

Chapter One

FACING ACUTE CONFLICTS

All conflicts are not equal

We live in a world of many conflicts, and we have a responsibility to face many of them.

Not all conflicts are equal. Some are much more important than others, and in some conflicts the issues at stake are more difficult to resolve in acceptable ways than are those in other conflicts.

Where the issues are of only limited importance, the difficulties in reaching a resolution are often small. Potentially, we can split the difference, agree on a third option, or postpone dealing with some issues until a later time. Even in these lesser conflicts, however, the group with a grievance requires effective means of pressing its claims. Otherwise, there is little reason for one's opponents to consider those claims seriously.

There are, however, many other conflicts in which fundamental issues are, or are believed to be, at stake. These conflicts are not deemed suitable for resolution by any methods that involve compromise. These are "acute conflicts."

Waging acute conflicts

In acute conflicts, at least one side regards it as necessary and good to wage the conflict against hostile opponents because of the issues seen to be at stake. It is often believed that the conflict must be waged in order to advance or protect freedom, justice, religion, one's civilization, or one's people. Proposed settlements that involve basic compromises of these fundamental issues are rarely acceptable. Likewise, submission to the opponents, or defeat by them, is regarded as disastrous. Yet, compromise or submission is often believed to be required for peaceful solutions to acute conflicts. Since these are not acceptable options for the parties involved, people therefore believe that it is necessary to wage the conflict by applying the strongest means available to them. These means often involve some type of violence.

There are alternatives

Violence, however, is not the only possibility. War and other forms of violence have not been universal in the waging of acute conflicts. In a great variety of situations, across centuries and cultural barriers, another technique of struggle has at times been applied. This other technique has been based on the ability to be stubborn, to refuse to cooperate, to disobey, and to resist powerful opponents powerfully.

Throughout human history, and in a multitude of conflicts, one side has instead fought by psychological, social, economic, or political methods, or a combination of them. Many times this alternative technique of struggle has been applied when fundamental issues have been at stake, and when ruthless opponents have been willing and able to apply extreme repression. This repression has included beatings, arrests, imprisonments, executions, and mass slaughters. Despite such repression, when the resisters have persisted in fighting with only their chosen "nonviolent weapons," they have sometimes triumphed.

This alternative technique is called nonviolent action or nonviolent struggle. This is "the other ultimate sanction." In some acute conflicts it has served as an alternative to violent struggle.

In the minds of many people, nonviolent struggle is closely connected with the persons of Mohandas K. Gandhi and

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The work and actions of both men and the movements that they led or in which they played crucial roles are highly important. However, those movements are by no means representative of all nonviolent action. In fact, the work of these men is in significant ways atypical of the general practice of nonviolent struggle during recent decades and certainly throughout the centuries. Nonviolent struggles are not new historically. They have occurred for many centuries, although historical accounts frequently give them little recognition.

Widespread nonviolent struggle

Nonviolent struggle has occurred in widely differing cultures, periods of history, and political conditions. It has occurred in the West and in the East. Nonviolent action has occurred in industrialized and nonindustrialized countries. It has been practiced under constitutional democracies and against empires, foreign occupations, and dictatorial systems. Nonviolent struggle has been waged on behalf of a myriad of causes and groups, and even for objectives that many people reject. It has also been used to prevent, as well as to promote, change. Its use has sometimes been mixed with limited violence, but many times it has been waged with minimal or no violence.

The issues at stake in these conflicts have been diverse. They have included social, economic, ethnic, religious, national, humanitarian, and political matters, and they have ranged from the trivial to the fundamental.

Although historians have generally neglected this type of struggle, it is clearly a very old phenomenon. Most of the history of this technique has doubtless been lost, and most of what has survived has been largely ignored.

Many cases of the use of nonviolent action have had little or nothing to do with governments. Modern cases include labor-management conflicts and efforts to impose or resist pressures for social conformity. Nonviolent action has also been used in ethnic and religious conflicts and many other situations, such as disputes between students and university administrations. Important conflicts between the civilian population and governments where one side has employed nonviolent action have also occurred very widely. The following examples are often of this type.

Cases of nonviolent struggle

From the late eighteenth century through the twentieth century, the technique of nonviolent action was widely used in colonial rebellions, international political and economic conflicts, religious conflicts, and anti-slavery resistance.¹ This technique has been aimed to secure workers' right to organize, women's rights, universal manhood suffrage, and woman suffrage. This type of struggle has been used to gain national independence, to generate economic gains, to resist genocide, to undermine dictatorships, to gain civil rights, to end segregation, and to resist foreign occupations and coups d'état.

In the twentieth century, nonviolent action rose to unprecedented political significance throughout the world. People using this technique amassed major achievements, and, of course, experienced failure at times. Higher wages and improved working conditions were won. Oppressive traditions and practices were abolished. Both men and women won the right to vote in several countries in part by using this technique. Government policies were changed, laws repealed, new legislation enacted, and governmental reforms instituted. Invaders were frustrated and armies defeated. An empire was paralyzed, coups d'état thwarted, and dictatorships disintegrated. Nonviolent struggle was used against extreme dictatorships, including both Nazi and Communist systems.

Cases of the use of this technique early in the twentieth century included major elements of the Russian 1905 Revolution. In various countries growing trade unions widely used the strike and the economic boycott. Chinese boycotts of Japanese products occurred in 1908, 1915, and 1919. Germans used nonviolent resistance against the Kapp *Putsch* in 1920 and against the French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr in 1923. In the 1920s and 1930s, Indian nationalists used nonviolent action in their struggles against British rule, under the leadership of Mohandas K. Gandhi. Likewise, Muslim Pashtuns in what was the North-West Frontier Province of British India (now in Pakistan) also used

¹ For bibliographic references to books in English on many of these cases, see Ronald M. McCarthy and Gene Sharp, with the assistance of Brad Bennett, *Nonviolent Action: A Research Guide*, New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1997.

nonviolent struggle against British rule under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

From 1940 to 1945 people in various European countries, especially in Norway, Denmark, and The Netherlands, used nonviolent struggle to resist Nazi occupation and rule. Nonviolent action was used to save Jews from the Holocaust in Berlin, Bulgaria, Denmark, and elsewhere. The military dictators of El Salvador and Guatemala were ousted in brief nonviolent struggles in the spring of 1944. The American civil rights nonviolent struggles against racial segregation, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, changed laws and long-established policies in the U.S. South. In April 1961, noncooperation by French conscript soldiers in the French colony of Algeria, combined with popular demonstrations in France and defiance by the Debré-de Gaulle government, defeated the military coup d'état in Algiers before a related coup in Paris could be launched.

In 1968 and 1969, following the Warsaw Pact invasion, Czechs and Slovaks held off full Soviet control for eight months with improvised nonviolent struggle and refusal of collaboration. From 1953 to 1991, dissidents in Communist-ruled countries in Eastern Europe, especially in East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, repeatedly used nonviolent struggles for increased freedom. The Solidarity struggle in Poland began in 1980 with strikes to support the demand of a legal free trade union, and concluded in 1989 with the end of the Polish Communist regime. Nonviolent protests and mass resistance were also highly important in undermining the apartheid policies and European domination in South Africa, especially between 1950 and 1990. The Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines was destroyed by a nonviolent uprising in 1986.

In July and August 1988, Burmese democrats protested against the military dictatorship with marches and defiance and brought down three governments, but this struggle finally succumbed to a new military coup d'état and mass slaughter. In 1989, Chinese students and others in over three hundred cities (including Tiananmen Square, Beijing) conducted symbolic protests against government corruption and oppression, but the protests finally ended following massive killings by the military.

Nonviolent struggle brought about the end of Communist dictatorships in Poland and Czechoslovakia in 1989 and in

East Germany, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 1991. Noncooperation and defiance against the attempted “hard line” coup d’état by the KGB, the Communist Party, and the Soviet Army in 1991, blocked the attempted seizure of the Soviet State.

In Kosovo, the Albanian population between 1990 and 1999 conducted a widespread noncooperation campaign against repressive Serbian rule. When the de facto Kosovo government lacked a nonviolent strategy for gaining de jure independence, a guerrilla Kosovo Liberation Army initiated violence. This was followed by extreme Serbian repression and massive slaughters by so-called ethnic cleansing, which led to NATO bombing and intervention.

Starting in November 1996, Serbs conducted daily parades and protests in Belgrade and other cities against the autocratic governance of President Milosevic and secured correction of electoral fraud in mid-January 1997. At that time, however, Serb democrats lacked a strategy to press the struggle further and failed to launch a campaign to bring down the Milosevic dictatorship. In early October 2000, the Otpor (Resistance) movement and other democrats rose up again against Milosevic in a carefully planned nonviolent struggle and the dictatorship collapsed.

In early 2001, President Estrada, who had been accused of corruption, was ousted by Filipinos in a “People Power Two” campaign.

There were many other important examples this past century, and the practice of nonviolent struggle continues.

The many methods of nonviolent struggle

A multitude of specific methods of nonviolent action, or nonviolent weapons, exist. Nearly two hundred have been identified to date, and without doubt, scores more already exist and others will emerge in future conflicts. These methods are detailed in Chapter Four.

Methods of nonviolent action include protest marches, flying forbidden flags, massive rallies, vigils, leaflets, picketing, social boycotts, economic boycotts, labor strikes, rejection of legitimacy, civil disobedience, boycott of government positions, boycott of rigged elections, strikes by civil servants, noncooperation by police, nonobedience without direct supervision, mutiny, sit-

ins, hunger strikes, sit-downs on the streets, establishment of alternative institutions, occupation of offices, and creation of parallel governments.

These methods may be used to protest symbolically, to put an end to cooperation, or to disrupt the operation of the established system. As such, three broad classes of nonviolent methods exist: *nonviolent protest and persuasion*, *noncooperation*, and *nonviolent intervention*.

Symbolic protests, though in most situations quite mild, can make it clear that some of the population is opposed to the present regime and can help to undermine its legitimacy. Social, economic, and political noncooperation, when practiced strongly and long enough, can weaken the opponents' control, wealth, domination, and power, and potentially produce paralysis. The methods of nonviolent intervention, which disrupt the established order by psychological, social, economic, physical, or political methods, can dramatically threaten the opponents' control.

Individuals and groups may hold differing opinions about the general political usefulness and the ethical acceptability of the methods of nonviolent struggle. Yet everyone can benefit from more knowledge and understanding of their use and careful examination of their potential relevance and effectiveness.

A pragmatic choice

Nonviolent struggle is identified by what people do, not by what they believe. In many cases, the people using these nonviolent methods have believed violence to be perfectly justified in moral or religious terms. However, for the specific conflict that they currently faced they chose, for pragmatic reasons, to use methods that did not include violence.

Only in rare historical instances did a group or a leader have a personal belief that rejected violence in principle. Nevertheless, even in these cases, a nonviolent struggle based on pragmatic concerns was often still viewed as morally superior.

However, belief that violence violates a moral or religious principle does not constitute nonviolent action.² Nor does the simple absence of physical violence mean that nonviolent action is occurring. It is the type of activity that identifies the technique of nonviolent action, not the belief behind the activity.

The degree to which nonviolent struggle has been consciously chosen in place of violence differs widely among historical examples. In many past cases, nonviolent action appears to have been initiated more or less spontaneously, with little deliberation. In other cases, the choice of a certain nonviolent method—such as a labor strike—was made on grounds specific to the particular situation only, without a comparative evaluation of the merits of nonviolent action over violent action. Many applications of nonviolent action seem to have been imitations of actions elsewhere.

There has been much variation in the degree to which people in these conflicts have been aware of the existence of a general nonviolent technique of action and have had prior knowledge of its operation.

In most of these cases, nonviolent means appear to have been chosen because of considerations of anticipated effectiveness. In some cases, there appear to have been mixed motives, with practical motives predominating but with a relative moral preference for nonviolent means.

What words to use?

The type of action in these cases and others has been given various names, some of which are useful and others of which are inappropriate. These names include “nonviolent resistance,” “civil resistance,” “passive resistance,” “nonviolence,” “people power,” “political defiance,” and “positive action.” The use of the term “nonviolence” is especially unfortunate, because it confuses these forms of mass action with beliefs in ethical or religious nonviolence (“principled nonviolence”). Those beliefs, which have their merits, are different phenomena that usually are unrelated to mass struggles conducted by people who do not share

² It is worth noting that some believers in “principled nonviolence” have even *rejected* nonviolent struggle because it was a way to wage conflict (in which they did not believe).

such beliefs. To identify the technique, we here use and recommend the terms *nonviolent action* or *nonviolent struggle*.

Because of the continuing imprecision and confusion about which words to use, it has been necessary over recent decades to refine existing terminology to describe and discuss such action, and even to develop new words and phrases. Therefore, a short glossary has been included for reference at the end of this book.

Exposing misconceptions

In addition to misconceptions conveyed by unfortunate terminology, there are other areas of confusion in the field of nonviolent struggle as well. Despite new studies in recent decades, inaccuracies and misunderstandings are still widespread. Here are corrections for some of them:

(1) Nonviolent action has nothing to do with passivity, submissiveness, or cowardice. Just as in violent action, these must first be rejected and overcome before the struggle can proceed.

(2) Nonviolent action is a means of conducting conflicts and can be very powerful, but it is an extremely different phenomenon from violence of all types.

(3) Nonviolent action is not to be equated with verbal persuasion or purely psychological influences, although this technique may sometimes include action to apply psychological pressures for attitude change. Nonviolent action is a technique of struggle involving the use of psychological, social, economic, and political power in the matching of forces in conflict.

(4) Nonviolent action does not depend on the assumption that people are inherently “good.” The potentialities of people for both “good” and “evil” are recognized, including the extremes of cruelty and inhumanity.

(5) In order to use nonviolent action effectively, people do *not* have to be pacifists or saints. Nonviolent action has been predominantly and successfully practiced by “ordinary” people.

(6) Success with nonviolent action does not require (though it may be helped by) shared standards and principles, or a high degree of shared interests or feelings of psychological closeness between the contending sides. If the opponents are emotionally unmoved by nonviolent resistance in face of violent repression, and therefore unwilling to agree to the objectives of the nonvio-

lent struggle group, the resisters may apply coercive nonviolent measures. Difficult enforcement problems, economic losses, and political paralysis do not require the opponents' agreement to be felt.

(7) Nonviolent action is at least as much of a Western phenomenon as an Eastern one. Indeed, it is probably more Western, if one takes into account the widespread use of strikes and economic boycotts in the labor movements, the noncooperation struggles of subordinated European nationalities, and the struggles against dictatorships.

(8) In nonviolent action, there is no assumption that the opponents will refrain from using violence against nonviolent resisters. In fact, the technique is capable of operating against violence.

(9) There is nothing in nonviolent action to prevent it from being used for both "good" and "bad" causes. However, the social consequences of its use for a "bad" cause differ considerably from the consequences of violence used for the same "bad" cause.

(10) Nonviolent action is not limited to domestic conflicts within a democratic system. In order to have a chance of success, it is *not* necessary that the struggle be waged against relatively gentle and restrained opponents. Nonviolent struggle has been widely used against powerful governments, foreign occupiers, despotic regimes, tyrannical governments, empires, ruthless dictatorships, and totalitarian systems. These difficult nonviolent struggles against violent opponents have sometimes been successful.

(11) One of the many widely believed myths about conflict is that violence works quickly, and nonviolent struggle takes a long time to bring results. This is *not* true. Some wars and other violent struggles have been fought for many years, even decades. Some nonviolent struggles have brought victories very quickly, even within days or weeks. The time taken to achieve victory with this technique depends on diverse factors—including the strength of the nonviolent resisters and the wisdom of their actions.

What about human nature?

Despite the widespread occurrence of this type of conflict, many people still assume that nonviolent struggle is contrary to "human nature." It is often claimed that its widespread practice

would require either a fundamental change in human beings or the acceptance of a powerful new religious or ideological belief system. Those views are not supported by the reality of past conflicts that have been waged by use of this technique.

In fact, the practice of this type of struggle is not based on belief in “turning the other cheek” or loving one’s enemies. Instead, the widespread practice of this technique is more often based on the undeniable capacity of human beings to be stubborn, and to do what they want to do or to refuse to do what they are ordered, whatever their beliefs about the use or nonuse of violence. Massive stubbornness can have powerful political consequences.

In any case, the view that nonviolent struggle is impossible except under rare conditions is contrary to the facts. That which has happened in the past is possible in the future.

The extremely widespread practice of nonviolent struggle is possible because the operation of this technique is compatible with the nature of political power and the vulnerabilities of all hierarchical systems. These systems and all governments depend on the subordinated populations, groups, and institutions to supply them with their needed sources of power. Before continuing with the examination of the technique of nonviolent struggle, it is therefore necessary to explore in greater depth the nature of the power of dominant institutions and all governments. This analysis sheds light on how it is that nonviolent struggle can be effective against repressive and ruthless regimes. They are vulnerable.

Chapter Two

TAPPING THE ROOTS OF POWER

Human problems and the distribution of power

Important progress has been made over the past century to meet human needs more adequately and to advance freedom and justice throughout the world. However, grave problems remain for which there are no easy solutions. Long-standing conflicts, injustices, oppression, and violence continue and even take new forms.

Many of these problems are created or maintained by the actions of those persons and groups that control the State apparatus of their society, using its vast resources, bureaucracy, police, and military forces, to implement and enforce their will. In many States, the dominant group is seen to be so powerful that it can ignore the good of those it dominates in order to gain its objectives. In other cases, certain elites have created their own means of con-

For fuller analyses of power and sources of the thinking in this chapter, see Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973), pp. 7-62, and Gene Sharp, *Social Power and Political Freedom* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1980), pp. 21-67 and 309-378.

trol and repression and have imposed their will by violence outside of the State apparatus.

The concentration of power and control in the State can under certain circumstances be applied with great cruelty against an apparently helpless population. Such a State can impose tyranny, wage wars, establish or maintain oppression, indoctrinate the population, and commit genocide. It is the machinery of combined central controls and institutionalized violence that makes modern tyranny possible.¹

Against opponents with strong means of control and repression, people who see themselves as victims of oppression, injustice, and dictatorship often feel weak and powerless, unable to challenge the forces that dominate them. These dominated groups may include exploited economic classes, harassed religious minorities, populations of attacked or occupied countries, victims of attempted genocide, people living under dictatorships, nations under foreign domination, or despised ethnic or racial groups, among others. In all such cases the problem exists because one group has the power to impose its will on a weaker group.

When faced with such a strong State, power is seen to derive from the few who command the administrative system and the institutions capable of applying violence for political purposes. The population is therefore believed to be fully vulnerable to rulers who may aim to sweep aside democratic institutions and human rights and to become tyrants. They never dream that they could possess sufficient power to improve their lives and to change those relationships.

Political power viewed as derived from violence

If the population widely believes that the real power in politics derives from violence, that it “comes out of the barrel of a gun,” then whoever has the most and biggest guns will find it much easier to control the population.

Most such populations then passively submit. Sometimes, however, people who reject the current regime as oppressive and who see the power of violence arrayed against them conclude that

¹ For further discussion of this analysis see Gene Sharp, *Social Power and Political Freedom*, pp. 285-308.

they must use whatever violence they can muster against their oppressors. This may take the form of violent rebellions, assassinations, terrorism, or guerrilla warfare. The results of these actions for the oppressed population have often been far from positive. Violent rebels are unlikely to succeed against extreme odds and the general population most likely will suffer massive casualties.

In the unlikely case that violent rebels succeed in defeating oppressive rulers, the rebels will probably have simply established themselves as a new ruling elite in control of the State apparatus. Violence may on occasion remove the previous rulers or dominant elite and replace them with other persons or groups. However, the actual relationship between the dominant elite and the dominated population is unlikely to be fundamentally altered by use of violence. In fact, the violence will likely contribute to a still greater concentration of power and an increased use of violence for political objectives.

Real and lasting liberation requires significant changes in the power relationships within the society, not merely replacement of personnel. Liberation should mean that the members of the previously dominated and weak population obtain greater control over their lives and greater capacity to influence events.

If we wish to create a society in which people really shape their own lives and futures, and in which oppression is impossible, then we need to explore alternative ways to meet the society's basic need for means of wielding power. We also need to explore the origins of political power at a much more basic level.

Political power as variable

The views that power derives primarily from the capacity to wield violence and that the power of rulers is monolithic and relatively permanent are not correct. Power relationships are not fixed and unchangeable. Instead, the power capacities of the State and the other institutions of the society are variable and are derived from the interplay of

- the varying degrees of power wielded by the respective groups in the society;

- the degree to which these various groups have mobilized their power potential into effective power;
- the degree to which the social, economic, and political institutions of the State and other powerful institutions are flexible and responsive to the will of the various sections of the population.

The existing distribution of power in a society is very real, but it is not permanent and will not be maintained under all conditions. Indeed, that distribution can at times change dramatically and rapidly.

A major change in the distribution of power happens when the sources of power at the disposal of the rulers are weakened or withdrawn, thereby drastically reducing their effective power. The power relationships also change if formerly weak groups mobilize their unused power potential into effective power.

Unless the sources of power of dominant groups are restricted or severed, or the sources of power of weaker groups are mobilized or strengthened, or unless both happen, the subordinated and oppressed groups inevitably remain in essentially the same relative power position. This is true despite any other specific changes that may be made in the society or whether or not changes occur in the persons of the rulers.

A fuller understanding of the nature of political power will help us to understand how power relationships can be fundamentally changed. In contrast to the monolithic view that political power is solid and highly durable and can only be weakened or destroyed by major destructive violence, the following insight is more accurate. It also allows for an understanding of how effective control can be exercised over rulers who are, or could become, oppressors.

The social view of power

The social view of power sees rulers or other command systems, despite appearances, to be dependent on the population's goodwill, decisions, and support. As such, power rises continually from many parts of the society. Political power is therefore fragile. Power always depends for its strength and existence upon a replenishment of its sources by the cooperation of numerous institutions and people—cooperation that does not have to continue.

In order to control the power of rulers, those sources of power that are provided by the society's groups and institutions must first be identified. Then the population will be able, when needed, to restrict or sever the supply of those sources.

Sources of political power

The persons who are at any point the rulers do not personally possess the power of control, administration, and repression that they wield. How much power they possess depends on how much power society will grant them. Six of these sources of political power are:

(1) *Authority*: This may also be called legitimacy. It is the quality that leads people to accept a right of persons or groups to lead, command, direct, and be heard or obeyed by others. Authority is voluntarily accepted by the people and therefore is present without the imposition of sanctions (or punishments). The authority figures need not necessarily be actually superior. It is enough that the person 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 assisting persons in the general population, and the extent and forms of their organizations.

(3) *Skills and knowledge*: The rulers' power is affected by the skills, knowledge and abilities of such cooperating persons, groups, and institutions, 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, contribute to the rulers' power.

(5) *Material resources*: The degree to which the rulers control property, natural resources, financial resources, the economic system, communication and transportation, and the like, helps to determine the extent or limits of the rulers' power.

(6) *Sanctions*: These have been described 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, are a major source of power. Sanctions are used by rulers to supplement voluntary acceptance of their authority and to increase the extent of obedience to their commands. The sanctions may be violent or nonviolent. They may be intended as punishment or deterrence against future disobedience. Violent domestic sanctions, such as imprisonment or execution, are commonly intended to punish disobedience or to prevent it in the future, not to achieve the objective of an original command. Military sanctions may be intended for defense or deterrence against foreign enemies or for combating strong internal opposition.

The presence of some or all of these six sources of power at the disposal of the rulers is always a matter of degree. Only rarely are all of them completely available to rulers, or completely absent.

Power relationships similar to those in political societies with State structures exist in other hierarchical institutions as well, which also derive their power from the cooperation of many persons and groups. Consequently various forms of dissent, noncooperation and disobedience may have important roles to play when members of such institutions have grievances against the people who direct or control those institutions.

The sources of power depend on obedience and cooperation

These six sources of political power are necessary to establish or retain power and control. Their availability, however, is subject to constant variation and is not necessarily secure.

The more extensive and detailed the rulers' control over the population and society, the more such assistance they will require from individuals, groups, organizations, and branches of the government. If these needed "assistants" reject the rulers' authority, they may then carry out the rulers' wishes and orders inefficiently, or may even flatly refuse to continue their usual assistance. When this happens, the total effective power of the rulers is reduced.

Because the rulers are dependent on other people to operate the system, the rulers are continually subject to influence and restriction by both their direct assistants and the general popula-

tion. The potential control of these groups over the rulers will be greatest where the rulers depend on them most.

Let us, for example, consider *authority* and *sanctions* from this point of view. The other four sources of power are highly dependent on these two.

Authority is necessary for the existence and operation of any regime. All rulers require an acceptance of their authority: their right to rule, 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 authority inevitably tends to loosen the subjects' predisposition towards obedience. Then the decision to obey or not to obey will be made consciously. Obedience may even be refused. *The loss of authority sets in motion the disintegration of the rulers' power. Their power is reduced to the degree that their authority is repudiated.*

Sanctions may be applied to enforce obedience and cooperation. However, the rulers require more than reluctant outward compliance. Sanctions will be inadequate as long as acceptance of the rulers' authority is limited. Despite punishments, the population may still not obey or cooperate to the needed extent.

A special relationship exists between sanctions and submission. First, the capability to impose sanctions derives from the obedience and cooperation of at least some subjects. Second, whether these sanctions are effective or not 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 punishments.*

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

The rulers' power depends on the continuous availability of all the needed forms of assistance. This assistance comes not only from individuals, officials, employees and the like, but also from the subsidiary organizations and institutions that compose the

system as a whole. These may include 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 effectively maintain the rulers' position and to enable them to implement their policies. No complex organization or institution, including the State, can carry out orders if the individuals and unit organizations that compose such an institution do not enable it to do so.

The internal stability of rulers can be measured by the ratio of the strength of the social forces that they control and the strength of the social forces that oppose them.

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, command and obedience influence each other. Without the expected obedience 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 reasons why people obey rulers are multiple, complex, variable, and interrelated. These reasons include the following:

- Habit
- Fear of sanctions
- Moral obligation
- Self-interest
- Psychological identification with the ruler
- Indifference
- Absence of self-confidence to disobey

All rulers use the obedience and cooperation they receive from part of the society in order to rule the whole. The part of the population that administers and enforces the rulers' policies is most likely to obey and cooperate in those duties because of feelings of moral obligation and of personal self-interest, especially motives related to economic gain, prestige, and status.

Most people in the general population obey from habit. Yet, the degree of obedience among the general population, even

among these administrators and enforcers, is never fixed, nor automatic, nor uniform, nor universal. Because the reasons for obedience are always variable, the degree of obedience is also variable, depending on the individuals concerned and on the social and political situation. In every society there are boundaries within which rulers must stay if their commands are to be obeyed and if the population is to cooperate.

Disobedience and noncooperation by the general populace are rarely undertaken lightly. Noncompliance usually is followed by punishments. However, under certain circumstances, members of the population will become willing to endure the consequences of noncooperation and disobedience, including inconvenience, suffering, and disruption of their lives, rather than continue to submit passively or to obey rulers whose policies and actions can no longer be tolerated.

When the reasons for obedience are weak, the rulers may seek to secure greater obedience by applying harsher sanctions or by offering increased rewards for obedience. However, even then, the results desired by the rulers are not guaranteed. A change in the population's will may lead to its withdrawing its service, cooperation, submission and obedience from the rulers.

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

Being accustomed to widespread obedience and cooperation, rulers do not always anticipate generalized noncompliance and therefore often have difficulties handling strong disobedience and noncooperation.

Consent and withdrawal of consent

Each reason for obedience, whether it is free consent or fear of sanctions (intimidated consent), must operate through the will or volition of the individual person to produce obedience. The present reasons for obeying must be seen by the population as sufficient grounds to obey. However, the will or volition of the individual may change with new influences, events, and forces. In varying degrees, the individual's own will can play an active role

in producing obedience or disobedience. This process can happen with large numbers of people.

The personal choice between obeying and disobeying will be influenced by an evaluation of either the short-term or the long-term consequences of obeying or disobeying, or of a combination of the two, depending on the individual. If the subjects perceive the consequences of obedience to be worse than the consequences of disobedience, then disobedience is more likely.

Obedience only exists when one complies with the command. If you are sentenced to imprisonment and walk to jail willingly, you have obeyed. If you are dragged there, you have not obeyed.²

Physical compulsion may yield some results, but since it affects only the body, 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, seizing their money or property, or killing them. But these actions do not necessarily result in obedience. The overwhelming majority of rulers' commands and objectives can be achieved only by inducing the subject to be willing for some reason to carry them out. (The ditch remains undug even if the men who refuse to dig it are shot.) *It is not the sanctions themselves that produce obedience, but the fear of them.*

However, people generally seek to avoid severe penalties for disobedience and noncooperation, except for special cases in which feelings are very intense. In such cases, disobedience and noncooperation sometimes occur despite repression.

In summary, the rulers' power depends upon the availability of its six sources, as reviewed previously. 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. Consent is at times granted because of positive

² David Austin, *Lectures on Jurisprudence or the Philosophy of Positive Law* (Fifth edition, rev. and ed. by Robert Campbell; 2 vols. London: John Murray, 1911), vol. I, pp. 295-297.

approval. However, it is also often granted because people are at times unwilling to suffer the consequences of the refusal of consent. The latter is consent by intimidation. Refusal of consent requires self-confidence, motivation to resist, and knowledge of how to act to refuse, and often involves considerable inconvenience and suffering.

The structural basis of resistance

The answer to the problem of uncontrolled political power, that is to oppression, therefore may lie in learning how to carry out and maintain withdrawal of obedience and cooperation despite repression. This will not be easy.

Greater confidence and ability to practice noncooperation and disobedience can usually be achieved when members of the population are able to act as members of groups or institutions. This is also a requirement for effective restriction or severance of the sources of political power that were discussed above. At times, individuals may protest or resign and barely be noticed, but if all persons in a government department refuse to implement a policy, their actions can create a major crisis.

Very importantly, in order to have a significant political impact, the disobedience and noncooperation often need to take the form of mass action. While individual acts may at times not have much impact, the defiance of organizations and institutions—for example, trade unions, business organizations, religious organizations, the bureaucracy, neighborhoods, villages, cities, regions, and the like—can be pivotal. Through these bodies people can collectively offer disobedience and noncooperation. Organizations and institutions such as these, which supply the necessary sources of power to the opponent group, are called “pillars of support.”³

The ability of the population to wield effective power and to control the power of their rulers will be highly influenced by the condition of these organizations and institutions. It is these “places” (or *loci*) where power can be mobilized and where it operates. Such “places” provide the structural basis for the control of the rulers, whether or not they wish to be controlled. Where

³ The term was introduced by Robert Helvey.

these independent bodies are weak, the controls over the rulers' power will be weak. Where those bodies are strong, the capacity to control the rulers will be strong.⁴

Factors in controlling political power

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

- the relative desire of the populace to control the rulers' power;
- the relative strength of the society's independent organizations and institutions;
- the population's relative ability to withhold their consent and cooperation by concrete actions.

Freedom is not something that rulers "give" the population. The degree of freedom within a society is achieved through the interaction between society and government.

According to this social insight into the nature of political power, people have immense power potential. It is ultimately their attitudes, behavior, cooperation, and obedience that supply the sources of power to all rulers and hierarchical systems, even oppressors and tyrants.

The degree of liberty or tyranny in any government is, therefore, in large part, a reflection of the relative determination of the population to be free and their willingness and ability to resist efforts to enslave them. "For the tyrant has the power to inflict only that which we lack the strength to resist," wrote the Indian sociologist Krishnalal Shridharani.⁵

Self-liberation and the mobilization of power potential

Without the direct participation of the population itself in the efforts to make changes, no major changes are likely to occur in the relative power positions between the population and whoever

⁴ For further discussion of this analysis, see Gene Sharp, "Social Power and Political Freedom," in *Social Power and Political Freedom*, pp. 21-67.

⁵ Krishnalal Shridharani, *War Without Violence: A Study of Gandhi's Method and its Accomplishments* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1939; reprinted: New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1972), p. 305.

occupies the position of rulers. At most, a new group will replace the old one as rulers. The new rulers may or may not, at their own discretion, behave with restraint and concern towards the welfare and liberties of the people.

If the liberation of oppressed people is to happen and be genuine and durable, it must therefore be essentially self-liberation. That liberation needs to be achieved by means that ensure a lasting capacity of people to govern themselves, to shape their own society, and to act to ensure their freedoms and rights. Otherwise, the people will face the likelihood of new, potentially even more oppressive, rulers, merely waving a different flag or espousing a different doctrine.

The great Indian Gandhian socialist Rammanohar Lohia once wrote that he was tired of hearing only of the need to change the hearts of the oppressors. That was fine, but far more important was the effort to change the hearts of the oppressed. They needed to become unwilling to continue accepting their oppression, and to become determined to build a better society. Weakness in people's determination, and very importantly in their ability to act, makes possible their continued oppression and submission. Strengthen that determination and increase that ability to act, and these people need never again be oppressed. Such self-liberation can be achieved only through an increase in the power of the subordinates by their own efforts.

Indian independence leader Mohandas K. Gandhi emphasized the importance of a change of will and a change of attitude as prerequisites 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 their assistance makes the existing regime possible;
- the building of a determination to withdraw cooperation and obedience.⁶

Gandhi was convinced that these changes could be consciously influenced.

⁶ See Gene Sharp, *Gandhi as a Political Strategist, with Essays on Ethics and Politics* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1979), pp. 43-59.

Once the dominated population wishes to make changes, it needs to be able to mobilize and wield effective power. Once the population is *willing* to disobey and noncooperate, it requires means of strong *action*. It then needs a technique of action through which it can maintain and strengthen its existing independent institutions, create and defend new ones, and, resist, confront, and undermine the power of oppressive rulers.

The population needs to be able to restrict and sever the sources of power of its oppressors. The power of the rulers is weakened to the degree that the population

- repudiates the moral right of the current rulers to rule;
- disobeys, noncooperates, and refuses to assist the rulers;
- declines to supply the skills and knowledge required by the rulers;
- denies the rulers control over administration, property, natural resources, financial resources, the economic system, communication, and transportation.

Additionally, if the rulers' punishments against a defiant population are not available because of disaffection in the military or police forces, or if popular defiance continues and even grows despite harsh penalties, then the power of the rulers will shrink or even dissolve.

A technique of action capable of accomplishing those controls over the power of rulers and of mobilizing the power potential of the population should also be one that will give the populace a lasting capacity to control any rulers, and to defend the population's capacity to rule itself. A type of action with the potential to achieve such controls is the technique of "nonviolent action" or "nonviolent struggle." Let us, therefore, examine in greater depth the nature of this type of struggle.

Chapter Three

AN ACTIVE TECHNIQUE OF STRUGGLE

A simple insight

Nonviolent action, or nonviolent struggle, is a technique of action by which the population can restrict and sever the sources of power of their rulers or other oppressors and mobilize their own power potential into effective power. This technique is based on the understanding of political power presented in the previous chapter.

That understanding showed that the power of rulers and of hierarchical systems, no matter how dictatorial, depends directly on the obedience and cooperation of the population. Such obedience and cooperation, in turn, depend on the willingness of the population and a multitude of assistants to consent by their actions or inaction to support the rulers. People may obey and cooperate because they positively approve of the rulers or their orders, or

For fuller analysis of nonviolent struggle and the thinking in this chapter, see Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973.

they may obey and cooperate because they are intimidated into submission by the fear of punishment.

Yet, despite such punishments, acts of protest, disobedience, and noncooperation have occurred frequently in many societies. Sometimes, these have been of major significance, as noted in Chapter One.

Nonviolent struggle does not require acceptance of a new political doctrine or of a new moral or religious belief. In political terms, nonviolent action is based on a very simple insight: people do not always do what they are told to do, and sometimes they do things that they have been forbidden to do. 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 or even mutiny. When all these events happen simultaneously, the power of the rulers weakens and can dissolve.

The technique of nonviolent struggle has been applied against a wide variety of opponents. The term "opponents" is used here to refer to the adversary, whether a group, institution, regime, invader, or, rarely, an individual, against whom nonviolent struggle is being waged. Usually, the most difficult of these conflicts are those against the current rulers of the State or groups that have State backing. However, the technique is also applicable in conflicts against less formidable opponents. The issues in these conflicts vary from case to case. They may include not only political but also social, economic, religious, and cultural ones.

When people repudiate their opponents' authority, refuse cooperation, withhold assistance, and persist in disobedience and defiance, they are denying to their opponents the basic human assistance and cooperation that any government or hierarchical system requires. If the opponents are highly dependent on such assistance, and if the resisters refuse cooperation and disobey in sufficient numbers for enough time and persist despite repression, the persons who have been the "rulers" or dominant elite become just another group of people. This is the basic political assumption of this type of struggle.

A way to wage conflict

Nonviolent action is a generic term covering dozens of specific methods of *protest*, *noncooperation* and *intervention*. In all of these, the resisters conduct the conflict by doing—or refusing to do—certain acts by means other than physical violence.

Nonviolent action may involve acts of *omission*—that is, people may refuse to perform acts that they usually perform, are expected by custom to perform, or are required by law or regulation to perform. Or, people may commit acts of *commission*—that is, people may perform acts that they do not usually perform, are not expected by custom to perform, or are forbidden to perform. Or, this type of struggle may include a *combination* of acts of omission and commission. In no way is the technique of nonviolent action passive. It is action that is nonviolent.

Although nonviolent means of conducting conflicts have been widely used in the past, they have not been well understood, or they have been confused with other phenomena. This misunderstanding and confusion have often reduced the effectiveness of attempts to use this technique. This has thereby benefited the opponents against whose regime or policies the struggle was directed. If this type of struggle is falsely identified with weakness and passivity, confused with pacifism, lumped with rioting or guerrilla warfare, or viewed as a type of action that does not require careful preparations, then nonviolent struggle may not even be attempted, or, if it is, the effort may well be ineffective.

Classes of methods of action

At least 198 specific methods of nonviolent struggle have been identified. These constitute three main types of activity. The first large class is called nonviolent protest and persuasion. These are forms of activity in which the practitioners are expressing opinions by symbolic actions, to show their support or disapproval of an action, a policy, a group, or a government, for example. Many specific methods of action fall into this category. These include written declarations, petitions, leafleting, picketing, wearing of symbols, symbolic sounds, vigils, singing, marches, mock funerals, protest meetings, silence, and turning one's back, among many others. In many political situations these methods are quite

mild, but under a highly repressive regime such actions may be dramatic challenges and require great courage.

The second class of methods is noncooperation, an extremely large class, which may take social, economic, and political forms. In these methods, the people refuse to continue usual forms of cooperation or to initiate new cooperation. The effect of such noncooperation by its nature is more disruptive of the established relationships and the operating system than are the methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion. The extent of that disruption depends on the system within which the action occurs, the importance of the activity in which people are refusing to engage, the specific type of noncooperation used, which groups are refusing cooperation, how many people are involved, and how long the noncooperation can continue.

The methods of social noncooperation include, among others, social boycott, excommunication, student strike, stay-at-home, and collective disappearance.

The forms of economic noncooperation are grouped under (1) economic boycotts and (2) labor strikes. The methods of economic boycott include, among others, consumers' boycotts, rent withholding, refusal to let or sell property, lock outs, withdrawal of bank deposits, revenue refusals, and international trade embargoes. Labor strikes include: protest strikes, prisoners' strikes, slowdown strikes, general strikes, and economic shutdowns, as well as many others.

Political noncooperation is a much larger subclass. It includes withholding or withdrawal of allegiance, boycotts of elections, boycotts of government employment or positions, refusal to dissolve existing institutions, reluctant and slow compliance, disguised disobedience, civil disobedience, judicial noncooperation, deliberate inefficiency, and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents, noncooperation by constituent government units, and severance of diplomatic relations.

The methods of nonviolent intervention all actively disrupt the normal operation of policies or the system by deliberate interference, either psychologically, physically, socially, economically, or politically. Among the large number of methods in this class are the fast, sit-ins, nonviolent raids, nonviolent obstruction, nonviolent occupation, the overloading of facilities, alternative social institutions, alternative communication systems, reverse strikes,

stay-in strikes, nonviolent land seizures, defiance of blockades, seizures of assets, selective patronage, alternative economic institutions, the overloading of administrative systems, the seeking of imprisonment, and dual sovereignty and parallel government.

These and many additional similar methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and nonviolent intervention constitute the technique of nonviolent action.

Success has requirements

Nonviolent struggle does not work through magic. Although nonviolent resisters have succeeded many times, they have not done so every time, and certainly not without cost. The simple choice to conduct a conflict by nonviolent action does not guarantee success.

Many past struggles were only partially successful. Sometimes a victory was short-lived because people did not use it well to consolidate their gains, nor did they effectively resist new threats to their liberties. In other cases, victory in a single campaign won concessions, but new struggles were still required to gain the full objectives. Nevertheless, in some cases, major victories were achieved that many people would have expected to be impossible through nonviolent resistance.

However, some of the past cases of nonviolent struggles failed to accomplish their objectives. Such failure has occurred for a variety of reasons. If the resisters are weak, if the specific methods used are poorly chosen, or if the resisters become frightened and intimidated into submission, then they are unlikely to win. If the resisters lack a strategy by which to wage the struggle with maximum effectiveness, their chances of succeeding are greatly diminished. There is no substitute for genuine strength and wise action in the conduct of nonviolent struggle.

Participating in a nonviolent struggle does not make an individual immune from imprisonment, injury, suffering, or death. As in violent conflicts, the participants often suffer harsh penalties for their defiance and noncooperation. Yet, victories by nonviolent struggle with few casualties, and even none, also have occurred, and commonly the casualties in nonviolent struggles are significantly fewer than those in comparable violent struggles for similar objectives.

Much greater consideration of this technique will assist us in assessing its potential relevance and potential effectiveness. Let us, therefore, survey the operation of nonviolent struggle.

Uses and effects of nonviolent struggle

Nonviolent struggle can be employed as a substitute for violence against other groups in one's society, against groups in another society, against one's own government, or against another government.

Many times, only the methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion may be used in attempts to influence opinions of the opponents and others. Such actions may affect the moral authority or legitimacy of the opponents. However, these methods are the weaker ones.

Many of the methods of noncooperation are much more powerful because they can potentially reduce or sever the supply of the opponents' sources of power. These methods require significant numbers of participants and usually the participation of groups and institutions in the refusal of cooperation.

The methods of nonviolent intervention may be applied by groups of various sizes. Some of the methods—as a sit-in in an office—require fewer numbers of participants to make a major impact than do methods of noncooperation. In the short run at least, these methods are generally more disruptive of the status quo than noncooperation. However, some of these methods may often be met with extreme repression. In order to make their impact, the resisters must be prepared to withstand this, while persisting in their nonviolent defiance. Unless the numbers of participants are extremely large—as in massive sit-downs on central city streets—it may not be possible to maintain the application of these methods for long periods of time. Casualties may be severe.

It is very important that those who plan to engage in a nonviolent struggle choose the methods they will use with extreme care. The methods chosen should strike at the opponents' vulnerabilities, utilize the resisters' strengths, and be used in combination with other methods in ways that are mutually supportive. To be most effective, the methods will also need to be chosen and implemented in accordance with a grand strategy for the overall

struggle. The grand strategy needs to be developed before the specific methods are selected. The development of grand strategies and strategies for limited campaigns will be discussed in Part Four.

The effects of the use of the diverse methods of nonviolent action vary widely. Such effects depend on the nature of the system within which they are applied, the type of the opponents' regime, the extent of their application, the normal roles in the operation of the system of the persons and groups applying them, the skill of the groups in using nonviolent action, the presence or absence of the use of wise strategies in the conflict, and, finally, the relative ability of the nonviolent resisters to withstand repression from the opponents and to persist in their noncooperation and defiance without falling into violence.

Repression and mechanisms of change

Since these methods of nonviolent action, especially those of noncooperation, often directly disturb or disrupt the supply of the needed sources of power and "normal" operations, the opponents are likely to respond strongly, usually with repression. This repression can include beatings, arrests, imprisonments, executions, and mass slaughters. Despite repression, the resisters have at times persisted in fighting with only their chosen nonviolent weapons.

Past struggles have only rarely been well planned and prepared and have usually lacked a strategic plan. Resistance was often poorly focused, and the resisters often did not know what they should or should not do. Consequently, it is not surprising that, in the face of serious repression, nonviolent struggles have at times produced only limited positive results or have even resulted in clear defeats and disasters. Yet, amazingly, many improvised nonviolent struggles have triumphed. There is now reason to believe that the effectiveness of this technique can be greatly increased with improved understanding of the requirements of this technique, and with development of strategic planning.

When nonviolent struggles succeed in achieving their declared objectives, the result is produced by the operation of one of four mechanisms—conversion, accommodation, nonviolent coercion, or disintegration—or a combination of two or three of them.

Rarely, the opponents have a change of view; that is, a conversion takes place. In this case, as a result of the nonviolent persistence and the willingness of the people to continue despite suffering, harsh conditions, and brutalities perpetrated on them, the opponents decide that it is right to accept the claims of the nonviolent group. Although religious pacifists frequently stress this possibility, it does not occur often.

A much more common mechanism is called accommodation. This essentially means that both sides compromise on issues and receive, and give up, a part of their original objectives. This can operate only in respect to issues on which each side can compromise without seeing themselves to be violating their fundamental beliefs or political principles. Accommodation occurs in almost all labor strike settlements. The final agreed working conditions and wages are usually somewhere between the originally stated objectives of the two sides. One must remember that these settlements are highly influenced by how much power each side can wield in waging the conflict.

In other conflicts, the numbers of resisters have become so large, and the parts of the social and political order they influence or control are so essential, that the noncooperation and defiance have taken control of the conflict situation. The opponents are still in their former positions, but they are unable any longer to control the system without the resumption of cooperation and submission by the resisters. Not even repression is effective, either because of the massiveness of the noncooperation or because the opponents' troops and police no longer reliably obey orders. The change is made against the opponents' will, because the supply of their needed sources of power has been seriously weakened or severed. The opponents can no longer wield power contrary to the wishes of the nonviolent struggle group. This is nonviolent coercion.

This is what occurred, for example, in the Russian 1905 Revolution. As a result of the Great October Strike, Tsar Nicholas II issued the constitutional manifesto of October 17, 1905, which granted a *Duma* or legislature, thereby abandoning his claim to sole autocrat.

In more extreme situations, the noncooperation and defiance are so vast and strong that the previous regime simply falls apart. There is no one left with sufficient power even to surrender.

In Russia in February 1917, the numbers of strikers were massive; all social classes had turned against the tsarist regime; huge peaceful street demonstrations were undermining the loyalty of the soldiers; and troop reinforcements dissolved into the protesting crowds. Finally, Tsar Nicholas II, facing this reality, quietly abdicated, and the tsarist government was “dissolved and swept away.” This is disintegration.

In Serbia in October 2000, the Otpor-initiated defiance and noncooperation campaign met almost all the characteristics of the disintegration campaign, with one notable exception. Milosevic had clearly lost his power capacity and faced nonviolent coercion. However, he retained enough power to go on television to capitulate. He had suddenly discovered that, contrary to earlier claims, his electoral rival Vojislav Kostunica had actually won the election and Milosevic had not. He had only enough remaining power to claim television time to surrender. This was almost disintegration. This mechanism, however, remains a rare ending of nonviolent struggles.

Additional elements of nonviolent struggle

While noncooperation to undermine compliance and to weaken and sever the sources of the opponents’ power are the main forces in nonviolent struggle, one other process sometimes operates. This is “political ju-jitsu.” In this process, brutal repression against disciplined nonviolent resisters does not strengthen the opponents and weaken the resisters, but does the opposite.

Widespread revulsion against the opponents for their brutality operates in some cases to shift power to the resisters. More people may join the resistance. Third parties may change their opinions and activities to favor the resisters and act against the opponents. Even members of the opponents’ usual supporters, administrators, and troops and police may become unreliable and may even mutiny. The use of the opponents’ supposedly coercive violence has then been turned to undermine their own power capacity. Political ju-jitsu does not operate in all situations, however, and instead heavy reliance must therefore be placed on the impact of large scale, carefully focussed noncooperation.

The importance of strategy

Effective nonviolent struggle is not the product of simple application of the methods of this technique. A struggle conducted by nonviolent means will, generally, be more effective if the participants first understand what the factors are that contribute to greater success or to likely failure, then act accordingly.

Another important variable in nonviolent struggles is whether they are or are not conducted on the basis of a wisely prepared grand strategy and strategies for individual campaigns. The presence or absence of strategic calculations and planning, and, if present, their wisdom, will have a major impact on the course of the struggle and on determining its final outcome. At this point in the historical practice of nonviolent struggle we can project that a very significant factor in its future practice and effectiveness will be its increasing application on the basis of strategic planning.

Competent strategic planning requires not only an understanding of the conflict situation itself, but also an in-depth understanding of why this technique can wield great power, the major characteristics of nonviolent struggle, the many methods that may be applied, and the dynamics and mechanisms at work in actual struggles of this technique when applied against repressive regimes.

The topics and themes of this chapter are all presented more extensively and in greater depth in the remaining chapters of this book.

We will examine the multitude of individual methods encompassed by this technique in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

The weapons of nonviolent struggle

The technique of nonviolent action consists of numerous specific “methods,” or forms of action. Such methods serve as the weapons of nonviolent struggle. They are used to conduct the conflict by psychological, social, economic, or political pressure, or a combination of these.

Methods of nonviolent action were introduced in Chapters One and Three and some examples were cited. These included protest marches, flying forbidden flags, massive rallies, vigils, social boycotts, economic boycotts, labor strikes, civil disobedience, boycott of phony elections, strikes by civil servants, sit-ins, hunger strikes, occupation of offices, and creation of a parallel government. Such methods may be used to protest symbolically, end cooperation, or disrupt the operation of the established system.

These and similar methods collectively constitute the overall technique of nonviolent action. Familiarity with their diversity

and characteristics is crucial to understanding nonviolent struggle as a whole and its variations in action.

Understanding the methods of nonviolent action

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

1. Protest and persuasion
2. Noncooperation
3. Nonviolent intervention

The following list of 198 methods is intended only to show the range of options available to groups that are using or considering the use of nonviolent struggle. The list is far from complete. Full definitions of each method and historical examples of its use are provided in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*.¹ Many additional methods doubtless exist, and many new ones could certainly be invented or learned from other groups. Scholars studying this technique, as well as resisters contemplating how they can most effectively conduct a future struggle, are strongly encouraged to study Part Two of the above volume, which is published separately as *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*.

This chapter is not intended as a guide to the selection and application of the methods, but only as a survey of the various types of available methods. Factors to be considered in the selection of methods for a particular conflict will be discussed in Chapter Thirty-seven.

The wise selection of specific methods for use requires knowledge not only of the whole range of possible methods of action but also of the strategy that has been developed for the waging of the conflict.

As we will discuss in Part Four, careful strategic planning is very important *before* the selection of specific methods in a given conflict. Strategic calculation and planning are required to identify what kinds of pressure the resisters need to apply against

¹ See Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Part Two, *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*, Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1973.

their opponents, and therefore what specific methods the resisters need to employ.

I. ACTIONS TO SEND A MESSAGE

NONVIOLENT PROTEST AND PERSUASION

Nonviolent protest and persuasion include numerous methods that are mainly symbolic acts of peaceful opposition or attempted persuasion. These extend beyond verbal expressions of opinion but stop short of noncooperation or nonviolent intervention. The use of these methods shows that the resisters are against or in favor of something, the degree of opposition or support, and, sometimes, the number of people involved.

The impact of these methods on the attitudes of others will vary considerably. It is possible that where a particular method is common, its influence in a single instance may be less than in locations where the method has hitherto been rare or unknown. The political conditions in which the method occurs are also likely to influence its impact. Dictatorial conditions make an act of nonviolent protest less common and more dangerous. Hence, if it does occur, the act may be more dramatic and may receive greater attention than it would where the act is common or carries no penalty.

The message may be intended to influence the opponents, the public, the grievance group², or a combination of the three. Attempts to influence the opponents usually focus on convincing them to correct or halt certain actions, or to do what the grievance group wants. The methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion may also be selected to facilitate a concurrent or later application of other methods, especially the forms of noncooperation. Fifty-four methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion are included in this listing, grouped here in ten subclasses.

Formal statements

1. Public speeches

² The grievance group is the general population group whose grievances are issues in the conflict and are being championed by the nonviolent resisters.

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, gestures, spoken, or mimicked)
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Recordings, 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” with whistles, bells, sirens, etc.)
29. Symbolic reclamations (takeover of lands or buildings)
30. Rude gestures

Pressure on individuals

31. “Haunting” officials (may involve constantly following them, or reminding them, or may be silent and respectful)
32. Taunting officials (mocking or insulting them)
33. Fraternalization (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. Performance 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. Renunciation of honors
54. Turning one's back

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

**II. ACTIONS TO SUSPEND COOPERATION
AND ASSISTANCE**

METHODS OF NONCOOPERATION

Overwhelmingly, the methods of nonviolent struggle involve noncooperation with the opponents. "Noncooperation" means that the resisters in a conflict either deliberately withdraw some form or degree of existing cooperation with the opponents or the resisters refuse to initiate certain forms of new cooperation. Noncooperation involves the deliberate discontinuance, withholding, or defiance of certain existing relationships—social, economic, or political. The action may be spontaneous or planned, and it may be legal or illegal.

The impact of the various forms of noncooperation hinges heavily on the number of people participating in the use of these methods and the degree to which the opponents are dependent on the persons and groups that are refusing cooperation. The classes

of noncooperation are social, economic, and political noncooperation.

A. Actions to suspend social relations

The methods of social noncooperation

Social noncooperation is the refusal to carry on normal social relations, either particular or general, with persons or groups regarded as having perpetrated some wrong or injustice, or refusal to comply with certain behavior patterns or practices. 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. Interdiction (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 (withdrawal to a place where you cannot be touched without violation of religious, moral, social, or legal prohibitions)

69. Collective disappearance (the inhabitants of a small area abandon their homes and villages)
70. Protest emigration (hijrat: a deliberate permanent emigration)

B. Actions to suspend economic relations

The methods of economic noncooperation

These methods involve the suspension or refusal to initiate specific types of economic relationships. This noncooperation takes many forms that are grouped under the subclasses of economic boycotts and labor strikes.

(1) Economic boycotts

An economic boycott is the refusal to buy, sell, handle, or distribute specific goods and services, and often also includes efforts to induce others to withdraw such cooperation. In this list are twenty-five methods divided into six subgroups of economic boycotts.

Action by consumers

71. Consumers' boycott of certain goods or firms
72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods (those already in one's possession)
73. Policy of austerity (reducing consumption to an absolute minimum)
74. Rent withholding (rent strike)
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 products)

Action by middlemen

80. Suppliers' or 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

(2) Labor strikes

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 impose pressure on others. While the unit within which a strike is applied is usually an industrial one, it may also be political, social, agricultural, or cultural, depending on the nature of the grievance. Twenty-three types of strikes are listed here in seven subgroups.

Symbolic strikes

- 97. Protest strike (for a pre-announced short period)
- 98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike: short, spontaneous protest strike)

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 (solidarity strike to support the demands of fellow workers)

Restricted strikes

108. Detailed strike (worker by worker, or area by area; 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. Sick-in (reporting “sick”)
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 to do certain types of work)

Multi-industry strikes

116. Generalized strike (several industries are struck simultaneously)
117. General strike (all industries are struck simultaneously)

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)

C. Actions to suspend political submission and assistance

The methods of political noncooperation

This class consists of methods that withhold or withdraw cooperation in political matters. The aim may be to achieve a particular limited objective or to change the nature or composition of a government, or even to produce its disintegration. This list consists of thirty-seven methods divided 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 placemarkers
- 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, discreet)

136. Disguised disobedience (looks like compliance)
137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
138. Sit-down
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 (as refusal to carry out particular instructions; informing superiors of the refusal)
143. Blocking lines of command and information
144. Stalling and obstruction
145. General administrative noncooperation
146. Judicial noncooperation (by judges)
147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation 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

III. METHODS OF DISRUPTION

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT INTERVENTION

In contrast to the methods of protest and persuasion and of noncooperation, these are methods that intervene directly to change a given 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.

Certain methods of nonviolent intervention can pose a more direct and immediate challenge to the opponents than the methods of protest and noncooperation, and may thereby produce more rapid changes. These methods may include sit-ins, nonviolent invasion, nonviolent interjection, nonviolent obstruction, nonviolent occupation, nonviolent land seizure, seeking imprisonment, and dual sovereignty and parallel government.

The methods of nonviolent intervention are, however, usually both harder for the resisters to sustain and harder for the opponents to withstand. Use of these methods may bring speedier and more severe repression than the methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion and the forms of noncooperation.

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

This list includes forty methods divided into five subgroups, according to the dominant means of expression of the intervention itself.

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 his work or activity)
172. Nonviolent obstruction (generally temporary)
173. Nonviolent occupations

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

The impact of the use of any of these methods depends on the adequacy and competency of their application, as well as important other factors in the conflict.

Learning from the past practice of such methods

Nonviolent struggles using these methods have occurred throughout human history. While the twentieth century was one of great violence and extreme dictatorships, genocide, nuclear weapons, massive slaughters, terrorism, and world wars, it was also a century of a multitude of nonviolent struggles.

The following chapters offer brief accounts of some of these important but highly imperfect struggles. They are intended to illustrate the historical scope of the practice of this technique in the twentieth century, the variety of opponents confronted by it, and

the differing results of these conflicts. These accounts also offer examples of the application of many of these specific methods.

Much can be learned from these cases of nonviolent struggle, both positively and negatively. These cases also can give us important insights into both the potential of this technique and the problems of waging nonviolent struggle.

PART THREE

THE DYNAMICS OF

NONVIOLENT STRUGGLE

INTRODUCTION TO THE DYNAMICS

Part Three offers a relatively brief summary of the workings, or dynamics, of nonviolent struggle in conflicts. Anyone seeking to understand or use nonviolent struggle needs to have a good grasp of these dynamics. The application of this technique produces a fluid, changing, interactive process that is never static. The workings of this technique are also very complicated.

Persons and groups seriously interested in the operation of this technique are encouraged to examine the more detailed study in Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Part Three, *The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973 and later printings). That text and this summarized discussion are based on twentieth century cases and analyses. They make only minor reference to the importance and application of strategy. The chapters in Part Four of this book focus exclusively on the impact that strategic planning can play in increasing the future effectiveness of this technique as it is developed and practiced in the twenty-first century. However, before proceeding to a discussion

The chapters of Part Three are heavily based on the extreme condensation of *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, prepared by Jaime Gonzales Bernal and published in Spanish in Mexico as *La Lucha Política Noviolenta: Criterios y Técnicas* (private printings, 1987); Santiago, Chile: Ediciones ChileAmérica CESOC, 1988. Revised, expanded edition with a new translation, Miami: Hermanos al Rescate. 1998. Part Three, however, is a newly revised English text.

of strategy, we must first examine the dynamics of this technique in greater depth. How does it work in conflicts?

Chapter Twenty-nine

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION

Confronting the power of the opponents

Nonviolent resisters use their power against the power of their opponents. The technique of nonviolent action controls and wields power by using psychological, social, economic, and political methods.

Frequently, the opponents are either a government or a group that has the support of the State's courts, police, prisons, and military forces. Groups using nonviolent struggle wisely refuse to confront their opponents with violent weapons, with which their opponents have overwhelming advantage. Instead, in strategic terms, the nonviolent struggle group counters the opponents' violent power *indirectly* in ways that operate to the resisters' advantage. An asymmetrical conflict ensues, with the two sides fighting by contrasting means.

Nonviolent struggle operates to weaken the opponents by alienating the institutions and groups that supply the sources of the opponents' power, frustrating the effective utilization of the

opponents' forces, and at times weakening their will to use their available capacities. The reduction or removal of the sources of the opponents' power is an attempt to reduce or destroy their capacity to continue the struggle.

Social sources of power changes

The power of both the nonviolent struggle group and the opponents is variable. The variations in the respective power of the contending groups in this type of conflict situation are likely to be more extreme, to occur more quickly, and to have more diverse consequences than do the power variations in a conflict when both sides are using violence. Furthermore, the nonviolent struggle group may, by its actions and behavior, help to increase or decrease the relative power of the *opponent group*.

The first source of the variations in the power of each side is that the strength of the leaders of both the resistance and the opponents depends on the degree and quality of the support and participation the leaders receive from their own group or from the bureaucracy and agencies of repression that they control. Bureaucrats and agents of repression of the opponent group are more likely to reduce their efficiency and to increase their noncooperation with their own officials when the resisters use nonviolent means instead of violent action.

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

The third source of these variations in the power of the two sides is the opinion and practical support of the national and international communities. Public opinion and external support can help to strengthen or weaken either group, but this impact very clearly cannot be relied upon as the major force for achieving change.

Risks and variations in nonviolent action

As with all types of conflict, nonviolent struggle involves risks. One is the risk of defeat. Use of this technique is no guarantee of success. Other risks include insecurity and danger for the resisters. Repression is a likely response when the resistance seriously challenges the established order. In nonviolent struggles resisters can be injured, suffer economic losses, be imprisoned, and even be killed. Historically, however, these risks are significantly reduced in nonviolent struggles, as compared with struggles in which both sides use violence. In explosive situations, there is also a risk of the eruption of violence by frustrated people, which could seriously damage the nonviolent struggle movement. Furthermore, extreme dictatorships may deliberately act harshly against innocent people in order to frighten others into compulsive submission. The Chinese saying is “Kill the chicken in order to frighten the monkey.” However, to do nothing in a situation of oppression is to invite not only continued violence by the opponents, but also by the dominated group.

The variety of the characteristics of nonviolent struggle movements is enormous, as the previous cases illustrate. No two cases are alike. To facilitate the analysis of the dynamics of nonviolent action in this and later chapters, however, certain assumptions are made here:

- That methods from all three classes of protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and intervention are used, but especially noncooperation.
- That large numbers of people are participating, mostly acting under nonviolent discipline for the duration of the struggle.
- That the opponent group is either the existing regime or has the backing of the State.
- That some civil liberties are present, although they may be sharply reduced during the conflict.

Leadership in nonviolent struggle

We also assume here the existence of a leadership group of the resisters that directs the action. This is not always the case. Even

when such a leadership group is present, it will not necessarily be well informed about this technique. These leaders need to become experts on nonviolent struggle. Knowledge about nonviolent struggle also needs to be spread widely. Greater knowledge and understanding of the nonviolent technique throughout the population will increase the difficulty for the opponents to “behead” the movement by imprisoning or killing the leaders. Leaders serve as spokespeople and offer, organize, and can implement solutions to problems. Leadership can be by group, committee, individual, or a combination of these. In some cases, it has been difficult to identify leadership in such movements.

Casting off fear

A prerequisite of nonviolent struggle is to cast off or to control fear of acting independently and of the potential sufferings. This is for several reasons:

- Cowardice and nonviolent struggle do not mix. The coward seeks to avoid the conflict and flees from danger, while the nonviolent resister faces the conflict and risks the dangers involved.
- Fear arises from the assumption of one’s weakness. Nonviolent resisters, however, ought to have confidence in their cause, principles, and their means of action.
- Casting off fear, or controlling it, depends on gaining confidence in one’s power to act effectively to produce changes. Fear can be removed in stages. Participation in struggle helps.
- Proposed resistance action should be proportionate to the bravery of the participants, not more dangerous than they can bear. Frightened activists can only engage in weak actions.
- To end brutalities more rapidly, it is helpful to demonstrate that the severe repression is not achieving the opponents’ objective of halting resistance.
- In short, bravery in this technique of struggle is not only moral valor, but a practical requirement.

Preparations for nonviolent struggle

In all campaigns, careful planning and preparations are essential. When possible, the following types of preparations should be considered in order to maximize the possibility of success.

Investigation

Advance investigation will include several elements. First, determine the causes of the conflict, list the grievances, formulate desired changes, give widest possible publicity to causes, facts, and goals, and generate “cause-consciousness”—awareness of the grievances and justification for the coming conflict.

Second, investigate the opponents, including their objectives, beliefs, background, strengths, weaknesses, supporting institutions, sources of power, decision-making processes, allies, and vulnerabilities. Other elements are discussed in Chapter Thirty-six.

Plan the strategy for a possible struggle

Assuming negotiations are initiated (as discussed below), extremely careful strategic planning for the possible future conflict should be completed before such talks begin. Without wise strategic planning and other types of preparations, it is premature to engage in serious negotiations with the opponents. Strength to back claims and demands are required for the opponents to take the resisters seriously.

In many ways, the political principles of nonviolent struggle are very simple. However, the actual workings of this technique are far more complex than the simple operation of the specific methods used. The highest degree of success is not likely to be achieved by chance or simple tenacity. In many conflicts, the operation of nonviolent struggle can be more complex than that of conventional military warfare. If this complexity is understood by the nonviolent resisters and their leaders, they have the opportunity to increase the effectiveness of their struggle beyond what it would be if they only understood the most basic characteristics of this technique.

In general, if one wishes to accomplish something, the chances of achieving that goal will be greatest if one uses one’s available

resources and leverage to maximum effectiveness. In nonviolent struggle that means having a strategic plan that is designed to move from the present—in which the goal is not achieved—to the future—in which it is achieved.

We will discuss the importance of strategic planning further in Chapter Thirty-five and discuss elements of strategic planning in Chapters Thirty-six and Thirty-seven. With a greater understanding of the dynamics of nonviolent action and examination of the conflict situation, it will be more possible to develop a competent strategy for a particular conflict. The identification of steps to use in the preparation of wise strategies is a new phenomenon, which is discussed in detail in Part Four.

Sharpen the focus for attack

The success of the campaign depends on finding the correct point of attack. It is not wise to try to achieve several major objectives at the same time. The nonviolent leadership will be wise to concentrate action on the weakest points in the opponents' case, policy, or system. The issues must be precise and capable of being clearly understood and recognized as justified. The struggle in a major conflict will usually benefit from formulation of concrete stages in the resistance. Success may depend on phasing the long-term strategy to score a series of minor gains that will eventually lead to a single major victory.

Concentrated strength on a clearly justified 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 concentrating on such a point of attack may operate to strengthen the resisters' cause.

Generate “cause-consciousness”

At an early stage, it is important to publicize the facts, issues, and arguments advanced by the nonviolent struggle group through pamphlets, leaflets, books, articles, papers, radio, television, public meetings, songs, slogans, audio- and videocassettes, and in other ways, as may be possible. Quality in these efforts is

important. Hatred or intolerance should not be aroused. It is also important not to antagonize potential allies.

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

- Develop understanding of the issues in the conflict.
- Inform the population of the contemplated action, the requirements for its success, and the importance of engaging or not engaging in particular acts.
- Justify resort to direct action.
- Warn of the hardship and suffering that will be incurred during the struggle.
- Arouse confidence that the likely repression will be worth incurring because nonviolent struggle is more likely than any other type of action to correct the grievances.
- Bolster confidence that in the long run the combination of a just cause and use of this technique will ensure victory.

Quantity and quality in nonviolent action

Careful consideration must constantly be given to the relationship between the number of persons participating in the conflict and the quality of their participation. The best balance between numbers and quality will vary with the situation. Certainly, when employing a technique of action that greatly depends for its effectiveness on the withdrawal of consent, cooperation, and obedience, the number of participants is important in determining the impact of the action.

In general, however, quality is more important than quantity. Lowered standards to obtain large numbers can be counterproductive and can lead to a weaker movement. High standards of nonviolent behavior are required for a movement strong in both quality and quantity. The genuineness of the strength of the resistance is related to such factors as fearlessness, discipline, and tenacity despite repression, and also to wisdom in the choice of strategy, tactics, and methods of action.

Organize the movement

Sometimes an existing organization—or several organizations—may conduct the nonviolent struggle. At other times, creation of a new organization may be required. The organization should be efficient, honest, able to operate with voluntary discipline, and have effective internal communication. It should also have planned in advance how to communicate with its own supporters, in case the opponents break or block lines of communication.

The organizational efforts should focus on

- **The public:** publicizing the facts and grievances; promoting sympathy; disseminating solid information about the nature and requirements of nonviolent struggle.
- **The volunteers:** recruiting; training and incorporating participants into the movement; promoting commitment.
- **The leadership:** preparing replacements for arrested leaders of the movement; setting the procedures for further selection of leadership; supplying information to the leaders.
- **The movement in general:** supporting morale and discipline; preparing participants to act without leaders in times of severe repression; maintaining communications.

Openness and secrecy in nonviolent struggle

Secrecy, deception, and underground conspiracy pose difficult problems for a movement using nonviolent struggle. If operating under a political dictatorship, secrecy will be required at times. Elsewhere, secrecy can pose a serious danger.

Arguments are often made in favor of secrecy in nonviolent struggles in order to surprise the opponents and to catch them unprepared to counter the resistance actions. This is of dubious validity. First, there is a long and successful use of spies and informers within resistance organizations. Also, modern communications technology makes secrecy very difficult to maintain. Second, advance knowledge by the opponents of planned demonstrations, for example, will give the opponents time to consider how to respond. This may reduce the chances of massive brutality.

ties and killings by police and troops who have not received specific instructions on how to act. Third, and most importantly, it is not surprise but the use by a movement of nonviolent struggle that contributes to the opponents' difficulties in handling this type of resistance, as compared to the use of violent resistance.

The effectiveness of nonviolent struggle depends on the very nature of this technique, the choice of strategies of resistance, and the skill of the resisters, as well as their courage and discipline.

An additional danger of practicing secrecy is the reason for its use. Secrecy is often used out of fear, and therefore contributes to fear—which must be abandoned or controlled for nonviolent struggle to operate effectively.

The following discussion assumes that the struggle is occurring within a political system that permits significant civil liberties. Where this is not the case, careful attention is required to determine what knowledge and activities should be secret or revealed.

Nonviolent struggle is based on bravery and discipline. Openness—that is, being truthful with the opponents and the public concerning intentions and plans—may be a corollary of the requirements of fearlessness and nonviolent discipline. Openness leads to liberation from the fear of arrest, disclosure of secrets, break up of resistance organizations, and imprisonment. A mass movement needs to be open. Masses of people cannot participate in a secret resistance movement because secrecy demands that knowledge of plans be held by only a trusted few. Additionally, nonviolent discipline is best achieved in the light of day rather than clandestinely. Secrecy contributes to a smaller movement and can lead to a resort to violence within the resistance movement in order to silence persons suspected of revealing secrets to the opponents.

Secrecy also contributes to paranoia within the movement, a paranoia that tends to increase over time. It often leads to disastrous consequences when internal differences surface under the guise of alleged violations of secrecy. Perhaps one faction may accuse the leader of another faction of being a spy. A paranoid movement cannot function effectively as a resistance movement.

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 his experience in the Indian struggles for independence, Jawaharlal Nehru (later

Prime Minister, and earlier an advocate of violent rebellion) 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 round-about 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.¹

Effects of the openness on the opponents

Openness will facilitate (but not ensure) the opponents' understanding of the nonviolent struggle group's motives, aims, intentions and plans. Direct contact with the opponents may be repeatedly sought in order to avoid or to correct distortions in perception that would seriously affect the course of the conflict. In some situations, advance notice to the opponents' officials about demonstrations, for example, may not only help to reduce brutalities by surprised police and troops, but may be interpreted as "clean fighting" and chivalry.

Revealing material ordinarily kept secret may be interpreted by the opponents in contrasting ways: the opponents may think that something more important remains secret, or they may become more respectful of the sincerity of the group. The opponents may see admission of the resisters' plans as a weakness and ineptness, or, to the contrary, as a sign of an exceptionally powerful movement capable of success without secrecy.

Negotiation

Where political conditions permit, the nonviolent struggle group should pursue, and be seen to pursue, every effort at a settlement before launching direct action. This greatly increases the group's moral position. Negotiations may help to put the oppo-

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography* (London: The Bodley Head, 1953), p. 69.

nents in the wrong in the eyes of many persons and groups and to bring sympathy and support to the nonviolent struggle group.

Negotiations will require careful advance consideration by the resisters of what the most important objectives are on which they must remain firm and on what points the negotiators can be flexible or make concessions. Once the demands are set, generally they should not be changed.

It should be remembered that words and moral appeals usually have much less influence on determining the outcome of negotiations than does the strength of the nonviolent resisters. The opponents must consider what the resisters can do if they do not achieve a satisfactory resolution of the conflict short of open struggle. In order to have the greatest effectiveness in both negotiations and in open struggle, the potential resisters need to be well organized and relatively strong—the more organized and stronger the better. However, this is not the occasion for political bragging or bluffing.

It is unlikely that the conflict will be resolved at this stage. Continued preparations for nonviolent struggle during the negotiations are important and realistic. Negotiations are not a substitute for open struggle. A prerequisite for effective negotiations in this situation is a determination and an 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 that they should offer some advance deeds as assurances that their promises will be fulfilled.

However, one should not expect miracles. Serious issues cannot be resolved simply by negotiations and dialogue. Fundamental shifts in power relations are often required to correct serious grievances. Effective nonviolent struggle capacity can often give powerful weight to one's words in negotiations. If those strengthened words remain insufficient to induce the opponents to accept the changes sought, then actual struggle will be necessary.

The basic strategy for the struggle having already been determined, if negotiations with the opponents do not show signs of producing satisfactory results, the organizational preparations for the coming conflict will need to be completed.

Sometimes an ultimatum

In some nonviolent struggles, but not all, the next stage will be the issuance of an ultimatum to the opponents. An ultimatum states the minimum demands and the intent to resist. The nonviolent struggle group offers to cancel plans for resistance if the opponents grant those demands (or a major part of them) by a given day and hour. A failure to achieve a mutually agreed upon change will mean that a nonviolent struggle will be launched. The nonviolent struggle group must be capable of carrying out the predicted action.

An ultimatum is issued to influence the opponents, inform the general public, and bolster the morale of the grievance group and increase the willingness of its members to act. Such an ultimatum was common in struggles led or inspired by Mohandas Gandhi, and has frequently been used in labor strikes.

The ultimatum may also be intended to demonstrate that the nonviolent struggle group has made a final effort at a peaceful resolution. This can give the struggle an aura of defensiveness, even as the group prepares for waging strong nonviolent struggle.

In most cases, however, there may be no ultimatum. The nonviolent resisters should not expect that such an ultimatum or declaration will lead to capitulation by 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, break off any negotiations in progress, or declare that the communication should have been directed to some subordinate official. The opponents may coldly acknowledge receipt of the ultimatum, or ignore it altogether.

If so, the time has come for action.

Chapter Thirty

CHALLENGE BRINGS REPRESSION

A time of thunder

The time for action is also the time for self-reliance and continued internal strengthening. The resisters need to organize themselves, act, and mobilize others. Nonviolent action tends to mobilize power among the population affected by the grievance and enables them to exert control over their lives and society. It helps them gain confidence and increase their strength. “Rely on yourselves” may well be the cry of the resisters. Submission and passivity must be cast off for nonviolent struggle to be effective.

In order to maximize the effectiveness of the coming struggle, a sound strategy appropriate to the specific conflict needs to be adopted. The strategy chosen for the struggle, and the specific methods selected to be used in the conflict, will differ widely from one conflict to another. The process of planning strategy is discussed in Part Four.

With the launching of nonviolent struggle, basic—often latent—conflicts between the opponents and the grievance group

are brought to the surface. Through the ensuing “creative conflict and tension,”¹ it becomes possible to address the issues in those underlying conflicts and make changes that may be required to resolve them.

Exponents of nonviolent struggle agree with Frederick Douglass, the eloquent nineteenth century African-American opponent of slavery:

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 a physical one; it may be both moral and physical. But it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will.²

The struggle will bring changes to the grievance group—the general population whose grievances are issues in the conflict. Some changes will be psychological—a shattering of conformity, hopelessness, inertia, impotence, and passivity, increased self-respect, confidence, and awareness of their power. Other changes will be more directly social and political: learning how to act together to achieve objectives.

The withdrawal of consent, cooperation, and submission will challenge the system because these actions can weaken the supply of the opponents’ sources of power. How seriously the withdrawal does so will vary with the quality of the action, the number of resisters, and their persistence in face of repression. The social and political milieu is also important. This includes the degree of nonconformity the system can tolerate, attitudes towards the regime, and the prospects for the resistance spreading.

The final outcome of the challenge will be determined by the balance between the seriousness of the challenge and the degree to which the social and political milieu favors each side. The opponents’ efforts are clearly important but, by themselves, are not decisive. Take repression, for example. To be effective, repression must produce submission. But it only produces submission if the potential resisters grow fearful and choose to submit. At times,

¹ As termed by the important African-American civil rights activist James Farmer.

² Quoted by James Farmer, *Freedom—When?* (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 7.

repression may even increase resistance, as discussed in the following chapter.

Initial polarization followed by shifting power

The launching of nonviolent struggle 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 for them. On the other side, persons and groups initially inclined toward the nonviolent group will tend to move toward it. This instability and uncertainty in the strength of the contenders seem to be present at the beginning of all forms of open conflict.

The initial polarization period may vary in length. During this period, the nonviolent resisters need to be most careful in their behavior, because it will influence how much support they and their opponents receive. At first, the grievance group may be worse off than previously if it must now cope with repression in addition to the original problem.

If handled properly, this will likely be a temporary situation. Successful nonviolent campaigns produce a strengthened solidarity among the nonviolent resisters, a growth of wider support for correction of the grievance, and a weakening, or even disintegration, of support for the opponents. The nonviolent resisters should attempt continually to increase their strength (numerical and otherwise), not only among their usual supporters and third parties, but even among 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 can be large and sudden.

This highly dynamic and changeable situation means that specific acts within a nonviolent struggle may have wide and significant repercussions on the power of each side. Each proposed particular resistance action, even a limited one, therefore needs to be selected and evaluated based on its potential wider influences on the overall conflict. The nonviolent resisters' behavior may not only influence their own strength, but may also affect the strength of their opponents. The behavior of the nonviolent group will

also help to influence whether third parties support either group during the conflict.

Short-term “successes” at the cost of weakening the resistance in general and strengthening the opponents are most unwise. On the other hand, improvements in the relative strength of the resisters 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 because the nonviolent action is disrupting the status quo in ways that require them to respond to the challenge. The type, extent, and severity of the nonviolent disruption will vary. The opponents’ tolerance and reactions (both psychologically and in countermeasures) may range widely and may change during the course of the conflict. The degree of dissent the opponents can tolerate will be influenced by the degree to which the society is democratic or nondemocratic. There is likely to be more tolerance in a democratic society and less in a nondemocratic society, although this is not always the case. Nonviolent action also tends to produce and aggravate conflicts within the opponents’ camp about what countermeasures should be taken in response to the nonviolent challenge.

The nonviolent resisters need to prevent and correct misperceptions of their intentions and activities. Such misperceptions may cause responses from the opponents that will harm both sides.

Sometimes, when confronted with nonviolent action, the opponents and their officials may become confused, especially if they are surprised by, or unfamiliar with, nonviolent action. Confusion can also occur when the resistance violates the opponents’ perception of the world. That perception may be based on accepted assumptions about political reality or an official ideology or doctrine. For example, the opponents may have believed that the State and violence are the most powerful political forces. There may be other sources of the opponents’ confusion, including excessive optimism and a favorable self-perception. The opponents’ confusion is not necessarily beneficial to the nonviolent group and its objectives.

Frequently, opponents may react to the nonviolent challenge emotionally, seeing it as an affront, an indignity, offensive behav-

ior, and a repudiation of their authority and position. The opponents may regard these aspects of the challenge as more important than the actual issues at stake. The opponents may then either try to obtain verbal acknowledgment of their authority and position, or demand a cancellation of the nonviolent campaign, or both, before they will consent to new 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 with the hope of ending the challenge. At other times, the opponents will make major concessions only after a considerable period of struggle. The opponents may do so only after they have experienced and recognized the real power of the movement.

Occasionally, opponents may genuinely believe that concessions, compromise, or surrender by them would be an unthinkable violation of their mission or duty. Even more serious can be the opponents' fear that giving way on limited specific issues will later lead to complete capitulation. This will make achieving the goal of the resisters even more difficult.

The opponents may attempt to use psychological influences, rather than repression, to induce the nonviolent resisters to be submissive again and withdraw from the struggle. The opponents 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 groups supporting the movement, or to turn resistance leaders against each other. Or a counterattack on the issues themselves may be mounted, with the opponents trying to justify existing policies and to show that there is no justification for the demands of the nonviolent group. Such efforts are aimed at reducing the support that the nonviolent group can mobilize and retain.

Repression

When the opponents are the State, or have its support, the punishments are likely to involve repression through the use of the police, the prison system, and the military forces.

Nonviolent resistance is commonly met with repression when the opponents are unwilling or unable to grant the resisters' demands. Repression is not a sign that the resisters are weak or will be defeated. *Repression is an acknowledgment by the opponents of the seriousness of the challenge posed by the resistance.*

Sometimes the severity of the repression will be in proportion to the seriousness of the nonviolent challenge, but this is not a standard pattern.

The opponents' need to end the defiance may in certain situations be largely symbolic. But in other situations of widespread and growing nonviolent struggle, the pressures on the opponents to halt the resistance will be overwhelming, especially in a system that cannot withstand major dissent.

The impact of the initiation of nonviolent struggle on the opponents will to a large degree depend on the resisters' strategy and the specific methods launched. The other major factor will be the competency and scale with which the strategy and methods are applied. If the strategy is of poor quality or even absent, if weak methods are selected, or if only a few resisters come forward to apply stronger methods when many resisters are needed, or if many persons join the action but do so in undisciplined and incompetent ways, the action will be weak and will pose little challenge to the opponents.

For example, an economic boycott supported by only 10 percent of the population, a strike in which a small minority of the workers participate, or a campaign of political noncooperation backed by the actions of only a small doctrinal group will not seriously threaten the opponents' policies and control. The chances of harsh and massive repression will therefore be lower. However, harsh repression is still possible because the opponents may wish to instill fear of future repression.

On the other hand, if there is an economic boycott backed by 90 percent of the population, or a labor strike in which 98 percent of the essential workers walk out, the action will be strong. Similarly, in a political defiance struggle in which most of the general population disobeys the regime's orders and many of the civil servants, police, and even troops refuse to follow orders, the action will be an extremely strong threat to the opponents. Harsh repression can be confidently expected in such situations.

Repression is intended to end the protest, noncooperation, and defiance. It is the power of competently applied nonviolent struggle that triggers repression from the powers that be in an attempt to maintain their positions and control and to block the nonviolent struggle group from achieving its objectives.

Types of repression

Nonviolent resisters familiar with the technique will not be surprised at the repression inflicted by the opponents. Freedom is not free. There is a price to be paid.

It must be recognized very clearly that harsh repression can be applied against nonviolent resisters. However, it must also be recognized that generally much harsher repression is inflicted on violent resistance movements, resulting in far greater casualties and destruction. This is not because violent resistance is a greater threat to the opponents but because harsh repression against violent resistance is likely to produce fewer negative reactions than harsh repression against disciplined nonviolent resisters. Not even passive submission guarantees safety under totalitarian and other extreme dictatorships. They aim to instill fear by the example of brutal repression whether it is focused on resisters or on people who have done nothing. This fear is intended to induce compulsive submission.

Once the opponents have decided to use repression, the questions are as follows:

- What means of repression will they use?
- Will the repression help the opponents to achieve their objectives?
- What will be the response by the nonviolent group and others to the repression?

Some of the harsh measures that the opponents may use will be official. In other cases, repression may be unofficially encouraged, through the creation of extralegal paramilitary forces or assassination squads, for example. Sometimes there will be threats. Other times the repression will simply be inflicted directly against the resisters without advance warning. Some repression involves police or military action. Other reactions to the nonviolent chal-

lenge may include more indirect means of control and manipulation—and occasionally even counter nonviolent sanctions.

The sanctions, or punishments, the nonviolent resisters can expect will vary in form, intensity, and objective. These are the following:

- **Control of communications and information**, as by censorship, false reports, or interruption of contacts.
- **Psychological pressures**, as by verbal abuse, ostracism, encouragement of defections, threats, or retaliation against resisters' families.
- **Confiscation**, including seizure of property, funds, literature, records, correspondence, offices, or equipment.
- **Economic sanctions**, monetary fines, economic boycotts, dismissal from jobs, blacklisting, cutting off of utilities, and similar measures.
- **Bans and prohibitions** of certain activities or organizations, bans of public meetings or assemblies, curfews, court injunctions, and similar measures.
- **Arrests and imprisonment** on serious or minor charges, legal harassment on unrelated or fabricated charges, arrests of negotiators, delegations, or leaders, or varying prison sentences.
- **Exceptional restrictions**, including new laws or decrees, suspension of *habeas corpus* and other rights, declaration of martial law or states of emergency, or mobilization of special military or police forces. Prosecutions may be also initiated on more serious charges such as conspiracy, incitement, rebellion, or treason. Nonviolent resisters may be conscripted into military forces or court-martialed. Mass deportations may be imposed, while individuals may be exiled, detained without trial, or placed in concentration camps.
- **Direct physical violence**, varying in form and severity, planned or improvised. It will tend to grow if the nonviolent struggle movement gains strength or if earlier repression has not resulted in submission. Other countermeasures may be used by the opponents, including "disappearances," assassinations, official executions, or massacres.

Making the repression ineffective

In the face of direct physical violence, the key to success by the resisters depends on their refusal to submit and their maintenance of discipline.

Generally, the opponents' means of repression are more suited to deal with violent opposition than nonviolent struggle. Against nonviolent resisters not intimidated by fear of repression, the repression can tend to lose its power to produce submission. When imprisonment is not feared, it has lost its effectiveness in deterring certain behavior. The resisters may therefore openly defy laws and seek imprisonment, and may even dare the opponents to do their worst. If the number of defiant people becomes large enough, effective enforcement is rendered impossible and repression becomes ineffective. How large that threshold of participation is will vary widely depending on the particular situation.

Persistence

Faced with repression, nonviolent resisters have only one acceptable response: to overcome, they must persist in their actions and refuse to submit or retreat. *If the resisters show in any way that the repression weakens the movement, they will signal to the opponents that if they make the repression severe enough it will produce submission.*

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

Sometimes, specific methods of nonviolent struggle will by their nature be both more difficult for the opponents to deal with by repression and less likely to provoke the most extreme brutalities. For example, it may be better not to march down the street in face of potential rifle fire, but instead for everyone to stay at home for 24 hours and thereby paralyze the city.

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

Facing repression

Facing repression with persistence and courage means that the nonviolent resisters must be prepared to endure the opponents' punishments 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 that of submissive people.

Those planning to initiate nonviolent struggle will need to consider the degree of suffering the volunteers are willing to endure and how firmly they will be able to defy their opponents' repression. A bold action likely to draw a repressive response that the nonviolent resisters are not prepared to endure usually should not be taken. It is generally better to choose methods of action that do not set up resisters as clear targets when more effective and less provocative methods are available. The selected methods of action should be in accord with the degree of repression the resisters are prepared to suffer for such action. Very importantly, it should be understood, only methods should be selected that clearly help to implement the selected strategy for the struggle. This point will be discussed further in Chapter Thirty-six.

The resisters' persistence will have several 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. The nonviolent group should be prepared for either scenario.

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) without orders from the regime, local officers or individuals in the army, police, or even the general public independently commit brutalities.

It is important to remember that beatings, killings, and massacres against nonviolent resisters do occur. 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 that depend to any degree on violence are likely to resort to violence. Resisters must determine how to respond according to the requirements for effectiveness of the nonviolent technique.

Informed resisters in crisis situations are not surprised by brutalities against the nonviolent group. For them, either to halt the action or to resort to violence would have serious, harmful consequences for the struggle. 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, required if fundamental goals are to be achieved.

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 knowingly attract brutalities beyond their ability to bear them. All actions should serve a strategic purpose. If an unwise course of action has been started, it should not be continued out of dogmatism or stubbornness. Yet, when a firm stand or still more daring action is required, there should be no retreat—despite brutalities.

At times, a planned daring and risky action by a smaller group of resisters may be used to produce intense repression from the opponents. By demonstrating the resisters' initiative, courage, and persistence in face of great danger, the risky action may help to improve the resisters' morale and lessen their fear of repression. When this occurs, the harsh repression is usually inflicted on the

volunteers themselves, not on the general population, as has occurred in some cases of guerrilla warfare.

The operation of one or more of the mechanisms of change may in time lead to a reduction or a cessation of brutalities, as will be discussed in Chapter Thirty-two. Brutalities may also be reduced when it is clear to the opponents that their repression is rebounding against their own position by alienating their own supporters and provoking increased resistance. When this occurs, the opponents may realize that the extreme repression and brutalities are counterproductive and need to be restricted. It is possible that the worst repression may occur shortly before capitulation by the opponents. At other times, the worst repression from certain extremist members of the opponent group may even occur shortly after their leaders have conceded the claims of the resisters.

Defiance of the opponents' repression, of course, is not deliberately intended to incur suffering from the brutalities of repression. The point is to continue the resistance, and especially the noncooperation, that has the potential to sever the sources of the opponents' power, as discussed in Chapter Two, by using the methods of nonviolent struggle, enumerated in Chapter Four. If a political noncooperation campaign, or a massive strike, collapses as soon as there are arrests, beatings, or deaths, there is no time for the resistance to have an effect. All sacrifices will have been in vain.

If, however, the opponents' use of repression fails and the resisters are willing to persist, widespread noncooperation has the potential of gaining the objectives of the struggle and even of disintegrating the oppressive system.

Supporters of military warfare are well aware that a struggle often requires a cost to be paid. One of the major differences between military conflicts and nonviolent struggles is that, almost without exception, in nonviolent conflicts the cost—in lives, injuries, and destruction—is not paid by nonparticipants but by those who are waging the struggle. Also, the casualties and the destruction suffered by the resisters are almost always far lower in nonviolent struggles than in comparable violent conflicts.

It can be argued that generally nonviolent struggles, as compared to violent ones, produce greater chances of success and less extreme repression, and also that persons not participating in the

struggle are usually not seriously affected. This is in contrast to the situation that tends to prevail in guerrilla wars, conventional wars, and other applications of violence in conflicts. In violent conflicts, nonparticipating civilians will usually pay in lives and suffering as a consequence of the violent combat initiated and conducted by others.

The fact remains, however, that serious nonviolent struggle will very likely be met by repression, but the resistance must nevertheless persist.

Chapter Thirty-one

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 resisters are likely to identify with the whole population affected by the grievance (the “grievance group”). It is rarely possible to achieve unanimous participation in nonviolent struggle from the grievance group. How many of them will directly participate or support the resisters will vary from one conflict to another. However, it is essential that all who participate in the struggle develop and maintain solidarity with each other, and deliberate efforts may help to achieve that. This solidarity will strengthen their morale and ability to act effectively.

Maintaining morale in nonviolent struggles is extremely important. There appear to be four basic ways of doing this:

A. Maintaining rapport and solidarity

The participants need to feel constantly part of a much larger movement that gives them, personally, support and strength to continue their resistance. They need to feel that others continue in solidarity with them. This is helped by regular contacts and demonstrations of “togetherness.” These may include mass meetings, marches, songs, parades, or symbols of unity. A common philosophy, if present, and open lines of communication among activists, leaders and support groups may also help.

B. Generating incentives to carry on the struggle

Efforts may be needed to support the determination to continue the struggle. The participants must believe their action is justified, the gained objectives will be worthwhile, and the means of action have been wisely chosen. Their morale is likely to increase if the resisters understand the technique well and if the goals and means of struggle are, or can be, related to the general population’s accepted values.

C. Reducing grounds for capitulation

Because the participants may become discouraged and fatigued, measures should be developed at the beginning of the conflict to prevent or minimize those feelings. At least the original participants should continue their support for the struggle. 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 these may be needed.

The sufferings incurred in the course of nonviolent struggle are sometimes interpreted by the leaders in ways that 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.¹

¹ Leo Kuper, *Passive Resistance in South Africa* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1957), pp. 112-113.

D. Restraints or sanctions

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

If the resisters' morale and determination remain high, the opponents' repression will have failed. To achieve this, however, the resisters must maintain their nonviolent discipline.

Inhibiting repression

The opponents' difficulties in controlling the movement arise in part because the means of repression generally applicable against nonviolent struggle tend to be more limited than those against violent resistance. Brutalities and other severe repression are more difficult to justify against nonviolent resisters and may actually weaken the opponents' position, as will be 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 such factors as the kind of regime it is; whether it expects that certain events can be kept secret; the degree to which it is threatened by the events; how dependent it is on the outside world; and whether opinion against the regime will be translated into assistance for the nonviolent struggle group and actions against the opponents.

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

The opponents prefer violence

The opponents may seek to reduce the special difficulties of repressing a nonviolent resistance movement by falsely attributing violence to the nonviolent resisters or publicizing and exaggerat-

ing any violence that occurs. The opponents may even try to provoke violence and break the resisters' nonviolent discipline. Resistance violence is often seen to "legitimize" violent repression. The opponents may provoke violence by severe repression, or they may employ spies and agents provocateurs. If publicly revealed, the news of such acts could disastrously undermine the opponents' 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 is not an alien emphasis introduced by moralists or pacifists. Nonviolent behavior is a requirement for the successful operation of this technique.

Nonviolent behavior is likely to contribute to achieving a variety of positive accomplishments, including (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 weaken a nonviolent struggle movement by disrupting nonviolent discipline, contributing to a possible shift to violence by resisters. It may lead to a collapse of the movement. Resistance violence shifts attention to the violence itself, away from the issues, the courage of the resisters and the opponents' usually much greater violence. The use of violence by the resisters or members of the broader grievance group tends to unleash disproportionately severe repression and to reverse any sympathy that may be developing inside the opponent group for the resisters. Success in nonviolent struggle 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 from those of nonviolent struggle. Sabotage

- risks unintentional physical injury or death to persons serving the opponents or to innocent bystanders;
- 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;
- requires secrecy in planning and conducting missions;
- requires only a few persons to implement plans and hence reduces the number of effective resisters;²
- demonstrates a lack of confidence in the potential of nonviolent struggle, thereby potentially weakening the resisters' tenacity in the use of this technique;
- is a physical-material action, not a human-social action, indicating a basic conceptual shift in how the conflict is best waged;
- attempts to undermine the opponents by destroying their property, not by withdrawal of consent by the population, thereby potentially weakening a fundamental approach of nonviolent struggle;
- creates an environment in which consequent physical injury or death commonly results in a relative loss of sympathy and support for the nonviolent struggle group and the resisters' movement in general; and
- often results in highly disproportionate repression. This repression that has been provoked by sabotage is not likely to weaken the opponents' relative power position, nor to bring support for the resisters.

² Some of the methods of nonviolent intervention also require only a few persons to apply them. However, their use predominantly occurs in the context of a wider struggle in which many other resisters are applying the methods of noncooperation and protest. Acts of sabotage, however, are not generally applied in combination with mass popular resistance, and may contribute to a reduction of such resistance as confidence is placed in the acts of demolition and destruction. This shift in confidence may lead to a deliberate increase in such acts, which can increase the risk of a general shift to violent conflict of some type.

Other ways to slip into violence

One of the ways the nonviolent struggle may slip into violence occurs when resisters prepare to use it in a possible future situation. Such preparations constitute a great temptation for the resisters or members of the grievance group to use violence, especially in a crisis when limited violence against the opponents has already occurred.

The necessity of discipline

Discipline is crucial, especially when there is danger of violent outbreaks and when participants lack experience and deep understanding of the nonviolent technique.

Under this discipline, resisters must adhere to certain minimum standards of behavior, depending on the particular situation. The absence of discipline will impede or block effective use of this technique.

Continued participation in the struggle and refusal to submit to fear are the most critical aims of discipline, followed closely by adherence to nonviolent behavior. Discipline also includes compliance with plans and instructions. Discipline will help people face severe repression and will minimize the impact of the repression. It also fosters respect for the movement by third parties, the population in general, and, at times, 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. Discipline in nonviolent action is primarily self-discipline. However, in dangerous or risky situations, stronger efforts are needed to promote nonviolent discipline. If a violent attack is to be confronted directly, both discipline and nonviolent behavior are required. Various means of encouraging discipline will be effective only to the degree that they strengthen the will or conscience of individual resisters. In-

structions, appeals, and pledges, as well as discipline leaflets, marshals, and other means, may be used to encourage discipline.

In violent situations, resistance leaders have sometimes postponed or called off a nonviolent campaign. At other times, more vigorous nonviolent struggle has been launched to provide nonviolent ways to express hostility and frustration. In the face of a hostile attack, strong discipline may be required to prevent both a violent response and a rout. If leaders wish to avoid a physical encounter, it may be better to move the nonviolent group, to disperse, or to shift to simpler, less provocative methods of action. Sometimes, certain forms of nonviolent action, such as a publicly visible demonstration, may allow for the venting of emotions, while avoiding violence.

High morale is important in achieving and preserving nonviolent discipline. The resisters' morale will often increase if they feel that some significant source of strength not available to their opponents is supporting them. Possible sources might include their chosen technique of action, the justice of their cause, the inevitability of their victory, or the support of powerful friends. But additional means are often still needed to ensure nonviolent discipline. Resisters and the general grievance group need to understand *why* the campaign needs to remain strictly nonviolent.

Wise leadership and carefully selected strategies, tactics, and specific methods, implemented with intelligently formulated plans, will contribute significantly to achieving and maintaining nonviolent discipline. Another contributing element is the training of both the general participants and special personnel. This has at times been done through study groups, workshops, seminars, sociodramas 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," for example, can be used to help keep a demonstration nonviolent and disciplined. Pledges of nonviolent discipline have also been used.

Whether or not the arrest of leaders is expected, other persons capable of stepping into leadership positions and able to help maintain discipline should be selected in advance. If known lead-

ers are arrested, this arrangement can lead to the diffusion of leadership. In rare cases of extremely large nonviolent struggle forces that are aiming to gain independence or to destroy a dictatorship, the resistance activities and organizations may grow so strong that they take on characteristics of a parallel government, which in turn helps to maintain nonviolent discipline. If serious violence appears possible, more active nonviolent intervention may be required to prevent the violence.

The inefficacy of repression

If the nonviolent resisters remain fearless, disciplined, and persistent, then the opponents' attempt to force them to submit will likely be thwarted.

Arresting leaders and banning their organizations are insufficient to end the resistance and are likely to stifle the movement only when it is weak and people are fearful. Such repression will likely fail to crush a movement under the following conditions:

- A widespread and intensive education program on nonviolent struggle has been conducted.
- People have considerable experience in using the technique.
- Advance training has taken place and a widely distributed manual is available on how to resist nonviolently.
- Successive layers of leadership have been selected in advance.
- The first leaders set the example of fearless action, risking arrest or other serious repression.

The result of such advanced developments may be the decentralization of leadership, increased self-reliance among the resisters, and adherence to nonviolent discipline.

Repressive measures may even become new points of resistance, without increasing the resistance group's original demands. Various measures of repression may be utilized as new points to practice civil disobedience and political noncooperation to continue the group's struggle to gain its original goals.

In this situation, even an intensification of repression may fail, and may instead aggravate the opponents' problems and further

erode their own power. If the methods of noncooperation used have been appropriate for the conflict, and applied widely, strongly, and persistently, the opponents' control of the situation—and even their ability to maintain their position—may become seriously weakened. Instead of repression helping the opponents to restore control, the repression may even trigger the additional force of political ju-jitsu against the opponents.

Chapter Thirty-two

NONCOOPERATION AND POLITICAL JU-JITSU

An asymmetrical conflict situation

The opponents' difficulties in dealing with nonviolent struggle are primarily associated with the special dynamics of this technique, as we have explored in the chapters of this Part. The main impact of the use of the methods of protest, noncooperation, and nonviolent intervention is due to the leverages they produce as a result of the nature of those methods themselves, as we will discuss shortly.

In addition, under certain conditions, the impact of a disciplined nonviolent struggle that has been met with harsh repression may in some cases be supplemented by a process called political ju-jitsu. This process requires special attention, and we will discuss it in detail after we examine the processes operating in the majority of nonviolent struggles in which political ju-jitsu may be absent.

The “weapons” of nonviolent struggle¹

To be effective, the nonviolent resisters must apply only *their own* weapons system. These “weapons,” or specific methods of opposition and pressure, are capable of changing selected social, economic, or political relationships of power. There are a multitude of such methods. We shall now review these three classes, which were listed in Chapter Four, with primary attention devoted to the potential impact of noncooperation.

Nonviolent protest and persuasion

The class of nonviolent protest and persuasion consists of mainly symbolic acts of peaceful opposition or attempted persuasion, extending beyond verbal expressions but stopping short of noncooperation or nonviolent intervention. Among these methods are parades, vigils, picketing, posters, teach-ins, mourning, and protest meetings.

Their use may simply show that the resisters are *against* something. For example, picketing may express opposition to a law that restricts dissemination of particular literature. The methods of this class may also be applied to express support *for* something. For example, group lobbying may support a clean-air bill pending in the legislature. Nonviolent protest and persuasion also may express deep personal feelings or moral condemnation on a social or political issue. For example, a vigil on Hiroshima Day may express penance for the American atomic bombing of that Japanese city on August 6, 1945. The point of concern for the nonviolent protesters may be a particular deed, law, policy, general condition, or a whole regime or system.

The act of protest may be intended primarily to influence the *opponents*—by arousing attention and publicity for an issue, with a hope to convince them to accept a proposed change. Or, the protest may be intended to warn the opponents of the depth or extent of feeling on an issue, which may lead to more severe action if a change the protesters want is not made. Or, the action may be intended primarily to influence the *grievance group*—the

¹ The following discussion of the methods of nonviolent action—and of noncooperation in particular—is heavily based upon Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, pp. 109-445.

persons directly affected by the issue—to induce them to take action themselves, such as participating in a strike or an economic boycott. Sometimes, a method of nonviolent protest and persuasion, such as a pilgrimage, may also be associated with another activity, such as collection of money for famine victims. Or, fraternization within the context of resistance may be intended to help induce a later mutiny by occupation soldiers.

Unless combined with other methods, the methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion usually remain expressions of a point of view, or an attempt in action to influence others to accept a point of view or to take a specific action. This attempt is distinguished from the social, economic, or political pressures imposed by noncooperation or nonviolent intervention.

There are political circumstances in which some of the forms of nonviolent protest, such as marches, are illegal. Under such circumstances, these methods would merge with civil disobedience and possibly other forms of noncooperation.

The impact of the methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion will vary considerably. Also, where a particular method is common, its impact may possibly be less than where that method has hitherto been rare or unknown. The political conditions in which the method is applied are likely to influence its impact. Dictatorial conditions make an act of nonviolent protest and persuasion less possible, more dangerous, and rarer. Hence, a forbidden or less frequent act may be more dramatic and may gain greater attention than it would in conditions in which the act is common or acceptable. Demonstrations of protest and persuasion may precede or accompany acts of noncooperation or nonviolent intervention, or may be practiced in their absence.

The methods of noncooperation

Noncooperation is the second and largest class of the methods of nonviolent action. Overwhelmingly, the methods of nonviolent action involve noncooperation with the opponents.

The many methods of noncooperation are acts of deliberate restriction, discontinuance, or withholding of social, economic, or political cooperation with the person, activity, policy, institution, or regime with which the resisters have become engaged in conflict. The resisters may reduce or cease existing cooperation, or

they may withhold new forms of assistance, or both. The noncooperation may be spontaneous or planned, and it may be legal or illegal.

With some forms of noncooperation, people may totally ignore members of the opponent group, looking through them as though they do not exist. With other forms, they may refuse to buy certain products, or they may stop working. The resisters may disobey laws they regard as immoral, refuse to disperse a street demonstration, or refuse to pay taxes.

By applying methods of this class, the resisters often can use their usual roles in the society as means of resistance. For example, consumers refuse to purchase, laborers refuse to work, citizens disobey orders or practice civil disobedience, civil servants stall or ignore illegitimate policies and orders, police and judges refuse to enforce illegitimate edicts, and on and on for a multitude of roles and usual activities.

Noncooperation on a large scale or at crucial points produces a slowing or halting of normal operations of the relevant unit, institution, government, or society. In very extreme applications of widespread determined noncooperation, even a highly oppressive regime can simply fall to pieces. This impact of noncooperation can be produced by extensively and persistently restricting or withholding the sources of political power that were identified in Chapter Two.

The degree of noncooperation practiced and its precise forms vary widely. Noncooperation includes three subclasses: social noncooperation, economic noncooperation (economic boycotts and strikes), and political noncooperation.

Social noncooperation

These methods involve a refusal to continue normal social relations, either particular or general ones, with persons or groups regarded as having perpetrated some wrong or injustice. They may also involve a refusal to comply with certain behavior patterns or social practices. These methods include ostracism of persons, noncooperation with social events, customs and institutions, or withdrawal from the social system as means of expressing opposition. The impact of these methods depends on the previous importance of the affected social relationships.

Economic noncooperation

Economic forms of noncooperation are much more numerous than the forms of social noncooperation. Economic noncooperation consists of a suspension of economic relationships. The first subclass within economic noncooperation is *economic boycotts*—the refusal to continue or to undertake certain economic relationships, especially the buying, selling, or handling of goods and services.

Economic boycotts may be spontaneous, or may be deliberately initiated by a particular group. In either case, they usually become organized efforts to withdraw, and to induce others to withdraw, economic cooperation by restricting the buying from or selling to an individual, group, or country.

Economic boycotts have been conducted by consumers, workers and producers, middlemen, owners and management, holders of financial resources, and governments. The issues in an economic boycott are normally economic, but they are not necessarily so. They can be political, for example. Motivations and objectives of economic boycotts have varied from economic and political to social and cultural.

The second subclass of economic noncooperation consists of various forms of *the strike*, which is the restriction or suspension of labor. The strike involves a refusal to continue economic cooperation through work. It is a collective, deliberate—and normally temporary—suspension of labor designed to exert pressure on others within the same economic, political, and, sometimes, social or cultural unit. A strike aims to produce some change in the relationships of the conflicting groups, usually the granting of certain demands made by the strikers as a precondition for their resumption of work.

The collective nature of the strike gives this type of noncooperation its characteristics and power. Strikes are largely associated with modern industrial organizations. They also occur, however, within agricultural societies and under various other circumstances. Strikes are possible wherever people work for someone else.

Strikes are almost always specific, in the sense of being for or against an issue that is important to the strikers. Theoretically, any number of workers might act together to hold a strike, but in

practice the number of strikers must be sufficiently large to disrupt seriously, or to halt completely, continued operations of at least a specific economic unit. As with violence and alternative powerful forms of nonviolent action, the threat of a serious strike may be sufficient to induce concessions from the opponent group. Strikes may be either spontaneous or planned.

Strikes have taken the forms of symbolic strikes, agricultural strikes, strikes by special groups, ordinary industrial strikes, restricted strikes, multi-industry strikes, and combinations of strikes and economic closures. Strikes may paralyze a single factory or the economy of a whole country.

Political noncooperation

The methods of political noncooperation involve refusals to continue the usual forms of political participation under existing conditions. Sometimes they are called political boycotts. Individuals and small groups may practice methods of this class. Normally, however, political noncooperation involves large numbers of people in corporate, concerted, usually temporary, suspensions of normal political obedience, cooperation, and behavior. Political noncooperation may also be undertaken by government personnel—or even by governments themselves.

The purpose of political noncooperation may simply be to protest, or it may be personal dissociation from an issue seen as morally or politically objectionable, without much consideration of consequences. More frequently, however, an act of political noncooperation is designed to exert specific pressure on the government, or an illegitimate group attempting to seize control of the governmental apparatus. The aim of political noncooperation may be to achieve a particular limited objective or a change in broader government policies. Or, the aim may be to change the nature or composition of that government, or even to disintegrate it. Where political noncooperation is practiced against internal usurpers, as in a coup d'état, its aim will be to defend and to restore the legitimate government.

The political significance of these methods increases in proportion both to the numbers participating and to their needed cooperation for the operation of the political system. In actual

struggles, this class of methods is frequently combined with other forms of nonviolent action.

Political noncooperation may take an almost infinite number of expressions, depending on the particular situation. Basically, all of the expressions stem from a desire not to assist the opponents through performance or cessation of certain types of political behavior.

Political noncooperation includes the methods of rejection of authority, citizen noncooperation with government, citizen alternatives to obedience, action by government personnel, domestic governmental action, and international governmental action.

Nonviolent intervention

The methods of nonviolent intervention are characterized by the nonviolent resisters taking the initiative to a greater degree than with the methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion and the methods of noncooperation. Methods of nonviolent intervention may be used both defensively—to thwart an attack by opponents by maintaining independent initiative, behavior patterns, institutions, or the like—and offensively—to carry the struggle for the resisters' objectives into the opponents' own camp, even without any immediate provocation. In general, the methods of nonviolent intervention are more risky for the participants than the methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion or noncooperation. Also, by their nature, most of the methods of nonviolent intervention can only be practiced by a limited number of people for a limited period of time. This is, in part, because of the form of action initiated and in part because the participants must exercise more courage and discipline in the face of severe repression than would usually be required, for example, from strike participants.

Nonviolent intervention has taken the forms of psychological, physical, social, economic, and political intervention. The impact of these may differ from their form. Psychological intervention (such as a fast) may have a political impact. A physical intervention (such as sitting down on the streets or in an office) may also make a political point. Social intervention (for example, establishing new relationships that violate separation of racial or ethnic groups) may have psychological or political consequences.

These methods may disrupt, and even destroy, established behavior patterns, policies, relationships, or institutions that are seen as objectionable. Or, they may establish new behavior patterns, policies, relationships, or institutions that are preferred.

Compared with the methods of the classes of protest and persuasion and of noncooperation, some methods of nonviolent intervention pose a more direct and immediate challenge to the status quo. For example, intervention by a sit-in at a lunch counter disrupts the established pattern of service more immediately and completely than would, say, picketing or a consumers' boycott, even though the objective of both types of action may be to end racial discrimination. Although the challenge by intervention is more direct, success is not necessarily more rapid, partly because more severe repression may be a first result—which, of course, does not necessarily mean defeat. Persistence in the intervention is likely to be both required and more costly to the resisters. If they are unwilling to pay that cost, the action may quickly end. However, with persistence and perhaps increased numbers, a victory may sometimes (but not always) come more quickly by the use of the methods of this class than with the use of methods of protest and noncooperation, because the disruptive effects of the intervention are harder for the opponents to tolerate or withstand for a considerable period.

In most cases, use of the methods of nonviolent intervention may induce change through the mechanisms of accommodation or nonviolent coercion, without the opponents' being convinced that they ought to change their policy on the question. However, certain of these methods (especially those classified as psychological intervention, such as the fast) may contribute to the opponents' conversion, or at least to the opponents becoming less certain of the validity of their previous views and policies. These mechanisms of conversion, accommodation, nonviolent coercion, and disintegration will be discussed in the next chapter.

The predominant impact of noncooperation

From this review of the classes of methods of nonviolent struggle, it should be clear that the respective pressures exerted by each class operate whether or not political ju-jitsu is a significant factor in that particular conflict.

Also, determined and strong opponents may more easily withstand the persuasive and moral pressures of the methods of non-violent protest and persuasion and the more provocative actions of nonviolent intervention than the steady impact of powerful economic and political applications of noncooperation.

The ways noncooperation wields its power will vary with the particular conflict situation, the resisters' chosen strategy, and the forms of pressure they have chosen to apply. However, the opponents will have an extremely serious problem if

- the previous social, economic, or political patterns and institutions no longer function as they previously did;
- the people, groups, and institutions that are required to operate the system, to implement the opponents' policies and programs, and to enforce obedience refuse to do so;
- new programs, policies, and structures of the opponents remain stillborn;
- the supply of the sources of the opponents' power are seriously weakened or severed; and
- these conditions persist despite retaliatory repression.

The resisters are then in a strong position of power. As long as the noncooperation can persist and the resisters remain strong and able to withstand the retaliation for their defiance, there is an excellent chance that they will attain their objectives.

Political ju-jitsu

Nonviolent action operates as though it were especially designed to be waged against opponents able and willing to use violent repression. Nonviolent struggle against violent repression creates a special, asymmetrical, conflict situation. In this situation, repression will not necessarily succeed in stifling the resistance.

In some nonviolent conflicts, but not all, the nonviolent resisters can use this asymmetry on a political level similar to the Japanese martial art of personal combat, ju-jitsu. In traditional ju-jitsu, the attacker's violent thrust is not met with physical blockage or a counter thrust. Instead, the attacked person pulls the opponent forward in the same direction the attacker has already

started to strike. This causes the opponent to lose balance and fall forward as a result of the acceleration of the force of the attacker's own forward thrust.

In a comparable sense, in political ju-jitsu the opponents' violent attack is not met with counter-violence, but instead with nonviolent defiance. This can cause their violent repression to rebound against their own position, to weaken their power, and also to strengthen the resisters. It can also turn third parties against the opponents, create internal opposition among the opponents' usual supporters, and even lead them to support the resisters.

There are no guarantees here. The outcome of the struggle depends on various important factors, just as the outcome of a military war does. However, the potential consequences of the operation of political ju-jitsu are so important that a solid understanding of the process is highly merited. In an actual conflict, it may be wise to try to facilitate the process.

For the above changes to occur, the nonviolent resisters must refuse to use violence, because that is where their opponents are stronger. The use of violence predictably makes these shifts of power much more difficult. Instead of using violence, the resisters must continue using nonviolent weapons only, with which they are stronger. This persistence can increase the resisters' power.

Using the opponents' power to weaken them

When brutal repression is inflicted on strictly nonviolent resisters, this can cause the opponents to be exposed in the worst possible light. This exposure, in turn, may lead to shifts in opinion, then in actions, and finally to shifts in power relationships favorable to the nonviolent struggle group. These shifts occur as the result of withdrawal of supports for the opponents, while the supports for the nonviolent group become stronger. The resisters' maintenance of nonviolent discipline helps the opponents' repression to rebound and to throw the opponents off balance politically.

Political ju-jitsu operates in only some cases where major brutalities are inflicted on clearly nonviolent and courageous resisters. At times, political ju-jitsu does not operate at all, or does so in only one or two of the three possible ways. Even then, political

ju-jitsu may operate only partially, and not as a dominant factor in determining the outcome of the conflict.

Political ju-jitsu operates among three broad groups:

- The general grievance group and the usually smaller group of nonviolent resisters
- The opponents' usual supporters, on various levels, including among the general population, the opponents' functionaries, administrators, and enforcement agents, and at times even the top echelons of officials
- Uncommitted third parties, whether on the local or the world level

Increasing support and participation from the grievance group

Harsh repression often has an intimidating effect on nonviolent resisters. For example, although various dispersed acts of popular defiance in Beijing followed the massacre in Tiananmen Square the night of June 4-5, 1989, such as attempts to block intersections, these efforts were too limited to develop into a wider struggle employing widespread and tenacious forms of noncooperation. However, such limited reactions to harsh repression are not the universal response in all nonviolent struggles. In another case, a similar massacre on January 9, 1905, in St. Petersburg led to a large-scale revolution that would earlier have been impossible.² A careful investigation is merited into the conditions under which these differing responses occur.

Sometimes, the harsh repression against courageous nonviolent resisters will motivate a larger number of people from the general grievance group to join in active resistance. There have been examples of this increase in the number of resisters from various nonviolent struggles, including the Norwegian resistance to Nazi occupation, the U.S. civil rights struggles, the 1944 struggle against the dictatorship in El Salvador, and the Indian struggles for independence from the British Empire.

² See the quotations and references in Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston, Massachusetts: Porter Sargent, 1973), pp. 679-680.

Repression can legitimize the resistance movement because it “deepens the injustice” and “reveals the true nature of the opponents.” The consequences of this may strengthen the resistance in two ways. The determination of the existing nonviolent resisters may intensify, and they may become willing to take more extreme and dangerous actions. Also, the points at which resistance is conducted may be expanded. Additionally, members of the wider grievance group may decide at such times that they should no longer observe from the sidelines, but instead directly participate in the resistance. This process will increase the number of resisters.

Whether or not repression produces these effects varies from case to case. However, the behavior that is most likely to produce the effects of political ju-jitsu is the same type of behavior that is wise if the resisters aim to win. That is, the resisters must withstand the repression, maintain their resistance and nonviolent discipline, and adhere to the strategic plan for the conflict. The resisters at times may wisely change the specific methods they are using, but the resistance must not collapse and they must not resort to violence.

Arousing dissent and opposition in the opponents' own group

Extreme repression against violent resisters is unlikely to provoke protests and opposition from persons and groups within the opponents' own group, who may see the severity of the repression to be necessary or justified. In contrast, extreme repression against nonviolent resisters *is* more likely to create opposition from within the opponents' own group. Harsh repression against nonviolent resisters may be perceived as unreasonable, distasteful, inhumane, or harmful to the opponents' own society.

When the resisters are nonviolent, it is much easier for members of the opponent group to advise caution in dealing with the situation, or to recommend responses other than current measures of repression, or even to dissent from the policy at issue. Severe repression may be seen as too high a price to pay for continued denial of the claims of the nonviolent group.

It has often been argued that the impact of the nonviolent struggles in India in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s was greater be-

cause the British were “gentlemen.” Therefore some people in Britain would protest against beatings and killings of Indian nonviolent resisters. This argument is incorrect. The British populace mostly did not protest against harsh repression of the Mau Mau violent resisters in Kenya during British rule in the 1950s or against the saturation bombings of German residential districts during the Second World War. The Indian choice to use nonviolent struggle instead of violence greatly facilitated protests in Britain against harsh repression. Crowds of textile mill workers in Lancashire even welcomed Gandhi when he visited them while in England in 1931, even though their work had been hard hit by the Indian boycott of British and other foreign cloth.

The impact of repression against nonviolent resisters on members of the opponent group may take several positive forms.

A. Questioning both repression and the cause

In the asymmetrical conflict situation—violent repression versus nonviolent struggle—some members of the opponents’ population and their usual supporters may begin to question the violent repression against the nonviolent resisters and also reexamine the issues at stake in the conflict. Members of the opponent group may have these reactions:

- feelings that the repression and the 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 internal changes are required
- active sympathy for the nonviolent group and its cause
- various types of positive assistance to the cause of the grievance group and aid to the nonviolent resisters

B. Defections in the opponents’ group

Revulsion at the brutality of repression against courageous nonviolent resisters at times has caused individuals serving in the opponents’ government, police, or military forces to question both the opponents’ cause and the means being used to control

the resisters. This may result in unease, dissidence, and even defection and disobedience among these members of the opponents' group.³

C. Mutiny

Defections sometimes extend to police and troops who are charged with inflicting repression. They may become deliberately inefficient in carrying out orders or may even mutiny. Sometimes only individuals disobey and desert, but there are historical cases where whole military units have deserted or defected to the cause of the nonviolent resisters.

D. Splits in the opponents' regime

Brutalities against the nonviolent resisters at times may also lead the opponents' regime to split into factions with different views concerning policies, means of control, and personnel issues. Individuals or groups with long-simmering personal rivalries may then express those rivalries through legitimate policy differences.

Winning over uncommitted third parties

Repression against nonviolent resisters may at times attract wide public and even international attention to the struggle and may elicit strong sympathy for the suffering nonviolent group. This widespread attention obliges the leaders of the opponents to explain and to justify their policies.

However, "public opinion" favorable to the resisters alone will not lead to their triumph. The nonviolent group should not expect such shifts in opinion and support to occur, much less that the opponent group will concede solely because of such shifts. For example, despite worldwide outrage following the slaughter in

³ Aware that brutal repression may cause the opponent group grave problems, some nonviolent resisters may deliberately take provocative actions with the expectation that brutal repression will provoke defectors from the opponents' forces. Also, the nonviolent group may directly appeal for support from members of the opponent group. Sometimes, new splits are created, and other times pre-existing ones are aggravated. In contrast, violence by resisters generally tends to unite the opponent group. It is a sound strategic principle not to unite your opponents against you. It is wise to act so as to aggravate internal problems and divisions among your opponents, and potentially to achieve some tolerance—or even support—of your position.

Tiananmen Square in June 1989, the Chinese officials for many years refused to admit any error in their actions.

Frequently, determined opponents can ignore hostile opinion until or unless it leads to, or threatens, shifts in power relationships. However, when international indignation is turned into concrete actions, such as withdrawal of credit, severance of supplies, or the imposition of economic and diplomatic sanctions, it becomes more powerful against the opponents and the indignation becomes much more difficult for them to ignore.

Public opinion favoring the nonviolent resisters can be a powerful supporting force, but it is no substitute for the mobilized capacity for nonviolent struggle by the nonviolent resisters and the wider grievance group.

Factors determining the impact of third party opinion

Four groups of factors will determine whether or not the opponents are affected by changes in the opinion of third parties:

(1) Are the third parties internal or international? The impact of changes in opinion and the consequent actions of internal, as opposed to international, third parties will differ considerably. Generally, one can expect that internal dissention and opposition to repression are likely to pose a more immediate and serious problem than international opposition. The latter may take considerable time to have an impact, which the opponents may anticipate, leaving time for the resistance to be crushed and the international opposition to fade away. Individual analysis on a case-by-case basis is required, however.

(2) The nature of the opponents and the conflict situation. Opponents confronted by nonviolent struggle are not all alike. Some are far more sensitive to public opinion than others. The following questions should be considered: Is the regime democratic or autocratic? What is its ideology and who are the resisters and the grievance group? What is the regime's attitude towards the resistance? How important to the regime are the issues? How do the opponents perceive the role of repression? In what kind of social system are the events taking place? Are the opponents sensitive to the opinion of third parties, or dependent on them in any way?

(3) Actions that result from changed opinions. Once the change of opinion of third parties has been achieved, who takes action against the opponent regime, 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 to the internal resistance, 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. Third party actions have generally been symbolic, and therefore weak. More substantial types of supporting actions, especially among international third parties, have generally been limited to economic sanctions, while technical assistance to support the internal resistance to an oppressive regime has almost always been nonexistent, although that could change.

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 immediately affected by the opponents' policies.

(4) Shifts in third party opinion to support the cause of the nonviolent group. These shifts 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 the opponent group.

The future of third party support

Third party and international support has generally had limited use and effectiveness. Perhaps, in the future, new forms of support could be launched, such as a supply of literature and handbooks about nonviolent struggle, offering generic advice on how to conduct strategic planning for nonviolent action, providing printing facilities or services, making available radio broadcasting facilities and equipment, and providing bases and centers for study and training in this type of struggle.

Less severe repression and counter-nonviolent action?

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

In the light of the opponents' risks when using harsh repression, they may experiment with less severe control measures and even seek to minimize their own violence. Sometimes they may even use counter-nonviolent action. Such cases of counter-nonviolent action that have already occurred may be the first tentative attempts to move toward a new type of conflict situation in which *both* sides rely on nonviolent action as their ultimate sanction.

Summary: altering power relations

The power of each contender in a conflict in which nonviolent action is used is continually variable. Sometimes this is a result of political ju-jitsu, as well as other forces unleashed by this technique. The shifts induced by political ju-jitsu may become obvious only after they have occurred.

The restriction or the withholding of support from the opponents and the nonviolent resisters will affect the sources of power available to each side. These shifts in power capacity can be extreme.

Whether this potential is realized depends on the circumstances and behavior of the participants. The factors related to the nonviolent resisters include the degree to which they assist the operation of political ju-jitsu by their nonviolent discipline, persistence, and choice of strategy and tactics.

Political ju-jitsu does not operate in all nonviolent struggles, as noted earlier. However, there are other means by which power relationships may be changed by nonviolent struggle. Even in the absence of extreme repression or political ju-jitsu, the methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and nonviolent intervention can wield very significant power if competently applied.

Chapter Thirty-three

FOUR WAYS SUCCESS MAY BE ACHIEVED

Four routes to success

Nonviolent struggle can be successful only when the necessary conditions exist or have been created. More often than is usually recognized, it is within the capacity of the resisters to create many of these conditions through deliberate acts.

It is possible to distinguish four broad processes, or mechanisms, that can bring success: conversion, accommodation, non-violent coercion, and disintegration.

Conversion

“By conversion we mean that the opponent, as the result of the actions of the nonviolent struggle group or person, comes around to a new point of view which embraces the ends of the nonviolent

actor,” wrote George Lakey.¹ This mechanism may be influenced by reason, argumentation, emotions, beliefs, attitudes, and morals.

Conversion in nonviolent struggle thus aims 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 the nonviolent struggle group in its own attitudes and actions seeks to separate the “evil” from the “evildoer,” to remove the “evil” while salvaging the “evildoer.”

Self-suffering is often considered important in triggering conversion. Some users of nonviolent struggle believe that self-suffering is not only required to neutralize or to immobilize the opponents’ repression, but also that it can be the main means to convert the opponents. Suffering, some contend, attacks rationalizations and overcomes indifference. Suffering then is no longer only a risk, it also becomes a weapon.

The greater the “social distance”—the degree of separation of “fellow feeling,” mutual understanding, and empathy—between the contending groups, the less the possibility of conversion. The lesser the social distance, the easier will be the possibility of conversion. Some nonviolent resisters seeking conversion of their opponents may take steps to reduce or to remove the social distance between the contending groups in order to facilitate this mechanism.

Conversion may result because of rational and/or emotional changes in the opponents’ thinking and views. Precisely what these changes are will differ, depending on the individuals, the events, and how long the process has been in operation. Conversion may result in various changes in the opponents’ behavior, beliefs, feelings, or worldviews. Individuals differ widely in their susceptibility to conversion.

The factors influencing conversion include the degree of conflict of interest and the social distance between the contending groups, the personalities of the opponents, shared or contrasting beliefs and norms between the groups, and the role of third parties.

¹ George Lakey, “The Sociological Mechanisms of Nonviolent Struggle” (*Peace Research Reviews*, vol. II, no. 6 [December 1968]), p. 12.

If the nonviolent struggle group deliberately seeks to achieve change through conversion of its opponents, it can facilitate this mechanism by refraining from violence and hostility, attempting to gain the opponents' trust by truthfulness, remaining open concerning intentions, exhibiting 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, or developing empathy.

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. Many practitioners of nonviolent struggle even reject conversion, believing it to be impossible or impractical. If conversion fails, or is not attempted, nonviolent struggle offers three other mechanisms by which change can be achieved.

Accommodation

In accommodation, the opponents are neither converted nor nonviolently coerced. The opponents, without having changed their minds fundamentally about the issues involved, resolve to grant at least some of the demands of the nonviolent resisters. The opponents decide to yield on an issue rather than risk a still more unsatisfactory result. Influences that might otherwise have led to conversion or to nonviolent coercion may be involved. Accommodation occurs while the opponents still have a choice. However, the social situation has been so significantly changed by the conflict that the opponents must accept some changes. Among the factors leading to accommodation are these:

- Violent repression is seen as no longer appropriate.
- The opponents believe they are eliminating a nuisance by accommodating themselves to some or all of the resisters' demands.
- The opponents are adjusting to opposition within their own group, and acting to prevent the growth of that opposition.

- The opponents are acting to minimize economic losses that 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 people from learning how much power the populace really can wield.

Nonviolent coercion and disintegration

In nonviolent coercion, the opponents are not converted, nor do they decide to accommodate to the demands. Rather, shifts of social forces and power relationships produce the changes sought by the resisters against the will of the opponents, while the opponents still remain in their existing positions. (This assumes that the changes sought do not include the removal of government officials or the disintegration of the regime.)

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

- The defiance becomes too widespread and massive to be controlled by the opponents' repression and other means of control.
- The noncooperation and the defiance make it impossible for the social, economic, and political system to operate unless the resisters' demands are achieved.
- Even the opponents' ability to apply repression is undermined or dissolved because their own forces for applying repression (police or military) become unreliable or disintegrate.

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

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

- whether the opponents' will is blocked despite their continued efforts to impose it; and

- whether the opponents have the capacity to implement their will.

Coercion is the use of either physical or nonphysical force to compel or restrict action.

Nonviolent coercion resulting from widespread noncooperation can at times be so effective that it temporarily paralyzes the opponents' power. The concept of disintegration takes the process one step further.

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 opponents' regime or group falls completely apart. No coherent body remains capable even of accepting defeat. The opponents' power has been dissolved.

The power of coercion and disintegration is possible because of the capacity of nonviolent struggle to cut off the opponents' sources of power, which were discussed in Chapter Two. This technique becomes coercive or disintegrative when the people applying it decisively withhold or withdraw the necessary sources of the opponents' power in the following areas:

(1) Authority: The mere 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 opponents' authority may weaken or even dissolve. In addition, the people who have repudiated the opponents' authority may then, under extreme circumstances, 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 required for the opponents' power. These may include the general population, and the grievance group, as well as the nonviolent resisters. 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 noncooperating. A challenge by nonvio-

lent struggle seems especially likely to aggravate conflicts within the opponents' regime, thereby reducing the available skills, knowledge, insight, energy, and the like needed to deal with the challenge.

(4) Intangible factors: Nonviolent struggle can threaten habits of obedience, and bring political beliefs and official dogmas into question. The resistance and disobedience may reflect prior changes in attitudes and beliefs, and may also help to erode further the habit of unquestioning obedience and to develop conscious choice of whether or not to obey.

(5) Material resources: Nonviolent resistance may regulate the amount of material resources available to the opponents. These resources include transportation, communication, economic and financial resources, raw materials, and the like. Of the 198 methods of nonviolent struggle, 61 are directly economic in form: 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 struggle. Those who help to provide the sanctions—the police and the military forces—may carry out orders inefficiently, or in extreme cases ignore them or disobey them completely. Such laxity or disobedience is more likely against nonviolent resistance than violent resistance. The reduced reliability of sanctions, or even their severance as a result of mutinies, will have a serious impact on the opponents' power position.

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

- The number of nonviolent resisters is very large.
- The opponents depend on the resisters for the sources of the opponents' power.
- The group or groups refusing assistance to the opponents are significant in terms of the assistance normally provided.

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

Skillfully applied nonviolent struggle may offer greater chances of success than political violence in the same circumstances. However, victory cannot be guaranteed. Changes will occur, for better or worse. Frequently, as in all conflicts, the results are mixtures of defeat and success in varying proportions.

Chapter Thirty-four

THE REDISTRIBUTION OF POWER

What consequences of success?

Sometimes one hears extremely different claims about the consequences of successful nonviolent struggle. Some hostile critics have casually claimed that chaos—not a more free or just society—will result. Other critics have said that the result will be a new dictatorship following the breakdown of the previous ordered system. Neither of these possibilities is likely to result when a disciplined nonviolent struggle has occurred, and especially not when it has been at least moderately successful.

Disciplined nonviolent resistance is not chaotic or disorderly. Effective nonviolent action involves both self-discipline and group discipline, as well as order. In fact, the more discipline is evident in nonviolent action, the more effective the struggle is likely to be, and also the less chance of later disorder and chaos.

It is true that several cases of nonviolent struggle have been followed by the establishment of a new dictatorship. Sometimes, for any of several possible motives, an authoritarian or dictatorial group may seek to exploit the unstable transition period by seiz-

ing control of the State, as we have already noted. Wise nonviolent struggle strategists and leaders should anticipate this danger and prepare and publicize plans for massive noncooperation to deter and defeat such attempted usurpations.

Both chaos and dictatorship are contrary to major trends in the long-term consequences of nonviolent struggle. Assuming that at least a moderately competent application of nonviolent struggle has occurred, the nonviolent technique of struggle has important lasting effects both on the nonviolent struggle group itself and on the distribution of power between the contenders in the conflict and within the wider system.

Effects on the nonviolent struggle group

The technique of nonviolent action produces changes in the participants. The strength of the nonviolent resisters is likely to grow as the struggle proceeds. Consequently, power becomes more widely diffused in the society, rather than concentrated in the hands of any oppressive elite.

Participation in nonviolent action both requires and produces an end to passive submission to the opponents' will. This participation also helps to correct a lack of self-confidence, negative self-images, a sense of helplessness and inferiority, a dislike of responsibility, or a desire to be dominated, which are often present in subservient populations. During the course of successful nonviolent struggles, these feelings tend to be replaced by their opposites.

Even more important than the changes produced by the nonviolent struggle on the opponents is the strengthening of the former subordinates who have learned to use this technique. This experience teaches them that they can act together with others with the same grievance and can make a major impact on improving their situation. Participation in struggle teaches them that people who were once weak can become strong.

Experience in using nonviolent action has also shown that participation tends to increase the degree of fearlessness among the resisters. Initially, the nonviolent resisters may need consciously to control both their fear and anger. Later, the fear may subside. By learning that they can remain firm in the face of repression, they often gain a sense of liberation from fear. With the reduction

or loss of fear, nonviolent resisters diminish, or can even eliminate, one of the major sources of the opponents' power: fear of punishment. This will not only weaken the current opponents but enhance the ability of the grievance group over the long term to remain free of oppression from any future opponents as well.

Jawaharlal Nehru, who was never a believer in ethical nonviolence, reported that participation in noncooperation gave the Indian masses "a tremendous feeling of release. . . . a throwing-off of a great burden, a new sense of freedom. The fear that had crushed them retired into the background, and they straightened their backs and raised their heads."¹ Similar reports have come from very different struggles in other parts of the world.

Hierarchical systems exist in part because the subordinates submit as a result of seeing themselves as inferiors. Therefore, two steps to challenge and to end the hierarchical system are first, to get the members of the subordinate group to see themselves as full human beings who are not inferior to anyone; and, second, to get them to behave in ways consistent with that enhanced view of themselves. Members of the previously subordinated group learn they are capable of resistance and of wielding significant power to correct the problems they face.

Despite the hardships of struggle, the nonviolent resisters may find the experience satisfying. This has been reported from diverse conflicts, including the pro-Jewish strike in Amsterdam, under Nazi occupation in February 1941:

To those who had participated, the strike provided a sense of relief since it represented an active repudiation of the German regime. . . . In the strike the working population had discovered its own identity in defiance of the occupying power.²

Participation may bring a new spirit, sense of self-worth, and hope for the future.

The effectiveness of nonviolent action increases when the resisters and the general grievance group possess a high degree of internal unity. Violence usually excludes some people from participation because of age, sex, physical condition, beliefs, or distaste. However, nonviolent action seems to contribute to internal

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography* (New edition: London: The Bodley Head, 1953), p. 69.

² Werner Warmbrunn, *The Dutch Under German Occupation, 1940-1945* (Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 1963), p. 111.

unity, and attracts wider and more heterogeneous groups to take part. This growth has been seen in the labor movement, as E. T. Hiller reported: Conflict “solidifies the group.” “Under attack, strikers perceive the identity of their interests.”³

The withdrawal of cooperation from the opponents and their system need not lead to confusion and disorganization. Instead, such withdrawal tends to produce greater cooperation within the general grievance group and among the resisters particularly. The movement against the 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. Massive political noncooperation requires development of alternative social and political institutions, in extreme cases potentially leading to parallel government. This was an explicit part of the mid-nineteenth century Hungarian resistance to Austrian rule.⁴

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 other people may follow the example in dealing with their own problems. Although violence may also be contagious, the consequences are very different. There were repeated instances during the Russian 1905 Revolution in which strikes and other methods of struggle spread by imitation. Small successes from strikes earlier in the year 1905 led to expansion of trade union organizations and more strikes. Similarly, limited political successes have sometimes prodded nonviolent resisters to press on for larger objectives.⁵

Although the effects of nonviolent struggle on the opponents are very important, in the long run the effects on the nonviolent resisters themselves are far reaching and potentially more important. If people are strong and learn to resist effectively, it becomes difficult or impossible for anyone to oppress them in the first

³ E.T. Hiller, *The Strike* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), pp. 30 and 90.

⁴ Arthur Griffith, *The Resurrection of Hungary: A Parallel for Ireland* (Third edition. Dublin: Wheland & Son, 1918), p. 170.

⁵ See Sidney Harcave, *First Blood: The Russian Revolution of 1905* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), pp. 77, 79-81, 134, 143-144, 154, 171, 176-177, and 215.

place. This strengthening of the grievance group will ultimately 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 in order to control an established government or a regime of domestic or foreign usurpers. If such groups and institutions are 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 political technique converge. There may be a causal connection between the relative concentration or diffusion of power in the society and the technique of struggle—political violence or nonviolent action—relied upon to maintain or to change the social system. Therefore, the choice between political violence or the technique of nonviolent struggle as the society's ultimate sanction may help determine the future capacity of that society to exercise popular control over any ruler or would-be ruler.

It has been widely recognized that violent revolutions and wars have been accompanied and followed by a tendency toward an increase in both the absolute power of the State and the relative centralization of power in its hands. Technological changes in military weaponry and transportation and the breakdown of the distinction of targeting and casualties between civilians and the military forces have accentuated this tendency. As was discussed in Chapter Two, centralized control by a self-selected clique directing the institutions of war can be later turned against the previous government and the population in order to seize and maintain political control. Because political violence often contributes to the destruction of a society's independent institutions, the population of a society that has used major violence may be less capable of resisting internal or foreign oppressors than a society that has used nonviolent methods of struggle and still has strong, independent institutions.

Nonviolent struggle, therefore, appears to have different long-term effects on the distribution of power within the society than does violent struggle. The nonviolent technique does not have the

centralizing effects of political violence. Instead, it seems that major application of organized nonviolent struggle increases the potential for greater popular control because this type of struggle contributes to increased diffusion of effective power throughout the society. People learn how to organize themselves and how to conduct resistance against identified opponents. Therefore, people are likely to develop greater freedom of action and, consequently, less dictatorship and greater democracy.

Widespread use of nonviolent action in place of political violence tends to diffuse power among the populace. The people using this technique become more self-reliant by developing their leadership capacities and improving their capacity to apply an effective means of struggle. Also, the power of the post-struggle governments is likely to be more limited, and the population is likely to have developed a reservoir capacity for nonviolent struggle for possible use against future dangers.

The leadership necessary in nonviolent struggle tends to be more democratic, does not rely on violence to maintain group cohesion, and depends upon the acceptance of its moral authority, political and strategic judgment, and popular support. Furthermore, although at times very important, the leadership of nonviolent struggles is changeable and can be temporary. Among the reasons for this are two: the leaders are often arrested or killed and the resistance itself consequently requires greater self-reliance among the participants. Under extreme conditions with severe repression, efficiency requires that the resisters be able to act without reliance on a central leadership group. This situation may affect the kind of leadership that develops and is accepted in nonviolent struggles, as compared to violent conflicts. Leaders of successful nonviolent struggles are less likely than those of successful violent struggles to become tyrants because the nonviolent technique tends to produce greater self-reliance among the population and to strengthen civil society.

The leaders of violent struggles can establish central control for two reasons. First, they are able to regulate and distribute the supply of military weapons and ammunition to the combatants and population. Second, they are able to command the application of violence, even against the population. In contrast, the leaders of nonviolent struggles cannot do this because the weapons of nonviolent action are not material ones.

Following a successful violent struggle, the State with its repressive capacity is likely to be larger than before the struggle. However, in the case of nonviolent struggles this is unlikely, and the population's capacity for popular struggle is likely to have increased. The society's independent institutions are also likely to have been strengthened through their roles in resistance. Consequently, they will be more able to function effectively in the future, both in peaceful times and in crises.

Nonviolent struggle can help citizens become 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.

People who know they have successful experience in applying an independent capacity for struggle are likely to be treated with greater care by their rulers because the populace is able to resist in order to secure and to defend their claimed rights.

However, it is unrealistic to expect that a successful nonviolent struggle for particular objectives will not only gain those goals but also will solve other problems that were not even in contention during the conflict. A single nonviolent campaign certainly will not eliminate future use of violence by that society or political system. Instead, replacement of violence with nonviolent action is likely to become possible by a series of specific substitutions for particular purposes, if and when those substitutions are seen to be desirable and effective.

The capacities developed to succeed in a nonviolent struggle can be used to defend the attained objectives from future threats, if the population chooses to use these capacities. Gains made by nonviolent struggle can therefore be relatively durable and do not require violence for their preservation.

This is, of course, a tendency, and not a guaranteed process. Following a successful nonviolent struggle, power may become more diffused among the population, giving the people greater control capacity than they previously had over their political future. However, under some circumstances this may not happen. The experience in popular power may be diminished, even in people's memory, and largely lost as people fall back into their previous views and patterns of submission. Which of these occurs, and to what degree, depends on the course of the nonviolent struggle, and on later choices and events. However, experience in

the effective use of nonviolent action arms the populace with knowledge of how to wield the nonviolent weapons if they so choose.

All of these indications are suggestive that nonviolent action and political violence may contribute to quite different types of societies. This possibility merits careful examination.

However, these characteristics alone do not ensure that no other forms of perceived social, economic, or political injustice will remain or will be practiced following a successful nonviolent struggle. Nor, in other cases, do these characteristics alone guarantee a vibrant, durable democracy after nonviolent struggle has defeated an oppressive government.

In several cases aiming at major political change, a dictatorial group has seized control of the State as a nonviolent struggle group approached success, as in Burma in 1988, or as the transition of power from the old regime was in process, as in the Russian Empire in 1917.

It is therefore important to plan how the new relationships will be implemented after success and, in cases in which major political change is the objective, to plan carefully the new democratic structure. It is necessary to strengthen the independent institutions of the society. It is also crucial to strengthen the population's capacity to resist new would-be oppressors or dictators. This means to spread among the population both a general understanding of nonviolent struggle and also specific strategies to defend newly won relationships and freedoms.

The future uses and effectiveness of nonviolent struggle depend in part upon gaining increased knowledge of its nature, deepening one's skills in applying this technique in crises, gaining greater strategic insight, and spreading this knowledge throughout society. In developing these capacities, there are roles for the contributions of many people.

PART FOUR
SHAPING THE FUTURE

INTRODUCTION TO STRATEGIC PLANNING

Knowledge of the past practice of nonviolent struggle and understanding of the processes that have operated in those cases are highly important. They help us to understand what has happened in the past and to think about what may well happen in the future.

However, this knowledge and understanding do not tell us what, if anything, we might do if we wish to make this type of struggle more effective in the future than it has been in the past. Considering the gravity of present conflicts in various parts of the world, and also projection about possible future forms of oppression, domination, and exploitation, it is highly desirable that people who choose to oppose these systems have at their disposal new information about how they can apply this technique still more effectively than it has been applied in the past.

One of the most important skills that will greatly contribute to making this technique more effective in the future is the ability to plan strategies for waging this technique of struggle in a variety of conflict situations.

Of course, the types of conflict situations and the nature of grievances will vary widely. Agricultural exploitation, foreign military occupation, an attempted coup d'état, ethnic conflicts, racial segregation, religious discrimination, and an established internal extreme dictatorship are all different types of conflicts. Fur-

thermore, even within any one of these categories, the individual conflicts will never be identical.

However, the one capacity that could greatly increase the effectiveness of future attempts to apply this technique is the capacity to plan strategies to guide the conduct of the struggle and to apply these new strategies skillfully.

In Chapter Thirty-five, we shall argue that this technique can be made more effective in the future than it has been in the past. This chapter gives an introduction to strategic planning and identifies some factors influencing the success of nonviolent struggle.

In Chapter Thirty-six, we shall introduce the importance of accurately assessing the conflict situation, then offer some tools on how to do so. We introduce the main categories of strategic thinking, ranging from grand strategy to individual methods. The chapter concludes with an examination of the development of a strategic plan before the struggle begins.

Chapter Thirty-seven offers some guidance on how to face various issues that are likely to arise during the course of a struggle, including determination of the objectives, the strengthening of the resisters, the role of leadership, undermining the sources of the opponents' power, and methods of conducting the struggle as the conflict unfolds, such as persistence in the face of repression.

Chapter Thirty-eight focuses on key elements during the struggle, among them preparations of the population for struggle, maintaining the momentum, monitoring the conflict, and bringing the conflict to an end.

The final chapter, Thirty-nine, introduces the potential application of this technique in place of violence in several acute problem areas. These include the dismantling of dictatorships, providing national defense, lifting oppression of rejected groups, the lifting of social and economic injustices, extending democratic practices and human rights, preventing dictatorships, and blocking genocide. These discussions are necessarily only introductory, but are topics on which much further attention is required as we enter a new phase in the historical development and practice of this alternative to both passivity and violence.

Chapter Thirty-five

MAKING NONVIOLENT STRUGGLE MORE EFFECTIVE

Success and defeat in nonviolent struggle

Conflicts conducted by nonviolent struggle have been far more effective in the past than is generally recognized. This is demonstrated by various cases that were described in previous chapters, which are only a sampling of the applications of this technique in the past century.

Nonviolent struggle is not magic. It sometimes succeeds in achieving the objectives for which it is waged and it sometimes fails to do so. Defeat in immediate political terms is always possible, just as it is in war or other violence. “Defeat” here means a failure to achieve the objectives of the struggle. “Success” means that the objectives of the struggle have been achieved. Sometimes, the results of a conflict may be mixtures of success and failure, with the objectives partially achieved and partially not achieved. This is also true of struggles conducted with violence.

The degree of effectiveness of nonviolent struggle must, of course, be compared to the degree of effectiveness of violent

struggle *in achieving the avowed objectives for which it is applied*, not simply in physically crushing the other group. Too often in discussions of effectiveness, it is assumed axiomatically that violence is the most powerful and effective force available to achieve the intended objectives. This is not true. If one measures the degree to which the original objectives of the conflict are actually achieved, the effectiveness of violent struggle is often quite limited and the effectiveness of nonviolent struggle is often greater than usually recognized. This is despite the fact that past cases of nonviolent struggle were usually improvised or had only minimal planning and preparations.

Dismissing simplistic explanations

In considering how to make nonviolent struggle more effective, it is essential to dismiss simplistic explanations and apologies for failure. These sometimes include the assertion that the avowed goal is not nearly as important as the resisters feeling good about their actions, that simple abstention from violence is sufficient, or that willingness of the resisters to die is most important. Feeling good, not engaging in violence, or being willing to die, when you have not achieved the goals of your struggle, does not change the fact that you have failed.

Many of the popular conceptions of what is required to make nonviolent action succeed are also not valid. Such misconceptions include the belief that success requires democratic, or even nonviolent, opponents. Some people have argued that success requires world support, the aid of the media, a much longer time span to succeed than does violence, or a “climate of nonviolence.” All of these views are inaccurate.

The opinion has been expressed that if a group is using nonviolent action, the opponents should be expected to respond nonviolently also. If the response is instead violent repression there is something wrong, it is thought. This view is also incorrect. The opponent group or regime often depends on violence to maintain itself and its practices. When the opponents are challenged nonviolently, subsequent violent repression is usually a sign that the nonviolent movement is threatening the status quo. Nonviolent action is a technique for combating violent opponents.

Conditions for struggle

Elements of the situation that may be helpful to the application of nonviolent struggle should not be confused with elements that are required, without which the struggle will surely fail. There are favorable and unfavorable internal and external conditions for the practice of nonviolent struggle. However, favorable conditions are not absolute requirements. Some nonviolent struggles have succeeded in very poor circumstances because the struggle group compensated for specific unfavorable conditions by developing their strengths and their skills in how to act under such conditions.

Nevertheless, there is no substitute for genuine strength in nonviolent struggle. If the participants in a nonviolent struggle do not as yet possess sufficient strength, determination, and ability to act skillfully against their opponents, then the simple verbal acceptance of nonviolent struggle will not save them. Deliberate efforts are required to develop that strength, skill, and capacity to act wisely.

If these characteristics are beyond the immediate reach of the potential nonviolent struggle group, then the group should not yet move beyond limited, low-risk campaigns for relatively easy, short-term objectives. Most of its attention should be dedicated to building up its own capacities internally. Only when the group is strong, determined, and skilled should it attempt strategic escalation in the struggle for its long-term objectives.

Factors influencing the outcome

There are many factors that determine the outcome of a nonviolent struggle.¹ Some of these factors lie within the “social situation,” some relate to the opponent group, some to third parties, and many others to the nonviolent struggle group. The nonviolent struggle group can influence many, but not all, of these factors.

(1) Factors in the social situation. These include the degree of conflict of interest between the two groups, the social distance between them, the degree to which beliefs and norms are shared

¹ These factors are taken from Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, pp. 815-817.

by the two groups, and the degree to which the population that is resisting includes significant social groups and institutions.

(2) Factors associated with the opponent group or regime. These include the degree to which the opponents are dependent for their sources of power on those who are noncooperating, and the degree of noncompliance that the opponents can tolerate. These factors also include the degree to which the opponents and their supporters are convinced of their views and policies and of the rightness and justification of repression or other sanctions against the nonviolent resisters.

Other factors in this group include the means of control and repression that the opponents may use; the degree to which the agents of repression obey the leadership of the opponent group; the degree of solidarity within the opponent group; the degree of loyalty within its bureaucracy and its police and military forces; the degree to which the opponents' general population supports their group's policy and repression; and the opponents' estimate of the future course of the struggle movement and its consequences.

(3) Factors associated with third parties. These include the degree to which third parties become sympathetic to either the opponents or to the nonviolent struggle group, and the degree to which the opinions and good will of third parties are important to both groups. These factors also include the degree to which third parties move to active support for, or noncooperation with, either of the contending groups.

(4) Factors associated with the nonviolent struggle group. This category includes the most important group of relevant factors, as they are the ones over which the nonviolent struggle group can exert the most influence. They include the ability to organize or to act spontaneously in accordance with the requirements of nonviolent struggle; the degree to which the resisters and the grievance group are convinced of the rightness of their cause; and the degree of confidence in nonviolent struggle among these groups. Also important are the types of nonviolent methods selected for use by the nonviolent struggle group and whether or not that group is capable of applying these methods; the soundness of the strategy and the tactics chosen or accepted by the nonviolent struggle group; and whether or not the demands made

by the nonviolent struggle group on its own members are within the capacity of these people to meet.

Additionally, the relative ability of the resisters to practice the nonviolent technique is important, as is the degree to which that group can act with discipline to implement plans. The number of participants in the actions will be important for some cases, such as those relying heavily on the use of noncooperation, provided that the numbers are compatible with maintaining both the needed quality of the activities and the requirements for use of the selected mechanism of change.

Whether the general grievance group supports the nonviolent struggle group or hinders its actions will be very important. The severity of repression, and possibly terror, imposed by the opponent group can be important as it balances with the ability of the members of the struggle group to persist in resistance. How long the resisters are able and willing to continue the struggle, their ability to keep the struggle nonviolent, and, in normal circumstances, the ability of the resisters to maintain nonsecretiveness in their actions can also be important.

The presence of effective leadership, or the ability of the group to act with discipline in accordance with a wise strategy without a significant distinguishable leadership group, is an additional factor. So also is the extent to which the resisters can arouse sympathy and support among members of the opponent group. Finally, the degree to which the nonviolent struggle group controls its own sources of power is important.

Increasing the chances of success

Except for some of the factors in the social situation, most of the factors operating in the conflict are subject to change, often considerable change, during the course of the nonviolent struggle. Such changes will result in increased or decreased power for the opponent group and also for the nonviolent struggle group. If these shifts increase the power of the opponent group significantly while the power of the nonviolent struggle group diminishes, it is very likely that the opponents will win. However, if the power of the opponents instead is undermined by restricting their sources of power while the power of the nonviolent struggle

group grows, the chances of the nonviolent struggle group being successful are greatly increased.

These changes may be directly or indirectly influenced by actions of the nonviolent struggle group. This is why great care needs to be exercised in planning and conducting these actions. Skill, strength, discipline, wise strategy, numbers, and persistence are among the essential qualities.

Of the factors listed above that are potentially under the control of the nonviolent struggle group, five stand out as especially important: (1) a willingness to act; (2) the strength of the struggle group (including persistence, numbers, and organization); (3) knowledge of nonviolent struggle; (4) adoption of wise strategic plans; and (5) skillful, disciplined implementation of the adopted strategic plans.

A population that wishes to increase its ability to gain important objectives will do well to make strong efforts to increase its capacities in these five areas. However, if only the first three are present, without wise strategic plans, the chances of success are not great. Even with willingness to act by a strong group, the action is unlikely to make much impact without knowledge of what to do and how to do it.

However, knowledge of nonviolent struggle, without the ability to determine how to apply it effectively, is not sufficient either. The development and the application of wise strategies to increase effectiveness in the use of this technique are extremely important.

Failure to plan for success

Some attempts to apply nonviolent struggle have been much more successful than others. As we have seen, various factors contribute to determining whether a specific attempt will succeed or fail.

Success should not be left to chance. Resisters can take deliberate steps to increase the likelihood of achieving their objectives. One of the most important factors in that effort is the use of available resources and actions in ways that increase their effectiveness in the conflict. This requires strategic planning.

Unfortunately, such planning in nonviolent struggles has seldom been given the attention it deserves. Only rarely do people

facing the prospect of such conflicts fully recognize the extreme importance of preparing a comprehensive plan before they act.

Some people naïvely think that if they simply assert their goal strongly and firmly, for a long enough period, they will somehow achieve their goal. Others assume that if they remain true to their principles and ideals, and witness to them in the face of adversity, then they are doing all they can to achieve their objectives. Some believe that if they act courageously and sacrificially, there is nothing more that they need to do. Still others simply repeat the type of action they have used in the past, or which they believe is required by their political doctrine, and have faith that they will eventually succeed.

Assertion of desirable goals, remaining loyal to ideals, and persistence are all admirable, but are in themselves grossly inadequate to achieve significant goals. Mere repetition of actions that have failed in the past often makes success unachievable. The technique of nonviolent action has special characteristics, and there are important factors that contribute to its effectiveness, as we discussed earlier.

People in conflict situations often allow themselves to be distracted from their main goal by focusing on trivial issues, repeatedly responding to the opponents' initiatives, and aiming only at short-term activities. Sometimes, too, people do not even attempt to develop a plan to achieve their goal, because deep down they do not really believe that they can succeed. These people—despite the impression they may offer—see themselves as weak, as helpless victims of overpowering forces. Therefore, they believe, the best they can do is to assert and witness, or even just die, in the faith that they are right. Consequently, they do not even attempt to think and to plan strategically about how to accomplish their objective.

This creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you do not believe you will succeed, and therefore do not take deliberate steps to increase your chances of doing so, you usually will fail.

Consequences of a lack of planning

In the past, most nonviolent struggles were improvised without advance planning. Some of these conflicts escalated in their scope and impact far beyond anyone's original estimate, leaving the

participants unprepared for what was to follow. Such was the case in the Russian Revolution of 1905 and in the Chinese pro-democracy struggle in 1989, for example. In many other past conflicts the groups involved recognized that they needed to plan how to act, but they did so only on a very limited, short-term, or tactical basis. In most cases, these groups did not attempt to formulate a broader, longer-term, or strategic plan of action.

While spontaneity and improvisation have some positive qualities, they also have serious disadvantages. For example, if resisters make gains, they will often not know what they should do next. If resisters in certain conflicts do not adequately anticipate the brutality of their opponents, they may suffer grave setbacks leading to the collapse of their movement. When crucial decisions are left to chance due to a lack of adequate planning, consequences can be equally disastrous.

The result of such failures to plan is that the chances of success in the conflict are drastically reduced, and at times eliminated. Without the formulation of a careful strategic plan of action

- One's energy may be deflected to minor issues and applied ineffectively.
- Methods of action may be attempted that are beyond the capacity of the resisters to apply effectively.
- Strengths of the nonviolent group may remain unutilized.
- The opponents' initiatives will determine the course of events.
- Uncertainty about what to do can spread confusion among the resisters.
- The weaknesses of one's own side will grow and lead to demoralization, and have detrimental effects on the attempt to achieve the goal.

In short, the group's strengths are dissipated or their impact is minimized. Sacrifices are wasted and one's cause is not well served.

Hodgepodge activities do not move the struggle forward, but instead result in scattered and unfocused actions or, worse, in the weakening of the movement. In contrast, directed action in accordance with a plan enables one to concentrate one's strengths to move in a determined direction toward the desired goal.

Long-term planning is also important for another reason. Even after the initial goal of a movement has been achieved, such as in the overthrow of a dictatorship or an otherwise oppressive regime, lack of planning on how to handle the transition to a better system can contribute to the emergence of new oppression.

Strategic planning

The short-term, or tactical, planning that has occurred in some past conflicts in which nonviolent methods have been used has often been useful and has contributed to the accomplishments of these struggles. However, longer-term strategic planning of the overall conflict has distinct additional advantages, enabling the nonviolent struggle group to calculate the most effective ways to bring down oppression, to assess when the political situation and popular mood are ripe for action, and to choose how to start the nonviolent campaign and how to develop it as it proceeds, while contending with the opponents' repression and other countermeasures.

Strategic planning also enables the nonviolent struggle group to become stronger because it knows where it intends to go and because it is aware of possible problems, events, and reactions that the resisters will likely encounter.

The more important the goal, or the graver the consequences of failure, the more important planning becomes. Strategic planning increases the possibility that available resources will be employed most effectively. This is especially important for a movement that has a noble objective but limited material resources and in which its supporters will face danger during the conflict. In contrast, one's opponents usually will have access to major material resources, organizational strength, and the ability to perpetrate brutalities.

The use of strategy is best known in military conflict. For centuries, military officers have engaged in strategic planning for military campaigns. Important thinkers such as Sun Tzu, Carl von Clausewitz, and Sir Basil Liddell Hart have analyzed and refined conventional military strategy. Mao Zedong and Ernesto "Che" Guevara, among others, have attempted to do the same for guerrilla warfare. In both conventional military warfare and in guer-

rilla warfare, the use of sophisticated strategy is a basic requirement for success.

Just as effective military struggle requires wise strategies, planning, and implementation, nonviolent action will be most effective when it also operates on the basis of sound strategic planning. However, the formulation and the application of strategy in large-scale nonviolent struggles are more complex than in military conflicts. This is because the factors contributing to success and failure in nonviolent struggles are more numerous than in military struggles. In major nonviolent struggles, potentially the whole population and many institutions of the society, not simply the military forces, become combatants. To make the efforts of all these people and institutions most effective requires competent strategies.

The absolute and relative strengths of the opponents and the nonviolent struggle group can vary widely and change quickly during the course of the conflict. The actions and the behavior of the nonviolent struggle group may have unexpected effects far beyond the particular time and place in which they occur. These changes in the strengths of the contending groups can be more extreme in nonviolent struggles than in violent conflicts. Therefore, great care must be taken in the choice of even limited actions and in the resisters' behavior during the conflict.

Levels of strategy

In developing a strategic plan, one needs to understand that there are four levels of strategy.² Grand strategy and strategy were very briefly introduced earlier. However, it is necessary to explore them in more depth here. At the most fundamental level is *grand strategy*. Then there is *strategy* itself, followed by *tactics* and *methods*.

Grand strategy can be called the master concept for the conduct of the conflict. It is the broadest conception that serves to coordinate and direct all the resources of the struggle group toward the attainment of the objectives of the conflict.

² These definitions were drafted by Robert Helvey, Bruce Jenkins, and Gene Sharp. Unpublished memorandum, Albert Einstein Institution.

Strategy is very similar, but applies to more limited phases of the overall struggle, such as campaigns for specific objectives. Strategy includes the development of an advantageous situation, the decision of when to fight, and the broad schema for utilizing smaller engagements within the adopted strategy.

Tactics refers to plans for conducting still more limited engagements within the selected strategy—limited in scale, number of participants, time, or particular issue. Tactics refer to how a group will apply its chosen methods and act in a specific encounter with the opponents.

Methods in nonviolent action are the many individual forms of action, such as picketing, social boycotts, consumers' boycotts, general strikes, civil disobedience, sit-ins, and parallel government, which were surveyed in Chapter Four. Among the factors to be considered in the selection of the methods are the mechanism by which change is sought (conversion, accommodation, nonviolent coercion, or disintegration), the degree of control by the resisters of the opponents' sources of power, and the status, strengths, weaknesses, and sources of power of the resisters.

If any of the four levels of strategy is inadequately conceived or developed, or even absent, the overall nonviolent struggle will be seriously weakened. Without knowledge of the broad picture, one may neglect to prepare, or be unable to take, effective steps to achieve the objectives.

The choice of the grand strategy, the implementing strategies, the tactics, and the methods to be used should determine the general direction and the conduct of the conflict throughout its course. These four levels of strategy will be discussed much more fully in the following chapter.

In implementing a strategy, careful support activities are needed. These will require planning and preparations. Such activities are tasks for logistical work. *Logistics* include a range of detailed supportive activities for the conduct of a conflict, such as the arrangement of finances, transportation, communications, and supplies.

Gains from wise strategies

The formulation and the implementation of wise strategies to guide the resisters' actions makes it possible to concentrate their

strengths and actions toward the desired goal, aggravate the opponents' weaknesses, strengthen the resisters, reduce casualties and other costs, and help the sacrifices to serve the main goal.

In order to increase the chances for success, nonviolent struggle strategists will need not only to formulate a grand strategy and strategies for individual campaigns, but also to develop a comprehensive strategic plan of action to apply the strategies in concrete terms. The strategic plan will need to be capable of strengthening the population, weakening and then destroying the oppression, and building an improved society. To develop such a plan of action requires a careful assessment of the situation and of the options for effective action.

The strategic plan lays out in broad strokes the anticipated concrete steps that the resisters will need to take to implement the grand strategy and the individual strategies in order to achieve their chosen objectives. It is the operational guide for action. The plan identifies the tasks that need to be carried out on the four levels of strategy and who is to be responsible for conducting them. Factors in the preparation and selection of a grand strategy, strategies, tactics, and choice of methods will be discussed at length in Chapters Thirty-six and Thirty-seven.

The importance of strategic planning cannot be overemphasized. It is the key to making social and political movements utilizing nonviolent struggle more effective.

Chapter Thirty-six

FIRST STEPS IN STRATEGIC PLANNING

An important but difficult task

The development of sound strategies is one of the most important requirements of an effective campaign. When the grand strategy, strategies, tactics, and methods have been selected in advance, these should shape the general direction and conduct of the conflict throughout its course.

A good strategy will aim at achieving the objectives of the overall struggle, as well as of individual campaigns, through effective mobilization of the strengths of the populace against the opponents. In most major conflicts, wise strategies will also need to include ways to undermine the opponents' sources of power.

The overall strategic conception—for both the grand strategy and the strategies for individual campaigns—will make the objective(s) clear, sketch how the struggle will begin, determine what kinds of pressures and methods are to be applied to gain the long-term objectives, and direct the actions aimed to achieve possible intermediate objectives. The strategies for individual campaigns

should also guide how the struggle can expand and advance despite repression, mobilizing and applying the resisters' resources in effective ways.

"To plan a strategy" means to calculate a course of action that is intended to make it more likely to get from the present to a desired future situation. A plan to achieve that objective will usually consist of a phased series of campaigns and other organized activities designed to strengthen the aggrieved population and society and to weaken the opponents.

Strategists should avoid both overly ambitious plans and excessively timid ones. Wise strategic development will help to ensure the effective interaction of tactics and specific methods to implement the strategy and improve the chances of victory. Clear strategic insight is required if changes from one phase of the conflict to another, and one method to another, are to take place with good purpose and effect. The strategies will also project the intended way in which the struggle will become successful and how the struggle will be concluded.

The development of strategic plans for the conduct of a major struggle is a difficult and complex task. This chapter and the two that follow are intended only to introduce a basic understanding of that task, and to provide limited guidance to those who recognize the need for responsible preparations.

We shall now focus on two important early components of strategic planning. The first is the preparation of a strategic estimate to reveal in greater depth what is the situation within which the conflict is to be waged. The second is to examine the levels of strategy as they may be with advantage developed in the conflict.

PREPARING A STRATEGIC ESTIMATE¹

Strategy can be developed only in the context of a particular conflict and its background and circumstances. Therefore, all strategic planning requires that the strategists have a profound understanding of the entire conflict situation. This requires attention to the broad context of the conflict, including physical, geographic, climatic, historical, governmental, military, cultural,

¹ This section draws very heavily on the thinking and analysis of Robert Helvey.

social, political, psychological, economic, and international factors. The identification and analysis of such factors prior to developing strategy is known as a “strategic estimate.”²

At its most basic level, a strategic estimate is a calculation and comparison of the strengths and the weaknesses of the nonviolent struggle group and that group’s opponents, as seen within the broad social, historical, political, and economic context of the society in which the conflict occurs. The strategic estimate should, at a minimum, include attention to the following subject areas: the general conflict situation, the issues at stake, the objectives of both parties to the conflict, the opponent group, the nonviolent struggle group, third parties to the conflict, and dependency balances between the contending groups.

Examining the issues and objectives

Of primary importance, strategic planners will need to examine the issues at stake from the perspectives of both the potential resisters and the opponents. What are the broad issues as seen by each side, and how important are they to the impending conflict?

Not all issues are equal. Some may be seen by one or both sides to be fundamental. Other issues may be viewed as of lesser importance. It is important to determine whether or not the issues are seen by either side to be ones of “no compromise,” that is, issues—rightly or wrongly—believed to be fundamental to a group’s adherents. Such issues often include strongly held beliefs about the nature of their society, their religion, their basic political convictions, or what they see as the requirements for their people to survive.

The nature of the issues at stake and their perceived importance to each side will have a fundamental impact on the development of strategies for the impending resistance. Therefore, strategists will need to develop clear and accurate statements of the issues at stake in the conflict from the perspectives of both the opponent group and the prospective nonviolent struggle group.

It is important to recognize the distinction between the broad issues of the conflict and the specific objectives of an individual campaign. Issues are more general. For example, in a labor con-

² See Appendix A for a plan for calculating a strategic estimate.

flict the issues might be seen as wages, working conditions, and respect. However, in a particular strike, the objectives would be more specific, such as a demand for a certain wage increase, implementation of certain safety measures, a demand for medical insurance, or proposals for job security.

Both parties to a conflict may have not only immediate objectives, but also long-term ones that may not be avowed at the time. Strategic planners should accurately assess what each side's objectives are, and to what degree the competing objectives may be compatible or incompatible.

The general conflict situation

Every strategic estimate needs to include a detailed survey of the general conflict situation in which the nonviolent struggle will be conducted. All factors that could have a conceivable impact either on the opponent group or on the nonviolent struggle group should be carefully examined. These include terrain and geography; transportation infrastructure; communications networks; climate and weather; the political, judicial, and economic systems in the country or region where the conflict occurs; population demographics; and types and degrees of social and economic stratification. These also, very importantly, include availability and control of economic and life-support resources; and the status of independent civil society.

It is also important to examine the immediate general political situation in which the struggle must operate. Are special controls, such as martial law or other means of serious repression, in effect? What are the current political and economic trends?

Condition and capabilities of the contending parties

Full and detailed knowledge about all parties to the pending conflict is extremely important. Such knowledge should focus on real capabilities, rather than on each group's statements of intent or simple assumptions about their respective conditions. The strategic estimate is an internal planning document, not a propaganda tool. Inaccurate or exaggerated views of the strengths, weaknesses, and capacities of the contending parties will produce unwise strategies and might even result in defeat.

It is very important to study the demographics of each side's adherents and sympathizers. This examination should include age, gender, literacy rates and educational standards, population growth rates, geographic distribution, socioeconomic class, and other such factors. Are there geographic, cultural, ethnic, or economic boundaries separating the two sides?

Similarly, it is important to know something about the political, social, cultural, and economic "systems" in which each side operates. What are the supports of these systems, and to what degree are they independent of, or dependent on, the other side? Are the supports of these systems independent of the State structure? Is the State structure itself controlled or utilized by the opponents, or are both sides independent of the State?

Attention must also be paid to identifying the opponents' sources of power, and the institutions that serve as "pillars of support"³ for the opponents by providing these sources of power. Pillars of support are the institutions and sectors of society that supply a regime (or any other group that exercises power) with the needed sources of power to maintain and expand its power capacity. Examples include moral and religious leaders supplying authority or legitimacy; labor, business, and investment groups supplying economic and material resources; civil servants, administrators, bureaucrats, and technicians providing human resources and special skills; and police, prisons, and military forces providing the ability to apply sanctions (including repression) against the population.

A similar review is required of the nonviolent struggle group and the broader "grievance group" (defined as the wider population that suffers from policies and actions of the opponent group and on whose behalf the conflict may be waged). What are the sources of power of those groups, and the institutions that serve as their "pillars of support"?

Part of the process of strategic planning will be to determine, on the basis of this information, how best to strengthen (or create) the pillars of support for the nonviolent struggle group while undermining those of the opponents.

It is also necessary to assess the relative "struggle power" of each side, and to compare them. For the opponents, this means it

³ The term "pillars of support" was introduced by Robert Helvey.

will be important to know the extent and reliability of their administration, military capacity, police and intelligence forces, as well as the degree of support they have from their own population and institutions. Also essential is the identification of weaknesses and vulnerabilities within the opponent group. How unified is the group? Are there power struggles or rivalries among the leadership? Are there any organizations or institutions that normally support the opponent group but might be targeted for transfer of loyalties or for organizational destruction?

For the resisters, it is important to know their capacity to wage nonviolent struggle. This includes their knowledge of this technique, their experience with this type of action, and the adequacy and nature of their preparations. What is the present and the potential degree of support the resisters receive from the general grievance group? What support do the potential resisters receive from other groups, institutions, and contact networks within the population? Which of these can really help? Are there significant internal conflicts, such as rivalries, power struggles, or ideological disputes, within or between sectors of either the general grievance group or the nonviolent struggle group?

Other questions are also important. How much support do the opponents receive from internal and external allies? How well do the prospective opponents understand nonviolent struggle? Is there actual or potential sympathy and support for the opponents within the general resisting population? What are the roles of social, class, racial, and religious factors?

What is the resistance group's access to information? Who are their internal and external allies? To what extent do they enjoy internal social solidarity and support? What are their economic resources? What is the depth of their strategic skill? What is the degree of competency of the group's strategists and leaders? Is strategic competence concentrated in a leadership group, or is such expertise instead diffused among the general population of potential resisters? (The latter would be very rare.) Are there threats to the organizational strength of the resisters?

Third parties

It will also be important to assess what may be the roles of third parties on behalf of each of the sides during a conflict.

These potential roles may include assisting with public relations, providing diplomatic assistance or pressure, providing financial support, applying economic pressures, and providing educational and technical assistance to either side. Third parties may also supply police and military assistance (usually not to the nonviolent struggle group), provide safe areas, and help disseminate knowledge of nonviolent struggle. It will be very useful for the resistance strategists to have accurate information and reasonable projections about who the potential third parties are and what their possible activities might be during the course of the coming conflict.

Dependency balances

A proper strategic estimate should also examine the “dependency balances” that exist between the contending parties. To what degree does or can the opponent group control the economic resources and life-support resources—fuel, water, food, etc.—of the potential resistance group? Similarly, to what degree does or can the nonviolent struggle group control the economic resources and life-support resources of the opponent group? This will reveal the degree of actual or potential dependence of each group on the other group for meeting identified needs. This can be very important in nonviolent struggles, and also can often help determine which methods might be most effective when planning the struggle.

When to launch a struggle

The specific factors presented above are only a sampling of the kinds of factors that will need to be identified in a strategic estimate prior to planning strategy. Once completed, the strategic estimate of the conflict situation and of the capacities of the contending parties serves as the background for the formulation of a grand strategy for the nonviolent struggle group and for the formulation of specific strategies for individual campaigns.

If the strategic estimate reveals that the nonviolent struggle group is weaker than required for a major struggle with the prospective opponents, then the group should not at that time launch a struggle that requires great strength. There is no substitute for,

or shortcut to, strength in a movement of nonviolent struggle. If the group is weaker than desired, either the action should initially take only limited forms that can be effective without great strength (which will be discussed later), or more ambitious action should be postponed until the group is stronger. Clearly, major efforts should be put into the strengthening of the population that is primarily affected by the grievances and into developing its capacity to wage effective struggle.

The strategic estimate is what makes this, as well as other decisions faced during the struggle, more clear. While extremely important, however, the strategic estimate is not the only issue to consider when planning strategy. Thorough and in-depth knowledge of this technique of nonviolent struggle is of prime importance. Other relevant factors also require attention throughout the planning process in order to make the nonviolent struggle as effective as possible. Many of these strategic guidelines will be addressed in Chapter Thirty-seven.

LEVELS OF STRATEGY

With the knowledge gleaned from the strategic estimate and the objectives of the nonviolent struggle group in mind, what is the broad conception of how the struggle is to be waged and how the objectives are to be achieved? Making this determination requires, among other things, identification of the intended mechanism of change in nonviolent struggle that is to be relied upon and determination of whether more than one campaign will be required. This is the domain of strategic thinking.

A strategy is the conception of how best to act in order to achieve objectives in a conflict. Strategy is concerned with whether, when, or how to fight, and how to achieve maximum effectiveness in order to gain certain ends. Strategy is the plan for the practical distribution, adaptation, and application of the available means to attain the desired objectives.

As was previously discussed, there are four levels of strategy: grand strategy, strategy, tactics, and specific methods.⁴ The most

⁴ These definitions were drafted by Robert Helvey, Bruce Jenkins, and Gene Sharp. Unpublished memorandum, Albert Einstein Institution.

fundamental is grand strategy. Then there is strategy itself for more limited campaigns, followed by tactics and methods that are used to implement the campaign strategies. An understanding of these four elements, and the differences between them, is essential if one is to attempt to develop strategies for a specific conflict.

It should be remembered, of course, that there is no single strategy applicable to the use of nonviolent struggle on all occasions. No single blueprint exists or can be developed to serve all conflicts. Each situation is somewhat different, often radically so. However, general guidelines can be developed for planning strategies, keeping in mind the factors we discussed previously. Planners of a grand strategy for a specific conflict will require a profound understanding, not only of the conflict situation, but also of the technique of nonviolent struggle, and of general strategic principles. Some of these will be discussed in Chapter Thirty-seven.

Grand strategy

Grand strategy is the master concept for the conduct of the conflict. A grand strategy is the conception that serves to coordinate and direct all appropriate and available resources (economic, human, moral, etc.) of the population or group to attain its objectives in a conflict. It is an overall plan for conducting the struggle that makes it possible to anticipate how the struggle as a whole should proceed. How can the struggle be won? How is the desired change to be achieved?

Grand strategy includes consideration of the rightness of the cause of the struggle group, evaluation and utilization of other pressures and influences apart from the technique of struggle, and the decision on the conditions under which resort to open struggle will be had.

Grand strategy very importantly includes the selection of the technique of conflict, or the ultimate sanction, which will be used as reserve leverage in actual or implied threats during negotiations, and later used in an open confrontation of forces if that occurs. In this case, the technique is nonviolent struggle. The selected grand strategy also sets the basic framework for the development of strategies for waging the conflict in more limited campaigns directed toward particular objectives.

Additionally, nonviolent struggle can sometimes be combined in a grand strategy with the use of other means of action that are not violent, and therefore do not threaten the operation of the technique. Fact-finding, publicity, public education, appeals to the opponents, and sometimes negotiations, as well as electoral campaigns in some cases, could in many situations be beneficially used in connection with nonviolent struggle. These means are often used in tandem with economic boycotts and labor strikes, for example. Lawsuits or other legal action have at times also been used to support nonviolent action, as in the case of the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott.

Grand strategy also includes consideration of how the struggle itself relates to the achievement of the objectives for which the conflict is waged. The projection of the likely long-term consequences of the conflict also falls within grand strategy.

A grand strategy for a nonviolent struggle should preferably include not only bringing an end to that which is rejected, but also the establishment of something new to replace it. For example, a grand strategy that limits its objective to merely destroying an incumbent dictatorship runs a great risk of producing another dictatorship. A better purpose might be to change the system of domination and to institute a superior political system of greater freedom and democratic controls.

The grand strategy needs to sketch in broad strokes how the nonviolent struggle group should conduct the conflict. This would broadly stretch from the present to a future situation in which its objectives have been achieved. Which general means of pressure and action might be applied in that effort? What is to be the main thrust of the nonviolent struggle against the opponents? Is the pressure to be applied through economic losses? By undermining the opponents' legitimacy? Through political paralysis? What about international pressures? Will other pressures be utilized?

Very importantly, is the nonviolent struggle group able to weaken or remove most or all of the sources of power of the opponent group? These sources include authority (or legitimacy), human resources, skills and knowledge, intangible factors, material resources, and sanctions. Weakening or severing these sources of power by attacking their pillars of support is crucial in strug-

gles against highly repressive regimes, and can cause the power of these regimes to crumble.

If the resisters are strong enough, have sufficient numbers, and focus their noncooperation on these sources, even an extremely ruthless regime can potentially be weakened or disintegrated. The Serbian struggle in October 2000 is an example.

At the beginning of the conflict, however, efforts to fully neutralize or remove the opponents' sources of power are unlikely to be within the capacity of the struggle group. The results of the strategic estimate should help to determine whether the group is capable of applying the required pressures with sufficient force to succeed in a single campaign, or whether it should plan for a series of more limited campaigns. This calculation is a necessary part of the grand strategy, and is discussed more fully in Chapter Thirty-seven.

Strategy

Individual strategies for campaigns with more limited objectives are very important. Strategies for campaigns guide how particular conflicts are to be waged within the scope of the broader struggle and the grand strategy. These limited strategies sketch how specific campaigns shall develop, and how their separate components shall be fitted together so as best to achieve their objectives. Strategy also includes the allocation of tasks to particular groups and the distribution of resources to them for use in the conflict. Sound campaign strategies help guide the struggle by taking the skeletal framework of the chosen grand strategy and filling it out into a comprehensive conception to direct specific aspects of the struggle.

Although related, development of a grand strategy and formulation of campaign strategies are two separate processes. Only after the grand strategy has been determined can the specific campaign strategies be fully developed. Campaign strategies will need to be designed to achieve and reinforce the grand strategic objectives. Factors in the formulation of campaign strategies include the development of an advantageous situation, the decision of when to wage a campaign, and the broad schema for utilizing more limited engagements within the strategy to bring success.

Often, the targets of campaign strategies should reflect the broad issues or grievances outlined in the grand strategy. If the conflict is largely of an economic nature, and a grand strategy has been adopted that prescribes the predominant use of economic pressures, then the strategies for selective campaigns will most likely focus on specific economic targets and will apply pressures such as labor strikes and economic boycotts. If, however, the grand strategy is focused on gaining political freedom, opposing dictatorial rule, or upholding freedom of expression, then the strategies for individual campaigns may focus on specific expressions of those issues, employing relevant methods such as distribution of prohibited literature, exercise of banned free speech, or other methods that may dramatize the extreme nature of the autocratic rule or the violations of human rights and civil liberties.

This is not to say that only economic pressures can be used in struggles over economic issues, or that only political pressures should be applied in predominantly political struggles. Economic noncooperation can be effective in forcing political policy changes—and even regime change—in some cases. Nevertheless, it is often beneficial when planning campaign strategies to select specific issues and targets that are easily recognizable as representative of the broad grievance identified in the grand strategy.

Tactics

The strategy for a campaign for a limited objective will determine what smaller, “tactical,” plans and specific methods of action should be used in pursuit of the main goal. 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 implement a strategy may involve consideration of different fronts, groups, time periods, and methods.

A tactic is a limited plan of action, based on a conception of how best in a restricted phase of a conflict to utilize the available means of fighting to achieve a limited objective as part of the wider campaign strategy. To be most effective, the tactics and methods must be chosen and applied so that they really assist the

application of the strategy and contribute to achieving the requirements for its success.

Tactics prescribe how particular methods of action are applied, or how particular groups of resisters shall act in a specific situation. For example, in a labor struggle in which factory workers are striking for union recognition, increased wages, or improved working conditions, tactics include selection of the timing of the strike, of how workers are persuaded to participate in the strike, of what action is to be taken to discourage strike breakers, of how strikers can be supported economically while not working, of what efforts are to be made to encourage public sympathy and support, and of what contacts are to be made with the factory owners.

Tactics are thus the plans for conducting more limited engagements within the selected strategy—limited in scale, participants, time, or specific issue. They specify how a group will act in a specific encounter with the opponents.

A tactic fits within the campaign strategy, just as campaign strategies fit within the grand strategy. Tactics are always concerned with struggle, although strategy also includes wider considerations, in addition to how to fight. A particular tactic can only be understood in relationship to the methods it employs and as part of the broader strategy of a campaign.

Methods

In order to achieve the best results and the most effective implementation of the developed strategies, the choice of nonviolent “weapons,” or specific methods, will need to be made carefully and wisely. Many past conflicts have started with the choice of the specific methods of action to be used, rather than development of long-term plans for conducting the conflict. This is not recommended. Instead, the wiser sequence is the development of the grand strategy first, then development of a strategy for an individual campaign. Only then can the planners select the tactics

and specific methods of action that are most appropriate. Available methods were listed in Chapter Four.⁵ There are others.

The characteristics of the three general classes of methods need to be reviewed.

- **Protest and persuasion:** These methods include vigils, parades, petitions, picketing, and walk-outs. They are largely symbolic in their effect and produce an awareness of the existence of dissent.
- **Noncooperation:** These methods include social boycotts, economic boycotts, labor strikes, and many forms of political noncooperation, including boycotts of government positions, civil disobedience, and mutiny. The methods of noncooperation, widely applied, are likely to cause difficulties in maintaining the normal operation and efficiency of the opponents' political or economic system. In extreme situations, these methods may threaten the existence of a regime.
- **Intervention:** These methods include hunger strikes, sit-ins, nonviolent obstruction, creation or strengthening of alternative institutions, and parallel government. They possess some of the qualities of both previous groups, but may additionally constitute a more direct challenge to the opponents' regime. By disruption of various types, they make possible—but do not guarantee—a greater impact with smaller numbers, provided that courage and discipline are maintained despite repression.

In most serious conflicts, the methods of noncooperation are especially important because they may threaten the capacity of the system to operate. They will require skill in their selection and their application. The advantage of these methods of noncooperation is that, adequately applied for sufficient time, they can be coercive and can even disintegrate the opponents' regime.

The methods of noncooperation often require much time and the participation of many people to achieve their impact. Many of the methods of nonviolent intervention, on the other hand, can be applied by small numbers of people. However, these methods usually require considerable discipline or preparation in order to

⁵ For full definitions of the methods with historical examples, see Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Part Two, *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*. There are, of course, many additional methods that exist or can be developed.

be successfully applied, and some can be applied only for limited periods of time. Some of these methods of nonviolent intervention may also be met with especially severe repression. Some methods of nonviolent intervention, such as parallel government, require massive support.

Frequently, methods that apply differing pressures and use different mechanisms may be combined effectively within the same campaign. Fast rules are not possible, but effective combinations of methods require wise strategic planning.

In most struggles, more than one method will be used. In such cases, the order in which the methods are applied, the ways in which they are combined, how they influence the application of other methods, and how they contribute to the struggle as a whole all become very important.

Sometimes, the combination of methods is relatively simple, especially in a local or limited type of action. Economic boycotts have been used, for example, in support of sit-ins against racial discrimination, and picketing is commonly used in support of strikes. When a general strike is used to support or oppose the mutiny of government troops, however, the situation becomes more complicated, with larger numbers of methods likely to be used.

Whoever plans the nonviolent struggle should be familiar with the full range of nonviolent methods of action available for possible application. The impact of the various methods differs considerably, even assuming that they are competently applied. For example, a protest fast by a highly respected person will have a very different effect than would bureaucratic obstruction by civil servants. The effect of a fast or bureaucratic obstruction, in turn, would differ significantly from a widespread general strike or refusal by police to locate and arrest political resisters. Different methods need to be chosen for different situations, objectives, and strategies.

Choosing methods

Each individual strategy requires a careful selection of the specific methods of nonviolent struggle to be used, followed by their skilled application. The most important specific methods to be used need to have a clear relationship to the objectives of the

campaign or the struggle as a whole, and should contribute instrumentally to achieving those objectives.

The number of methods applied in any single conflict will vary from only one to dozens. The chosen methods need to be matched to the issues at stake, the intended mechanism of change, the capabilities of the population that is to apply them, and the selected campaign strategy. Other factors that need to be considered in choosing specific methods include the situation, the objectives of both the nonviolent struggle group and the opponents, characteristics of the resistance group and the opponents, the expected repression, and the anticipated development of the struggle.

Here some questions should be asked. Very importantly, do the methods being considered contribute to implementing the selected grand strategy and the individual campaign strategy? Do the methods in question apply the kind of pressures against the opponents that have been identified as necessary if the struggle is to be successful? For example, if the strategy identifies economic pressures as the most important, then economic methods such as labor strikes and economic boycotts will likely be required. If, instead, the strategic objective is to undermine the ability of the opponents to rule, then particular methods of political noncooperation are likely to be needed to weaken or sever the supply of the regime's sources of power by attacking its pillars of support.

If the methods being considered do not directly implement the campaign strategies and do not apply the identified needed pressures directly, do they at least facilitate the application of the methods that will apply those pressures, such as by increasing resistance morale or undermining the opponents' morale? For example, if a labor strike is the primary method being employed under the strategic plan, secondary methods such as picketing or an economic boycott may be used to support the strike.

The methods to be used also need to be chosen with consideration of whether they are likely to help produce the change through the chosen mechanism of nonviolent struggle: conversion, accommodation, nonviolent coercion, or disintegration, as we discussed in Chapters Thirty-two and Thirty-three. For example, an extended fast may affect people's feelings and may gain publicity. However, a general strike, a walk-out by civil servants,

or an army mutiny may paralyze the regime, producing nonviolent coercion. The methods and the mechanisms need to be matched.

Another important factor in the choice of methods is the type of repression and other countermeasures that are expected. How much repression are the general population, the resisters, and the leaders prepared to suffer while continuing their resistance and defiance?

Also, the number of available resisters is very relevant in the choice of methods and mechanisms. It is obviously unwise to call a general strike if one has only 20 persons committed to participate. With a different method, however, such as a hunger strike, 20 people, depending on who they are, can call significant attention to the grievance and exert significant psychological or moral pressure that can lead to stronger action. Such a small action, however, needs to be conducted with extra high standards of behavior for the participants.

The effects particular methods will produce on the development of the movement are also important. Will they contribute to the progressive development of the struggle, to changed attitudes and altered power relationships, to shifts in the support for each side, and to the later application and impacts of stronger nonviolent methods?

In choosing the methods, one should remember that it may be easier to get people to refrain from doing something that has been ordered than to get them to do something that they do not usually do. This is especially true if the action is very risky or is prohibited.

During the struggle

Specific methods will need to be selected for initiating the conflict. These may be symbolic, or they may be more ambitious, such as the launching of a strike. At the very beginning of a campaign, nonviolent struggle strategists may deliberately use relatively weak methods in order to test, by the population's response, whether the population will be willing to attempt stronger methods and able to withstand more severe repression as the price of success.

Once the struggle is underway, it will be necessary to review the strategy previously selected for the conflict to determine if additional or different methods should also be scheduled for application. Is the use of only a small number of methods dangerous to the success of the struggle, or is such a restriction necessary to concentrate the pressures on the opponents? Can the resisters survive the opponents' pressures and repression as they concentrate their action against these selected few points? Is a shift of methods needed to maintain flexibility in the developing struggle?

More questions will also need to be answered. Will the methods help to gain or keep the initiative in the conflict? If the methods are intended to be applied more widely, are they in fact likely to spread? If the methods require special training or preparations—and hence are suited for select small groups—are such preparations available? If the methods are to be applied by masses of people, can their use be replicated widely without special training or preparations?

Moving from one level of action to another—as from symbolic protests to noncooperation, and from noncooperation to intervention—can involve a progressive increase in the degree of repression that 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. These relationships between the classes of methods and the severity of repression are not applicable in all situations and against all opponents, however. Quite mild methods may at times be met with brutal repression, especially if the opponents are a regime that cannot tolerate public expressions of dissent and opposition.

In a long struggle, phasing is often very important. The selection of objectives and the choice and sequence of methods may be the most important factors in that phasing. Often, certain milder actions must precede others, so that it may be possible later to use stronger methods. The decision of when to proceed to a new phase of the struggle must be carefully weighed. Such shifts of methods can help to avoid a static condition and to maintain the initiative.

The strategic plan

The strategic plan is the concrete blueprint for the implementation of a strategy. The plan should answer the questions of who, what, when, where, and how for the strategic components of each campaign.

In small or extremely limited struggles, this strategic plan might exist realistically only on the tactical level. For example, in a limited labor struggle where the grand objective and campaign objective are the same (a contract that includes improved benefits and wages), and with only one or two methods and one campaign involved (a conventional strike following the breakdown of contract negotiations), the strategic plan will lay out the details of when the strike is to begin, who is to participate and what their roles will be, where the picket lines will be, and what logistics will be necessary for provision of food, money, and other material necessities to the families of the striking workers. In such a case, the preparation of the strategic plan will not necessarily be a separate step from the planning involved in selecting tactics and methods for the implementation of the campaign strategy.

In a broader and more complex struggle, however, the strategic plan may exist on multiple levels. In rare struggles in which it is possible to plan concretely for multiple campaigns to operate simultaneously or in short sequence, the strategic plan should specify the order of those campaigns and the timing when each is to begin, based on the strategic relationship between them. It will also identify any subdivisions within the campaigns themselves.

For example, in a broad labor struggle directed against a particular company or industry in which the labor group possesses uncommon strength and popular sympathy, the struggle might include, in addition to strike action, a campaign to boycott all products produced by that company or industry. The campaign strategy may then identify a need to promote and enforce the boycott through varied actions ranging from primary and secondary boycotts and picket lines in front of stores to solidarity demonstrations and blockage of foreign exports of the product. The strategic plan with implementing tactics and methods fills in the blanks, identifying which stores to picket, where and when to arrange demonstrations, what types of publicity to seek for pro-

motion of the primary and secondary boycotts, and what groups to target for support in preventing exports of the product.

While method selection is involved here, some of these specific tasks may exist above the level of tactical planning, which—though part of the strategic plan—refers specifically to the concrete logistical and operational planning of each individual action within the campaign.

In short, the strategic plan is the overall operational guide for action. It is the plan for concrete application and implementation of the strategy. On a broad level, strategic plans normally include four phases:

- Preparation for the conflict
- Initiation of action to gain the objective(s)
- Development of the ongoing struggle
- After success, consolidation of the gains

Within each phase, the strategic plan should follow the campaign strategies to identify the specific tasks that need to be carried out on the various strategic levels, as well as the persons or groups who will be responsible for them. As previously mentioned, an important component of the strategic plan is the tactical plan, which should identify in detail the tasks required to implement successfully each individual action within a campaign.

Strategists should keep in mind that in complex struggles, including those against repressive regimes, prior to the initiation of conflict it is usually very difficult, and often impossible, to plan the concrete implementation of the grand strategy from the first campaign to the last. In these cases, the strategic plan should be as concrete and specific as possible for implementation of the strategy for the initial campaign, but will be necessarily vague for future campaigns. This is because the limited objectives of future campaigns, their strategies, timing, and tactical activities will be determined in large part by changes in the conflict situation that will occur during the first stage or stages of the struggle. Strategists will therefore need to keep a close eye on the progress of the struggle, and develop the concrete strategic plans for future campaigns accordingly, while the conflict is ongoing.

Further guidelines for responding and adapting to changes in the course of the conflict will be discussed in Chapter Thirty-seven. In the meantime, it is important to identify insights into strategic planning gained from past experience and analyses that can contribute to greater effectiveness in planning strategy for nonviolent struggle. This is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter Thirty-seven

SOME STRATEGIC GUIDELINES

Careful attention required

Effective application of the technique of nonviolent struggle requires great care, much thought, skilled action, and strength. Careful attention is required to the elements discussed in this chapter about the development of wise strategies for effective future nonviolent struggles.

These guidelines and suggestions are based on an understanding of how nonviolent struggle works, on lessons from past applications of this technique, and on basic strategic principles.

Knowledge of nonviolent struggle

Perhaps the most important part of the understanding of nonviolent struggle is the analysis of the sources of political power, as we discussed in Chapter Two. In acute conflicts with repressive regimes, particular strategies can be developed to target, weaken and remove the sources of the opponents' power. This targeting can be a major factor in making nonviolent struggle effective

against highly repressive regimes. This will be discussed more fully below.

The formulation of wise strategies and tactics for nonviolent struggles also requires a thorough understanding of the dynamics and mechanisms of nonviolent struggle, such as is presented in summary form in Chapters Twenty-nine to Thirty-four, and more fully in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*.¹ This knowledge makes possible an understanding of several of the other elements in the effective practice of this technique, including the maintenance of nonviolent discipline.

Nonviolent struggle both requires, and tends to produce, a reduction of fear of the opponents and their violent repression. That control of fear, or its abandonment, is a key element in destroying the control by the opponents over the general population and potential resisters.

Another major characteristic of the operation of nonviolent struggle in many conflicts is that the power capacities of the two sides do not remain constant. The absolute and relative power of the resisting population and also of the opponents can vary widely during nonviolent struggles. As compared to variations of strength of the contenders in violent conflicts, these changes in the respective power of the opponents and resisters in nonviolent conflicts, when they occur, are likely to be more extreme, to take place more quickly, and to have more significant consequences.

This is because the wider strategies, tactics, specific methods, and behavior of the two groups are all likely to have effects far beyond the particular time and place in which they occur. Certain types of behavior—such as violence, destruction of property, or unwise provocative nonviolent acts—may have consequences that would not be expected or wanted. The number of resisters and the forms of their resistance can grow or shrink. At times, this happens slowly, but at other times it occurs rapidly and extremely. The opponents' power also may increase or decrease, again slowly or rapidly. The nonviolent group may by its actions and behavior help to control the increase or decrease in the power

¹ Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Boston, Massachusetts: Porter Sargent, 1973. Also issued in three volumes (paperback edition), *Power and Struggle*, *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*, and *The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action*.

of the opponent group, and this to a much greater degree than occurs in military conflicts.

In the preparation of strategies, it is necessary to be attentive to the selection of plans and actions that facilitate the operation of the dynamics and mechanisms of the technique. It is also necessary to remember the need to reject proposed actions that, if implemented, would disrupt the very factors that make this technique of struggle effective.

Self-reliance and third party² assistance

Essential to the planning of nonviolent struggle campaigns is a basic principle: plan your struggle so that the success of the conflict becomes possible by reliance on yourselves alone. This was Charles Stewart Parnell's message to Irish peasants during a rent strike of 1879-1880: "Rely on yourselves," and not on anyone else.³

Assuming that a strong nonviolent struggle is planned or already being waged, it is fine to seek limited and nonviolent assistance from others. However, calculations on how to win the struggle must be based only on capabilities and actions of one's own group. Then, if no one else helps, one still has a chance to succeed, assuming that the strategic planning has been sound and the resisters are strong. However, if the responsibility for success and failure has been given to others, when they do not come forward the struggle will fail. In any case, responsible external support is more likely to be forthcoming when a strong nonviolent struggle is being conducted by the aggrieved population, which is acting as though success or failure will be determined by its efforts alone.

Although it is dangerous to rely on support by third parties—for they have their own interests and objectives—their support can nevertheless be very useful at times. The motives for such external groups to assist may vary, sometimes relating to the resisters' objectives and to the choice of nonviolent struggle. At other

² Third parties are groups that are neither the nonviolent struggle group nor the opponent group. They may be parts of the overall society within which the conflict is occurring or may be groups from outside that society.

³ Patrick Sarsfield O'Hegarty, *A History of Ireland Under the Union 1880-1922* (London: Methuen Press, 1952), pp. 490-491.

times, third parties may anticipate possible economic or political benefits after the nonviolent resisters have successfully ousted a repressive regime. (Of course, short-term economic benefits also may be a strong motive for third parties to side with the opponents and reject support for the resisters.)

The nonviolent resisters should cultivate third party assistance both in advance of the struggle and also while it is in progress. The kinds of help they may seek may include material resources, safe bases of operation, noninterference, and endorsement of the legitimacy of the objective and means used by the nonviolent resisters. Very supportive third parties may invoke economic sanctions and diplomatic pressures against the opponents, and even attempt to isolate the opponents internationally. However, the caution about depending on third party support remains valid. The resistance movement needs to be able to pursue the struggle effectively if this external assistance never develops or disappears.

A single struggle or several campaigns?

On the basis of the results of the strategic estimate, it is essential to determine whether or not the objective(s) of the conflict can be achieved as the result of a single all-out struggle. If the chances are high that a single struggle could succeed, then a sound strategy needs to be developed that may realistically achieve that objective.

This assessment of the potential for a single campaign to successfully achieve the objectives must be done carefully. It should include attention to both the characteristics and the requirements of nonviolent struggle, and also to an accurate strategic estimate of the capacities of the opponents and of the potential resisters, as we discussed in Chapter Thirty-six.

It must be recognized, however, that only rarely can the full objective(s) of a major conflict waged by nonviolent struggle against powerful opponents be achieved in a single effort.

The following is an incomplete list of the conditions that are likely to be prerequisites of a successful single struggle:

- The opponents have lost legitimacy on a wide scale—whether or not this loss has yet been openly expressed.

- The opponents are highly dependent, politically, economically, or in other ways, on a population that may wield noncooperation.
- The population already has, or is developing, groups and institutions that are outside the control of the opponent group.
- The groups and institutions that serve as “pillars of support” for the opponents, supplying their necessary sources of power, are unstable and lack full commitment to the opponent leadership.
- The current control over the general population by the opponents is less than fully effective.
- The general population—and especially the groups most likely to resist—have previously either had satisfactory experience in the use of nonviolent struggle or have received competent advice to develop resistance actions and an understanding of their roles.
- The issues on which attention is focused in the struggle have wide and deep support.
- A wise grand strategy has been developed for the struggle with supporting recommended specific resistance actions by particular population groups and institutions, including those that have served as pillars of support for the opponents.
- The opponents’ bureaucracy and police and military forces include major portions whose loyalty and assistance to the opponents’ leadership is uncertain at best.

In a large-scale conflict against a government or regime, efforts to remove the opponents’ sources of power so that their regime collapses are unlikely to be within the capacity of the struggle group at the beginning of the conflict. However, if a single campaign is in fact attempted in order to achieve the objectives of a struggle, a contingency plan should be prepared in case such a campaign proves unsuccessful. If a single struggle is attempted and does not succeed, the opponents may not only survive institutionally but may also be relatively strengthened. The resisters will consequently have experienced a serious loss, in terms of both their morale and their resistance capacity.

It may, therefore, generally be wiser to prepare initially for a few campaigns with limited objectives. These will need to be ones

that are compatible with the larger major objective and will help to make its accomplishment possible. This is not a case of being moderate in one's objectives, but instead an instance of concentrating one's strength on the opponents' weaknesses in order to gain objectives that are within the capacity of the resisters to achieve. As limited objectives are gained and efforts are made to strengthen the grievance group and the resisting population, the capacity to wage effective nonviolent struggle will increase.

Determine the objectives

The objectives of the individual campaigns will need to be formulated carefully and must be compatible with the resisters' major objective(s) in the overall conflict. Each campaign for limited objectives will require wise specific strategies and skilled action to ensure that it contributes to achieving the larger major objectives, as we will discuss later.

The objectives of both the overall struggle and its component campaigns need to be formulated in terms that are clear, understandable, and widely accepted. The objectives should not be expressed as vague platitudes, such as "peace," "freedom," or "justice." Rather, they should be concrete and relatively specific, while always related to the general grievance. For example, although in the second quarter of the twentieth century the overall goal in the struggle of Indian nationalists against the British Empire was independence for India, the specific objectives of the 1930-1931 campaign as formulated by M. K. Gandhi were 11 limited and concrete demands that, he believed, if gained would bring India closer to self-governance.

The terminology used in stating objectives should not be subject to wide interpretations. Proper terminology will make it easier to measure whether or not the objective(s) of a particular campaign or the wider struggle have in fact been achieved. Nor should the objectives be excessively detailed: in some struggles a "freely elected parliament" might be a reasonable objective, but stating that the parliament should have 537 members would be too detailed.

For a limited campaign, it is wise to choose an issue that will be a suitable point of attack. The key is to select an issue that symbolizes the general grievance, or is a specific aspect of the

general problem, that is least defensible by the opponents and is almost impossible to justify. The initial objective would then be one for which the nonviolent struggle group could receive maximum support. It should also be an objective that is either within the capacity of the opponents to yield, or within the power of the resisters to take.

A poor choice of an objective in a limited campaign shifts attention away from the major objective(s) of the grand strategy. A wise choice attracts support from the general population, third parties, and potentially even some individuals and groups among the opponents.

It is often very helpful if the objectives of such limited campaigns are ones that challenge deplorable specific expressions of the general grievance against which the resisters are fighting. For example, if all racial discrimination cannot be abolished in a single struggle, individual campaigns may be launched—as was done in the southern United States in the 1950s and 1960s—against specific practices of discrimination, such as segregated buses and lunch counter service, employment discrimination, and voting restrictions.

For another example, a single limited campaign in a struggle against a dictatorship could focus on defending an opposition publication that the regime wants to prohibit, defying censorship or violations of religious liberty, defending the independence of social or religious institutions, creating new independent organizations (such as a trade union), or campaigning against election fraud. Selective objectives may also focus on specific vital social, economic, or political issues, chosen because of their key role in keeping the social and political system out of the opponents' control, in blocking achievement of the opponents' objectives, or in undermining their pillars of support.

If the struggle is against a foreign military occupation, comparable strategies of selective resistance with specific objectives can be waged. The campaigns may be focused on rejection of the legitimacy of the occupation regime, or on noncooperation with some specific part of it. Blocking the establishment of effective occupation and control over the society would be a crucial part of such a struggle. Strategies of selective resistance may also be focused on denying to the attackers one or more of their specific objectives. For example, the resistance may be focused on block-

ing a specific type of economic gain to the attackers, or preventing their use of the educational system, newspapers, radio, or television to indoctrinate the population in their ideology.

Having chosen the point(s) for concentrated attack, the resisters must not allow themselves to become sidetracked on a lesser course of action or dead-end issues. Initial success on limited points will increase both the resisters' self-confidence and their ability to move forward effectively toward the fuller realization of their objectives.

The perceived validity of the issues and goals espoused by the nonviolent struggle group, as compared to those of the opponent group, are likely to contribute to the effectiveness of the coming nonviolent struggle. The stated issues and goals will influence the support for the resistance from the affected population, as well as, potentially, some people within the opponent group, and perhaps third parties. Clearly stated goals and identification of grievances should be maintained throughout the ebbs and flows of the struggle so long as the grievances remain intact and the goals are still relevant, justifiable, and attainable.

Strengthen the population and the resisters

Parallel with the weakening of the power of the opponents by noncooperation and disobedience is the mobilization of power capacity by the general population. These people and institutions may have previously been thought to be weak and helpless in the face of the opponents' organizational and repressive capacity. This mobilization of the power potential of the population affected by the grievances into effective power that can be used in struggle is of extreme importance to the outcome of the conflict.

From the resisters' position, both the grand strategy and individual strategies for campaigns should be designed so that the resisters and the general population become stronger during the struggle than they were previously. It is possible to calculate their power by determining if they have independent groups and organizations, if they are able to apply nonviolent struggle despite repression, and if they demonstrate skill in using this technique of conducting a conflict.

There is no substitute for genuine strength in the resisting population. If the participants are weak when they begin the

struggle and remain so during the conflict, they will almost certainly lose. In a large-scale conflict, it is necessary to mobilize sufficient struggle capacity to overwhelm the opponents by massive resistance and by the removal of the opponents' sources of power.

At a minimum, the resisters need to be able to force the opponents into a compromise settlement on nonessential issues. This means that the resisters require the ability to direct and coordinate forces to enable them to press the struggle forward despite difficulties. Major efforts are required to strengthen the resisters and the general population so that the opponents can no longer dominate them.

A phased series of campaigns can be designed to strengthen the aggrieved population, as well as to weaken the opponents' regime. These phased campaigns can give the population experience in applying nonviolent struggle. If planned and conducted skillfully, this option can bring a series of successes to the resisting population. These may increase their skills in conducting this type of struggle, give experience in strategic planning, and increase the self-confidence of the population and the resisters.

Strengthen institutions

Commonly, political oppression occurs where civil society—meaning a society consisting of strong independent institutions—is weak. Oppressive regimes already in existence commonly seek to destroy the independence of social, economic, and political institutions outside the control of the State or party. Weakened or destroyed independent institutions make societal resistance very difficult to conduct. The strength or weakness of such institutions is important in planning strategy for nonviolent struggle. Social groups and institutions can be organizational bases for waging nonviolent struggle. Individuals can witness or participate, but only groups can resist effectively.

The institutions of civil society are generally composed of organized groups that are neither vertically controlled by, nor integrated into, that part of political society regulated by the State. Examples of civil society groups include sports clubs, gardening associations, certain labor unions and business associations, religious institutions, organized social movements, and all classes of

nongovernmental organizations. They can exist at a local, regional, or national level.

Other important independent institutions may at times include small governmental bodies, including local town governments, schools, and legislative, executive, taxation, and judicial units. This can happen either when these institutions already exist and are controlled by independent forces, or when new such bodies are created to replace those controlled by the opponent group.

Consequently, preserving and strengthening existing independent groups and institutions and creating new ones are important contributions to the capacity to wage effective future resistance. The condition of these bodies must be carefully considered by strategic planners, as they are important in determining the ability of the populace to wage nonviolent struggle successfully.

If such independent social groups and institutions are weak or largely absent, it may be necessary to create new groups or organizations in order to prepare for future strong resistance. Or, it may be possible to turn certain existing groups or institutions that have not been fully independent into ones with more independence of action, groups capable of playing major roles in future struggles. The creation and the strengthening of such institutions can significantly increase the future capacity for nonviolent struggle and can expand its effectiveness.

The role of leadership

Leaders have been defined as those who make the most important decisions for the conduct of the conflict and also those who personally serve as rallying points for supporters in the struggle.

It is important for planners of future resistance to review different models of leadership, from highly centralized and charismatic ones to committee structures with full group participation. The merits and disadvantages of different models in differing circumstances need to be considered. Leaders are always vulnerable to attack, discrediting, seizure, or assassination. Therefore, replacements and lines of succession of leaders need to be prepared.

It should also be noted that in some predominantly nonviolent struggles, such as the Russian 1905 Revolution, it was often difficult or impossible at various stages to identify who the leaders were, if indeed there were any, except locally and temporarily.

Analysis is required of the possibility that wide diffusion of knowledge of nonviolent struggle, including its dynamics and requirements, may greatly reduce the need for identifiable leadership in actual struggles.

Steps will need to be prepared to mitigate damage to the movement that would be caused by removal of resistance leaders by the opponents. Such measures should include spreading widely the plan of operations for the struggle throughout the resisting population well before the conflict begins. At times, setting up a more decentralized structure for the nonviolent struggle (as was done in Serbia in 2000) may also help.

Certain qualities should be taken into account when selecting leaders. Leaders should set the example, know their people and look out for their welfare, be technically and tactically proficient, seek out and accept responsibility, let others get credit for success, observe loyalty to superiors and subordinates, know the opponents, learn from the experience of one's own group and others as well, maximize and challenge the abilities of subordinates, and pick the right people for the right positions.

Very importantly, the leaders should either have significant knowledge of nonviolent struggle and be capable of wise strategic planning or have the judgment and humility to rely on other persons with those qualities for strategic direction.

Ensure access to critical material resources

Various material resources will be needed by the resisters and the population during the struggle. It is important to identify and secure access to them in advance of open conflict. Without material necessities, the conflict cannot be conducted effectively and the population may be unwilling to support the struggle.

There is a need to survey, for example, available supplies of food, clothing, energy, medical supplies, communications, and transportation, and to plan for secure future access to them.

Resistance strategists will need to answer such questions as these: What supplies will be needed? How may such supplies and access to them be affected during the struggle? What can the resisters and third parties do to ensure their availability? How can the resisters neutralize, or compensate for, the opponents' attempts to restrict or sever supplies of the materials the resisters

need? Can supplies be decentralized in advance or during the struggle, therefore making the resisters less vulnerable to severance or seizure of these supplies? Can new ways be developed to produce these supplies and resources so that the opponents cannot easily defeat the resistance by controlling them? Are there other options or countermeasures open to the resistance to ensure access to material necessities?

Undermine the opponents' sources of power

In a serious conflict over important issues it is unrealistic to expect that the hearts and minds of the opponents will be changed because people are protesting and resisting nonviolently even in the face of the opponents' brutal repression. Some elements of conversion because of nonviolent suffering are possible on occasion for some people, as was discussed in Chapter Thirty-three. However, in a large-scale conflict about no-compromise issues and important power relationships, it is naïve to expect that the mechanism of conversion will resolve the conflict. Stronger action is required.

Nonviolent struggle is most effective when it is able to undermine or dislocate the opponents. This must be kept in mind in the planning of every strategic move. The strategy needs to be designed to concentrate the resisters' strengths against weak links in the opponents' policies or system of control.

The most efficient way to undermine the opponents' policy or system is to weaken or remove their sources of power. In relatively small campaigns over limited issues, this approach will be only partially required. For example, in a labor strike or a major economic boycott, the withdrawal of labor or halt to purchasing is designed to restrict the opponents' economic resources. In these conflicts, it normally is not necessary for the resisters to undermine other sources of the opponents' power.

However, in larger political struggles—such as attempts to repel a foreign occupation or dissolve a dictatorship—strategists of nonviolent struggle would be wise to attempt to weaken and remove as many of these sources of power as possible. This requires that the weapons of nonviolent struggle be applied against crucial targets, primarily the “pillars of support” of the opponents that are determined to be most vulnerable.

Resisters facing acute conflicts about no-compromise issues and serious power relationships will have a strategic option to attempt to restrict or sever the supply of the sources of power of their opponents through symbolic protests, forms of noncooperation, or disruptive intervention. Such action becomes especially powerful when it involves defiance and noncooperation by organizations and institutions. The impact of their resistance will vary with the degree of the opponents' dependence on them.

Often it will be wise to target specific sources of the opponents' power in a sequence of priorities. This sequence may be selected on the basis of certain criteria, including at times both their vulnerability and their importance to the opponents.

One of the most important sources of power, as we discussed in Chapter Two, is authority, or legitimacy. The undermining of this source of power was exceptionally important in Serbia in October 2000. Without authority, the provision of the other sources of power is unstable. Loss of authority can set in motion the disintegration of a regime's power.⁴ As we noted earlier, all governments depend upon the cooperation and assistance of their subjects, of the groups and organizations of the society, and of the branches of the government. When these bodies do not sufficiently supply the several needed sources of power, or when they carry out the regime's wishes and orders slowly or inefficiently—or even flatly refuse to assist and obey—the power of the regime is weakened.

Governments may attempt to restore obedience and cooperation by imposing sanctions, or punishments. However, even sanctions will be inadequate to enforce obedience and cooperation as long as acceptance of the regime's authority is limited. If popular disobedience and noncooperation continue—or even grow—despite such sanctions, the power of the opponents will shrink or dissolve. This effect is heightened when police and soldiers refuse to obey orders. Another key source of power—sanctions—will then have been removed.

In some conflicts, specific actions can be undertaken with a view of undermining the morale and the reliability of the opponents' military forces and functionaries. Sometimes, such efforts

⁴ For this analysis, we have assumed that the opponents either are the established regime or have the backing of the established regime.

may have little or no impact. Troops facing nonviolent resisters have sometimes perpetrated brutalities, as in China in 1989 and Burma in 1988. At other times, efforts to undermine troops have been extremely influential, as in Russia in 1991 and the Philippines in 1986. The general situation of a population resisting nonviolently, so as not to threaten the lives of members of the military forces, will sometimes suffice to create serious morale problems among soldiers and police. This can lead to laxity in repression, and occasionally, although rarely, to disobedience of orders and mutiny. While it is wise not to depend on such military disobedience, special efforts to influence troops, police, and functionaries can prove to be important.

If the acceptance of the regime, cooperation with it, and obedience to it are ended, the regime must weaken and collapse. This explains the phenomenon of “people power,” and the collapse of dictatorships when confronted by the strong use of this technique.

Concentrate strength against weakness

To be most effective, nonviolent action needs to be concentrated against crucial targets. These targets need to be selected after careful consideration of one’s own strengths, overall objectives, and campaign objectives; the objectives and position of the opponents, including their weaknesses; and the importance of the issues at stake themselves. Napoleon’s maxim that it is impossible to be too strong at the decisive point applies here as well.

Campaign strategies need to be designed to utilize the strengths of the resisters to expose and attack the opponents’ vulnerabilities and weaknesses, while avoiding engagement of the opponents at their strongest and most defensible points. This applies to both the selection of campaign objectives and the choice of tactical targets for attack within those campaigns.

However, it should also be recognized that some struggles may be launched against policies or governments that have wide popular support. In such cases, the struggles will often be about non-compromise issues, and both the struggle and the campaign objectives may not initially find wide acceptance among the population as a whole. If so, campaigns and actions should be designed to strengthen the resisters and chip away at the support for the opponents or their policies. These struggles will usually take sig-

nificantly longer to win, and the external conditions will be unfavorable for the resisters.

Generally, however, when choosing points of attack for particular actions within the campaign strategy, it is wise for the nonviolent struggle strategists to target weak or particularly vulnerable supports of the opponents, their policies, or both. We have already noted the need to focus the resisters' capabilities against vital "pillars of support," defined as the groups or institutions that support and provide the opponents' various sources of power. However, it would be unwise initially to target those pillars of support that are the strongest and most defensible by the opponents. For example, if internal solidarity, morale, and cohesion of the military forces are among the opponents' greatest strengths, then at the beginning of the struggle it would probably not be wise to attempt to induce disaffection among rank-and-file soldiers as a primary campaign tactic.

In contrast, if the opponents are heavily dependent on the sale of mineral resources produced at mines that have been unionized by supporters or members of the nonviolent struggle group, then a key weakness of the opponents—and an important strength of the resisters—has been revealed. A wise campaign might then include application of economic pressures against the opponents through strikes, slowdowns, or other such measures at these facilities. The key, again, is to target the vulnerable sources of power of the opponents by concentrating strength against their weakest pillars of support.

Concentration of strength is vital. Activities and pressures should be selected that allow the nonviolent struggle group to apply its strengths, not expose its weaknesses. Without support of labor unions (as well as internal discipline within those unions), it is unlikely that many forms of economic pressure, including those in the example just given, will have much effect. On the other hand, if labor union support and solidarity with the nonviolent struggle group is one of the resisters' great strengths, then such strikes might prove effective if targeted against a key pillar of support of the opponent group. As another example, if the resisters enjoy the full backing of popular religious institutions, it would be wise to employ them in the struggle. If the religious institutions support the opponents, however, it would be unwise to

plan activities that require their participation in resistance against the opponents.

This same principle holds for selection of methods. Methods of nonviolent action that require certain preparation or capabilities on the part of the resisters should be selected only if those capabilities exist. Demonstrations should not be called unless organizers are confident that turnout will be sufficient to achieve the identified purposes of such actions within the campaign. A hunger strike should not be launched if the resisters who volunteer to apply the method are not willing to continue it for the full declared duration. Consumers boycotts should not be launched without the capacity to apply them.

However, the above methods become viable if (a) the resisters have the strength to carry them out and to maintain them despite the opponents' countermeasures; and (b) the methods fit within a selected campaign strategy to target vulnerable pillars of support of the opponents. In all cases, the selected methods should be part of a strategic plan that will apply the strengths of the resisters against the weaknesses of the opponents, concentrating heavily on vulnerable pillars of support. To do otherwise is to ignore opportunities to advance in the struggle, while exposing potentially vital weaknesses of one's own side that the opponents will eagerly exploit.

Keep the opponents off balance

The resistance movement needs to keep the opponents off balance, and it must strike where the opponents are unprepared to deal with the attack. Timing and speed can be important here. Unlike what is sometimes true in military struggles, however, nonviolent resisters generally do *not* have to rely on surprise attacks in order to be effective.

The timing of implementation of the resisters' tactics can be very important. It is essential for the resistance strategists and leaders to be able to judge when people are willing to resist. Sometimes action may be timed to coincide with a significant day or special occasion. Where a combination of actions involving several groups is planned, the precise time at which each group is to act will be important. Timing of resistance actions is also important at the various stages of a struggle. It is important to de-

termine the right time to shift from symbolic actions to massive noncooperation, for example, or to begin a new campaign within the overall grand strategy.

Prompt defensive actions may be required in response to an aggressive attack by the opponents. For example, if the opponents are attempting to seize control of the whole country, as by an invasion or a coup d'état, resistance should be initiated before the attackers have established effective control of the State. Similarly, resistance is important at the point when an oppressive regime is attempting to control or abolish the independent groups and institutions of the society in order to expand its control of the governmental apparatus and society. Defense of these groups and institutions is necessary in order to maintain both their freedom of action and their future ability to resist.

Block control by the opponents

In all large-scale conflicts, the resisters need to make efforts to block the establishment or maintenance of control by the opponents. Resistance should continue as long as required to achieve the goal, or as long as the nonviolent struggle group is willing to withstand the expected repression and to continue other aspects of the struggle. This is done principally in three ways:

(1) The resisters and the general population they represent should (a) disobey defiantly and withhold cooperation from the opponents, thereby denying the opponents control over them and also weakening the opponents' power, and (b) disperse resistance widely throughout the population and society. At times, this dispersal of resistance can include applying relatively mild delaying tactics and feigning incompetence among certain sectors of the populace. At other times, it may require applying stronger methods of defiance and noncooperation. Geographic dispersal of resistance is often necessary as well, although there will likely be physical focal points (such as important cities or industrial zones) where concentrated resistance may at times produce a stronger impact.

(2) Specifically, in cases of reaction to invasion or coup d'état, the resisters need to prevent, undermine, and make ineffective any collaboration with the opponents. Denying the attackers a group

of collaborators is an important specific application of the general policy of disobeying and noncooperating with opponents.

(3) The resisters should make efforts to undermine the effectiveness of the troops, police, and functionaries of the opponents. This is done by alienating their loyalty to their leaders and attempting, when feasible, to induce disaffection, mutiny, or desertion.

Defy the opponents' violent repression

Nonviolent struggle can pose grave problems for many opponents. Naturally, opponents whose power, privilege, and control are threatened will be disturbed. When this occurs, powerful opponents are likely to resort to violent repression. Resisters may be beaten, imprisoned, attacked, kidnapped, wounded, tortured, or killed.

Such repression is not a sign that the nonviolent struggle has failed. Indeed, this repression is a tribute to the degree to which nonviolent struggle has upset the oppressors. Casualties are not a sign of defeat in nonviolent struggle, any more than they are in military conflicts. Casualties are the expected human cost of waging an acute conflict with opponents willing and able to wound and kill in order to establish or maintain their control.

The degree to which the opponents' reactions will be crude and brutal, or refined and sophisticated with very little violence, will vary. However, strong responses from the opponents need to be anticipated. The opponents' reactions should be no surprise and the resisters should be prepared for them.

Some resisters in past movements assumed that they were defeated when their opponents applied strong repression against them. If resisters believe they have been defeated, then they have been. However, defeat is not a necessary consequence of repression. Grave repression may instead lead to increased resistance, increased third party support, and on occasion even sympathy and support from members of the opponent group.

If repression is not understood, and if wise responses to it are not applied, the opponents' violence can produce destruction, induce terror, and demoralize a population. People may become less willing to risk these consequences as the price of resistance. Some persons, angry at the brutality of the repression and at the

suffering and death of friends and family, may wish to strike out in retaliation with their own acts of violence. This counter-violence, however, will not strengthen the resistance. It does not serve a strategic purpose, and it will almost certainly be counter-productive, helping to undermine the effectiveness of the nonviolent struggle, as we discussed in Chapter Thirty-one.

In the long run, the most effective response to violent repression is to demonstrate that it does not produce submission, but instead increases resistance. Continued nonviolent resistance in the face of severe repression may at times also produce both unrest among the opponents' own population and opposition to the opponents among third parties. For this to occur, however, there will likely be a time of suffering until the opponents' leadership recognizes that brutalities are counterproductive, or until the opponents' regime weakens and falls apart through political starvation due to the severance of its sources of power.

Resisters can take steps to weaken the impact of repression on the resisters and the population. Less provocative methods of resistance may at times be chosen. For example, people may be urged to stay off the streets where they can easily be shot and to remain in their homes where they are less obvious targets. Sometimes, "lightning" actions may be taken, with participants rapidly assembling for an event and then dispersing extremely quickly before police or troops have time to respond.

A shift of strategy and tactics, such as to use less risky methods that are still defiant, may be appropriate to reduce the impact of repression. At times, a temporary retreat may be wise, with the resistance taking a different turn. Intensified efforts may be launched to subvert the opponents' police and troops, and the population. Wherever possible, it is important to provide support for the victims of the repression and their families, through such means as medical assistance, psychological support, financial assistance, and similar measures. Fundamentally, the resisters need to maintain their solidarity and determination to resist through nonviolent struggle.

Harsh repression can also be countered by increasing the cost to the opponents for its use. If extremely violent repression is inevitable, then some strategists have advised that one should attempt to ensure that the brutalities are committed in the open where they can be seen by the public, observers, and journalists.

News of the brutalities should be publicized so that they may alienate members and allies of the opponents' group, including decision makers, agents, the general population, and, also, members of third parties. The opponents' collaborators who become alienated by the violence of the repression may as a result even switch sides at times. In some cases, extreme repression can result in international economic sanctions and diplomatic pressures against the regime that inflicted the brutalities.

Maintain persistent nonviolent discipline

Nonviolent struggle can be waged effectively against opponents with massive capacity for military and police action precisely because it does not attempt to confront that type of power directly. Instead, the struggle is pursued by nonviolent means, which is more difficult for the opponents to control. Even limited violence by resisters, or on their behalf, including in response to brutalities, can be counterproductive. Resistance violence in the midst of a nonviolent struggle reinforces the opponents' ability to use repression effectively against nonviolent resisters.

In contrast, the maintenance of nonviolent discipline against violent opponents facilitates the workings of the mechanisms of nonviolent struggle, including the occasionally applicable process of political ju-jitsu, which was discussed in Chapter Thirty-two. This is a process in some nonviolent struggles in which the contrast between the opponents' brutal violence and the resisters' persistent nonviolent resistance tends to increase support for, and participation in, the nonviolent struggle, and to reduce support for the opponents.

It is important to note that such reactions in support of the resistance are by no means guaranteed and often do not occur. However, this process is greatly facilitated by the maintenance of nonviolent discipline on the part of the resisters.

Nonviolent discipline consists of two components: (1) adhering to the strategic plans for the struggle and (2) refraining from violence. Failure of the resisters to adhere to the strategic plan can produce confusion and can deflect strength away from the points at which it needs to be concentrated. The breakdown of nonviolent discipline and the outbreak of violence can have disastrous effects on a nonviolent struggle and can assist the opponents.

If the resisters become overly enthusiastic about participation and take action that is not a part of the original strategic plan, or decide not to carry out the actions prescribed in that plan, this often can be very harmful to the effectiveness of the struggle. Although there may be times at which innovation can be helpful, it can also be dangerous. Resisters need to discipline themselves to implement carefully developed plans designed to bring them success.

The general population and all resisters must understand the need for commitment to participate in the current campaign. Methods for dealing with fear should also be developed. Knowledge of disciplined responses to serious repression, and the rationale for maintaining nonviolent resistance despite provocations and repression, need to be understood and accepted.

The grand strategy for the overall conflict needs to provide for means to carry the struggle to successful completion by nonviolent forms of action. It must exclude the possible introduction of violence at a later stage, when resistance violence would be of great assistance to the opponents. Resistance violence would allow them to justify even harsher repression against the resistance group and to assist efforts to discredit the resisters as really terrorists in attempted disguise. Allowance for possible later use of violence can cause abandonment of the development of forms of action that are needed in critical stages of the conflict to achieve success. Resistance violence can also strengthen the opponents' internal support from their population, police, and troops. A struggle that is almost successful should continue to rely on the strengths that have brought the conflict that far. Otherwise, the course of the conflict may be reversed and the opponents may prevail after all.

The negative consequences of resisters turning to violence may include reduced participation in resistance, increased repression, higher casualties, increased solidarity within the opponent group, enhanced morale among the opponents' troops and police while conducting repression, loss by the resisters of the "moral high ground," and reduced or lost international sympathy and support.

Means of promoting nonviolent discipline may include spoken and written instructions and appeals; pledges and oaths; use of "marshals" to assist order during demonstrations; the design of

challenging nonviolent activities to keep the initiative; avoidance of activities that are especially likely to turn violent; exertion of pressures on participants who have earlier pledged to remain nonviolent; holding “socio-drama” sessions to act out in advance anticipated actions and repression in serious conflict situations; and various efforts to raise morale for participation in the non-violent activities. Participants in demonstrations may be barred from bringing such items as weapons, alcohol, and drugs to demonstrations.

From guidelines to action

The above guidelines are extremely important in making non-violent struggle effective. However, to have an impact on the outcome, plans based on them must, if possible, be prepared in advance of the struggle and then be applied during the conflict.

The course of a strategically planned and well-prepared non-violent struggle will be a dynamic one. It will require wise responses and skilled action in the face of the many changes and problems that will be encountered, in order to bring the conflict to a successful conclusion.

Chapter Thirty-eight

CONDUCTING THE STRUGGLE

The role of a strategic plan

The diverse cases of nonviolent struggle described in earlier chapters of this book started in various ways. Almost without exception, they did so without a strategic plan for the impending major conflict. The closest to a strategic plan was the case of India in 1930-1931, although elements of planning were also present in Serbia in 2000.

The approach that is presented in this book is a more deliberate one. It envisages careful analysis and strategic development before the struggle begins. The deliberate initiation of the struggle with advance planning will likely increase the chances of the struggle being successful. Advance planning may also reduce, but not eliminate, the possibility of extreme casualties.

Once the struggle has begun, it will not remain static. Power relationships will change, sometimes rapidly. Although the nonviolent struggle group should always try to maintain initiative in the conflict, momentum may be periodically gained or lost. Unanticipated problems and setbacks may, and probably will, occur.

Strategic planners and leaders of the nonviolent struggle group should try to anticipate changes in the conflict situation and be prepared to take them into account over the course of the struggle. Such changes may result in a need to alter tactical plans for the implementation of the existing campaign strategies. Changes in the conflict situation will also be important in the continued development of the strategic plans for imminent future campaigns within the grand strategy. On rare occasions, the strategies for existing campaigns may need to be altered if it is determined conclusively that setbacks in the struggle are due to poor strategic planning rather than inadequate implementation.

In this chapter, we will offer some thoughts that may help to guide the resisters in these matters as the struggle develops.

Preparing the population for struggle

The effectiveness of nonviolent struggle can be significantly increased if certain activities are undertaken before the conflict begins. These can include improving the social context for the coming action, spreading the understanding of nonviolent struggle among potential participants, strengthening independent groups and institutions, and increasing the resisters' capacity to apply the technique skillfully.

An important initial step in preparing the general population for later struggle is the spreading of the simple concept of noncooperation, and some basic understanding of the technique of nonviolent struggle. It will be important to determine how deep and widespread the knowledge of nonviolent struggle is among the population of potential resisters. For some sections of the population, fuller explanations of nonviolent struggle may be required. For example, this may include additional emphasis on the role of noncooperation and the recognition that violence has no role in this struggle and must be excluded. Various means of communication may be used for these purposes, including radio, audio- and videocassettes, leaflets, booklets, books, cartoons, and stories.

It will be important also to assess what skills will be needed during future individual campaigns, and whether these skills are already present among expected resisters. If not, then preparations to develop these skills will be a necessary task.

It will also be important to spread the idea of phased campaigns with limited objectives, conducted both to gain those objectives and to strengthen the subordinated population and society, while weakening the controls of the oppressive regime. The population needs to become accustomed to the need for making repeated and continued efforts and not to expect instant success.

In well-prepared campaigns, clear instructions will be issued to the general population and to particular groups that are asked to carry out specific acts of resistance and defiance in disciplined ways. Guidelines for specific types of resistance behavior can also be determined in advance of a crisis (such as a coup d'état), with instructions for contingencies. These instructions may include the resistance roles of various groups in the population and various institutions in the society.

Experience also establishes that, even under the most extreme totalitarian systems, it has been impossible for the dictators to sever completely all communication among resisters and the general population. Illegal news sheets, pamphlets, and even books were published and circulated under Nazi occupations and Communist rule.

Facing problems: barriers or challenges?

It must be expected that problems will be encountered during the course of the conflict. How the resisters regard these problems and respond to them is very important. Both the resisters and their leaders need to regard identified problems as challenges, not insurmountable barriers. Unless this attitude is present, it will be impossible to move beyond such difficulties.

It is therefore very important to learn how to examine serious problems and how to develop effective ways to solve them. In that way, the problems can be overcome, bypassed, or removed, and the struggle can proceed toward achieving its objectives. It is wise to try to anticipate such problems throughout the course of the struggle and to seek solutions for them before they occur.

Maintaining momentum and initiative

It is very important that the resistance movement maintain the initiative and strong momentum during the conflict in order that the application of the adopted strategies can proceed with vigor and effectiveness. Failure to do so seriously weakens the movement. For example, a brave, disciplined, and imaginative demonstration may occur on a given day that attracts significant interest, attention, and support. However, if during the following weeks and months no new acts of resistance are carried out, the public focus will be on the period of silence and passivity, not on the earlier demonstration. Its impact will be largely lost. On the other hand, maintaining the initiative and the progressive advancement of the resistance movement by new acts of protest or resistance according to the planned strategy will strengthen the struggle and contribute to the movement's success.

The nonviolent struggle movement needs to conduct primarily offensive actions, taking and maintaining the initiative as much as possible. If the movement retains its capacity to resist but does not take the initiative, there is a serious danger that the movement will become primarily reactive. The choice of what to do and how to do it would then be determined by the opponents' initiatives, thereby giving them great advantages. Defensive operations should be limited to those taken to block advances by the opponents while offensive operations are being prepared. Keeping the planned strategy in mind, leaders and strategists will need to consider what their options are for taking the initiative in the next steps of the conflict.

Even in the case of a basically defensive struggle, such as one opposing a foreign occupation or a coup d'état, the defenders need to take the initiative to turn the struggle into one in which they are the driving force. The defenders will need to plan what offensive actions they can take to protect their institutional bases, principles, and ability to act to force the collapse or withdrawal of the attackers.

A wise grand strategy, as well as particular strategies for individual campaigns, should include plans for developing a progressively more powerful and successful movement.

A long-term struggle operating under a grand strategy may include several campaigns for limited objectives. Effectiveness of the

long-term struggle is likely to be increased, and momentum is maintained, if both the campaign goals and the population groups required to bear the brunt of the responsibility for waging the struggle are varied between the successive campaigns.

In some long-term struggles, campaign strategies might focus on economic issues at one time, on freedom of expression issues at another, and on religious issues at still another. Quite different methods of action might be used in each of these campaigns. Each campaign may also call for differing degrees of both involvement and risk for different sectors of the resistance. For example, teachers may bear the brunt of the responsibility and the repression for a while. For other periods, the clergy, rail workers, journalists, judges, or students may hold prime responsibility for carrying out certain actions to gain specific objectives. Later, the group primarily responsible for resistance during one period may be given rest time, as the specific issue shifts or a different occupational or geographical group is required to assume a more active role in a new campaign.

If such a plan for developing an increasingly strong resistance movement has been made, then it is important to monitor the course of the struggle to determine whether or not the movement has indeed been growing more powerful. If the movement has become primarily reactive or has been acting largely defensively, a change to more aggressive action is needed. Decisions must be taken and implemented to make the struggle increase its drive, initiative, and force toward greater capacity to achieve its objective(s).

Monitoring the course of the conflict

During the course of the conflict, many important changes are likely to occur among both the opponents and the resisters, in their relationships to each other, and in their relationships to third parties. Very importantly, the degree and type of support that each of the contending parties receives from its own “pillars of support” may increase or decrease. The result is likely to be shifts in the overall conflict situation that was earlier assessed during the preparation of the strategic estimate, as we discussed in Chapter Thirty-six. The original situation will not remain static. Various factors will intervene as the resisters attempt to

apply a chosen strategic or tactical plan and as the opponents react. Therefore, it is important to know how the support for each side has changed, how it is currently changing, and whether and how well plans for the nonviolent struggle are actually being applied.

Larger indicators of the impact of the struggle should be monitored. These will include developments among the resisting groups, the general population, the opponents, and third parties. A variety of important questions needs to be asked. What are the favorable developments? What are the unfavorable ones? How are the views, morale, and reliability of the opponents' troops, officials, and population being affected by the conflict? How has the tenacity of the resisters been affected thus far in the conflict, and are their numbers growing or shrinking? What has happened during the conflict to the opponents' ability to control the conflict situation and the resisting population?

It is important to identify the reasons why the changes in power relationships have occurred, on both sides. What are the trends? What factors have contributed to these changes? Are the events providing evidence that the original strategic plan was sound, or that it needs to be revised? Were the opponents' countermeasures anticipated, and therefore responses prepared, or are new actions by the resisters now required? What does this say about the possible benefits of initiating changes in the tactics and the methods to be employed, or even in evaluating the selected strategy during a future review? Additional information may also be gathered about other relevant and changing factors in the conflict situation, including the use of propaganda, intelligence agents and informers, movements of key opponent personnel, and other factors.

One of the most important tasks in the evaluation of the ongoing struggle is to assess how effectively the specific tactics and methods of resistance are being applied. This is especially the case when methods have been selected that require participation of large numbers of resisters. Examples of these methods include economic boycotts, labor strikes, various forms of political non-cooperation, and even some symbolic actions such as protest marches or the public display of certain colors or symbols. If such methods are being applied by large numbers of people, that fact alone communicates a great deal, and can have a major impact on

the conflict. On the other hand, if a call for the use of methods that require many participants receives a very small response, a weakness in the resistance is exposed that may have very negative consequences for the future of the struggle.

The strategists and leaders will need ways to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of their ongoing campaign in order to assess what, if any, new steps may be needed to increase its effectiveness and its chances of success. That assessment may make it possible to take steps (1) to prevent, correct, or compensate for certain negative developments, or (2) to take new initiatives to increase the power of their struggle, strengthen the struggle group, weaken the opponents, and gain increased third party support.

Shifts in tactics and methods

A wise strategy that has been prepared to guide the main course of the conflict by the nonviolent struggle group should not be regarded as easily disposable in favor of another. However, the plans that implement the adopted strategy can be subject to change when opportunities arise to accelerate momentum, or when unanticipated serious opposition is encountered.

As the situation changes and the conflict proceeds, opportunities may arise for the resisters to take steps that were earlier envisaged but not scheduled for that particular time. If, after assessment, the proposed new actions are deemed to be wise, the movement needs to be prepared to take advantage of the unexpected opportunities. However, these steps must be compatible with the adopted grand strategy and the strategy of the current campaign.

The movement must also be careful not to be distracted into focussing on side issues and undertaking activities that are not central to the basic strategy of the struggle.

Within a given campaign, shifts may at times be made in which population groups are relied upon to conduct particular applications of protest, noncooperation, or intervention. Other changes may also be made in the choice of specific methods to be applied in the short term. Such changes in methods, or groups of methods, can be used to shift responsibilities and dangers from one group of resisters to another that is perhaps less exhausted or more disciplined. Shifts in methods may also be made to change

the kind of pressures applied to the opponents or to compensate for weaknesses in the nonviolent struggle group. Variation in tactics and methods may also add variety and interest—and often newsworthiness—to the campaign.

Retrenchment or acceleration?

If the course of the struggle has revealed that the necessary strength and ability of the resisters to persist in the face of punishments and suffering do not exist, that fact must be recognized. Ways must be sought to correct the weaknesses while continuing the struggle.

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

The implementation of strategy and tactics requires sensitivity to the developing conflict situation. If a given tactical action succeeds, then what? If a given tactical action fails, what then? If there is partial success for that limited action, what follows? The capacity to respond to unforeseen, or unforeseeable, events must be acutely developed. It is especially important to conserve the morale of the nonviolent resisters and potential supporters and to continue their resistance actions. If a tactical action is not succeeding, plans must be altered. Under some conditions, a temporary retreat might be called in order to prepare for a stronger future effort.

Several additional important questions may need to be asked. When is it wise to continue current actions to increase the power of the resistance, or instead to modify those actions? When is it wise to initiate new activities and toward what specific limited objectives should the new action be aimed? When is it wise, despite a tactical setback, to attempt to strengthen the resisters and to persist with the chosen strategy? How does one determine whether it is wise to reassess and revise strategies already adopted?

Making gains despite setbacks

Not all struggles will proceed smoothly. Resistance leaders and strategists need to be prepared to offer guidance in situations in which the opponents have gained important ground and have won some or all of their objectives despite the resistance.

Setbacks are not permanent defeats. Without anticipation of such contingencies, and without preparations by the resisters to deal with them, setbacks and defeats in specific campaigns within an overall grand strategy may result in demoralization, confusion, and a collapse of the resistance campaign. On the other hand, with proper anticipation and preparations, the resisters may be able to handle setbacks and reverse them before they turn into debacles.

Lessons should be learned from setbacks. These may include ways to improve the development of strategies, increase the solidarity of the resisters, maintain discipline, improve their skill in applying resistance actions, and increase their capacity to continue resistance despite repression and other problems.

It is important to determine, on the basis of the examination of developments in the movement and careful analysis of events, whether the causes of a setback have been in the choice of the objectives and the strategy. If this was not the case, and the objective was wisely chosen and the strategy to achieve it was well developed and planned, then the objective and the strategy should not be lightly abandoned or replaced.

Difficulties on the tactical level are not necessarily grounds for abandoning the strategy. Changes may, instead, be appropriate on the tactical level. The general population and the resisting group may have been weak and thus needed strengthening. The implementation of the strategy and the tactics may have been poorly conducted. There may have been organizational and leadership problems. The resisters may have lacked effective means to counter the opponents' strengths and moves. In all cases, the precise nature of weaknesses in the resistance needs to be identified, and corrections need to be made on the proper levels.

In those cases where the objectives of individual campaigns have been achieved, those gains need to be recognized and the resisters given credit for their achievements. This recognition and

credit will help the resisters to follow up their successes with further gains in the next stages of the conflict.

Bringing the conflict to an end

No technique of struggle, violent or nonviolent, can be guaranteed to succeed in all circumstances, irrespective of the conditions, the strengths and skills of the resisters, and the nature and actions of the opponents. Full consideration certainly needs to be given to the external conditions of the conflict and to the nature and capacities of the opponents. However, other important factors in determining the outcome of the struggle that are often neglected are the skill, preparation, bravery, strategies, and persistence shown by the resisters. If these qualities are weak or absent, then it is most likely that the struggle will fail. But if such capacities are present and can be fortified, the resisters stand a chance of winning against even ruthless opponents.

There are three basic ways in which a conflict may end: defeat, mixed results, or success. Conflicts involving the use of nonviolent struggle are no exception.

Defeat

The nature of defeat may range from simple failure to achieve the declared objectives of the struggle to full collapse of the resistance movement. This is similar to defeat in military warfare, except that this evaluation of nonviolent struggle is measured by an additional standard that is not usually applied to wars, namely, whether the vowed objectives have in fact been gained.

Defeat may occur because of insufficient strength, or weakness in organization, perseverance, or strategy. As we said earlier, there is no substitute for genuine strength in nonviolent struggle.

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

If defeat of a nonviolent struggle appears nearly certain, or at least very likely, the nonviolent leaders and strategists will need to make very careful calculations as to how to handle the situation.

Even if the struggle group is unable to achieve its objectives at the time, it does not have to abandon them or otherwise surrender legitimacy to the opponents. Deliberate steps should be taken to ensure the possibility of resuming the struggle after major regrouping, internal strengthening, and new strategic analysis and preparations.

A movement that has proved to be too weak to stand up to the opponents and has simply disintegrated will have very little capacity at that time to salvage anything from the debacle.

However, if the defeat has not been extreme, and yet the resisters and the broader population are incapable at the time of regrouping after losses, then a temporary halt to the action should be called. An effort can be made to salvage as much as possible from the crisis. It is important to know how to withdraw in an orderly fashion to a tenable position. What that position may be will vary widely with the particular situation and the strengths of the contending groups.

If a given struggle has been defeated, it is important to analyze what factors contributed to the failure. When those are identified, it will be necessary to examine them to see why they occurred, whether they can be corrected in the future, and, if so, how. That analysis must be done carefully and without simplistic explanations, such as “the opponents were too brutal.”

An attempt will need to be made to turn the difficult situation into a period of regrouping and new preparations. If some spirit of resistance survives among the resisters and the population, it will be important to maintain at least some small symbolic means of protest and to continue some limited organizational work. This is what Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss has called “micro-resistance.”¹ As conditions improve, surviving resistance leaders and strategists will need to conduct preparations for future non-violent resistance, encourage people to take small, low-risk actions, and later even to initiate limited local protest and resistance activities for small objectives.

¹ Arne Næss defined micro-resistance as “resistance by individuals and tiny, temporary groups carried out in such a way that exposure and annihilation of larger organizations do not affect it, at least not directly.” See Adam Roberts, ed., *Civilian Resistance as a National Defense*, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1967 and *The Strategy of Civilian Defence* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), pp. 252 and 270n. Several examples are offered.

Not all defeats are total and permanent. Even if the resisters appear to be defeated, the opponents' power, despite their victory, may actually have been significantly weakened. In military warfare, this is known as a "Pyrrhic victory." Even at times when objectives have not been achieved, the resisters may grow in organizational strength and skill in resisting. Such gains can be the basis for later increased strength and effectiveness. A fundamental reassessment of the situation is likely to be required, however, including a new strategic estimate.

Mixed results

In practice, of course, the end results of conflicts are often neither a complete success nor a complete defeat, but a mixture of both. In such cases, the nonviolent struggle group will need to reassess the situation and determine what needs to be done to achieve the full objectives of the campaign as originally intended.

Limited gains must be accurately reported and understood. They are not the same as defeats, but neither are they full successes. Nevertheless, in a situation of limited gains for the nonviolent struggle group, it is possible that the opponents also may have experienced comparable setbacks. They may lose self-assurance and become weakened and less able to deny the resisters' objectives in the future.

If the gains from the struggle have been less than desired by the resisters but no fundamental questions have arisen challenging the validity of the chosen strategy, then it is important to continue applying that same strategy, perhaps in a new way. However, if serious problems have been discovered in the earlier resistance, problems that can be identified as factors impeding other gains in the future, the previous strategic plan may need to be reconsidered.

Not all major changes can be achieved in a single struggle, and negotiated conclusions may be wise in some campaigns. 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, non-essential matters, but ought not compromise on essentials or give

up fundamental principles or demands. The resisters need to know the difference and ought not claim secondary issues as fundamental principles or major objectives. The full achievement of fundamental principles or demands may be postponed, but they must not be renounced.

The period following a truce or interim settlement will be difficult. It could be used by the resisters to regroup, strengthen positions, or consolidate gains. One should not continue along the same line that led to the truce. The new strategy and tactics are very important. The first actions after losing a battle should be brief, but one should never allow the opponents to dictate the resisters' future actions. The nonviolent struggle group should not allow itself to become completely passive and to 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.

Strategists and leaders will need to assess how their struggle can be strengthened to enable them to proceed from a campaign or a struggle that concluded with mixed results, toward a new campaign capable of attaining their full objectives. How can they recover from losses, regroup, strengthen their people, and prepare to resume a new phase of the struggle? Do they need to focus on a more vulnerable specific objective? Or do they need to expand their objectives to capitalize on their newly identified strengths and opportunities? The strategy and tactics during such a period of regrouping and regaining strength will be of particular importance.

Success

Success in a limited campaign, or in a major nonviolent struggle operating on the basis of a grand strategy, needs to be precisely understood. Success in nonviolent struggles is defined as the achievement of the substantive objectives of the struggle group. Have the resisters' goals been gained? This is all that is necessary for victory to be declared, even if the opponents have not explicitly acknowledged the changed situation.

As we just discussed, some nonviolent struggles may produce results that are mixtures of success and failure. But a struggle cannot be called fully successful if only the morale of the resisters has improved, if only the general population has become better organized and skilled in resistance, or if the opponent group has merely been weakened. Those situations are indeed gains, but they are something less than full successes.

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 struggle group may become overconfident and careless. At this point, the opponents can make a supreme effort to avoid capitulating. The nonviolent struggle group's final effort is the most important and most difficult. Campaigns may be successfully concluded in different ways. These include negotiations, the opponents granting the demands, and the collapse of the opponents' regime.

On some occasions, a negotiated agreement between the contending sides may include the goals gained by the nonviolent struggle group. Sometimes, the goals may be formalized by a decision imposed by an institution, such as a court, that has not been a party to the conflict, as occurred at the conclusion of the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott in 1956. Examination is then needed of the degree to which that decision was directly or indirectly influenced by the nonviolent resistance. In extreme cases, such as a nonviolent uprising to end an extreme dictatorship, success may be produced by the disintegration of the oppressive system. This disintegration may result from the shrinking or the severance of the regime's sources of power due to widespread and focused noncooperation by the regime's previous pillars of support.

Often, opponents will firmly deny that the gaining of the resisters' objectives was in any way influenced by their resistance. Opponents who have been defeated will sometimes do the best they can to save face. It may also be the case that strong opponents rarely want opposition groups and the general population to become aware that their power potential could, by wise strategy and action, be turned into effective power. Some other explanation of the change may be offered. Perhaps, it may be claimed by the opponents that their views or policies had been misunderstood, the grievances had been the result of poor administration

or wrong doing by underlings, or the change had been planned all along. It may even be claimed that the change had in fact been delayed by the actions of the nonviolent struggle group.

The ways success is implemented will vary with the chosen objectives, the scale of the conflict, and the nature of the opponent group. In a large conflict against a powerful dictatorship willing to apply ruthless repression, the dictatorship could be undermined by the withdrawal of authority and submission by the general population, massive shut-downs of the society, general strikes, mass stay-at-homes, defiant marches, loss of control of the economy, the transportation system, and communications, slowdowns and defiance by the civil service and the police, disguised disobedience or outright mutiny by soldiers, or other activities. As a consequence of such defiance and noncooperation, executed wisely and with mass participation in resistance over time, even dictators would become powerless. The democratic forces would, without violence, triumph.

Of course, this is not the typical situation in which nonviolent struggle is practiced. Most cases are far less difficult than facing an extreme dictatorship. Against a powerful dictatorship, the resistance most likely would require several campaigns and considerable time to succeed. However, in some situations in which conditions are favorable and much groundwork has been laid, the collapse of a dictatorship may occur extremely rapidly, as occurred in Czechoslovakia and East Germany in 1989.

Handling the transition skillfully

Nonviolent strategists and leaders should early on provide resisters with insights to help them to face and solve problems they may encounter when the movement is on the verge of success or has accomplished its objective. Such problems may include attempts by the opponents to disrupt the movement, to promote claims that the success credited to the resisters was really gained by some other group, or they may even attempt to seize the State in a coup d'état.

In the past, several nonviolent struggles that were mostly or completely successful in achieving an objective were met with hostile intervention and disruption that damaged the achieved results or produced a new oppressive regime. For example, the suc-

cessful anti-tsarist Russian Revolution of February/March 1917 was followed within a few months by the Bolshevik seizure of the State in October/November. Another example is the predominantly nonviolent Iranian revolution of 1979, which was followed by the establishment of the clerical dictatorship. Such events can be made less likely if they are anticipated and plans are prepared in advance to prevent and to counter these dangers.

If the struggle is a major one that aims to disintegrate an established dictatorship and that aim is gained, a period of political uncertainty is likely to follow. The resisters should calculate in advance how the transition from the dictatorship to the new interim government is to be handled at the end of the struggle in order to establish a viable and improved political system. The path should be blocked to any persons or group that would like to become the new dictators, while they of course deny that intention.

It is very important for nonviolent struggle strategists and leaders to assess the situation accurately. They will also need to consolidate the victory and decide how best to prevent and defeat possible hostile attacks. These may include international attacks, such as military aggression or activities of foreign intelligence services and their collaborators. Particular attention needs to be paid to preparing plans to defeat coups d'état,² and any other efforts to establish a new dictatorship. Attention will also need to be given to planning how to face the dangers of the transition between dictatorship and the new regime, and to the importance of building a free society with capacity to withstand possible new threats.

Short-term issues that merit attention during the transitional period include how to consolidate and strengthen newly established democratic and popular rule, how to induce the military and the police to shift loyalties and to accept the new system, and how to resist attempted seizures of the State.

It is wise to recognize that the social and political situation following the collapse of a dictatorship will not be the ideal society desired by all persons and groups. Major additional objectives

² See Gene Sharp and Bruce Jenkins, *The Anti-Coup*, Boston, Massachusetts: Albert Einstein Institution, 2003, and Gene Sharp, *Civilian-Based Defense*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990.

will remain to be achieved in the future. These include creating and enriching the forms of democratic control, political freedom, popular participation, and social and economic justice. At this point, these will be at best imperfectly achieved and at worst will still be serious problems requiring major attention. The reality will be, however, that a grave form of oppression in the form of the old political order will have been effectively removed as the result of the wise and courageous nonviolent struggle by the population. This success opens the way for additional effective steps in improving and enriching human society.

Expanding future potential

In a world of many acute conflicts, widespread oppression, and great violence, the technique of nonviolent struggle has considerable potential to be applied with greater success than ever before in a wide range of situations. Strategic analysis, planning, and action can significantly increase the effectiveness of its future use.

The insights into the importance and the wise development of strategic nonviolent struggle here are not the final word. Nor are they the only studies of strategy in nonviolent struggles that strategic planners and leaders should examine. A very important additional analysis has been offered by Dr. Peter Ackerman and Dr. Christopher Kruegler in their book *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century*.³ They offer detailed analyses of 12 general principles of strategic nonviolent conflict.

Another very important study is Robert Helvey, *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict*.⁴ It offers both a review of basic insights into this technique of struggle and more advanced analyses of several elements of the application of this technique. These include the strategic estimate, psychological operations, strategic analysis, fear, leadership, contaminants, and consultations.

It is now urgent that major attention and resources be devoted to the task of refining nonviolent struggle, expanding the skilled

³ Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger, 1994), Chapter Two, pp. 21-53.

⁴ Robert Helvey, *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: Thinking About the Fundamentals*, Boston: Albert Einstein Institution, 2004.

strategic uses of this technique in place of violence, and exploring the types of conflict situations in which it can be applied in place of both passivity and violence.

Appendix A

PREPARING A STRATEGIC ESTIMATE FOR NONVIOLENT STRUGGLE

Before attempting to plan an overall grand strategy for a long-term phased nonviolent struggle, or limited strategies for individual campaigns within that struggle, it is necessary first to gather and analyze much information about the context in which the impending conflict will occur.

It is insufficient simply to be familiar with the technique of nonviolent struggle and understand how it operates, although this is a vital prerequisite. Rather, in order to make the application of nonviolent struggle as effective as possible in a given set of circumstances, strategic planning is also essential.

It is impossible to develop a wise strategy for the conduct of a particular struggle if the planners are not intimately familiar with the “conflict situation,” or the context in which the struggle will take place. It is essential to know and compare the characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses (actual and potential) of the groups that will be contending in the future conflict, as well as of those groups that will not initially be directly involved. Geographic, social, economic, political, cultural, climatological, and other factors also need to be examined.

The preparation of a strategic estimate can provide this needed knowledge. This, in turn, will increase the ability of strategists of the nonviolent struggle to prepare a wise strategy that will maximize the chances of achieving their objective.

The aim of this essay is to provide guidelines for preparing this strategic estimate. We will first explain what the strategic estimate is. Then, we will survey factors that need to be taken into consideration when gathering relevant information and preparing that analysis. Finally, we will comment on the role of the strategic estimate, its uses and limitations.

This appendix is based on the work of Robert Helvey, President of the Albert Einstein Institution.

The importance of a strategic estimate

Military planners usually prepare a strategic estimate prior to developing plans for their campaigns. The information produced by this process is extremely useful for nonviolent struggles as well. So far as is known, however, a deliberate and thorough examination of the conflict situation of the type required for preparing a strategic estimate has never been done in preparation for past nonviolent struggles. Instead, past nonviolent struggle leaders have, at best, relied on less rigorous impressions of the impending conflict situation. Past struggle groups have therefore often been less prepared than they could have been for developing a course of action to increase their chances of success. The proper use of a strategic estimate can help to prepare them more adequately, as well as to reduce the likelihood that they will overlook important facts in planning a nonviolent struggle.

At its most basic level, a strategic estimate is a calculation and comparison of the strengths and the weaknesses of the nonviolent struggle group and of that group's opponents, whom we shall call the "opponent group." In some conflicts, the opponent group may be the government itself or a specific part of the ruling regime. In other cases, the opponent group could be a nongovernmental body, such as an educational institution, an economic organization, a religious body, a transportation system, or some other type of institution. A nongovernmental opponent group may have the backing of the current government, with its means of control and repression, or it may not. The proper identification of such relationships is, in fact, one of the first tasks in preparing a strategic estimate.

Of particular value to those involved in strategy development would be the sections that contain analyses regarding the pillars of support of both the opponent group and the nonviolent struggle group, as well as other political considerations. Also, those responsible for propaganda would find demographic considerations quite useful. Information regarding military units, such as locations and capabilities, would be quite useful to operational planners in anticipating military responses to applications of nonviolent resistance. Other components of the strategic estimate will be relevant to other elements of the chosen strategy.

In order to gain the relevant information for the strategic estimate, however, it will take time and energy. While this information can be very valuable, strategic planners must also remember that the strategic estimate is not the only important factor in developing strategies and supporting plans for a future struggle. Therefore, it needs to be kept in perspective. Strategic planners need to avoid becoming bogged down in the minutiae of the situation and need to keep the strategic estimate within the context of other important elements in the development of strategies and the formulation of plans for their implementation. In this regard, one should be mindful of the advice given by Carl von Clausewitz that “strategy forms the theory of using battle for the purposes of war.” In other words, using in part the analysis of information gathered for the strategic estimate, the strategist determines objectives, times and places for campaigns, while those who will wage these battles prepare their own supporting plans.¹ They, in turn, may draw upon the strategic estimate to complete their own estimate of the situation. The emphasis placed upon some portions of the strategic estimate provides an indication of the importance to the planners in determining both the strategy and also how this information should influence supporting plans.

The strategic estimate of the conflict situation is perhaps the most fundamental document on which a strategic planner relies. It is the product of intense, structured, and focused intellectual scrutiny that contributes to greater understanding of the situation in which the struggle will be waged, and the selection of the most effective courses of action to achieve the objectives of the conflict. Since the strategic operational plan is based heavily on the strategic estimate, both the quantity of information analyzed and the quality of the analysis itself help to determine the quality of the developed strategy. Ideally, this document should be critically reviewed in draft form, so that others can challenge the accuracy of facts and the quality of analyses.

Inaccurate or unrealistic views of the strengths, the weaknesses, and the capacities of the contending parties will produce unwise strategies and will likely spell defeat. Although it may at

¹ *Neue Bellona* 9 (1805), p. 271. Quoted from Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 190.

times be necessary to make assumptions about the contending parties when facts cannot be obtained, no assumption is as good as a fact. So it is important to make as few assumptions as possible. If assumptions are used, extra care should be taken to ensure their probable validity. Of course, it is far better to use facts wherever possible.

Needed information

There are seven subject areas about which the persons preparing the strategic estimate should seek solid information. These are:

1. The general conflict situation
2. The issues at stake and the objectives of both parties to the conflict
3. The opponent group
4. The nonviolent struggle group (and the wider grievance group)
5. Third parties (friendly, hostile, and neutral or uncommitted)
6. Dependency balances

On the basis of the information and the understanding produced by such an examination, the nonviolent struggle group will be better equipped to prepare wise strategies to guide the conduct of the conflict.

The strategic estimate serves multiple purposes. The strategic estimate process will greatly assist in identifying strategy options. Additionally, it becomes an important reference document for developing supporting plans to implement the chosen strategies. The strategic estimate is also useful when developing policies and responding to crises, and for providing organizations with a source of sound and thoughtful analysis and factual data.

As you review the following information requirements contained in a strategic estimate, it may appear quite daunting—and it is, indeed. But rather than visualizing one person attempting to gather and analyze all this information, you should be thinking, Who knows about this particular topic and can that person or

persons provide information to me? Once information is received from subject experts, that which is directly relevant to the estimating process can be included in the strategic estimate.

1. The general conflict situation

It is useful to list here in some detail some of the many categories of information about the general conflict situation in which the nonviolent struggle will be conducted. These may provide extensive and in-depth knowledge of the conflict situation. It is highly desirable to be familiar with all factors that could have a conceivable impact either on the opponent group or on the nonviolent struggle group. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Terrain and geography**
(including land forms and waterways, and how they may assist or impede one or the other side in the conflict)
- **Transportation**
(including all available means of transportation for either side in the conflict, local and national transportation infrastructure, alternative routes, and how these might impact the capabilities of either side)
- **Communications**
(all types, access, extent of controls, surveillance, issues of privacy, etc.)
- **Climate and weather**
(including seasonal variations and their possible impact on transportation, communications, food and agriculture, and activities of either side)
- **Political system and governing regime**
(including their characteristics and capacities on various levels, from the top echelons down to small units; any variations in central control or local initiatives; and who controls the State and the roles or functions of the State, political parties, and controlled subordinate organizations)
- **Economic system**
(including both type and condition of the economy, strength and degree of independence of unions and business sectors, and degree of State intervention in the economy)

- **Judicial system**
(especially the degree to that this remains independent of the control of the State or of the opponent group)
- **Demographics**
(information about both the total population and the segment of the population related to the conflict, including statistical breakdowns by age groups, gender, population growth and death rates, population densities in varying locations, and literacy rates)
- **Population strata**
(including socioeconomic classes, ethnicities, religion, language, culture, status of indigenous and immigrant populations, etc.; geographical distribution of such; any variations or differences in these groups in satisfaction, loyalties, or economic interests; and also any conflicts between or among different population groups, whether or not the reasons for such conflicts are related to the non-violent struggle)
- **Control of economic resources and life support**
(fuel, food, water, etc., and consequences for dependency of one side on the other)
- **Status of civil society**
(extent and condition of nongovernmental organizations and social life, including degree of organization and autonomy from the State; and status of other aspects of social life and organization that lie outside control of the political system and/or the regime)

In addition, it is important to examine the immediate general political situation. Are special controls, such as martial law or other means of serious repression, in effect? What are the current political and economic currents and trends?

2. The issues and objectives of the contending groups

It is very important to identify or develop accurate and clear statements of the issues at stake in the conflict from the perspectives of both the opponent group and the prospective nonviolent struggle group. These statements may often be based on declarations by each group, but sometimes additional information from other sources, independent observers, or other groups may be required.

Also, it is important to identify and recognize the differing objectives of the two groups. To what degree are these objectives compatible or incompatible? The stated objectives are not always the full story. Both groups may have not only short-term objectives but also long-term goals that may not be avowed at the time. Both types are significant in preparing strategies for the nonviolent struggle group.

Clear objectives for the nonviolent struggle group are prerequisites for developing strategies and supporting plans for their implementation. If objectives have not been stated at the time the strategic estimate is being prepared, it would be appropriate to make very careful assessments about the aims of both the opponent group and the struggle group.

The issues and objectives of the two contending groups, and how fundamental each side believes them to be, are likely to have important consequences on the actions of both sides during the conflict. These issues and objectives will likely influence the degree to which the opponent group is determined to resist or repress the resistance. The issues and objectives will also likely influence the tenacity of the nonviolent struggle group to persist in the struggle despite repression. Additionally, the degree to which third parties or the general population are willing to side with the nonviolent struggle group will often also depend partly on how such sectors view the issues at stake in the conflict.

3. The opponent group

Full and detailed knowledge of the opponent group that the nonviolent struggle group will face in the pending conflict is extremely important. Such knowledge should focus on the opponents' capabilities rather than on their statements of intent or on assumptions about their interests or intentions. Detailed responses to the following questions about the opponent group are required:

- What is their political system?
- What is their social and cultural system?
- What is their economic system?

- Are these systems independent of each other, or closely interrelated? Are they dependent in any way on the political, social, or economic systems of the potential nonviolent struggle group?
- To what degree are these respective systems controlled by the State structure?
- What is the nature and importance of any religious, moral, ideological, or other doctrinal beliefs and commitments of the opponent group?
- What are the demographics of the opponent group? (age, gender, birth and death rates, literacy, educational standards, and geographical distribution, etc.)
- What is the degree of support for the opponent group's system or regime among the general population and institutions?
- What is the ideological situation (the degree of doctrinal support for the opponent group and/or regime, or for the resistance to its policies and controls)?
- To what degree does the opponent group rely on each of its potential sources of power?
 - Authority or legitimacy
 - Human resources
 - Particular skills or knowledge
 - Psychological or ideological factors
 - Material resources
 - Ability to apply sanctions
- What are the pillars of support of the opponent group (people, groups, and institutions) that supply the needed sources of power? Some of these pillars will require detailed examination. The pillars may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Moral and religious leaders and groups
 - Labor groups
 - Business and investment groups
 - Civil servants and bureaucrats
 - Administrators
 - Technicians
 - Police
 - Prisons

- Military forces
- Intelligence services
- Media
- Foreign investors
- Particular classes or ethnic groups
- To what extent are the pillars of support influenced, or actually or potentially controlled, by the opponent group itself? Are any influenced or controlled by the broad grievance group or the potential nonviolent struggle group? Which pillars are the strongest and most durable? Which pillars are the weakest and most vulnerable?
- Who are the opponent group's internal (domestic) allies, and what is their extent and reliability?
- Who are the opponent group's external (foreign) allies and what is their extent and reliability?
- Can any of these be considered "natural allies" of the opponent group? (If the opponent is a government or a regime, these might include the army, intelligence services, civil servants, the business community, settlers, foreign governments, certain political parties, etc.)
- Who are the "natural enemies" of the opponent group? (Examples may include repressed minorities, disaffected youth, the unemployed, workers, political parties, the lower, middle, or upper classes, etc.)
- Is there any potential or actual support or sympathy for the nonviolent struggle group from within sectors of the opponent group itself?
- What is the organizational structure of the opponent group (administration, organizational branches, complexity, efficiency, reliability, degree of initiative, degree of centralized controls, etc.)?
- What is the opponent group's military capacity? Necessary information includes the following:
 - Strength, number, size, structure, and types of units
 - Locations of units
 - Opponents' military capabilities to counter resistance, impose repression and restore control, including their capacity and willingness to inflict brutalities

- The speed with which the military forces can arrive at specific locations where quick demonstrations might occur
 - Commanders of the important units and their characteristics
 - Personality profiles of select officials and commanders
 - Efficiency, reliability, and morale among troops
 - General profile of military personnel, including education, class, religion, politics, motivation, ethnic group, age range, and possible reasons for disaffection
 - Logistics of troop movements and operations, location of supply lines, and means of re-supply
- What is the opponent group's police capacity? (The same type of information obtained about military forces—as described above—needs to be obtained for police and other security forces as well.)
 - What intelligence organizations, if any, does the opponent group have at its disposal? What are their characteristics, including their known activities and their resources?
 - What is the level of the opponent group's strategic skill?
 - To what degree does the opponent group have competent leadership?
 - What means of nonmilitary control are wielded by the opponent group? Examples may include the following:
 - Censorship
 - Ownership of radio, television, and print media
 - Control of education
 - Financial means to influence behavior
 - Control of private industry or State enterprises
 - International recognition
 - Control of communications technology
 - Control of the judiciary
 - What are the political fissures, internal conflicts, and other weaknesses in the opponent group, such as within the leadership group and supporting organizations, institutions, or population groups?

- Are there any organizations or institutions that normally support the opponent group but might be targeted for transfer of loyalties or for organizational destruction?
- Is the present leadership of the opponent group disputed or contested from within, through rivalries, power struggles, or other reasons?
- What other vulnerabilities and weaknesses of the opponents can be identified? These may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Vulnerabilities and internal conflicts
 - Incompetent leadership or governing ability
 - Being despised by, or leaving a generally unfavorable impression on, the population
 - Lack of trained strategists
 - Ideological bankruptcy
 - Economic crisis
 - Corruption
 - Lack of ability to withstand foreign diplomatic or economic pressure
 - Overreliance on repression or military means as a means of control

4. The nonviolent struggle group (and the wider grievance group)

Full and detailed knowledge of the nonviolent struggle group and the “grievance group” (defined as the wider population that suffers from policies and actions of the opponent group) and other potential or actual sympathizers is just as important as knowledge about the opponent group. The interests and intentions of the nonviolent struggle group are not very useful for this part of the strategic estimate (though they should be recorded when examining the issues and stake and objectives of the contending sides, as described above). Rather, attention should be focused here only on the group’s actual condition and capabilities.

Detailed responses to the following questions about the nonviolent struggle group are therefore required:

- What are the demographics of the nonviolent struggle group and its potential or actual sympathizers, including

the general grievance group (age, gender, geographical distribution, literacy rates, and educational levels, etc.)?

- What is their political system?
- What is their social and cultural system?
- What is their economic system?
- Do these systems operate independently of each other, or are they closely interrelated? To what extent are they identical to, integrated with, or independent of, the political, social, or economic systems of the opponent group?
- To what degree are these respective systems controlled by the State structure?
- What is the nature and importance of any religious, moral, ideological, or other doctrinal beliefs or commitments of the grievance group and the nonviolent struggle group?
- What is the broad ideological situation (the degree of doctrinal support for the nonviolent struggle group, and its ideas, positions, or platforms)?
- What is the actual and potential degree of support for the nonviolent struggle group from the general grievance population, specific groups, institutions, and contact networks? Which groups can really help?
- What sectors of the population are most or least likely to provide support or sympathy to the nonviolent struggle group over the course of the conflict?
- What is the actual and potential degree of support for resistance from third parties or previously “neutral” sectors?
- Who are the “natural allies” of the nonviolent struggle group? (e.g., students or youth, political parties and associations, religious, ethnic, or minority groups, etc.)
- Who are the nonviolent struggle group’s current and potential internal and external allies?
- What are the internal conflicts, rivalries, or power struggles within both the grievance group and the nonviolent struggle group (e.g., groups with differing ideological positions or long-term objectives)? Are there any rivalries between important sectors of the grievance group and the nonviolent struggle group?

- Is there any potential or actual support or sympathy for the opponent group from within sectors of the general grievance group or the nonviolent struggle group?
- What are the operative or potential sources of power of the nonviolent struggle group? What are the operative or potential sources of power of the general grievance group?
 - Authority or legitimacy
 - Human resources
 - Particular skills or knowledge
 - Psychological or ideological factors
 - Material resources
 - Ability to apply sanctions
- What are the pillars of support (people, groups, and institutions) that serve to supply those sources of power? Some of these pillars will require detailed examination. Examples may include
 - Moral and religious leaders and groups
 - Labor groups
 - Business and investment groups
 - Civil servants and bureaucrats
 - Administrators
 - Technicians
 - Media
 - Dominated classes or ethnic groups
 - Youth and/or student organizations
 - Other societal institutions
- To what extent are such pillars of support for the grievance group or the nonviolent struggle group influenced, or actually or potentially controlled by, the nonviolent struggle group, or by the opponent group?
- Which pillars are suitable for use in resistance activities? Which ones need to be strengthened? Do any new ones need to be created?
- What other vulnerabilities and weaknesses can be identified? Can any of these be rectified through deliberate efforts?
- Does the nonviolent struggle group currently exist as a coherent movement or organization? If so, what is its or-

ganizational structure (administration, organizational branches, complexity, efficiency, reliability, degree of initiative, degree of centralized controls, etc.)? Does it have capable and competent leadership?

- What is the strategic skill level of the nonviolent struggle group and its leaders?
- Who among the nonviolent struggle group has knowledge of the theory, methods, and practical dynamics of nonviolent struggle?
- Does the grievance group as a whole, parts of that group, or the nonviolent struggle group have prior experience in using nonviolent struggle?
 - Where has it occurred in the past?
 - What population sectors were involved?
 - How competently were such struggles carried out?
 - What were the results?
 - What lessons can those past struggles bring to the present situation?
 - Is the recollection of such struggles remembered reasonably accurately, or has a mythology about them been perpetuated? What are the consequences of this?
- What preparations have already been made for the application of nonviolent struggle in this conflict?
- What means of nonmilitary control, if any, are already wielded by the nonviolent struggle group or its sympathizers? Examples may include the following:
 - Ownership of radio, television, and print media
 - Ownership or control of electronic media sources
 - Control of education (through school administration, teachers, professors, alternate schooling, etc.)
 - Control of private industry
 - International recognition of legitimacy
- What is the information and intelligence capacity of the nonviolent struggle group?
- What economic resources are at the disposal of the nonviolent struggle group?
- What are the communications capacities of the resisters?
 - How are communications transmitted?
 - How secure are these means?

It is necessary, finally, to provide a general assessment of the struggle capacity of both the nonviolent struggle group and the general grievance group, based largely on the above information. Wise strategists will not plan a campaign that requires a struggle capacity beyond the current abilities of the nonviolent struggle group. If an expanded struggle capacity is needed, attention must be devoted to the means required to develop this increased strength.

5. Third parties

It is very important to assess the potential roles of third parties on behalf of either of the two sides over the course of a conflict. “Third parties” are defined here as any group, institution, or sector, internal or external, that is not initially a direct party to the conflict. Third party roles may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assisting public relations (for either side)
- Providing diplomatic assistance or exerting diplomatic pressures (for either side)
- Supplying financial assistance (for either side)
- Providing police and military assistance (for the opponent group); (police or military action intended to assist the nonviolent struggle can instead undermine it)
- Providing educational and technical assistance (for either side)
- Providing safe areas (usually for the resisters but sometimes for the opponent group)
- Applying economic pressures (on either side)
- Providing knowledge about nonviolent struggle (primarily to the resisters)

It is also necessary to assess which third parties could potentially provide such assistance to either side, and also to determine which groups already serve as pillars of support to one side or the other. Strategists will later need to determine which third parties should be courted for possible future assistance and which groups should be undermined.

6. Dependency balances

In the development of strategies for the struggle, it is important to determine which of the two contending sides is dependent on the other, in what ways and to what degree. These calculations should include the following:

- The degree of dependency of the opponent group on the resisting population and on the wider grievance group for meeting identified needs
- The degree of dependency of the resisting population and the grievance group on the opponent group for meeting identified needs
- The degree of actual and potential independence of the opponent group from the resisting population and general grievance group for meeting identified needs
- The degree of actual and potential independence of the resisting population and grievance group from the opponent group for meeting identified needs

Conclusion

After preparing a strategic estimate, it will be necessary to update it as changes occur in the conflict situation. A strategic estimate for a specific conflict that has been well prepared on the basis of accurate and complete information will make it possible to think clearly and make wise decisions about how to act, even in the face of serious pressures and difficult circumstances. This document, with a structured format, allows the reader to find information quickly that is both general and detailed.

This estimate will be of great assistance when choosing specific types of methods for use during the conflict. For example, if the opponent group is heavily dependent on the grievance group for meeting certain needs, methods of noncooperation may prove to be highly effective. However, if there is no such dependence, noncooperation is unlikely to be useful.

If the strategic estimate reveals that the nonviolent struggle group is weaker than required for a major struggle with the prospective opponent group, then the former should not at that time launch a struggle that requires great strength. There is no substi-

tute for, or shortcut to, strength in a movement of nonviolent struggle. If the group is weaker than needed, the action should initially take only limited forms, perhaps symbolic ones, that can make some impact without great strength. More ambitious action should at the time be postponed until effective means have been taken to strengthen the nonviolent struggle group relative to the opponent group. Clearly, major efforts should in this situation be placed into strengthening the population and the institutions that are primarily affected by the grievances and into developing the group's capacity to wage stronger nonviolent struggle in the future.

Additional factors also require attention before focusing on specific steps that may be helpful in preparing a strategy for the coming struggle. One of the most important factors, of course, is knowledge of the technique of nonviolent action that is to be used. Deliberate steps can be taken to gain and disseminate that knowledge.

Once that knowledge is obtained, however, it is the development and implementation of wise strategies, not simply the use of nonviolent methods, that will allow the nonviolent struggle to become as effective as possible. The ability to develop such strategies rests on an adequate understanding of the whole context within which the struggle is to be conducted. The primary purpose of the strategic estimate is to provide this understanding.

With much detailed information readily at hand, planning can be accomplished quickly to exploit new opportunities that may arise during campaigns.

