Thirteenth Class University Essays

13

Nonviolence as a Strategy and Commitment by Robert Seeley
The Technique of Nonviolent Action by Gene Sharp
Nonviolent Civil Defense by Liane Ellison Norman
Look to the Future, Learn from the Past by Dudley Weeks
Charles Grassley and the Pentagon Hogs by Colman McCarthy

CLASS OF NONVIOLENCE

Nonviolence as Strategy and Commitment

By Robert A. Seely

The difficulty with considering nonviolence as one strategy among others, as "pragmatic" nonviolent strategists are prone to do, is twofold. On the one hand, widespread use of nonviolence would transform the system and human relations in ways which, though not totally foreseeable, would differ sharply from the effects of any chosen military strategy. On the other hand, effective nonviolent action is difficult or impossible without a firm commitment to nonviolent discipline—a commitment generally going beyond that required to choose one strategy as against another. Thus, Gandhi says that nonviolence begins in the mind, and, if it does not, it is likely to fail.

From the pragmatic point of view, however, maintenance of nonviolent discipline is also essential. A break in the discipline would allow an occupying army an opportunity for violent repression. As Liddell Hart says:

> *[The German generals] were experts in violence, and had been trained to deal with opponents who used that method. But other forms of resistance baffled them - and all the more in proportion as the methods were subtle and concealed. It was a relief to them when resistance became violent, and when nonviolent forms were mixed with guerrilla action, thus making it easier to combine drastic suppressive action against both at the same time.*

Thus, for nonviolent resistance to be most effective, deep commitment to nonviolent discipline is needed and, preferably, training in maintaining it.

The Dynamics of Nonviolence

Gene Sharp, one of the major theorists of nonviolence, has said that nonviolence involves a kind of "moral jiu-jitsu." This characterization, though terse, encapsulates the particular nature of nonviolent action. Nonviolence is not passive. Though it can involve persuasion, it is not merely this. Nor is it a form of coercion like that used by the military. Nonviolence seeks to establish a human bond between the resister and those being resisted. In the long run, this changes the oppressor and can transform the system which has created the oppression in the first place.

The most basic assumption of nonviolent theory, and especially of nonviolent civilian defense, is that government—and, by extension, occupation— functions only with the consent of the governed. This means literal physical cooperation. If such cooperation is withdrawn in a nonviolent way, the government faces two choices. It can modify its policies or it can repress the resistance. The latter choice is not, in general, attractive because the resisters have provided no excuse for violence. To enforce repression against unarmed people who resist without fighting back, risks undermining the morale of the occupying army. This is too real a risk for many regimes to take. Nonviolence, which uses "go-slow" tactics and other more subtle forms of resistance, can baffle an occupying force, since it can make ordinary administration difficult or impossible while providing no focus for repression.

This does not suggest that nonviolent resisters will not suffer terribly. Gandhi's movement and King's movement accepted great suffering as the price of their freedom. But in the end, both prevailed because it became impossible to enforce repression against people

who would not respond to it with violence.

Techniques of Nonviolence

Gene Sharp lists 198 distinct nonviolent techniques which have been used in history. Sharp summarizes these techniques as follows:

- Protest and persuasion: Including leafleting, picketing, marches and teach-ins.
- Social noncooperation: Including student strikes and social boycotts.
- Economic noncooperation: Including war tax resistance, consumer boycotts, and labor strikes.
- Political noncooperation: Including draft resistance and refusal to obey unjust laws.
- Nonviolent intervention: Civil disobedience generally, nonviolent blockages, sit-ins and nonviolent obstructions.

Some pragmatic strategists include sabotage of property as a nonviolent technique. While arguable, this position poses serious difficulties. In a property-conscious society, sabotage of property is often considered a form of violence which justifies violent repression. Thus, the use of property sabotage carries risks which outweigh its potential benefits.

Far less dangerous and more clearly acceptable is sabotage of bureaucratic systems. This technique is frequently not only low in risk but completely legal. An example is the breakdown of the Selective Service System in the early 1970s, which was brought on by a combination of civil disobedience and mass use of rights which were provided by law. In this event, the hundreds of thousands of legal appeals filed by men subject to the draft were probably the determining factor in making the draft unworkable.

In the occupation or totalitarian situation, sabotage of bureaucratic systems may take the form of a perfectly legal slowdown undertaken in a cordial and smiling way. It may include losing papers, "accidentally" erasing computer tapes and so on. The possibilities are limited primarily by the imagination of the nonviolent resister. Such actions would be difficult to repress, and they would make administration of the government a matter of extreme difficulty. In order to be most effective, however, they should be part of a coordinated campaign so that if one resister is fired from a bureaucratic job, the next person in the post will continue the resistance, perhaps in different ways.

Obstacles to Nonviolent Defense

The obstacles to the use of nonviolence as defense are not those usually cited by militarists. They relate instead to the more general problems of defense in modern warfare and to acceptability of nonviolence to governments as they are now constituted.

Military defense is extremely costly in material and human terms. More than that, however, it is impossible in the case of missile attack, and to a lesser extent, in aerial bombardment generally. This is also true of nonviolent defense for there is no complete effective defense against such attack.

None of this invalidates nonviolence. It suggests, however, that nonviolent defense of one's country is not sufficient to end war or increase national security. What is required is a strategy which will prevent missiles from being deployed and launched in the first place. Military defense and preparations for it cannot provide such a strategy. They are built around deployment of missiles and

the threat to use them. Thus, while it provides no defense against aerial attack, in the long run, nonviolence offers the real hope of stopping such attacks before they begin —which is the only way they will be stopped.

A far more serious obstacle to widespread use of nonviolent resistance is the fact that it is a technique based not in an elite or a government but in the population at large. It cannot work without popular participation. Thus, it is the only inherently democratic form of national defense. Moreover, because it seeks to change those who enforce the system being resisted, to break through to them as human beings, nonviolence, in principle, undercuts all oppressive systems.

This is an obvious threat to governments, which even among the democracies engage in some degree of repression. Although a democratic government operates to a greater or lesser extent by popular consent, it does not empower the public in the way that nonviolent training would. Thus, it is an open question whether any current government would accept nonviolent defense as national policy —not because such defense would fail, but because a people trained in nonviolent resistance would be a constant check on government abuses. From the government's point of view, an obedient and disciplined army which follows its leader without question would be far more desirable than a nonviolently-trained citizenry which can, if it chooses, block government actions it finds unacceptable.

This suggests strongly that nonviolent strategists must look beyond the question of national defense to the larger question of transformation of the war system itself. If governments will not adopt nonviolent defense then the public must learn to defend itself against the government's military follies.

This is in fact being done. In Europe, the nonviolent peace movement seeks to interpose itself as a neutral force between the Eastern and Western alliances. It does this in the name of Europe, but even more so in the interest of humanity. Based on this model, nonviolence would be not simply a "better" form of national defense, but a defense for humanity against the destructive forces the nations are now empowered to unleash.

Transformation of the system thus becomes the overriding goal of nonviolent action. National defense is of far less importance for if the war system does not change, there will sooner or later be no nations to defend.

Nonviolence and the United States

Despite the difficulties of considering nonviolence solely as a form of national defense, it is worthwhile to imagine how civilian resistance could be used in one country. This can show the feasibility of nonviolent defense, and it can also show how one country's adoption of nonviolent defense could begin to transform the war system.

Paradoxically, one obvious candidate for successful nonviolent defense is also the greatest military power: the United States. Strategically, the United States is well-situated for any form of defense. It is bordered on the north and south by friendly neighbors and on the east and west by oceans thousands of miles wide. The nearest hostile bases are in Cuba, ninety miles from American shores. The United States is geographically large, politically complex and administered by bureaucracies which an invader could not replace without extreme difficulty.

All this means that the defense of the United States could be accomplished with far smaller military forces than are currently

at the president's disposal. It also means that the country is ideally situated for nonviolent defense.

There is, as noted earlier, no adequate defense against aerial attack, particularly missile attack. An invader would, however, gain little by such an attack. If the bombardment were conventional, the attacker could not expect to annihilate all defenders; the history of aerial bombardment shows that this has never occurred. An occupational army following after the bombardment would find defenders (either nonviolent or military) still alive, while means of transportation, roads and so on, would be severely damaged. This would make occupation against any form of resistance difficult. If the bombardment were a large-scale nuclear attack, it would render most of the United States uninhabitable and, as shown in the article "Nuclear Weapons and War," might precipitate a "nuclear winter" and amount to suicide for the attacker.

Despite the objections to a preliminary bombardment, such tactics are common military practice and would be likely in any conventional attack on the United States. The logistics of the occupation that followed, however, would frighten any sane general. An army is only as good as its line of supply and cannot easily cross three thousand miles of ocean, let alone sustain itself, once at its destination. Its troops would be far from home and thus liable to drastic declines in morale. Confronted with a nonviolently trained citizenry, they would face the choice of regularly using violence against unarmed people or seeing the occupation's administration break down. Their own bombardment would have made getting around and obtaining local supplies more difficult. The occupying army would be dependent on a three-thousand-mile line of supply. They would be forced to unload their own ships, arrange their own transportation, and perhaps set up their own administration. This would lead to the phenomenon that Liddell Hart called"overstretch." For a military force, overstretch leads to collapse.

It is impossible to predict whether any of this would in fact occur should the United States adopt nonviolent defense. The difficulties of an invasion and the possibility of widespread citizen resistance would, in all likelihood, be strong deterrents in themselves.

The positive effects of a nonviolent policy would, however, be incalculable. U.S. military forces would no longer be available to intervene in civil wars. The United States would no longer threaten the world with mass destruction. And abandonment of violence would lead to an immediate decrease in the general level of violence in the world - by, for example, stopping U.S. arms sales. America's role as world policeman, with all its terrible results, would end.

Whether the change in U.S. policy would lead to a larger transformation in the world system is unknowable. One can only speculate. However, the United States is not about to adopt a nonviolent policy. Quite the contrary. Thus, like the peace movement elsewhere, the American peace movement cannot look to its government to change the system. It must instead seek, as it has done, to change the system directly.

Two Spurious Objections

It is commonly suggested that Gandhi and, to a lesser extent, Martin Luther King, Jr., succeeded with their nonviolent campaigns only because they were dealing with civilized oppressors or, in the case of King, a country in which the basic law and social consensus favored them. Critics of nonviolence also suggest that

because nonviolent strategies often depend on influencing public opinion, nonviolence is somehow a failure. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Gandhi's nonviolent campaign succeeded despite British civilization. The British record, particularly in the nineteenth century, had been as bloody and racist as that of most other nations, save Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia. In repressing a Moslem revolt, British troops slaughtered ten thousand Dervishes at Omdurman (1896): the architect of the slaughter, Lord Kitchener, earned a peerage for his troubles. British troops had repressed violent rebellions in India with heavy casualties for the rebels. They showed little compunction about firing into crowds of unarmed Indian civilians during Gandhi's campaign. Thus, the suggestion that the British were especially civilized, while flattering to the British, is unsupported by the facts.

So, too, with King's campaign, which while its aims were far more limited, encountered entrenched and violent opposition that led to beatings, jailings and even death for nonviolent resisters. Nor did the social consensus favor King's campaign. Though his name is remembered now with a holiday, Martin Luther King, Jr. was considered by many to be a dangerous radical while he was alive and was harassed by the FBI. His support among the general population was by no means widespread, and racism, in various forms, persists in the United States today. King's campaign succeeded because of the power of nonviolence and the steadfastness of its resistance, not because he reflected an existing consensus.

The argument that nonviolence somehow does not work if it seeks to change public opinion is unworthy of extensive comment. It is perfectly true that Gandhi tried to influence British public opinion and that King sought to change American public opinion. This was an effective and nonviolent way of achieving their goals. When a military force uses similar tactics, it is called "psychological warfare" and is considered a respectable tactic even though it seldom works.

The ability of nonviolent movements to change public hearts and minds is, in fact, one of their strengths. Violence, whether in India or in the southern United States, would have failed utterly in this regard and led to bloody repression of the two movements. It is hardly surprising that a military force generally fails to influence enemy public opinion, while a nonviolent movement succeeds more frequently than not.

By changing the hearts and minds of people in Britain, Gandhi gained independence. King made major gains for civil rights in the same way. These results hardly show that nonviolence fails; they are instead one of the enduring strengths of nonviolent action.

Nonviolence and Revolution

Critics of nonviolence argue that it cannot overthrow an entrenched, ruthless and unjust power structure. According to this argument, nonviolence, though in principle revolutionary, cannot reasonably promise success if those in power have no scruples.
Questions about the best methods for achieving social change are difficult and painful not only for pacifists but for all who seek justice and peace. They are also, however, impossible to answer with certainty. No route to social change can guarantee success. On the contrary: Movements, whether violent or nonviolent, frequently fail or lose their initial impetus. Ideals are betrayed; liberation becomes oppression. History provides ample evidence that justice is

never easily or perfectly achieved.

The difficulty of social change, however, is not a defect of nonviolence. It is part of the human condition. We cannot predict all of the consequences of our acts. When a movement seeks major social change, it cannot determine the outcome; it can control only the means used to seek that outcome. If those means are violent, the movement—whether it succeeds or fails—will do extensive damage to people or property or both. Violence, far from building a movement for social change, frequently increases factionalism and destroys the movement from within. The aftermath of violence is bitterness and division. The aftermath of failed violence is almost always increased government repression. This destruction is not an accidental by-product. It is a consequence of the means chosen.

A simple example will illustrate. A nonviolent sit-in may not achieve its objectives, but it will not destroy the building where it takes place. Nor, unless it is met with police violence, will it result in death or injury. But a time bomb placed in the same building will inevitably do damage to the building and to anyone who happens to be within range of the explosion. Government repression, decrease in popular support for social change, media fascination with the violent and spectacular all make peace and justice more difficult to achieve. The consequences of violence are all too evident from history.

It is clear that violence is, at best, an untrustworthy and risky means of achieving social change. More significantly, the use of violence does nothing to change the balance of power between the established order and those who seek change. The established order is based on violence. It is far better armed than those who would overthrow it.

from The Handbook of Nonviolence

The Technique of Nonviolent Action
by Gene Sharp

A ruler's power is ultimately dependent on support from the people he would rule. His moral authority, economic resources, transport system, government bureaucracy, army, and police—to name but a few immediate sources of his power—rest finally upon the cooperation and assistance of other people. If there is general conformity, the ruler is powerful.

But people do not always do what their rulers would like them to do. The factory manager recognizes this when he finds his workers leaving their jobs and machines, so that the production line ceases operation; or when he finds the workers persisting in doing something on the job which he has forbidden them to do. In many areas of social and political life comparable situations are commonplace. A man who has been a ruler and thought his power sure may discover that his subjects no longer believe he has any moral right to give them orders, that his laws are disobeyed, that the country's economy is paralyzed, that his soldiers and police are lax in carrying out repression or openly mutiny, and even that his bureaucracy no longer takes orders. When this happens, the man who has been ruler becomes simply another man, and his political power dissolves, just as the factory manager's power does when the workers no longer cooperate and obey. The equipment of his army may remain intact, his soldiers uninjured and very much alive, his cities unscathed, the factories and transport systems in full operational capacity, and the government buildings and offices unchanged. Yet because the human assistance which had created and supported his political power has been withdrawn, the former ruler finds that his political power has disintegrated.

Nonviolent Action

The technique of nonviolent action, which is based on this approach to the control of political power and the waging of political struggles, has been the subject of many misconceptions: for the sake of clarity the two terms are defined in this section.

The term technique is used here to describe the overall means of conducting an action or struggle. One can therefore speak of the technique of guerrilla warfare, of conventional warfare, and of parliamentary democracy.

The term nonviolent action refers to those methods of protest, noncooperation, and intervention in which the actionists, without employing physical violence, refuse to do certain things which they are expected, or required, to do; or do certain things which they are not expected, or are forbidden, to do. In a particular case there can of course be a combination of acts of omission and acts of commission.

Nonviolent action is a generic term: it includes the large class of phenomena variously called nonviolent resistance, satyagraha, passive resistance, positive action, and nonviolent direct action. While it is not violent, it is action, and not inaction; passivity, submission, and cowardice must be surmounted if it is to be used. It is a means of conducting conflicts and waging struggles, and is not to be equated with (though it may be accompanied by) purely verbal dissent or solely psychological influence. It is not pacifism, and in fact has in the vast majority of cases been applied by nonpacifists. The motives for the adoption of nonviolent action may be religious or ethical or they may be based on considerations of expediency. Nonviolent action is not an escapist approach

to the problem of violence, for it can be applied in struggles against opponents relying on violent sanctions. The fact that in a conflict one side is nonviolent does not imply that the other side will also refrain from violence. Certain forms of nonviolent action may be regarded as efforts to persuade by action, while others are more coercive.

Methods of Nonviolent Action

There is a very wide range of methods, or forms, of nonviolent action, and at least 197 have been identified. They fall into three classes - nonviolent protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and nonviolent intervention.

Generally speaking, the methods of nonviolent protest are symbolic in their effect and produce an awareness of the existence of dissent. Under tyrannical regimes, however, where opposition is stifled, their impact can in some circumstances be very great. Methods of nonviolent protest include marches, pilgrimages, picketing, vigils, "haunting" officials, public meetings, issuing and distributing protest literature, renouncing honors, protest emigration, and humorous pranks.

The methods of nonviolent noncooperation, if sufficient numbers take part, are likely to present the opponent with difficulties in maintaining the normal efficiency and operation of the system; and in extreme cases the system itself may be threatened. Methods of nonviolent noncooperation include various types of social noncooperation (such as social boycotts); economic boycotts (such as consumers' boycott, traders' boycott, rent refusal, and international trade embargo); strikes (such as the general strike, strike by resignation, industry strike, go-slow, and economic shutdown); and political noncooperation (such as boycott of government employment, boycott of elections, administrative noncooperation, civil disobedience, and mutiny).

The methods of nonviolent intervention have some features in common with the first two classes, but also challenge the opponent more directly; and, assuming that fearlessness and discipline are maintained, relatively small numbers may have a disproportionately large impact. Methods of nonviolent intervention include sit-ins, fasts, reverse strikes, nonviolent obstructions, nonviolent invasion, and parallel government.

The exact way in which methods from each of the three classes are combined varies considerably from one situation to another. Generally speaking, the risks to the actionists on the one hand, and to the system against which they take action on the other, are least in the case of nonviolent protest, and greatest in the case of nonviolent intervention. The methods of noncooperation tend to require the largest numbers, but not to demand a large degree of special training from all participants. The methods of nonviolent intervention are generally effective if the participants possess a high degree of internal discipline and are willing to accept severe repression; the tactics must also be selected and carried out with particular care and intelligence.

Several important factors need to be considered in the selection of the methods to be used in a given situation. These factors include the type of issue involved, the nature of the opponent, his aims and strength, the type of counteraction he is likely to use the depth of feeling both among the general population and among the likely actionists, the degree of repression the actionists are likely to be able to take, the general strategy of the overall campaign, and the amount of past experience and specific training the population and the

actionists have had. Just as in military battle weapons are carefully selected, taking into account such factors as their range and effect, so also in nonviolent struggle the choice of specific methods is very important.

Mechanisms of Change

In nonviolent struggles there are, broadly speaking, three mechanisms by which change is brought about. Usually there is a combination of the three. They are conversion, accommodation, and nonviolent coercion.

George Lakey has described the conversion mechanism thus: "By conversion we mean that the opponent, as the result of the actions of the nonviolent person or group, comes around to a new point of view which embraces the ends of the nonviolent actor." This conversion can be influenced by reason or argument, but in nonviolent action it is also likely to be influenced by emotional and moral factors, which can in turn be stimulated by the suffering of the nonviolent actionists, who seek to achieve their goals without inflicting injury on other people.

Attempts at conversion, however, are not always successful, and may not even be made. Accommodation as a mechanism of nonviolent action falls in an intermediary position between conversion and nonviolent coercion, and elements of both of the other mechanisms are generally involved. In accommodation, the opponent, although not converted, decides to grant the demands of the nonviolent actionists In a situation where he still has a choice of action. The social situation within which he must operate has been altered enough by nonviolent action to compel a change in his own response to the conflict; perhaps because he has begun to doubt the rightness of his position, perhaps because he does not think the matter worth the trouble caused by the struggle, and perhaps because he anticipates coerced defeat and wishes to accede gracefully or with minimum of losses.

Nonviolent coercion may take place in any of three circumstances. Defiance may become too widespread and massive for the ruler to be able to control it by repression; the social and political system may become paralyzed; or the extent of defiance or disobedience among the ruler's own soldiers and other agents may undermine his capacity to apply repression. Nonviolent coercion becomes possible when those applying nonviolent action succeed in withholding, directly or indirectly, the necessary sources of the ruler's political power. His power then disintegrates, and he is no longer able to control the situation, even though he still wishes to do so.

Just as in war danger from enemy fire does not always force front line soldiers to panic and flee, so in nonviolent action repression does not necessarily produce submission. True, repression may be effective, but it may fail to halt defiance, and in this case the opponent will be in difficulties. Repression against a nonviolent group which persists in face of it and maintains nonviolent discipline may have the following effects: it may alienate the general population from the opponent's regime, making them more likely to join the resistance; it may alienate the opponent's usual supporters and agents, and their initial uneasiness may grow into internal opposition and at times into noncooperation and disobedience; and it may rally general public opinion (domestic or international) to the support of the nonviolent actionists; though the effectiveness of this last factor varies greatly from one situation to another, it may produce various types of supporting actions. If repression

thus produces larger numbers of nonviolent actionists, thereby increasing the defiance, and if it leads to internal dissent among the opponent's supporters, thereby reducing his capacity to deal with the defiance, it will clearly have rebounded against the opponent.

Naturally, with so many variables (including the nature of the contending groups, the issues involved, the context of the struggle, the means of repression. and the methods of nonviolent action used), in no two instances will nonviolent action "work" in exactly the same way. However, it is possible to indicate in very general terms the ways in which it does achieve results. It is, of course, sometimes defeated: no technique of action can guarantee its user short-term victory in every instance of its use. It is important to recognize, however, that failure in nonviolent action may be caused, not by an inherent weakness of the technique, but by weakness in the movement employing it, or in the strategy and tactics used.

Strategy is just as important in nonviolent action as it is in military action. While military strategic concepts and principles cannot be automatically carried over into the field of nonviolent struggle, since the dynamics and mechanisms of military and nonviolent action differ greatly, the basic importance of strategy and tactics is in no way diminished. The attempt to cope with strategic and tactical problems associated with civilian defense (national defense by prepared nonviolent resistance) therefore needs to be based on thorough consideration of the dynamics and mechanisms of nonviolent struggle; and on consideration of the general principles of strategy and tactics appropriate to the technique—both those peculiar to it and those which may be carried over from the strategy of military and other types of conflict.

Development of the Technique

Nonviolent action has a long history but because historians have often been more concerned with other matters, much information has undoubtedly been lost. Even today, this field is largely ignored, and there is no good history of the practice and development of the technique. But it clearly began early. For example, in 494 B.C.E. the plebeians of Rome, rather than murder the Consuls, withdrew from the city to the Sacred Mount where they remained for some days, thereby refusing to make their usual contribution to the life of the city, until an agreement was reached pledging significant improvements in their life and status.

A very significant pre-Gandhian expansion of the technique took place in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The technique received impetus from three groups during this period: first from trade unionists and other social radicals who sought a means of struggle—largely strikes, general strikes, and boycotts—against what they regarded as an unjust social system, and for an improvement in the condition of working men; second, from nationalists who found the technique useful in resisting a foreign enemy such as the Hungarian resistance against Austria between 1850 and 1867, and the Chinese boycotts of Japanese goods in the early 20th century; and third, on the level of ideas and personal example, from individuals, such as Leo Tolstoy in Russia and Henry David Thoreau in the U.S.A., who wanted to show how a better society might be created.

With Gandhi's experiments in the use of nonviolent action to control rulers, alter policies, and undermine political systems, the character of the technique was broadened and refinements were made in its practice. Many modifications were introduced: greater attention was given to strategy and tactics; the

armory of methods was expanded; and a link was consciously forged between mass political action and the ethical principle of nonviolence. Gandhi, with his political colleagues and fellow Indians, demonstrated in a variety of conflicts in South Africa and India that nonviolent struggle could be politically effective on a large scale. He termed his refinement of the technique "satyagraha," meaning roughly insistence and reliance upon the force of truth. "In politics, its use is based upon the immutable maxim, that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed."

From: The Politics of Nonviolent Action

Nonviolent Civilian Defense

By Liane Ellison Norman

You want us to lie down and let the Russians trample over us, critics say of peace workers. There's some justice in this view: we've opposed particular wars or preparations for wars. But we've not sufficiently explored ways to replace warfare, which has historically been the principal recorded means whereby nations, states, princes or parties within states have contended for both noble and ignoble ends—defense as well as conquest, liberty and justice as well as hegemony and despotism. In our hatred of war, we've ignored the needs it has satisfied.

War at its Old Germanic linguistic roots means confusion, discord and strife. But war is also associated with splendid panoply and poetry. "Once more into the breach, dear friends," urges the warrior King Henry V, appealing to the tradition that burnishes the reputation of battle. Our culture tells us that though war is hell, it is honorable. It occasions solidarity, heroism, spectacle, comradeship, self-sacrifice and vitality.

War is thought to work, despite evidence that there's always at least one losing side, that each war concludes by making the next more likely. And when, for participants, experience tarnishes war, culture tells us that there's no other way to pursue certain objectives.

Long-standing ambivalence about war has tightened like thumbscrews since 1945, when it became evident that nuclear weapons could do in seconds die damage it had taken decades-even centuries—to do in earlier times; could destroy not only populations and their works, but the very environment on which life depends. We who deplore violence have seized on each new piece of evidence that war is insupportable to make our point. But, say the dubious, so long as the world is not made up of saints, you cannot dismantle arms nor do away with war.

It's worth listening to our critics. History suggests it's realistic to be concerned about both conquest and tyranny. If we had neither weapons nor soldiers, what would we do if an enemy tried to conquer us? What would we do if our government suspended civil liberties, imprisoned, tortured and executed people like us? Women know that to accommodate bullying makes them silent partners in violence. Peace, given such realities, smacks of weakness, cowardice, appeasement and submission.

Our language both reflects and shapes the problem. Peace means the absence or cessation of war, a negative definition. How can we have both peace and the power to stand up to conquerors and tyrants?

I ask my students to draw a picture of peace, not an easy task, for while we use the term "power" with confidence, it's an elusive idea. One student draws God threatening a father who has his arm raised with a club to beat his son—my student. This picture crudely expresses a common notion about power: that in the nature of things, power resides at the top of some kind of hierarchy and that it involves the ability to hurt and/or humiliate. Those with high position have power because they can do violence. Parents, teachers, religious leaders and employers can make us do their bidding because they can punish us if we don't. This view of power is a widespread article of faith.

Looked at more closely, however, the power exercised by those in power is both dependent and fragile. No head of state governs single-handedly. She has aides and

advisors to help formulate and transmit policy to bureaucracies; secretaries to answer the telephone, write letters and file records; tax collectors to provide revenues; experts of all varieties (planners, economists, engineers, construction crews, garbage collectors, mail deliverers, cooks, cleaners); police to enforce and courts to interpret the laws; and citizens, who by and large obey the laws, cooperate, submit to the general order.

The power to govern depends on the willingness of people to be governed. If they withdraw their consent, even in significant part, no head of state can govern. In other words, citizens provide their leaders with power and can regulate its use. Those in power can use sanctions against the dissident and disobedient—or at least a representative sample—but even sanctions require obedience to carry out.

For example, the federal government says Central American refugees are illegal aliens and requires that law-enforcement officials help catch and punish them. But a large number of cities have declared themselves sanctuaries, which means that city employees will not assist the government in carrying out its policy. *The New York Times* (December 27, 1985) proclaims editorially that "Cities Can't Make Immigration Law." But cities, along with individual citizens make law all the time when they comply with it. "If the law displeases them, let them petition Washington," scolds the *Times*, which nearly always reinforces the view that power rests only at the top. The cities, like the churches which have offered sanctuary, like those who once harbored runaway slaves en route to freedom or those who made white lightning during prohibition, refuse obedience to the federal government and laws they judge to be oppressive. Government is limited by the power of the people.

What really frightens power-at-the-top people is that citizens and localities may discover how powerful they are. However, with the discovery that they can resist the policies of their own government comes the insight that the same citizens and localities can formulate a defense that does not depend upon the kind of organized, legalized violence we call war.

To design a nonviolent defense requires thinking about conquest, victory and defeat. Though it seems to be about battlefields, war is really about who is to govern what and how. Conquest is meaningless unless the conqueror is able to govern: victory means that one or more of the contending parties acknowledges defeat, concedes the right of the victor to govern. One army may rout another, but unless the population represented by the defeated army permits itself to be governed by the conquerors, there is no conquest.

A conqueror can punish or kill those—or some of those—who resist, just as he does in battle. But conquerors do not bring with them whole regimes to govern, enforce and implement: even if they had the requisite human power, newcomers would not know how to make a conquered system operate. The conquerors, instead, have to persuade local people to run things for them by intimidation or reward. If the "conquered" refuse, braving threat or punishment, the "conquerors" are stymied. Increased oppression meant to persuade the population to obey may backfire: any regime that has to rely on excessive punishment to govern loses legitimacy and increases resistance. Precisely the same general principles apply to domestic tyranny as to foreign imposition: dictators, wherever they originate, rely on cooperation and consent, whether given with enthusiasm or fear.

Nonviolent defense strategy is to

deny enemy objectives, to make the task of controlling a population and its institutions impossible. Historic instances—of the Danes and Norwegians in World War II, of the Czechs in 1968, of the Indians under Gandhi, of many others as documented by Gene Sharp—are more suggestive than conclusive: they represent spontaneous rather than well developed strategies, relying more on ingenuity and courage than preparation and discipline. But that very spontaneity, ingenuity and courage suggest that with preparation and discipline, with advance planning, with reinforcement by education and popular culture, nonviolent strategies can provide defense against both foreign conquest and domestic tyranny.

Nonviolent defense strategies cannot be used against nuclear weapons: but then, neither can violent defense strategies. But a country that ceases to menace others while maintaining its capacity to defend itself can afford to give up its nuclear weapons, which though expensive, undermine rather than provide security. While nuclear weapons provide a fundamentally incredible deterrent, nonviolent strategies can be used to deter an enemy by making clear in advance that the nonviolently-prepared country will make the task of conquest and governance costly, impossible and unpopular. But nonviolent defense cannot be perverted to offense. While a country, region or people can protect themselves using nonviolent means, they cannot invade and intimidate using the same means.

A nonviolent defense strategy does not require that other nations relinquish violence: it can be used against violent, brutal and ruthless enemies. Nonviolent combatants need not be nice, cussedness being more to the point than saintliness. The effectiveness of their strategy does not require the moral conversion of the enemy. However, by depriving enemies of the arguments they rely on to justify otherwise outlawed acts of brutality, nonviolence undermines their conditioning. Recognizing that adversaries also have the power to withdraw their consent humanizes them, offering them options they may, as individuals, not have considered. This is what the advice to love one's enemies means in tactical terms.

Young men have to be broken of their humanity to be made soldiers. Nonviolent defense requires no such rupture of human inclinations, but rather a strengthening thereof. Nonviolent civilian, or popular, defense does not delegate society's dirty and dangerous work to adolescent boys, but relies on people to defend themselves—taking their share of casualties. Such strategies do not require temporarily setting aside civilian values, but fortify them. Violent revolutions habitually fail because the arts of war are ill-suited to post-revolutionary order: violent revolution spawns counterrevolutionaries eager to avenge their losses, and those who win by violence can rarely be kind. Nonviolent defensive and revolutionary strategies are inherently democratic, for those doing the defending learn the skills, develop the stamina and support systems necessary to the withdrawal of consent not only from foreign tyrants and their agents but from tyrants closer to home as well. Thus nonviolent policies demand legitimacy now rather than eventually. Further, nonviolent strategies promote the continuous renewal of democratic principles, relying on the genius and know-how of ordinary people and providing them with the means to rectify wrongs long before desperation makes them reckless.

Most societies teach people to be powerless. This is convenient for those who want to wield power over others, but is in the

long run self-defeating because it prepares them to submit. The more powerless people think they are, the more easily they can be conquered. *The New York Times* sees no recourse but courteous petitions to those in power: the same habit of mind might well lead the *Times* to defer to a conqueror. The cities which defy the federal government in the matter of sanctuary are better prepared to resist foreign or domestic tyranny. Few parents, frustrated by a two-year-old resisting a snowsuit, teach the child to note and learn from that exercise of power. Few teachers, faced with students coughing in unison, use the occasion to teach the lesson of resistance and solidarity. It takes confident, secure adults and leaders to teach power and the discernment to use it well. However, violence springs from insecurity and the sense of weakness rather than security and strength: Rambo is a fantasy of power, not the real thing.

Some say that there's no evidence that nonviolent strategies for defense would work. It's true that we haven't tested such strategies consciously enough to know for sure whether they would always do the trick: nor does warfare. It's also true, however, that we have tested organized violence, and while wars have won some gains, the price has been terrific. Part of that price has been die failure to develop other means of serious struggle.

And so we find ourselves in a corner: war has become too dangerous to use and we haven't as a civilization developed an alternative. But we have the opportunity, even this late in the day, to work together, hawks and doves, each with our partial understanding of the truth, to develop the means to make peace strong and strength peaceful.

from "Peace Through Strength," Civilian Based Defense. Vol.3, No.2, March 1986. Reprinted as "Nonviolent Civil Defense" by permission of the author and the Civilian-Based Defense Association

Look to the Future, Then Learn from the Past

By Dudley Weeks

Every relationship and every conflict has a past, present, and future, and resolving conflicts effectively requires that we deal with all three. The conflict partnership process encourages us to use positive power to focus on what I call the present-future, and to learn from the past.

The past provides an experiential landscape for the present and the future, but the past is not the soil in which the present and future are irrevocably rooted. The present brings past memories onto new ground and tills that fresh soil with improved tools, always mindful that the future will reap what the present has sown. The present and the future are inseparable, and the future develops in the womb of the present. They are all linked: past, present, and future. Blending the three into a dynamic reach for improvement is the essence of being.

We will begin by dealing with how the past can impede conflict resolution. Then we will explore how we can learn from the past. Finally, we will look at the present-future and explore how focusing on this time frame helps us to deal with present conflicts and improve the future relationship.

Here are a few of the more prevalent ways we allow the past to impede effective conflict resolution.

People sometimes allow the past to hold present and future possibilities prisoner by thinking that because they did not deal well with a conflict in the past, they cannot deal effectively with a current conflict. In this pattern, people think that because they were unable to deal with problems in the past, or because they have in the past defined their relationship as a struggle for dominance and advantage over the other party, it is futile to believe that they can ever act differently or even try to apply improved relationship and conflict resolution skills.

This negative use of the past is, in effect, a self-deprecating and self-disempowering pattern. It implies that people are incapable of growing and improving. Of course, those who use this pattern usually say it is the other party who is incapable of improving, but such a stance hinders the development of positive power and positive influence in both parties. However, when one party moves beyond this negative use of the past and takes the lead in demonstrating improved relationship and conflict resolution behavior, the other party usually begins to feel more hopeful that improved behavior can be implemented.

People sometimes see only the past negative behavior of their conflict partner, refusing to see the positive potential, even if their partner's present behavior is encouraging. This particular pattern seems to be one of our favorite ways of using the past to obstruct both the improvement of relationships and the actualization of the positive potential of conflict resolution. Examples abound. Perpetually harping on one or two incidents of a conflict partner's especially negative behavior in the past when dealing with a current conflict, regardless of her or his stated willingness to avoid repeating that behavior, is one example. Another is evident when people and groups are perpetually held accountable for past mistakes or inadequacies, even though they have tried to make amends and have not repeated those mistakes.

Another example involves perceiving

people as they were at a past age and never allowing them the possibility and right to grow up, to change and improve. Sons and daughters who have reached maturity but are still seen by a parent as "my little boy or girl" in need of protection are being perceived as the role they once were, not as the human beings they now are and can be.

People sometimes blame themselves for what they were or did at some time in the past and continue to punish their own lives and their relationships in a subconscious attempt at penance. Perhaps no misuse of the past is more agonizing and complex than allowing a past mistake to cover with guilt and shame one's own self-image in the present and future. People involved in such a pattern often become obsessed with a past mistake and ignore how they can improve in the present. They may even strike out at any person or event that reminds them of that past mistake.

People sometimes are unwilling to let go of a particular demand or behavior they expressed in the past, even though that demand or behavior is no longer relevant or helpful in the present. I'm sure we've all heard people say, "I've done things that way all my life and I'm not going to change now!", or, "If I go back on that demand now, it will make me look weak." There are usually several hidden reasons underlying this use of the past to justify a continuation of damaging or ineffective behavior in the present.

One of these reasons is that people do not want to admit that a past behavior pattern or demand was damaging or ineffective. They see that as an admission of failure. Another is that some people feel they have little insight or confidence in designing alternatives to ineffective or harmful patterns. Still another is that certain narrow, vested self-interests are perceived as being served by a continuation of the past behavior or demands. Finally, people sometimes hold onto old behavior patterns or demands because they fear the unknown of trying new patterns or making effective, shared-need, positive-power proposals rather than demands.

Impeding conflict resolution by holding onto past patterns is evident, for example, when a parent invests a great deal of energy and money in a daughter's education toward becoming a doctor or teacher and then cannot accept the daughter's decision that teaching or medicine is not the most fulfilling profession for her. The parent stubbornly tries to force her not to change directions, or charges the daughter with being a failure.

Another example is a business that, for twenty years, has kept a particular organizational pattern, and now, when that policy is proving unpopular and counterproductive among the work force, refuses to change because that is the way they have always done things or because it would take too much time and expense to change.

People assume that because something has always been done a certain way, it somehow means it's the best way. This obstructing use of the past might be called the wisdom-of-the-ages syndrome. Just because a particular behavior pattern, or business policy, or family habit has been around for some time does not automatically mean it is best. It may have been appropriate for the past, but is it appropriate for today and tomorrow?

Involved in this pattern is that complex and resilient phenomenon we call tradition. Tradition certainly has its place, but in conflict resolution we need to rely on effective skills not just tradition. Sometimes traditional ways of conducting a relationship or dealing with conflict have, in part, contributed both to the

conflict and to an inability to resolve it.

People sometimes romanticize or glorify the past to such a degree that present behavior or relationships can never compare favorably with that past behavior or that past relationship. Pleasant memories do not make demands or require attention to needs. They do not prove bothersome, stubborn, or intransigent. They do not have budget deficits, confused policies, or unfavorable public opinion. They don't even call us in the middle of the night seeking help on a matter we feel totally incompetent to address. Pleasant memories just float in a lovely morning sky, reminding us of better times as we struggle through the storms and stresses of our present lives.

In other words, we not only use the past unwisely by carrying its negative behavior into the present and future, we sometimes use the past unwisely by creating glorified interpretations of the past that cause us to see the present and future as undervalued comparisons to the good old days. Pleasant memories of a past time, event, behavior, or relationship are wonderful and cherished gifts, but we must beware of using them as nostalgic hindrances to resolving conflicts effectively and making the present and future the best we possibly can.

from "Look to the Future, Then Learn from the Past"
The Eight Essential Steps To Conflict Resolution

Charles Grassley and the Pentagon Hogs

By Colman McCarthy

Hoisting his corn-fed hulk over the fence and into the sty, the farmer walks among his rooting hogs. The black and white-belted Yorkshires, fat and getting fatter, eat in gluttonous zeal the best grist growable on this 240-acre farm in the rural outback of northeast Iowa.

The farmer—51, black-haired, and wearing a mud-splattered shirt—stands next to a trough and pats his hogs. They snort, squeal and scurry in the muck. But he has them under control. This is a man who understands hog psychology.

He ought to. The farmer is Charles Grassley, Iowa's senior senator and conservative Republican who in the past two years has been going into the sty of military excess where the fattest breed on earth—the money hog—feeds at the Pentagon trough, the world's deepest. Grassley, a member of the Senate Budget Committee, has been the most vocal Republican in Washington to call for a freeze on military spending.

Last month, he wrote in the *Des Moines Register* and the *Wall Street Journal* that the Pentagon's budget has "become the nation's largest entitlement program, and has nursed a new generation of welfare queens: the defense industry."

Such language—which is as close to a barnyard epithet as the evangelical Baptist will get—is not a sudden outburst. Grassley has been developing in a gradual germination. He voted 15 times in favor of the MX missile, standing as tall as an Iowa cornstalk when it came to loyalty to Ronald Reagan. Then, in June of 1984, he changed his mind and began voting against the MX.

What happened? He began studying the Pentagon's procurement policies and learned that military contractors were routinely putting a move on the public. Last month, he explained his anti-MX votes: "I discovered from Air Force documents that work-to-date by the 14 associate contractors for the MX was taking up to 17 times as many direct labor hours as the contractors' own standards determined it should have taken. The average factory efficiency rate of those 14 contractors...was 48 percent. In other words, 48 percent of the taxpayers' dollars were funding efficiency, and 52 percent were funding inefficiency. We paid for in-house work for 2.1 equivalent units, on average, and got only one.

In New Hartford, the grass-roots Grassley jokes easily about how his militancy is being perceived as a drift to the left. He tells of his conservative right-of-right brother on a farm down the road who thinks the senator is something of a pinko. In fact, Grassley voted 78 percent of the time with Reagan in the past two years. That is down from about 85 percent from a previous period, a drop which signifies apostasy only to the fanatical wing of the New Right.

The Old Right is alarmed for other reasons. Sen. Barry Goldwater wrote a 2,000 word reply to Grassley's pro-freeze articles. What Washington sophisticates of the left were snickering when Grassley came to the Senate in 1980—the guy's a yokel, an airhead — Goldwater was suggesting now. The Arizonan lectured Iowans that their senator "does his state and our nation a disservice when he passes off his simplistic, self-serving advocacy as reasoned analysis."

Goldwater sought to bomb Grassley's thinking back to the stone age with a further assault: "Superficial impulsive schemes like Sen. Grassley's defense freeze are better suited to bumper stickers than the realities of the dangerous world in which we live."

Goldwater had a final put-down: Grassley isn't a member of the Armed Services Committee—Goldwater is the chairman—so what can he know?

"He doesn't have access to all the information required to discuss the defense budget," said the chairman who gives access to any general, admiral or military supplier who screams communists are coming.

Among his New Hartford hogs and while showing a visitor to a barn where the shoats are sleeping and to a pen where a boar is grunting, Grassley prefers to talk about the farm and the beauty of Iowa's springtime than the snipes from Goldwater. This is home on the weekend, a moment for renewal of the spirit through contact with the earth.

Iowans, heartened that their farmboy is becoming a national figure, are rallying to Grassley's defense. A letter to the Register last week said that "Goldwater brings out that old argument that Grassley is not a member of the committee so he 'does not have access to all the information.' This 'big-daddy-knows-best' and, you'd agree-with-him-if-you-had-the-secret-information-he-has' argument simply does not wash with those of us who were adults during the Vietnam War. Besides, this is a cheap shot which attempts to put Grassley down."

The senator is up right now: in popularity and influence. He is currently the liberals' favorite conservative, a fate he can live with. Goldwater and the Pentagon are dismissing him as a rube, but Grassley's attacks on waste, fraud and excess are seeds sure to grow. He is betting the farm.