers and strength.** As discussed, numbers may be extremely important in nonviolent action but are not by themselves decisive. Also important is the quality of the participants. Large numbers of resisters with discipline and persistence may become irresistible.

(6) **The issue and concentration of strength.** Wise strategy and tactics require a careful selection of the points on which to fight. This can only be done by taking into consideration the political, psychological, social, and economic factors of the struggle.

There is no substitute for genuine strength in nonviolent action. It is impossible to be too strong at the decisive point. To be effective, nonviolent action needs to be concentrated at crucial points, as already discussed in this chapter. These points are selected after consideration of one's own strength, weaknesses, and resources; the objectives, position, strengths, and weaknesses of the opponents; the importance of the issue itself; and the probable consequences of defeat or success.

"Adjust your end to your means," wrote Liddell Hart. It is necessary to be realistic without losing faith. Avoid exhausting confidence or the capacities of others in vain efforts where you cannot win. In special circumstances it may be necessary to act despite weaknesses. If so, a realistic assessment of the situation is still required. The development of strategy and tactics should be based on an assessment of

how one's existing strength can be used to best advantage and how one's weaknesses can be bypassed or corrected.

Concentration in nonviolent struggles will primarily be on certain political, social, or economic points which symbolize the "evil" which is opposed. These are points which are least defensible by the opponents and capable of arousing maximum strength among the nonviolent resisters and the general population. Having chosen the point for concentrated attack, the resisters must not allow themselves to become sidetracked to a lesser course of action or a dead-end issue.

(7) **The initiative.** It is important to obtain and retain the initiative. Whenever possible, the nonviolent group, not the opponents, should choose the time, issue, and course of action and seek to maintain the initiative despite the opponents' repression. The nonviolent leadership group needs to be able to control the situation and to demonstrate that it has that control. After the time, place, and issue of a campaign or specific tactic are decided, they ought not to be changed because of any passing event. The resisters should not allow the opponents to dictate to them any course of action.

C. Selecting the strategy and tactics

The grand strategy, strategies, tactics, and methods planned by the leaders in advance will usually determine the general direction

and conduct of the campaign throughout its course. Strategic planning is one of the most important requirements of an effective struggle. The discouraging results which may follow from lack of a clear strategy can lead first to the spread of uncertainty as to what to do, then to demoralization, and finally to disintegration of the nonviolent movement.

On the other hand, careful strategic planning will guide the progressive development of the movement. A good strategic plan will aim at achieving the objectives of the struggle through effective mobilization of the strengths of the nonviolent group against the opponents and their system and for implementing the resisters' own goals. It will also need to include ways to undermine the opponents' sources of power.

The strategic plan will sketch how the struggle will begin, determine what kinds of pressures and methods are to be applied to gain the objectives, and direct action to achieve possible intermediate objectives as the struggle gains strength. The plan should show how the nonviolent group can mobilize its power to achieve the group's objectives. The strategic plan should also guide how the struggle can expand and advance despite repression, mobilizing, and applying its resources in effective ways. It should avoid both overly ambitious plans and excessively timid ones. The strategic plan will also project the intended way in which the struggle will become successful and how the

conflict will be concluded. Wise strategic planning will help to ensure the effective interaction of tactics and specific methods to implement the strategy and increase the chances of victory. Without clear strategic insight, changes from one method to another may take place without good purpose or effect.

The following intimately related factors need to be considered in the selection of strategy and tactics:

- The objectives of the nonviolent group
- The opponents' objectives
- The qualities, strengths, and weaknesses of the nonviolent group
- The opponents' strengths and weaknesses
- The anticipated duration of the forthcoming struggle and what will be needed to sustain it
- External conditions that will have a bearing on the campaign
- Other factors in the general situation

Careful attention to all of these factors is required.

Consideration of the situation should include attention to the general social and political context of the conflict, the physical details and climate of the areas in which action is contemplated, the culture, the traditions, the social structures of the people involved, the nature and objectives of the contending groups, and the issues at stake.

What is the nature of the general grievance group and also of the expected participants in the nonviolent struggle? What are the assured and expected numbers of resisters? How much support do they now, and will they, receive from the general population? How much do they know about nonviolent action? What experience have they had with using it, and how skillful are they in waging this kind of struggle? What is the quality of the resisters and leaders?

Who are the opponents? What are the resources at the opponents' disposal, such as economic resources, administration, and agencies of repression? What are the opponents' objectives? What degree of ruthlessness are the opponents prepared to use? Who are the opponents' friends and supporters? To what degree are the opponents dependent on members of the nonviolent opposition?

It is important to consider the willingness of the resisters to act, their ability to withstand the opponents' repression, their degree of discipline, and their ability to avoid both fear and violence. The intensity of their commitment to the struggle is important also.

Additionally, the type of expected repression and other countermeasures needs to be considered in choosing the methods of resistance. How much repression are the general population, the resisters, and the leaders prepared to suffer?

A good strategy remains impotent unless it is put into action with sound tactics. However, skillful selection and implementation of tactics will not make up for a bad overall strategy. The choice of tactics to execute a strategy may involve consideration of different fronts, groups, time periods, and methods.

In specific phases of the struggle, the intended course of action should often have more than one objective, while remaining limited and potentially achievable. The formulation of a campaign plan which offers more than one objective may make it possible to gain at least one of them. However, selecting only a single objective usually guarantees that the opponents will prevent you from gaining it.

Changes in methods may also be used to shift responsibilities and dangers from one group to another, perhaps a less exhausted one or one more disciplined. Shifts in methods may also be made to change or increase the pressures on the opponents or to compensate for weaknesses in the nonviolent group. Variation in tactics and methods may add variety and interest (and often news worthiness) to the campaign.

The planning and implementation of strategy and tactics require sensitivity to the developing conflict situation. If a given action succeeds, then what? If a given action fails, what then? If there is partial success, what follows? The capacity to respond to unforeseen (or unforeseeable) events must be acutely developed. It

is especially important to conserve the morale and commitment of the nonviolent resisters and potential supporters, and their response and behavior during the conflict. If the action is not succeeding, plans must be altered, perhaps even calling a temporary retreat in order to prepare for a future stronger effort.

There is no substitute for, or shortcut to, strength in a movement of nonviolent action. If the necessary strength and ability to persist in face of penalties and suffering do not exist, that fact must be recognized and given an intelligent response. Never wait until it is too late. Know how to withdraw in an orderly fashion to a tenable position and find ways to correct the weaknesses.

On the other hand, it may be wise to accelerate the action and implementation of the strategy if the opponents reveal significant weaknesses or if the nonviolent resisters are stronger than expected.

D. The choice of weapons

In order to achieve the best results and the most effective implementation of the chosen strategies, the choice of which nonviolent weapons (specific methods) are used will need to be made carefully and wisely. Available methods were listed in Part Two. There are still others. Boycotts, strikes, civil disobedience, and parallel government are examples of available methods.

The characteristics of the general classes of methods need to be remembered.

- **Protest and persuasion**: These methods are largely symbolic in their effect and produce an awareness of the existence of dissent.
- **Noncooperation**: These methods applied by many persons and groups with disciplined strength can cause difficulties in maintaining the normal operation and efficiency of the system. In extreme situations, these methods may threaten its existence.
- **Intervention**: These methods possess qualities of both previous groups, but in addition usually constitute a more direct challenge to the regime. They make possible a greater impact with smaller numbers, providing that courage and discipline are maintained.

The many factors which need to be considered in choosing specific methods include the situation, the issues in the conflict, characteristics of the resistance group and of the opponents, the resistance strategy, the expected repression, and the anticipated development of the struggle.

While all of these are important, the most important of these will be the resistance strategy, including the type of pressures which are to be applied.

Here are some questions that can be asked. Do the methods being considered contribute to implementing the selected grand strategy and

the strategies? What effects will the methods produce and how do these fit with the strategic plan for the struggle? Do they apply the kind of pressures against the opponents which have been identified as necessary if the struggle is to be successful? The specific desired pressures for change may include economic losses, weakening of political position, loss of control, or psychological impact. Can the methods contribute to implementing the selected mechanism of change intended by the nonviolent group (such as to reach a compromise in accommodation or to coerce)?

If the methods being considered do not directly implement the strategies and apply the identified needed pressures, do they at least facilitate the application of the methods which will apply those pressures? That may be done by increasing resistance morale or undermining the opponents' morale.

There are other factors which need to be considered in selecting methods, but these really should be considered when the strategies for the struggle are being considered.

In choosing the methods, one should remember that it may be easier to get people to refrain from doing something which has been ordered than to get them to do something very risky which has been prohibited. Noncooperation often requires much time and the participation of many people to achieve its impact. Also, many of the methods of nonviolent interven-

tion can only be practiced for limited periods of time and require skilled, reliable, disciplined, and determined practitioners. They usually require considerable preparation in order to be successfully applied, often in combination with other methods of nonviolent action.

In a long struggle, phasing of the action is highly important. The choice and sequence of methods may be the most important single factor in that phasing. The decision when to proceed to a new phase must be carefully weighed. A static condition must be avoided.

Moving from one level of action to another—as from symbolic protests to noncooperation, and from noncooperation to intervention—generally involves progressive increase in the degree of repression which is risked. In reverse, the choice of noncooperation instead of intervention, may at times help to produce a relatively less explosive and dangerous conflict situation with relatively less severe repression.

Assessment of the effects certain methods will produce on the development of the movement is highly important. Possible effects include changes in both attitudes and also power relationships, shifts in the support for each side, and the possible later use of stronger nonviolent methods.

The ultimatum

If negotiations with the opponents are not showing signs of producing satisfactory results, the basic strategy for the struggle and early tactics must be settled, and various types of organizational preparations completed. In some nonviolent struggles, especially Gandhian ones, the next stage will be the issuance of an ultimatum to the opponents. In most cases, however, there may be no ultimatum, because the idea is unknown, because the planners hope to take the opponents by surprise, because the conflict has already broken out spontaneously, or for some other reason.

In an ultimatum the demands are stated. An offer is made to cancel plans for attack if the opponents grant those demands (or a major part of them) by a given day and hour. The consequences of a failure to achieve a mutually agreed change in the matters at stake are also made clear: a nonviolent struggle will be launched. An ultimatum is issued to influence the opponents, influence the general public, and build up morale and willingness to act in the grievance group. An ultimatum may also be worded in a way to provide the opponents a way to save face.

Negotiations—especially long, sincere negotiations which have really sought a solution short of open struggle—may also help to put the opponents in the wrong in the eyes of all concerned and to bring sympathy to the non-

violent group. On occasion, an ultimatum may take the form of a general public declaration of what will happen if the demands are not met by a given date. The ultimatum may be part of a plan of escalation of resistance. The ultimatum may also be intended to demonstrate that the nonviolent group has made a final effort at a peaceful resolution, and give it an aura of defensiveness, even as it prepares for militant nonviolent struggle.

The nonviolent resisters are not naïve enough to expect that such an ultimatum will often lead to capitulation of the opponents. The opponents are likely to see such a communication as an unjustified challenge to their authority and highly improper behavior for people of a subordinate position. The opponents may therefore become angry, they may break off negotiations in progress, they may totally ignore the communication, or they may say it should have been directed to some subordinate official. Or, the opponents may coldly acknowledge receipt of the ultimatum.

If so, the time has come for action.

Chapter Ten
CHALLENGE BRINGS REPRESSION

A time of thunder

The time for action is also the time for self-reliance and internal strengthening. The resisters need to organize themselves, act, and mobilize others. Nonviolent action tends to mobilize power among the subordinates and enables them to exert control over their lives. It helps them to gain confidence and to increase their strength. "Rely on yourselves" may well be the cry of the resisters. Nonviolent action means that submission and passivity are cast off. The beginning strategy of the movement and the initial methods of action will differ widely from one campaign to another.

With the launching of nonviolent action, basic—often latent—conflicts between the respective groups are brought to the surface and activated. Through the ensuing "creative conflict and tension," as termed by African-American civil rights activist James Farmer, it becomes possible to produce change to resolve the underlying conflict.

Exponents of nonviolent struggle agree with Frederick Douglass, the eloquent African-American opponent of slavery, that: "Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate

agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. The struggle may be a moral one; or it may be both moral and physical. But it must be a struggle. *Power concedes nothing without demand*."

Exponents of nonviolent action insist that in acute conflicts only effective nonviolent struggle can lead to a satisfactory solution, avoiding both passivity and violence.

The struggle will bring changes to the grievance group. Some will be psychological—a shattering of attitudes of conformity, hopelessness, inertia, impotence, and passivity, and an increase of self-respect, confidence, and awareness of their own power.

Other changes will be more directly political; learning how to act together to achieve objectives.

The withdrawal of consent, cooperation, and submission will challenge the system as it affects the opponents' sources of power. How seriously the withdrawal does so will vary with the quality of the forms of the action, the numbers of the activists, and their persistence in the face of repression. The social and political milieu is also important. This includes the degree of non-conformity the system can tolerate, attitudes towards the regime, and the prospects for the resistance spreading.

The final outcome of the challenge will be de-

termined by the balance between the seriousness of the challenge and the degree to which the social and political milieu favors each side. The opponents' own efforts are clearly important, but by themselves they are not decisive. Take repression, for example. To be effective, repression must produce submission. But at times it does not. Repression may even result in increased resistance, as discussed below.

Initial polarization followed by shifting power

The launching of nonviolent action will almost always sharpen the conflict. It will likely cause the conflicting groups to become more sharply delineated and stimulate previously uncommitted people to take sides. Those persons and groups initially inclined toward the opponents will tend to move closer to their position and support, while those initially inclined toward the nonviolent group will tend to move toward it. This instability and uncertainty seem to be present at the beginning of all forms of open conflict.

The initial polarization may be short or long. It is especially important for the nonviolent resisters to be most careful in their behavior during this period because it will influence which side receives support. At first, the grievance group will be worse off than previously because it must now in addition to the grievance cope with repression. However, a disciplined

struggle may in time tend to induce disunity in the opponents' group, a loss of support for the opponents, and an increase in support for the nonviolent group.

Successful nonviolent campaigns produce a strengthened solidarity among the nonviolent militants, a growth of wider support for correction of the grievance, and a fragmentation and disintegration of support for the opponents. This shift appears to operate only as long as the movement remains nonviolent. The nonviolent resisters should attempt continually to increase their strength (numerical and otherwise), not only among their usual supporters and third parties but even in the camp of the opponents.

During the campaign the respective strengths of the two contending groups are therefore subject to constant change, both absolutely and relatively. Such changes at times can be great and take place quickly.

The nonviolent actionists' behavior may therefore not only influence their own strength but also that of the opponents, and also whether third parties support either group.

This highly dynamic and changeable situation means that specific acts within a nonviolent struggle may have extremely wide and significant repercussions on the power of both sides. Each particular action, even a limited one, therefore needs to be selected and evaluated in terms of its wider influences on the overall conflict. Short-term "successes" at the

cost of weakening the resistance in general and strengthening the opponents are most questionable. On the other hand, improvements in the relative strength of the activists after the initial polarization will be highly important in determining the later course of the struggle and the final result.

The opponents' initial problem

The opponents' initial problem arises from the fact that the nonviolent action disrupts the status quo and requires of them some type of response to the challenge. The type, extent, and severity of the disruption will vary. The opponents' tolerance and reactions (both psychologically and in countermeasures) may range widely and may change during the conflict. The degree of dissent the opponents can tolerate will be influenced by the degree to which the society is democratic or nondemocratic. Nonviolent action also tends to produce and aggravate conflicts within the opponents' camp about what countermeasures should be taken.

The nonviolent resisters need to prevent and correct misperceptions of their intentions and activities. Such misperceptions may cause responses harmful to all concerned.

Sometimes, when confronted with nonviolent action, opponents and their officials become confused. This can occur when they have been surprised by events, or are unfamiliar with nonviolent action. This confusion is

not necessarily beneficial to the nonviolent group and its objectives. Confusion can also occur when the resistance violates the opponents' perception of the world, based on an official ideology or doctrine, i.e. the view that the power of the State and violence are the most powerful political forces. There are other sources of confusion, including excessive optimism and a too favorable self-perception.

The effectiveness of nonviolent struggle does not hinge on surprise or the novelty of the use of nonviolent means. Its effectiveness depends rather on the very nature of the nonviolent action, the choice of strategies of resistance, and the skill of the activists, as well as their courage and discipline.

Frequently, opponents may react to the nonviolent challenge emotionally, seeing it largely as an affront, an indignity, as offensive behavior, and as a rejection of their authority and position. They may regard these aspects of the challenge as more important than the actual issues at stake. The opponents may then try to obtain either verbal acknowledgment of their authority and position, or a cancellation of the nonviolent campaign, or both, before they will consent to negotiations.

In other instances, the opponents may be less concerned with challenges to their dignity or authority and more with the immediate issues at stake. Recognition of the power of nonviolent action will sometimes lead the opponents to

make limited concessions in the hope of ending the challenge. At other times, the opponents will make major concessions only after a considerable period of struggle. That is, after they have recognized the real power of the movement. Or, the opponents may still offer only relatively minor concessions. These frequently will not satisfy a determined movement.

Occasionally opponents may genuinely believe that concessions, compromise, or surrender are out of the question if they are to be true to their mission or duty. Even more serious can be the opponents' fear that once they surrender on some specific issues, they may have to surrender everything. This will make achieving the goal even more difficult.

The opponents may use psychological influences, rather than repression, to induce the nonviolent resisters to be submissive again and to withdraw from the struggle. They may send messages such as ". . . not only can you not win, but you are already losing strength." False rumors may also be spread about the movement, its intentions, and its leadership. Attempts may be made to split off groups supporting the movement or to turn leaders against each other. Or a more direct counterattack may be mounted, with the opponents making a major effort to justify existing policies and to show that there is no justification for the demands of the nonviolent group. This effort may be intended to reduce the support that the nonviolent group

can mobilize and retain.

It is common for nonviolent resistance to be met with repression when the opponents are unwilling or unable to grant the actionists' demands.

Repression is an acknowledgment of the seriousness of the challenge.

Sometimes the severity of the repression will be in proportion to the seriousness of the nonviolent challenge, but this is by no means a standard pattern.

The opponents' need to bring an end to defiance may, in certain situations, be largely symbolic. But in other situations of widespread and growing nonviolent action, the pressures on the opponents to halt the resistance will be overwhelming. This is especially the case where the system cannot stand major dissent. When the opponents are the State, or have its support, the sanctions are likely to involve the use of the police, the prison system, and the military forces. This response is repression.

Repression

Nonviolent resisters who know what they are doing will not be surprised at the repression inflicted by the opponents. Freedom is not free. There is a price to be paid. Once the opponents have decided to use repression, the questions are:

- What means of repression will they use?
- Will repression help the opponents to

achieve their objectives?

- What will be the response of the nonviolent group and others to the repression?

Some of the sanctions which the opponents may use will be official, while some sanctions may be unofficially encouraged. Sometimes there will be threats. Other times the sanctions will simply be inflicted against the resisters. Some sanctions involve police or military action. Other reactions to the challenge may be more indirect means of control and manipulation, and occasionally, even counter nonviolent sanctions.

The sanctions the nonviolent resisters can expect will take many forms and involve different degrees of pressure. They are discussed under eight general headings.

A. Control of communication and information

Censorship of all means of public information, suppression of particular newspapers, books, leaflets, radio and television broadcasts, and the like, may be imposed. Also, the opponents may disseminate false news reports and sever private communications between members and sections of the nonviolent group (as by intercepting mail, electronic communications, and telegrams, taping telephone conversations, videotaping activities and discussions, and the like).

B. Psychological pressures

Verbal abuse, ostracism, and covertly encouraging defections and changes in plans are among the psychological pressures which the opponents may initiate. Others include vague threats of various types, making "examples" of a few by severe punishments, retaliation against family and friends of resisters or other innocent people, and severe psychological pressures.

C. Confiscation

Confiscation may take the form of seizure of property, funds, literature, records, correspondence, offices, and equipment.

D. Economic sanctions

These may range from those imposed by courts and officials to popular economic boycotts. Direct or indirect efforts may be taken to deprive nonviolent resisters of their livelihood, especially by dismissal from jobs and blacklisting, cutting off utilities, and similar measures.

E. Bans and prohibitions

The government may issue orders which prohibit certain types of acts and activities. It may declare organizations illegal, ban public meetings or assemblies, impose curfews, issue court injunctions, and take other measures.

F. Arrests and imprisonment

These are commonly used to punish disobedience of the State's laws and regulations. They

include arrests for serious and minor charges related to the nonviolent action, arrests and legal harassing on unrelated or imagined charges, arrests of negotiators, delegations, and leaders, and varying prison sentences.

G. Exceptional restrictions

These methods involve unusual or more severe forms of detention and restrictions on normal public liberties. These methods include new laws or regulations to deal with defiance and types of noncooperation, suspension of *habeas corpus* and other rights, declarations of martial law and states of emergency, and mobilization of special forces. Prosecutions may be initiated on charges more serious than for simple acts of resistance, as for conspiracy and incitement. Nonviolent resisters may be conscripted into military forces, where they will be subject to court martial for indiscipline. Mass expulsion of the resisting population may be imposed, while individuals may be subjected to exile, detention without trial, and placed in concentration camps.

H. Direct physical violence

Violent repression can be of many kinds and to various degrees. The amount and type of repression used by the opponents will vary with their perception of the conflict situation, and of the issues involved. Also important will be the understanding of the nature of nonviolent action and the anticipated results of the repres-

sion both in restoring "order" and in alienating needed cooperation and support of others. Repression may be well planned or improvised. It will tend to grow as the nonviolent struggle movement becomes stronger and when the earlier repression has not resulted in submission. Various other countermeasures may be used by the opponents in the repression.

Making the repression ineffective

In the face of direct physical violence, the key to success by the resisters is to refuse submission and to maintain discipline.

Generally repression is more suited to deal with violent opposition than with nonviolent action. In a situation of repression against a strong nonviolent struggle movement, without fear of sanctions, the sanctions tend to lose their power to produce submission. When the jail is not feared, imprisonment has lost its effectiveness. The resisters may therefore openly defy laws, seek imprisonment, and may even ask the opponents to do their worst. At times the numbers of defiant people may become so large that effective enforcement becomes impossible. The result may be to make repression impotent.

Persistence

Faced with repression, nonviolent resisters have only one acceptable response: *to overcome they must persist in their action and refuse*

to submit or retreat. To show in any way that the repression weakens the movement will signal to the opponents that if the repression is made severe enough it will produce submission.

Fearlessness, or deliberate control of fear, is especially important at this stage of the struggle. Firmness will make it possible for mass noncooperation to produce its coercive effects. Persistence may also contribute to winning sympathy for the defiant nonviolent resisters. It is especially important that the leadership of the nonviolent struggle be, and be seen to be, courageous and unbowed in face of repression and threats of future punishments.

Sometimes certain methods of action will, by their nature, be more difficult for the opponents to deal with by repression and less likely to put resisters to the test of withstanding severe brutalities. For example, it may be better for everyone to stay at home than to march toward machine guns.

No change of tactics and methods, however, must be permitted to alter the basic nonviolent counteraction to repression: brave, relentless, and peaceful struggle.

Facing repression

Facing repression with persistence and courage means that the nonviolent resisters must be prepared to endure the opponents' sanctions without flinching.

Not all suffering is the same nor does it have

the same effects. The results of the suffering of courageous resisters are likely to differ radically from the suffering of submissive people.

Those planning to initiate nonviolent action will need to consider the degree of suffering the volunteers are willing to endure and how firmly the volunteers will be able to defy their opponents' repression.

This persistence will have a number of effects. Two are:

- The numerical and quantitative effect of many defiant subjects refusing to obey despite repression will significantly limit the opponents' ability to control the situation and to maintain their policies.
- The nonviolent persistence despite repression may produce psychological or qualitative effects on the opponents, their supporters, third parties, and others.

In some cases of nonviolent struggle, the repression will be relatively mild or moderate. In other cases there will be brutalities.

Facing brutalities

Brutalities may arise because (1) the regime commonly uses terror; (2) a nontyrannical regime decides that only drastic action can crush the resisters; or (3) local officers or individuals in the army or police, without orders, or even the general public, on their own initiative, commit brutalities.

A. Official and unofficial brutalities

It is important to remember that beatings, killings, and massacres against nonviolent resisters do occur, and to determine how to respond to them in accordance with the requirements for effectiveness of the nonviolent technique.

The more dictatorial the regime and system generally, the more probable will be extreme brutalities against the nonviolent resisters. However, when challenged nonviolently all regimes which depend to any degree on violence are likely to resort to violence.

B. Remaining firm

The informed resister in crisis situations is not surprised by the occurrence of brutalities against the nonviolent group. In reaction, either to halt the defiance or to resort to violence would have serious negative consequences. To be effective, the resisters must persist through the brutalities and suffering and maintain their fearlessness, nonviolent discipline, and firmness. Some time and considerable suffering may be required to demonstrate to the opponents that brutalities will not crush the movement.

The price may be severe, but at times it may be required if fundamental changes are to be made. However, the leadership in a nonviolent struggle will not, on the basis of any criteria, be wise to demand that the resisters undergo suffering or court brutalities beyond their abili-

ties to bear them. If an unwise course of action has been started, it should not be continued out of dogmatism or stubbornness. However, when a firm stand or still more daring action is required, there should be no retreat.

Rarely, a planned daring and risky action by a smaller group may be used to provoke intense repression from the opponents. This may, by demonstrating initiative, courage, and persistence in face of extreme danger, help both to weaken the opponents and to improve the resisters' morale and increase loss of fear of repression. However, such actions require extreme caution and normally are not advised.

The operation of one or more of the mechanisms of change may lead to a reduction or cessation of brutalities. Brutalities may be also reduced when it is clear that repression is rebounding against the opponents' position by alienating their supporters and provoking increased resistance. When this occurs, the opponents may realize that their repression and brutalities are counterproductive and need to be restricted. It is possible that the worst repression may come shortly before capitulation by the opponents.

Chapter Eleven

SOLIDARITY AND DISCIPLINE TO FIGHT REPRESSION

The need for solidarity

Faced with repression, the nonviolent resisters will need to stand together, to maintain their nonviolent discipline, internal solidarity, and morale, and to continue the struggle.

During the initial stages of the struggle, the nonviolent group is likely to identify themselves with the grievance group as a whole. It is not always possible to achieve unanimous support, and the degree of participation and support for the nonviolent resisters will vary. Deliberate efforts may be made to develop and maintain group solidarity among the participants.

The maintenance of morale in nonviolent struggles is extremely important. There appear to be roughly four ways of doing this.

A. Maintaining rapport, feelings of group participation, and group solidarity

The participants in the struggle need to feel constantly that they are part of a much larger movement which gives them, personally, support and strength to carry on. They need to feel that others are in continuing solidarity with them. To these ends, regular contacts and demonstrations of "togetherness" can be important.

These may include mass meetings, marches, songs, parades, and wearing of symbols of unity. It may help if they share a common philosophy and if they keep the lines of communication open among activists, leaders, and support groups.

B. Generating incentives to carry on the struggle

Efforts may be needed to support the determination to continue the struggle. The participants must believe that their action is justified, that the gained objectives will be worthwhile, and that the means of action to achieve them have been wisely chosen.

Morale is likely to increase the better the movement is understood and if the goals and means of struggle are, or can be, related to values accepted by the population in general.

C. Reducing grounds for capitulation

Because the participants may become discouraged and fatigued, specific attention must be given to ways to counteract those feelings. Measures to prevent or minimize those feelings should be taken initially. It is highly important that at least the original participants continue their support for the struggle and that none desert. Specific supports for their morale may be helpful. Special entertainment may be marginally useful. Where the nonviolent resisters and their families lack food, housing, money, and the like—because of participation in the struggle—a major effort to supply those may be needed.

The sufferings incurred in the course of nonviolent struggle are sometimes interpreted by the leaders in ways which make them seem more bearable: "Our people suffer every day, and it is all wasted," said a South African resistance leader, who invited people instead to suffer for the cause of justice.

D. Restraints or sanctions

These pressures to continue support for the struggle differ radically from the sanctions for indiscipline applied in violent conflicts, which can be imprisonment or execution. Sometimes in nonviolent struggles verbal persuasion is sufficient to bolster participation. When pressure is not adequate, other methods may be used. These include vigils, public prayers, picketing, fines, publication of names of defectors, suspension of membership, social boycott, economic boycott, fasting, and nonviolent interjection. Intimidation and threats of physical harm must not be used.

If these nonviolent means succeed and the resisters remain determined, the opponents' repression will have failed. To achieve this, however, the resisters must maintain their nonviolent discipline.

Inhibiting repression

The opponents' difficulties of controlling the movement arise in part because the means of repression usable against nonviolent struggle

tend to be more limited as compared to the means which would be used against violent struggle. Brutalities and other severe repression are more difficult to justify against nonviolent resisters and their use may actually weaken the opponents' position, as discussed in the next chapter.

The degree to which a regime will feel able to defy world—or internal—opinion will of course vary, depending on several factors. These include: the kind of regime it is, whether it expects that certain events can be kept unknown, the degree to which it is threatened by the events, and also whether opinion against the regime will be translated into assistance for the nonviolent group and resistance against the opponents.

There is suggestive evidence that the maintenance of nonviolent discipline in face of repression tends significantly to restrict the repression and to cause especially difficult problems for the opponents.

The opponents prefer violence

Because of the special difficulties of repressing a nonviolent resistance movement, the opponents may seek to counter the difficuties by falsely attributing violence to the nonviolent resisters. Or, the opponents may publicize and exaggerate any violence that occurs. The opponents may even try to provoke violence and break down the resisters' nonviolent discipline.

Resistance violence is seen to "legitimize" violent repression. The opponents may provoke violence by very severe repression, or they may employ spies and *agents provocateurs*.

If it is publicly revealed that the opponents have acted in these ways, the news could disastrously undermine some of their usual support and power position. Disciplined nonviolent resistance will help to expose any such agents.

The need for nonviolent behavior

The requirement that volunteers maintain nonviolent discipline is rooted in the dynamics of the technique of nonviolent action. Nonviolent discipline in these conflicts is not an alien emphasis introduced by moralists or pacifists. Without nonviolent behavior, the opponents' repression will not rebound to undermine their power through political *jiu-jitsu* (Chapter Twelve) and the mechanisms of change (Chapter Thirteen) will not operate.

Nonviolent behavior is likely to contribute to achieving a variety of positive accomplishments. Four of these are: (1) winning sympathy and support, (2) reducing casualties, (3) inducing disaffection and even mutiny of the opponents' troops, and (4) attracting maximum participation in the nonviolent struggle.

How violence weakens the movement

The introduction of violence by resisters will reverse the process which produces strength in nonviolent action, and will increase the effectiveness of the opponents' control measures. Violence by resisters shifts attention to the violence itself, away from the issues, and away from the courage of the resisters and the opponents' own, usually much greater, violence. The introduction of violence into a nonviolent struggle movement may weaken nonviolent discipline, contribute to a shift to violence, and even lead to the collapse of the movement. The use of violence by the grievance group tends to unleash disproportionately severe repression by the opponents and to reverse any sympathy for the resisters which may be developing inside the opponent group. Success requires that only nonviolent "weapons" be used.

Sabotage and nonviolent action

Sabotage—defined for this discussion as "acts of demolition and destruction of property"—is *not* compatible with nonviolent struggle. The dynamics and mechanisms of sabotage are different:

- Sabotage always runs the risk of unintentional physical injury or death to persons serving the opponents or to innocent bystanders.
- Effective sabotage requires a willingness to use physical violence against persons who

discover the plans and are willing and able either to reveal or to block them.

- Sabotage requires secrecy in the planning and carrying out of missions.
- Sabotage requires only a few persons to carry it out and hence reduces the numbers of effective resisters.
- Sabotage demonstrates a lack of confidence in the adequacy of nonviolent struggle.
- Sabotage is a physical-material action and not a human-social action.
- Sabotage and nonviolent action are rooted in quite different premises about how to undermine the opponents. Nonviolent action produces withdrawal of consent by the subjects, while sabotage acts against the opponents by destroying property.
- Where physical injury or death occurs to persons there is likely to be a relative loss of sympathy and support for the nonviolent group and the movement in general.
- Sabotage is likely to result in highly disproportionate repression. Repression provoked by sabotage is not likely to weaken the opponents' relative power position.

Other ways to slip into violence

One additional way of slipping into violence occurs when resisters prepare to use violence in some possible future situation. Such prepa-

rations constitute a great temptation actually to use violence, especially at a crisis point when limited violence has already occurred.

The necessity of discipline

Discipline is especially important when there is special danger of violence breaking out and when participants lack experience and deep understanding of the nonviolent technique of struggle.

This discipline consists of adherence to certain minimum standards of behavior. The degree and type of discipline required will vary depending on the situation. The absence of discipline will mean that effective use of this technique will become very difficult or impossible.

Continued participation in the struggle and refusal to submit to fear are the most critical aims of discipline. After these, adherence to nonviolent behavior is the most important single aspect.

Discipline includes complying with plans and instructions. Discipline will help people to face severe repression and to make the maximum impact for their objectives. Such discipline also contributes to respect for the movement by third-parties, the population in general, and even the opponents.

Promoting nonviolent discipline

Nonviolent action almost always occurs in a

conflictual and tense situation. Nevertheless, it is possible to prevent violence and maintain discipline. Tension and aggression can be released in disciplined, nonviolent ways.

In some cases, participants in nonviolent action may intuitively, or by common accord, adhere to nonviolent discipline without formal efforts to promote it. However, in dangerous or risky situations, stronger efforts are needed to promote nonviolent discipline. Discipline in nonviolent action is primarily self-discipline. Various means of encouraging discipline will be effective only to the degree that they influence or strengthen the will or conscience of the resisters. Instructions, appeals, pledges, as well as discipline leaflets, marshals and other means, may be used to encourage discipline.

In situations of violence, leaders have sometimes postponed or called off a nonviolent campaign. On occasion, use of those nonviolent methods that are not likely to lead to violence may be substituted for other potentially provocative nonviolent methods. In face of a hostile group attack, strong discipline may be required to prevent both violence and a rout. If leaders wish to avoid a physical encounter, it may be better to move the nonviolent group to another spot, or disperse, or change to simpler forms of action. If the opponents' possible violent attack is to be confronted directly, strong nonviolent discipline is needed.

Where conflict and tension are widespread, at times a form of nonviolent action, such as pub-

lic demonstration, may itself allow for the venting of emotions nonviolently, while avoiding violence. High morale is important in achieving and preserving nonviolent discipline. Morale will often be increased by feelings among the resisters that some significant source of strength not available to their opponents is supporting them. This might be their technique of action, the justice of their cause, the inevitability of their victory, or the existence of powerful friends. In some situations it may be rooted in their religion or "history." Other means are also needed to ensure nonviolent discipline. It needs to be understood *why* the campaign needs to be kept strictly nonviolent.

Good organization, wise leadership, carefully laid and intelligently formulated plans, and effective means of communication within the movement will contribute significantly to achieving and maintaining nonviolent discipline. Strategies, tactics, and specific methods need to be chosen with extra care. Training of general participants and special personnel is important, through such means as study groups, workshops, seminars, socio-dramas, and other means. Speeches, messages, and on-the-spot appeals are also often used to prevent violence and to promote discipline.

Effective organization and communication within the nonviolent group will also contribute to nonviolent discipline. Clear lines of command and communication can produce both

general and specific instruction on behavior. "Marshals" can be used to help keep a demonstration nonviolent and disciplined. Pledges of nonviolent discipline have also been used.

Whether or not leaders are arrested, it is vital that other persons be capable, if needed, of stepping into leadership positions and helping to maintain discipline. In some cases the known leaders may be arrested, leading to the diffusion of leadership and less centralized efforts to provide nonviolent leadership. In other advanced cases the nonviolent forces may grow in strength so much that they take on characteristics of parallel government, helping to maintain nonviolent discipline. If serious violence appears possible, more active nonviolent intervention may be required to prevent the violence.

Refusal to hate

In some past nonviolent struggles, the resisters have clearly hated their opponents. However, some specialists on nonviolent action consider it to be a desirable refinement to develop the capacity to refuse to hate. Nonviolent action does not require its practitioners to "love" their opponents, or to attempt to convert them. Those are, in fact, unusual characteristics in this type of struggle. However, it is also true that nonviolent discipline and general effectiveness may be increased when the resisters are able to refrain from hatred and hostility.

The Inefficacy of Repression

If the nonviolent resisters remain fearless, keep their nonviolent discipline, are willing to accept the sufferings inflicted for their defiance, and are determined to persist, then the opponents' attempt to force the resisters to submit to their will is likely to be thwarted.

Arresting leaders and banning their organization are inadequate to end the resistance. Those means of control are likely to stifle the movement only when it is weak and when people are fearful. Such means of repression are likely to fail to crush the movement under the following conditions:

- When there has been a widespread and intensive education program on nonviolent action.
- When people have considerable experience in using the technique.
- When there has been advance training and a widely distributed manual on how to resist in this way.
- When successive layers of leadership have been selected in advance.
- When the first leaders set the example of fearless action, risking arrest.

The result may be the decentralization of leadership, increased self-reliance, and adherence to nonviolent discipline.

Repressive measures may even become new

points of resistance. This is not the same as increasing the group's original demands. Every measure of repression may be utilized as a new point at which to practice civil disobedience and political noncooperation to press for the original goals.

In this situation even an intensification of repression may fail, and instead aggravate the opponents' problems and weaken their own power still further. The repression may even have triggered against the opponents the force of political *jiu-jitsu*.

Chapter Twelve
POLITICAL *JIU-JITSU*

Against violent opponents

Nonviolent action is designed to operate against opponents who are able and willing to use violent sanctions. However, political struggle by means of nonviolent action against violent repression creates a special, asymmetrical conflict situation. In it, the nonviolent resisters can use the asymmetry of nonviolent means versus violent action to apply something like the Japanese martial art *jiu-jitsu* to their opponents. This throws the opponents off balance politically, causing their repression of the resisters to rebound against the opponents' position and weaken their power. By remaining nonviolent while continuing the struggle, the resisters can improve their own power position.

The opponents' difficulties in dealing with nonviolent action are primarily associated with the special dynamics and mechanisms of this technique.

Political *jiu-jitsu* operates basically by the opponents' violent repression against nonviolent resisters alienating support from the opponents. This can result in the growth of internal opposition among the opponents' usual supporters, an increase in power of the resistance

movement, and the turning of the third parties against the opponents. The ways this occurs are described below.

For this to happen, the nonviolent resisters must refuse to shift to violence, where their opponents are strongest. Instead, the resisters must continue their resistance by using only "nonviolent weapons."

Undermining the opponents

Political *jiu-jitsu* is a process by which nonviolent action deals with violent repression. Nonviolent discipline combined with persistence against violent repression causes the adversaries' repression to be exposed in the worst possible light. This, in turn, may lead to shifts in opinion and then to shifts in power relationships favorable to the nonviolent group. These shifts occur as support for the opponents is withdrawn while support for the nonviolent group is strengthened. The resisters' nonviolence helps the opponents' repression to throw them off balance politically.

Political *jiu-jitsu* does not occur in all nonviolent struggles. Most of the specific methods listed in Part Two are independent of this process. Political *jiu-jitsu* operates among three broad groups:

- Uncommitted third parties, whether on the local scene or the world level.
- The opponents' usual supporters.
- The general grievance group.

Winning over uncommitted third parties

Repression against nonviolent resisters may attract wide attention to the struggle and strong sympathy for the suffering nonviolent group. It obliges the opponents to condescend to explain, to justify themselves. Thereby the claims of the physically weak resisters are now heard in the court of public opinion, perhaps world opinion.

A. International indignation

International indignation can be translated into concrete actions, such as withdrawing credit, halting supplies, and imposing additional economic and diplomatic sanctions. However, in many situations, perhaps most, this does not occur.

B. Factors determining the impact of third party opinion

There should be no naïve assumption that "public opinion" alone will triumph. Frequently, determined opponents can ignore hostile opinion until and unless it is accompanied by, or leads to, shifts in power relationships, or threatens to do so. Three groups of factors will determine whether or not the opponents are affected by changes in the opinion of third parties:

- **The nature of the opponents and of the conflict situation**: Opponents are not all alike. Some are far more sensitive to public opinion than others.

Is the regime democratic or autocratic? What is its ideology? What is its attitude towards the resisters? How important to the regime are the issues? How does it perceive the role of repression? In what type of social system are the events taking place? Are the opponents sensitive to the opinion of third parties, or dependent on the third parties?

- **Actions that result from changed opinions**: Once the change of opinion has been achieved, who takes action against the regime of the opponents, and what type of action is taken?

Third-party actions may include protests, public declarations, demonstrations, diplomatic actions, economic sanctions, and the like. They ought to be seen as supplementary and complementary, but never as the main actions of the struggle. The proportion of successes among past cases of international nonviolent action, especially by third parties, is extremely small. The actions have been generally symbolic, and more substantial types, as economic sanctions, have not been applied on the systematic and sustained basis required for effectiveness. International action is not a substitute for internal action by the grievance group itself.

It is in the nature of the nonviolent technique that the main brunt of the struggle must be borne by the grievance group imme-

diately affected by the opponents' policies.

- **Shifts in third party opinion toward the cause of the nonviolent group**: These may aid the resisters by boosting their morale and encouraging them to persist until they win. Such shifts may also help to undermine the morale of sections or of the whole of the opponent group.

C. The Future of Third Party Support

Third-party and international support has generally had limited use and effectiveness. Perhaps, new forms of support are now being launched. These include supply of literature and handbooks about nonviolent struggle, printing facilities or services, radio broadcasting facilities and equipment, electronic communication, and bases and centers for study, education, and training in this type of struggle.

New technologies, although they do not produce miracles, can assist in communication, education, and access to information. The technologies are, of course, also available to oppressive regimes.

Arousing dissent and opposition in the opponents' own camp

Violent repression against nonviolent resisters is likely to be perceived as more unreasonable, distasteful, inhuman, or dangerous for the society than is violent repression against violent resisters.

When the resisters are nonviolent it is much easier for members of the opponent group themselves to advise caution or to recommend lessening of the repression and other counteractions or even changes in the policy in contention. Severe repression may be seen as too high a price to pay for continued denial of the demands of the nonviolent group.

A. Questioning both repression and the cause

In the asymmetrical conflict situation—violent repression versus nonviolent struggle—some members of the opponents' population and usual supporters may begin to question both the violent repression against the nonviolent resisters and also to reexamine the issues at stake in the conflict. This aspect of political *jiu-jitsu* may contribute to several types of dissent and other reactions among members of the opponent group:

- Feelings that the repression and possible brutalities are excessive and that concessions are preferable to continuation of the repression.
- An altered view of the nature of the opponents' regime, possibly resulting in a new or intensified conviction that important changes are required.
- Active sympathy for the nonviolent group and its cause.
- Various types of positive assistance for the cause of the grievance group and aid to the

nonviolent resisters.

B. Repression may produce defections from the opponent group

In some conflicts, officials, even high ones, and soldiers and police of any rank may change sides.

C. The troops mutiny

Defections sometimes extend to police and troops who are charged with inflicting repression. They may become deliberately inefficient in carrying out orders or actually mutiny. Sometimes individuals disobey and desert, but at times whole military units have deserted or defected together.

When soldiers disobey orders for brutal repression and defect to the resisters, it is extremely important that they join the ongoing nonviolent struggle. They must not use their military weapons and training against the remaining troops still loyal to the opponent regime. If they do, other troops that may have been on the verge of breaking with the oppressing regime are highly likely to resume reliable obedience to the regime. That can give the regime new life, turning the conflict into a civil war that the anti-regime forces may lose, and also greatly increase casualties.

During the 1905 Russian Revolution, the use of violence by mutinied soldiers gave sufficient-new life to the Czar's regime to effectively end

the revolution.[5] In Syria in 2012, the use of military weapons by the mutinied troops created a prolonged military conflict and greatly increased the total number of casualties.

By joining the nonviolent struggle and not using their military weapons, the mutinying troops can instead greatly facilitate the defection of much larger numbers of the troops serving the opponents, thereby helping to speed the end of the opponent regime by taking away its army.

D. Splits in the opponent regime

Brutalities against the nonviolent resisters at times may also lead the opponent regime to split into factions with different views concerning policies, means of control and repression, and personnel issues.

E. Deliberate efforts to win defections

Aware that brutal repression may cause the opponent regime grave problems, on occasion some nonviolent resisters may deliberately take extreme provocative actions with the intent of prodding the regime to take violent actions that are expected actually to help the resisters. Such actions require extreme care and normally are not advised.

On other occasions, the nonviolent group may make direct appeals for support from

5 See a full description of this important nonviolent struggle in Gene Sharp, *Waging Nonviolent Struggle*, Chapter Five.

members of the opponent group. Sometimes new splits are created and other times existing splits are aggravated. In contrast, violence by the resisters generally tends to unite the opponent group.

Increasing support and participation from the grievance group

Political *jiu-jitsu* may operate in yet a third way. Sometimes the repression will motivate a larger number of the current dissenters to join in active resistance.

Whether or not repression has that effect, strength is needed if the resisters are to withstand the repression and maintain their resistance. Submission to violence spells defeat. Repression can legitimize the resistance movement because it "deepens the injustice." Repression can both increase the determination of the existing nonviolent resisters and may at times increase the number of resisters.

Less severe repression and counter-*non*violent action?

In light of the above risks that harsh repression may damage the opponents' cause, their forces of repression may experiment with less severe control measures and even seek to minimize their own violence. On rare occasions they may sometimes use counter-nonviolent action. Such cases of counter-nonviolent action may be the first feeble attempts to move to-

ward a new type of conflict situation in which both sides rely on nonviolent action as their ultimate sanction.

By choosing to fight with a technique which makes possible political *jiu-jitsu*, the nonviolent resisters unleash forces which may be more difficult for the opponents to combat than is violence.

Altering power relations

The power of both contenders in a conflict in which nonviolent action is used is continually variable. This variation can be a result of political *jiu-jitsu* as well as other forces unleashed by this technique. The restriction or withholding of support from one side or another will affect the sources of power available to the targeted side. The power shifts produced by political *jiu-jitsu* may become obvious only after they have occurred.

Nonviolent struggle has the potential to make a government powerless. Whether this potential is realized depends primarily on the circumstances, the wisdom of the resistance strategy, and the actions of the resisters. These factors include the degree to which, by its nonviolent discipline, persistence, and choice of strategy and tactics, the nonviolent group promotes the operation of political *jiu-jitsu*. However, even if political *jiu-jitsu* does not occur, there are other means by which the power relationships may be changed fundamentally by nonviolent action.

Chapter Thirteen

FOUR WAYS SUCCESS MAY BE ACHIEVED

Nonviolent struggle can only be successful when various necessary conditions exist or have been created. It is possible to distinguish four broad processes, or mechanisms, which can bring success: conversion, accommodation, nonviolent coercion, and disintegration.

Conversion

"By conversion we mean that the opponent, as the result of the actions of the nonviolent group or person, comes around to a new point of view which embraces the ends of the nonviolent actor," wrote George Lakey. This mechanism may be influenced by reason, argumentation, emotions, beliefs, attitudes, and morals.

A. Seeking conversion

The aim of nonviolent action employed so as to achieve this mechanism is thus not simply to free the subordinate group, but also to free the opponents who are thought to be imprisoned by their own system and policies. Advocates of this mechanism often say that they seek to separate the "evil" from the "evildoer," to remove the "evil" while salvaging the "evildoer."

B. The rationale of self-suffering

Some users of nonviolent action consider that self-suffering is not only required to neutralize or immobilize the opponents' repression, but that it can also be the main means to convert the opponents. Suffering, some nonviolent actionists contend, attacks rationalizations and overcomes indifference. Suffering is no longer only a risk, it is also a weapon. Other practitioners reject conversion as impossible or impractical.

C. The barrier of social distance

The greater the "social distance"—the stronger the barriers to "fellow feeling," mutual understanding, and empathy—between the contending groups, the less possibility of conversion. The closer the social distance, the easier will be the conversion. Some nonviolent resisters have taken steps to reduce or remove the social distance between the contending groups.

D. Conversion produces change

Conversion includes various types of changes varying in their rational and emotional components, operating on different people, and differing with the length of time the change has been in operation. Conversion includes various changes in the opponents' attacks, beliefs, feelings, and worldviews. Individuals differ widely in their susceptibility to conversion.

E. Some factors influencing conversion

The external factors influencing conversion include the degree of conflict of interest, social distance, the personality structure of the opponents, shared or contrasting beliefs and norms, and the role of third parties.

The internal factors influencing conversion under the control of the nonviolent group include: refraining from violence and hostility, attempting to gain the opponents' trust by truthfulness, openness concerning intentions, chivalry, maintaining a pleasant personal appearance and habits, refraining from humiliating the opponents, making visible sacrifices, carrying on constructive work, maintaining personal contact with the opponents, demonstrating trust of the opponents, and developing empathy.

F. Conversion may not be achieved

For a variety of reasons, including unsatisfactory fulfillment of the above influential factors, conversion efforts may only partially succeed or may fail completely. Some persons and groups may be especially resistant to conversion. If conversion fails, or is not even attempted, nonviolent action offers three other mechanisms by which change can be achieved.

Accommodation

In accommodation the opponents are neither converted nor nonviolently coerced. The

opponents resolve to grant the demands of the nonviolent resisters without having changed their minds fundamentally about the issues involved. The opponents have decided to yield on the issue rather than experience or risk a still more unsatisfactory result later. Influences which might have in time led to conversion or to nonviolent coercion may be involved. Accommodation occurs while the opponents still have a choice but the social situation has been significantly changed by the conflict.

Among the factors leading to accommodation are these:

- Violent repression is seen as no longer appropriate.
- The opponents believe they are getting rid of a nuisance.
- The opponents are adjusting to opposition in their own group, and acting to prevent its growth.
- The opponents are acting to minimize economic losses which are expected to grow.
- The opponents are bowing gracefully to the inevitable, avoiding the humiliation of defeat and possibly salvaging something more than would be possible later. At times the opponents may act to prevent the populace from learning how much power it really can wield.

Nonviolent coercion and disintegration

In nonviolent coercion, the opponents are neither converted nor decide to accommodate the demands. However, shifts of social forces and power relationships may produce the changes sought by the activists against the will of the opponents, while the opponents remain in their positions.

Roughly speaking, nonviolent coercion may take place in any of three ways:

- The defiance may become too widespread and massive to be controlled by the opponents' repression.
- The noncooperation and defiance may make it impossible for the social, economic, and political system to operate unless the actionists' demands are achieved.
- Even the opponents' ability to apply repression may be undermined and may at times dissolve.

In any of these cases, or any combination of them, despite their resolution not to give in, the opponents may discover that it is impossible for them to defend or impose their objectionable policies or system.

A. The concept of nonviolent coercion

Coercion is not limited to the effects of threat or use of physical violence. The key factors in coercion are:

- Whether the opponents' will is blocked de-

spite their continued efforts to impose it.

- Whether the opponents are able to act in efforts to implement their will. Coercion is the use of either physical or nonphysical force to compel action. Noncooperation has sometimes been so effective that temporary paralysis of the opponents' power has been achieved, but total collapse of their regime did nevertheless not result.

B. The concept of disintegration

Disintegration results from the more severe application of the same forces that produce nonviolent coercion. However, those forces operate more extremely in disintegration, so that the opponent regime or group completely falls apart. No coherent body remains capable even of accepting defeat. The opponents' power has been dissolved.

C. Withdrawing the sources of political power

This technique becomes coercive or disintegrative when the people applying it withhold or withdraw to a decisive degree the necessary sources of the opponents' power.

1. **Authority**: The application of nonviolent struggle may both show how much authority the opponents have already lost and also may help to undermine their authority still further. The rulers' authority may dissolve. In addition, the people who have repudiated the rulers' authority may then, under extreme circum-

stances, transfer their loyalty to a rival claimant in the form of a parallel government.

2. **Human resources**: Nonviolent noncooperation and disobedience may sever the human resources necessary for the opponents' power. These may include the general population, the subordinate group, and the grievance group. The result may greatly increase the opponents' enforcement problems while weakening their power capacity. Widespread tenacious noncooperation may paralyze the system.

3. **Skills and knowledge**: A withdrawal of cooperation by key personnel, technicians, officers, administrators, etc., may have an impact on the opponents' power quite disproportionate to the numbers actually non-cooperating. A challenge by nonviolent action seems especially likely to aggravate conflicts within the opponents' regime, thereby reducing the degree to which skills, knowledge, insight, energy, and the like are available to deal with the challenge.

4. **Intangible factors**: Nonviolent action can threaten habits of obedience, and bring political beliefs and official dogmas into question. The resistance may reflect prior changes and also help to erode further the habit of unquestioning obedience and to develop conscious choice of whether to obey or to disobey. Obedience is no longer automatic.

5. **Material resources**: Nonviolent action may regulate the degree to which material resources are available to the opponents. These

resources include the economic system, transportation, communication, financial resources, raw materials, and the like. Of the 198 methods of this technique, 61 are directly economic: boycotts, strikes, and several methods of intervention. Other methods may have indirect economic consequences.

6. **Sanctions**: Even the opponents' ability to apply sanctions against the resistance may be reduced or removed by nonviolent action. Those who help to provide the sanctions—the police and the troops—may carry out orders inefficiently, or in extreme cases disobey them completely. Such laxity or disobedience is more likely against nonviolent resistance than violent action. The reduced reliability of sanctions, or even their severance as a result of mutinies, will have serious impact on the opponents' power position.

D. Some factors influencing nonviolent coercion and disintegration

The factors that produce nonviolent coercion and disintegration occur in different combinations and proportions. The contribution of each factor will depend upon the degree to which it regulates one or more of the opponents' necessary sources of power. Nonviolent coercion is more likely where:

- The numbers of nonviolent resisters are very large.
- The opponents are dependent on them for

the sources of their power.

- The group refusing assistance to the opponents is a significant one.
- The nonviolent group is skilled in applying the technique of nonviolent action.
- The defiance and noncooperation can be maintained for significant time.
- The opponents are dependent for certain services or supplies on third parties that are sympathetic and supportive of the nonviolent group.
- The opponents' means of control and repression prove to be insufficient or ineffective in face of massive defiance.
- There is opposition within the opponent group to the policies at issue or to the repression (including attention to the number of dissidents, the intensity of their disagreement, and the types of action they use, such as strikes and mutinies).

A successful conclusion?

Skillfully applied nonviolent action may offer greater chances of success than would political violence in the same circumstances.[6] However, victory cannot be guaranteed. Changes will take place, which may or may not be for the

6 For the "Summary of Factors Determining the Outcome of Nonviolent Struggles" see Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, (1973 edition), pp. 815-817.

better. Frequently, as in all conflicts, the results are mixtures of defeat and success in varying proportions.

A. The risk and nature of defeat

Defeat indicates failure to achieve the objectives of the struggle. Defeat may occur because of insufficient strength to continue the struggle powerfully, or weaknesses in organization, perseverance, discipline, or strategy. There is no substitute for genuine strength in nonviolent action.

The consequences of defeat will vary. At times, there may be physical suffering, mental anguish, economic losses, worsened conditions, and new legal restrictions. If there is demoralization and loss of confidence in nonviolent action, the chances of using this technique again soon may be low.

Sometimes it is better to have struggled and lost than not to have struggled at all. Peaceful defiance of powerful opponents, even if not successful, may be preferable to desertion of principle and integrity.

Defeats, however, are not always total and permanent. Defeat may be seen as a lost battle, with a war yet to be won. Even in the midst of defeat there may occur less obvious favorable changes which may contribute to a later success for the nonviolent group. Defeat may at times be followed by an increased spirit of resistance, strengthened organization, improved skill in applying nonviolent action, and new

friends. If so, then a failure may well be the prelude to success.

B. A draw or an interim settlement?

Not all major changes can be achieved in a single struggle. A series of campaigns may be required, with temporary pauses between them.

This may happen under such conditions as when:

- The resisters are not strong enough.
- The movement is weakening.
- An honorable withdrawal is prudent.
- The next activities can be done by a few persons or groups so the many can rest.
- The essential elements of the movement are being jeopardized and actions to continue the campaign unchanged are foolhardy.
- Participants are not capable of further suffering without demoralization.
- The moment is favorable for limited gains.
- The opponents are ready to negotiate and offer significant concessions, although not all the demands.
- There is a breathing space while other changes can take place.

In such conditions, a shift of strategy and an interim settlement may be wise.

Sometimes, the very fact of negotiating for gains—not losses—is a victory, for it reflects an improved power relationship. At times, a truce

or interim settlement may be produced without formal negotiations and agreements.

The nonviolent resisters may compromise on secondary, nonessential matters, but will not compromise on essentials or give up fundamental principles or demands. Their achievements may be postponed but they must not be renounced.

The period following a truce or an interim settlement will be difficult. It could be used to regroup, strengthen positions, and consolidate gains. One should not continue along the same line that led to the truce. The development of a new strategy and tactics is very important.

The first actions after losing a battle should be brief, but one should never allow the opponents to dictate to the resisters. The nonviolent group should not allow itself to become completely passive and return to submission. Periods of retreat and even defeat must be turned into opportunities for the recovery of strength and preparations for more favorable action.

When limited successes have been won by producing basic changes in attitudes, power positions, and relationships, these successes are likely to be genuine and lasting, not easily taken away.

C. Success

When there have been significant advances, and victory is in sight, one has to be careful. This is a crucial and dangerous period. The nonviolent group may become overconfident

and careless. The adversaries may make a supreme effort to avoid defeat. A domestic extremist political or military group, or a foreign intelligence agency, may see an opportunity to stage a coup d'état.[7]

The nonviolent group's final efforts are the most important and most difficult of all. Campaigns may be ended in different ways, including negotiations, or the opponents granting the demands. Or, rarely, the end may come with the collapse and disintegration of the opponent regime or group.

Rigorous analysis may be needed to determine clearly whether a given struggle has been a "success" or a "failure." The following questions may help in making that determination.

- Were the goals of the nonviolent group achieved? Fully? In part? As the result of nonviolent action? As the result of other means or factors? Immediately, or some time after the struggle?
- Which mechanisms of change operated?
- Were the nonviolent group and the grievance group strengthened or weakened internally as a result of the campaign?
- Was the basis laid for later or wider achievement or both?

7 Serious planners should study Gene Sharp and Bruce Jenkins, *The Anti-Coup*. Boston: Albert Einstein Institution, 2003. It is a guide on how to prevent attempted coups and how to defeat them if they are attempted.

- Were there changes in attitudes and perceptions toward the issues and towards the various groups?
- Were there additional subtle and indirect effects, and if so of what types?
- Were there lasting effects on the social structure or social system generally, and if so of what kind?
- What was the cost of the achievements, and how do they compare with the cost of other efforts to achieve similar results?

There may be other relevant questions.

D. Toward a genuine solution

Advocates of the use of nonviolent action in place of techniques of violence have sometimes argued that the results achieved by nonviolent action are likely to be more permanent and satisfactory than those achieved by violence.

Those advocates have argued that in the period following a successful nonviolent struggle, there will likely be "no aftermath of resentment, bitterness or revenge, no necessity for further threats of force," as Richard Gregg put it. A lasting change in the power relationships between the contending groups is also likely.

Chapter Fourteen

THE REDISTRIBUTION OF POWER

Effects on the Nonviolent Group

The application of the technique of nonviolent action can produce changes in the participants and in the distribution of power.

The strength of the resistance group may grow in the following ways:

A. Ending submissiveness

Participation in nonviolent action both requires and produces an end to passive submission to the will of the adversaries. Such action also helps to correct a lack of self-confidence, a sense of inferiority, fear, a dislike of responsibility, and a desire to be dominated. These are progressively replaced by their opposites.

B. Learning a technique which reveals one's power

The most important change produced by nonviolent struggle will be the strengthening of the subordinates. People learn how to oppose dominant "evil" policies and systems. This frees them from a sense of helplessness. This experience of participation in struggle helps to teach the participants that those once weak can become strong, and how they can act to develop their power.

C. Increasing fearlessness

Experience in using nonviolent action tends to increase the degree of fearlessness among the resisters. Initially, the nonviolent resisters may need to control both their fear and their anger. Later, they may cease to be fearful. By learning that they can remain firm in face of repression, they can gain a sense of being liberated from fear. Suffering is seen as serving the cause. The loss of fear of the opponents' sanctions makes one of the opponents' major sources of power ineffective. This will not only weaken that system but enhance the ability of those people to remain free of oppression.

D. Increased self-esteem

Hierarchical systems exist in part because the subordinates submit as a result of seeing themselves as inferiors. Two steps to challenge and to end the hierarchical system therefore are: first, get the members of the subordinate group to see themselves as full human beings, not inferior to anyone; and, second, get them to behave in ways consistent with that enhanced view of themselves. That means to resist and defy the patterns of inferiority and subordination. These changes in self-perception and behavior may both affect the current dominant group and also have highly significant long-term consequences.

E. Bringing satisfaction, enthusiasm, and hope

Despite the hardships of struggle, the nonviolent resisters may find the experience satisfying. Participation may bring a new spirit, sense of self-worth, and hope for the future.

F. Possible effects on aggression, masculinity, crime, and violence

Participation in nonviolent action has at times reversed, or demonstrated a reversal of, the usual assumed relationships between nonviolent behavior and human aggressiveness, masculinity, crime, and future violence.

- Aggressiveness can be channeled for expression in nonviolent ways without losing its edge: "I always love my enemies because it makes them mad as hell."
- Nonviolent action struggles have also broken "the psychological link between masculinity and violence . . ." (Jerome D. Frank). It may seem to be more "macho" to be ready to stand up to acute danger than to resort to violence. Nonviolent defiance can strengthen the sense of masculinity and superiority to the opponents.
- Nonviolent action may also help reduce crime and other anti-social behavior among the general grievance group.
- This type of action allows for ways to release emotions and social resentment without violence.

- The process of self-justification for using only nonviolent means can reduce hostility towards the adversaries, and also produce more favorable evaluations of nonviolent means in general.
- There may also be some social-psychological effects of adherence to nonviolent methods on the group as a whole.
- On a more conscious and rational level, participation in nonviolent action may convince people that such behavior may be practical and effective in cases where they have assumed only violence was viable.

These changes may not take place at all, or only with a small percentage of the participants. It depends on time, suitable experiences, some degree of success, and group support.

G. Increased group unity

The effectiveness of nonviolent action is increased when the resisters and the general grievance group possess a high degree of internal unity. Violence usually excludes some people because of age, gender, physical condition, beliefs, or distaste. However, nonviolent action seems to contribute to internal unity better than violence, and attracts participation of wider and more heterogeneous groups than does violence.

H. Increased internal cooperation

The withdrawal of cooperation from the opponents and their system does not lead simply to chaos and disorganization. Instead, the withdrawal tends to produce greater cooperation within the general grievance group and particularly among the actionists. The movement against opponents requires organization, cooperation, and mutual support within the grievance group in order to meet social needs and maintain social order. The boycott of certain institutions requires the strengthening of other institutions or the creation of new ones. For example, economic boycotts require alternative sources for meeting economic needs. Political noncooperation requires development of alternative social and political institutions, potentially leading to parallel government.

I. Contagion

When nonviolent action is used with at least moderate effectiveness, the technique will tend to spread. The same people may use it later under other circumstances and still other people may follow the example. Although violence may also be contagious, the consequences are very different.

J. Conclusion

Although the effects of nonviolent struggle on the opponents are very important, in the long run the effects on the nonviolent actionists themselves are far reaching and could be

even more important. The strengthening of the grievance group is bound to alter power relationships in lasting ways.

Diffused power and the nonviolent technique

A free society needs strong social groups and institutions capable of independent action and able to wield power in their own right. Those bodies will be needed in order to control an established oppressive government or a regime of domestic or foreign usurpers. If those social groups and institutions are at the moment weak, they need to be strengthened. If they are absent, they need to be created in order to control rulers who do not wish to be controlled.

Here questions of social organization and of political technique converge. There may be a causal connection between the relative concentration or diffusion of power in the society and the final sanction, or technique, of struggle—political violence or nonviolent action—relied upon to maintain or to change the system.

A. Violence and the centralization of power

It has been widely recognized that violent revolutions and wars have been frequently accompanied and been followed by an increase both in the absolute power of the State and in the relative centralization of power in its hands.

Technological changes and the breakdown of the distinction between civilians and the

military forces have accentuated this tendency. Centralized control of the institutions and weapons of internal or international war by a self-selected clique can be later turned against the previous government and the population in order to seize political control. Political violence contributes to the destruction of the independent institutions. Therefore, the population of a society that has used major violence is less likely to be able to resist internal or foreign oppressors than a society which has strong independent institutions.

B. Nonviolent action and decentralization of power

Nonviolent action, in contrast, appears to have different long-term effects on the distribution of power within the society. It does not have the centralizing effects of violence. It increases the potential for greater popular control. Therefore, people are likely to enjoy greater freedom and, consequently, less dictatorship and greater democracy.

The kind of leadership that is necessary in nonviolent struggle tends to be more democratic than the necessary leadership of violent struggles. Leaders in nonviolent struggles do not use violent sanctions against their followers. Those leaders depend on the acceptance of their moral authority, political and strategic judgment, and popular support. The leaders of nonviolent struggles are less likely than those of violent struggles to become tyrants because

the technique tends to produce greater autonomy of the citizens.

In nonviolent struggles the leaders cannot establish a central control by the regulation and distribution of weapons and ammunition because the "weapons" of nonviolent action are not material ones.

The society's independent institutions are likely to have been strengthened through their roles in actual resistance. Consequently, those institutions will be more able to function effectively in future peaceful times and to resist dictatorial pressures in crises.

Nonviolent action can help create citizens who are free, organized, disciplined, courageous, and capable of instituting a democracy and of defending it when needed. These people are more likely to be confident in their capacity to act effectively in the future.

It has been argued that the adoption of nonviolent action in place of violence might break the constant cycle of the violence of one group leading to violence by the other, and also break the frequent escalation in the extent and severity of violence, especially in politics. If so, the consequences could be widespread and profound.

However, these characteristics alone do not guarantee a vibrant durable democracy after nonviolent struggle has defeated an oppressive government. In several cases, a dictatorial group has seized control of the State.

It is therefore important for opponents of oppression to plan carefully the new democratic structure. It is necessary to strengthen the independent institutions of the society. It is also very important to prepare the capacity of the population to resist all those who would establish a new dictatorship or to restore the old one. There is need to spread among the population both general understanding of nonviolent struggle and also knowledge of strategies to defend new hard-won freedoms.

The future uses and effectiveness of nonviolent struggle depend upon our gaining increased knowledge of its nature. We also need to deepen our skills in applying this technique to meet major social and political needs. Increased understanding of this option needs to be spread throughout the society. Additionally, greater strategic acumen and capacities in using nonviolent action in actual conflicts are required.

In developing these capacities there are roles for the contributions of many people.

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A complete list of the author's selected publications is available on the web site: www.aeinstein.org, *including publications in diverse languages.*

The Albert Einstein Institution Mission Statement

The mission of the Albert Einstein Institution is to advance the worldwide study and strategic use of nonviolent action in conflict.

The Institution is committed to:

- Defending democratic freedoms and institutions
- Opposing oppression, dictatorship, and genocide, and
- Reducing reliance on violence as an instrument of policy.

This mission is pursued in three ways, by:

- Encouraging research and policy studies on the methods of nonviolent action and their past use in diverse conflicts
- Sharing the results of this research with the public through publications, conferences, and the media, and
- Consulting with groups in conflict about the strategic potential of nonviolent action.