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# The Voluntaryist

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Whole Number 27

*"If one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself."*

August 1987

## THE POWER OF NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

By Jerry M. Tinker

*(Editor's Note: The following article was adapted from Volume 24 of THE WESTERN POLITICAL QUARTERLY (1971) (pp.775-788). Given the insights of LaBoetie (discussed in our last issue), I thought this piece would be an especially good follow-up, explaining how non-violent resistance actually works, and showing how it is truly a radical alternative to electoral politics.)*

As many writers have noted, the basic thesis, or strategy, upon which Gandhi's *satyagraha* and all non-violent resistance rests is that all structures of power - government and social organizations - always depend upon the voluntary cooperation of great numbers of people even when they seem to rely upon coercion. The chief wielders of power, in other words, must have the tacit assistance and cooperation of hundreds or even thousands of persons in order to exercise power. The strategy, then, of those who oppose or wish to change an established power structure, particularly one equipped with overwhelming physical force, is to persuade large numbers of persons to refuse to cooperate with it any longer. This is *not* the objective of non-violent resistance, but its strategy.

Altering the present power structure, or certain policies or aspects of that structure, is the goal of non-violent resistance; its success or failure in attaining that objective rests squarely on the degree to which its strategy succeeds in inducing individuals to withdraw support from the structure. Once such cooperation is withdrawn, the power structure must at some point come to terms with the resisters: political change is brought about and conflict resolved. Two forces operate in this process: a form of *persuasion* and a degree of *coercion*.

Conflict is resolved in society and in government to the extent that a majority, or a substantial portion of individuals comprising it, are "persuaded" - either voluntarily or coercively - to adopt or follow a particular position. Persuasion by violence is part of the well-known story of mankind. *Satyagraha*, however, attempts to persuade without violence.

As noted previously, the strategy of non-violent resistance is to develop techniques of persuasion that will induce the hundreds of clerks, soldiers, police, heads of departments and thousands of other individuals upon which the opposing power rests, to abandon it - refusing tacitly, if not explicitly, to cooperate with it. The question is, of course, how does non-violent resistance induce such non-cooperation? In what manner does non-violent resistance persuade? Essentially, it persuades by manipulating techniques that play upon "suffering."

One of the persistent myths of non-violent resistance is that its persuasion is only accomplished through a particular kind of human reaction to suffering: namely, the opponent supposedly has a guilty change of heart - a sense of remorse - upon seeing poor passive resisters suffering.

This conception of the role of suffering in non-violent resistance makes the fundamental error of presuming that only *two* persons are involved in the process - the suffering resister and the opponent. One suffers, and the other feels guilty and presumably makes amends. Actually, non-violent resistance operates within a

framework involving *three* actors: the suffering passive resister, the opponent, and the larger, on-looking populace.

Because in every conflict situation the outcome is dramatically affected by the extent to which the on-looking audience becomes involved, this third actor is most important in politics. This concept was best enunciated by E. E. Schattschneider; he calls it "the contagiousness of conflict." Although intended to analyze the functioning of pressure groups in the United States, his concept clearly has relevance to the operation of non-violent resistance in the political process.

Schattschneider notes that a great change inevitably occurs in the nature of conflict as involvement inexorably expands to include the on-looking audience. Hence, a most important aspect of conflict in the public arena is how, and in what way, the scope of conflict expands. It is unlikely, says Schattschneider, that both sides will equally benefit by an expansion in the scope of conflict, for every change in the battle lines and its composition has a bias: it favors one side or the other. The moral of the phenomenon of the contagiousness of conflict is: If a fight starts, watch the crowd, because the crowd plays the decisive role. In every conflict one protagonist struggles to "privatize" it - to contain it and limit attempts to involve the larger public - while the other attempts to "socialize" it.

The tactics of non-violent resistance seek primarily to create situations that crystallize public opinion - that "involve" it - and which "direct" it against the government, while at the same time legitimatizing its own position. This legitimatization is accomplished when the resister willingly *suffers*; it demonstrates his integrity, courage, honesty, while showing the injustice, cruelty, or tyranny of the government. The essential function of suffering is comparable to the interaction that takes place between a martyr and a crowd. The resister's token of power in the face of the opponent's violence is his capacity to "suffer" in the eyes of the on-looking audience.

The non-violent resister employs techniques calculated to *provoke* a response from the opponent which can be made to seem unjust or unfair - thus confirming the resister's claims against the power structure. Yet, were the opponent or government to fail to act, it would abdicate its power, its control over the population, and over the enforcement of its laws. The classic non-violent resistance technique is to suddenly thrust the initiative to the opponent, and thus also the responsibility, for a conflict with unarmed citizens that it cannot avoid and which will have the inevitable consequence of alienating a portion of the on-looking audience. And because the resister is unarmed and "suffers" (going to jail, being beaten, etc.), the onus of responsibility for all the suffering falls squarely on the opponent. Hence, the primary function of non-violent resistance suffering is to re-draw the lines of battle in favor of the resister; it attempts to involve the audience and to coalesce public opinion in ways favorable to him.

How frequently does suffering in and by itself succeed in "persuading" an opponent? Does it really represent a powerful enough force to change an opponent's course of action - to cause him to abandon the opponent being resisted? Reviews of past cases of non-violent resistance show a mixed picture, and results seem to depend largely on certain significant variables.

First, is the attitude and orientation of the opponent; success seems somewhat dependent upon whether the opponent really cares how a population views him - whether he has any long-term interests in pacifying or winning support. Also, the effect varies upon whether the opponent is the resister's own countrymen; if foreigners are being resisted, non-violent resisters may more easily play upon common identity and nationalism. Finally, in some

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# The Voluntaryist

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### From the Editor:

## The Noose Is Tightening: "The Threat to Your Stash of Cash"

The sub-title of this piece is taken from the cover of Fred Woodworth's *THE MATCH!* (Fall-Winter 1986/87; Box 3488, Tucson, Az. 85722). It summarizes his editorial on "Unleaded Money," in which he points out that a currency call-in would subject "your private stash of money" to IRS scrutiny.

Although we need to be concerned about the dangers of being forced to turn in our greenbacks for a new colored currency (in which case, people who had accumulated large amounts of cash would be required to show that they had paid taxes on the accumulations), I believe there are more far-reaching regulations already in place.

In one sense, these regulations are only the frosting on the cake, or the chickens coming home to roost. Once the State is granted the power to tax, it is only a matter of time until the principle that the State owns all the wealth in a given geographic area is extended as far as it can be pushed. Non-voluntaryists do not share the insight that taxation cannot be limited or controlled by any process known to man. If you give the State a dollar it wants ten; if you give it ten it wants a hundred. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

The latest IRS regulations I want to call to your attention are:

a. Beginning with the 1987 federal tax return (fileable in April 1988), you must list the social security number of all dependents on your return who are age 5 or over.

b. All tax free income (such as from municipal bonds) must now be listed on your tax return. The IRS wants to know what your assets are even if they don't generate tax revenues for them.

c. Applicants for passports must now fill out a tax information form which the IRS is supposed to check.

d. As of the first of 1987, those who conduct real estate closings (such as title or escrow companies, lawyers, lenders, or real estate agents) are required to report the terms of sale to the IRS. The ostensible purpose of this provision is to help the IRS see that taxes are paid on capital gains transactions involving real estate.

e. Employers must send the IRS a copy of any W-4 form (withholding) on which a worker claims over 10 exemptions. Until December 1, 1986, the IRS only had to be told if a claim exceeded 14 exemptions.

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## Potpourri from the Editor's Desk

1. "The value of your participation cannot be gauged in terms of your chances of victory but rather by the value of your idea. In other words, you score a victory not when you win power but when you remain faithful to yourself."

So writes Adam Michnik (one of the Polish Solidarity leaders) in his *LETTERS FROM PRISON AND OTHER ESSAYS* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, p. 7). In view of our lead article in this issue on "nonviolence" I thought the following comments about Solidarity would be of interest. Portions of Michnik's letters explain Solidarity's approach to social change and why the Poles renounced violence. As Michnik puts it,

People who claim that the use of force in the struggle for freedom is necessary must first prove that, in a given situation, it will be effective, and that force, when it is used, will not transform the idea of liberty into its opposite. ... No one in Poland is able to prove... that violence will help us dislodge Soviet troops ... and remove the communists from power. ...

In our reasoning, pragmatism is inseparably intertwined with idealism. ... Revolutionary terror has always been justified by a vision of an ideal society. It wants to live and let live. ... The ethics of Solidarity, with its consistent rejection of the use of force, has a lot in common with the idea of nonviolence espoused by Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. But it is not an ethic representative of pacifist movements. (pp. 86-89)

Jonathan Schell in his "Introduction" to this volume carries this discussion further. He explains "that the classic formula for revolution is first to seize state power and then to use that power to do the good things you believe in." Solidarity rejected this approach. The power that Solidarity gained was a new "social" power, which was created where there had been none before. Their program "was not to seize political power from the state but to build up the society. ... The distinction between 'society,' which was to be renewed by the movement, and 'power,' which was to be left to the state, became common currency within the opposition, and was the subject of much discussion." (p. xxxi, emphasis added)

Schell then shows how Solidarity interpreted the question of "means and ends":

It proved itself "today", and let "later" take care of itself. In so doing, it offered a new approach to one of the most intractable problems of all political life: the endemic discrepancy between evil means and good ends in politics - between the brutal and mendacious methods commonly accepted as a necessity of politics and the noble or visionary ends toward which these means are directed. ... (I)n Poland, means and ends were rolled into one. For example, each of the "means" of KOR (the forerunner of Solidarity) - openness, truthfulness, autonomy, and trust - was also an end. A courageous act or a truthful word was a good "end" in itself, it enriched life, made life better -.... To reform the adversary might take some time, but in the sphere of one's own actions the just society could be established right away. It followed that evil means could no longer be employed to attain good ends. If the journey and destination were the same, it made no sense to spoil the conveyance in which one was riding. Here, I believe, is the source of the movement's non-violence, which was especially striking for being practiced even more rigorously than it was preached-.... The use of violence, spoiling means and ends at the same time, would have polluted the source of both the movement's virtue and strength. The elements of the

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# WHAT IS POLITICAL "EXTREMISM"?

By Laird Wilcox

Roger Scruton, in the *DICTIONARY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT* (Hill & Wang, New York, 1982) defines "extremism" as:

"A vague term, which can mean:

1. Taking a political idea to its limits, regardless of 'unfortunate' repercussions, impracticalities, arguments and feelings to the contrary, and with the intention not only to confront, but also to eliminate opposition.
2. Intolerance towards all views other than one's own.
3. Adoption of means to political ends which show disregard for the life, liberty, and human rights of others."

This is a very fair definition and it reflects my experience that "extremism" is essentially more an issue of style than of content. In the twenty-five years that I have been investigating political groups of the left and right, I have found that many people can hold very radical or unorthodox political views and still present them in a reasonable, rational and non-dogmatic manner. On the other hand, I have met people whose views were shrill, uncompromising and distinctly authoritarian. The latter demonstrated a starkly extremist mentality while the former demonstrated only ideological unorthodoxy, which is hardly to be feared in a free society such as our own.

I don't mean to imply that content is entirely irrelevant. People who tend to adopt the extremist style most often champion causes and adopt ideologies that are essentially "fringe" positions on the political spectrum. Advocacy of "fringe" positions, however, gives our society the variety and vitality it needs to function as an open democracy, to discuss and debate all aspects of an issue and to deal with problems we may otherwise have a tendency to ignore. I think this is the proper role of radical movements, left and right, in our system. The extremist style is another issue altogether, however, in that it seriously hampers our understanding of important issues, it muddies the waters of discourse with invective, fanaticism and hatred, and it impairs our ability to make intelligent, well-informed choices.

Another, perhaps more popular, definition of "extremism" is that it represents points of view we strongly disagree with, advocated by someone we dislike whose interests are contrary to our own!

Political ideologues often attempt definitions of extremism which specifically condemn the views of their opponents and critics while leaving their own relatively untouched, or which are otherwise biased toward certain views but not others. To be fair, a definition must be equally applicable across the entire political spectrum.

In point of fact, the terms "extremist" and "extremism" are often used thoughtlessly as epithets, "devilwords" to curse or condemn opponents and critics with! I find, however, that the extremist style is not the monopoly of any sector of the political spectrum. It is just as common on the "left" as it is on the "right," and sometimes it shows up in the political "center" as well!

In analyzing the rhetoric and literature of several hundred "fringe" and militant "special interest" groups I have identified several specific traits that tend to represent the extremist style. I would like to caution you with the admonition, however, that we are all fallible and anyone, without bad intentions, may resort to some of these devices from time to time. But with bonafide extremists these lapses are not occasional and the following traits are an habitual and established part of their repertoire. The late Robert Kennedy, in *THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE* (1964), said: "What is objectionable, what is dangerous about extremists is not that they are extreme, but that they are intolerant. The evil is not what they say about their cause, but what they say about their opponents."

1. **Character Assassination.** Extremists often attack the character of an opponent or critic rather than deal with the facts and issues that he raises or debate the points of his arguments. They will question his motives, qualifications, past associations, values, personality, mental health and so on as a diversion from the issues under consideration.
2. **Name calling and labeling.** Extremists are quick to resort to epithets (racist, subversive, pervert, natemonger, nut,

crackpot, degenerate, Un-American, Anti-Semite, Red, Commie, Nazi, Kook, etc.) to label and condemn an opponent in order to divert attention from his arguments and to discourage others from hearing him out.

3. **Irresponsible sweeping generalizations.** Extremists tend to make sweeping claims or judgments on little or no evidence, and they have a tendency to confuse similarity with sameness. That is, they assume that because two (or more) things are alike in some respects they must be alike in all or most respects! Analogy is a treacherous form of logic and its potential for distortion and false conclusions even when the premises are basically correct is enormous.
4. **Inadequate proof for assertions.** Extremists tend to be very fuzzy on what constitutes proof for their assertions. They also tend to get caught up in logical fallacies, such as *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (assuming that a prior event explains a subsequent occurrence simply because of their "before" and "after" relationship). They tend to project "wished for" conclusions and to exaggerate the significance of information which confirms their prejudices and to derogate or ignore information which contradicts them.
5. **Advocacy of double standards.** Extremists tend to judge themselves in terms of their intentions, which they tend to view generously, and others by their acts, which they tend to view very critically. They would like you to accept their assertions on faith but they demand proof for yours. They also tend to engage in "special pleading" on behalf of their group, because of some special status, past persecution or present disadvantage.
6. **Extremists tend to view their opponents and critics as essentially evil.** Their enemies hold opposing views because they are bad people, immoral, dishonest, unscrupulous, mean-spirited, cruel, etc., and not merely because they simply disagree, see the matter differently, have competing interests or are perhaps even mistaken!
7. **Extremists tend to have a Manichean worldview.** That is, they tend to see the world in terms of absolutes of good and evil, for them or against them, with no middle ground or intermediate positions. All issues are ultimately moral issues of right and wrong. Their slogan tends to be "he who is not with me is against me!"
8. **Extremists very often advocate some degree of censorship and repression of their opponents and critics.** This may range from an active campaign to keep them from media access and a public hearing, as in the case of blacklisting, banning, or "quarantining" dissident spokesmen, or actually lobbying for repressive legislation against speaking, teaching or instructing the "forbidden" information. They may attempt to keep certain books out of stores or off of library shelves or card catalogs, discourage advertising with threats of reprisals, keep spokesmen for offending views off the airwaves, or certain columnists out of newspapers. In each instance the goal is some kind of information control. Extremists would prefer that you only listen to them.
9. **Extremists tend to identify themselves in terms of who their enemies are,** who they hate and who hates them! Accordingly, they often become emotionally bound to their enemies, who are often competing extremists on the opposite pole of the ideological spectrum. They tend to emulate their enemies in certain respects, adopting the same style and tactics to a certain degree. Even "anti-extremist" groups often exhibit extremist behavior in this regard!
10. **Extremists are given to argument by intimidation.** That is, they frame their arguments in such a way as to intimidate others into accepting their premises and conclusions. To disagree with them, they imply, is to ally oneself with the devil or give aid and comfort to the "bad guys." This play allows them to define the parameters of debate, cut off troublesome lines of argument, and keep their opponents on the defensive.
11. **Wide use of slogans, buzzwords and thought-stopping cliches.** For many extremists simple slogans substitute for more complex abstractions in spite of a high level of intelligence. Shortcuts in thinking and reasoning matters out seem to be necessary in order to appease their prejudices and to avoid troublesome facts and counter-arguments.

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## Political "Extremism"

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12. **Doomsday thinking.** Extremists often predict dire or catastrophic consequences from a situation or from failure to follow a specific course, and they exhibit a kind of "crisis-mindedness." It can be a Communist takeover, a Nazi revival, nuclear war, currency collapse, worldwide famine, drought, earthquakes, floods or the wrath of God. Whatever it is, it's just around the corner unless we follow their program and listen to their special insights or the wisdom that only the enlightened have access to!
  13. **Extremists often claim some kind of moral or other superiority over others.** Most obvious are claims of general racial superiority—a master race, for example. Less obvious are claims of ennoblement because of alleged victimhood, a special relationship with God, membership in a special "elite" or revolutionary vanguard. They also take great offense when one is "insensitive" enough to dispute these claims or challenge their authority.
  14. **Extremists tend to believe that it's OK to do bad things in the service of a "good" cause.** They may deliberately lie, distort, misquote, slander or libel their opponents and critics, or advocate censorship or repression in "special cases" involving their enemies. This is done with no remorse as long as it's useful in defeating the Commies or fascists (or whoever). Defeating an "enemy" becomes an all-encompassing goal to which other values are subordinate. With extremists, the ends often justify the means.
  15. **Extremists tend to place great value on emotional responses.** They have a reverence for propaganda, which they may call education or consciousness-raising. Consequently, they tend to drape themselves and their cause in a flag of patriotism, a banner of righteousness or a shroud of victimhood. Their crusades against "enemies" may invoke images of the swastika, the hammer and sickle or some other symbol, as the case may be. In each instance the symbol represents an extremely odious concept in terms of their ideological premises. This ploy attempts to invoke an uncritical gut-level sympathy and acceptance of their position which discourages examination of their premises or the conclusions which they claim necessarily derive from them.
  16. **Some extremists, particularly those involved in "cults" or religious movements** such as fundamental evangelical Christians, Zionists, members of the numerous "new age" groups and followers of certain "gurus," claim some kind of supernatural, mystical or divinely-inspired rationale for their beliefs and actions. Their willingness to force their will on others, censor and silence opponents and critics, and in some cases actively persecute certain groups, is ordained by God! This is surprisingly effective because many people, when confronted by this kind of claim, are reluctant to challenge it because it represents "religious belief" or because of the sacred cow status of some religions.
- Extremist traits tend to have three things in common:
1. They represent some attempt to distort reality for themselves and others.
  2. They try to discourage critical examination of their beliefs, either by false logic, rhetorical trickery or some kind of intimidation.
  3. They represent an attempt to act out private, personal grudges or rationalize the pursuit of special interests in the name of the public welfare.

Remember, human beings are imperfect and fallible. Even a rational, honest, well-intentioned person may resort to some of these traits from time to time. Everyone has strong feelings about some issues and anyone can get excited and "blow off" once in awhile. We still retain our basic common sense, respect for facts and good will toward others. The difference between most of us and the bonafide extremist is that these traits are an habitual and established part of their repertoire. Extremists believe they're doing the right thing when they act this way in the service of their cause.

The truth of a proposition cannot be inferred merely from the manner in which arguments in its behalf are presented, from the

fact that its advocates censor and harass their opponents, or because they commit any other act or combination of acts suggested in this essay. Ultimately, the truth of any proposition rests on the evidence for it. To impeach a proposition merely because it is advocated by obvious "extremists" is to dismiss it *ad hominem*, that is, because of who proposes it. The fact is that extremists are sometimes right—sometimes very right—because they often deal with the gut issues, the controversial issues many people choose to avoid. So, before you perfunctorily write off somebody as an "extremist" and close your eyes and ears to his message, take a look at his evidence. It just might be that he's on to something! (Laird Wilcox is editor of *THE WILCOX REPORT NEWSLETTER*, Box 2047, Olathe, Kansas 66061. He is founder of the Wilcox Collection on Contemporary Political Movements in the Kenneth Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas.)

## Potpourri

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movement's style of action - its direct approach to society and its problems, its local emphasis, its rejection of violence and lying and other base means of striving for noble ends - formed a self-consistent whole. If you wished to act locally, then what could be more local than yourself? And if you wished to produce results "today", then what area of your life was more ready to change, more thoroughly within your grasp, than your own actions? And if, accordingly, you made yourself and your own actions your starting point for the reform of society, then how could you permit those actions to be degraded by brutality, deception, or any other disfigurement? ... The genius of the movement lay in its having seized upon a method of action which did not depend upon violence and whose strength would have been undercut by the use of violence. (pp. xxxiii-xxxiv)

### 2. THE CAPTIVE PUBLIC: How Mass Opinion Promotes State Power

Benjamin Ginsberg of Cornell University has authored a new book published by Basic Books. His earlier volume, *THE CONSEQUENCES OF CONSENT: Elections, Citizen Control and Popular Acquiescence* (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1982) was reviewed in *THE VOLUNTARYIST*, No. 9. In *THE CAPTIVE PUBLIC* Ginsberg provides additional support for the voluntaryist rejection of electoral politics.

### 3. Frank Chodorov on "What to do about government jobs"

In an interview in *REASON* magazine (March 1987) with John Chamberlain, the interviewer related that Chodorov was once asked "what to do about Communists in government jobs." Most anti-communists of his day advocated removing Communists from government jobs, but Chodorov's response was more to the point: "Abolish the jobs," he responded.

### 4. H.L. Mencken on Chinese Morality

In *HAPPY DAYS* (p. 251) Mencken relates his father's abhorrence of borrowing money. "His moral system" as Mencken was able to piece it together, "seems to have been predominantly Chinese. All mankind, in his sight, was divided into two great races: those who paid their bills, and those who didn't. The former were virtuous, despite any evidence to the contrary; the latter were unanimously and incurably scoundrels."

### 5. Italians See 'Red'

*The WALL ST. JOURNAL* (Feb. 4, 1987) reports that Italians in Genoa are planning to donate their blood to a blood donor agency at the conclusion of an anti-tax rally. The proposed slogan for this Italian protest is "Better donate your blood than let the government suck it!"

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## The Power of Non-Violent Resistance

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societies passive suffering may be viewed with contempt, and it can produce an opposite effect: instead of viewing suffering as noble, they perhaps see it as masochism or "an exploitation of the rulers' good natured reluctance to allow unnecessary suffering, denying thus any attributes of personal courage or virtue to the sufferer."

In summary, if non-violent resistance is stripped of its moral and philosophic trimmings, its role in conflict resolution may be simplified as follows:

a. The *strategy* of non-violent resistance is to rob an opponent of the public support and cooperation upon which his power ultimately rests. Even though it may seem to rest on violence, all power to be sustained long must at least have the acquiescence of the majority of individuals involved.

b. The *tactic* of non-violent resistance involves the use of various techniques - most of which demonstrate "suffering" - to manipulate the interaction of protagonist, antagonist and audience in ways that crystallize public opinion, alienating it from the opponent while legitimatizing the passive resister's position.

c. The *objective* of non-violent resistance is to resolve conflict by forcing, through non-violent coercion, the opponent to seek grounds for mutual agreement and to synthesize a satisfactory solution.

As qualified earlier, this is not to exclude entirely the objective of some non-violent resisters who seek a "change of heart" in the opponent. However, this is not the basis upon which the true efficacy or full political power of non-violent resistance rests.

The success of non-violent resistance rests, to a large extent, on whether it gains widespread compliance within a society. The strategy of robbing the opponent of popular support upon which his power depends cannot be made effective if only a few individuals respond. Most non-violent resistance techniques require *mass action* if they are to be anything more than just fleeting symbolic acts. A boycott, for instance, presumes participation by great numbers of people.

How does non-violent resistance secure such widespread compliance? What forces and factors induce people to participate or support the resister's cause? What are the prerequisites for non-violent resistance action?

One method is to clothe the movement and its techniques in the values and norms of society - in things people accept without questioning. Here lies one of Gandhi's greatest achievements in India; unlike previous nationalist leaders, Gandhi couched his movement in terms and symbols familiar to the mass of India's population. The result was that the Congress party and the Indian Independence movement became a mass rural movement for the first time. Gandhi had secured widespread compliance, and at that point one can rightly say the last days of the British *raj* began.

### Communication and Propaganda

The first phase of a campaign is characterized by a period of intense propaganda activities: parades, demonstrations, posters, newspapers, and other forms of communication. Propaganda is directed to the opponent, but even more to the populace - to educate and inform both.

Once the resistance movement is launched, there must be continuing means of "spreading the word." No movement can operate without some form of communication between the leaders and the led. One of the principal organs used by Gandhi was his newspaper, *YOUNG INDIA*.

Publicity and propaganda are essential tools in securing widespread compliance. Even under circumstances when open publication is banned, a non-violent resistance movement must have some means of communication. There are numerous examples of underground newspapers operating effectively during World War II in Nazi-occupied Europe where non-violent resistance met with considerable success.

### Population Pressure

In attempting to insure widespread compliance, non-violent resistance movements benefit from pressures, intentionally ap-

plied or not, that work against the public in the same coercive fashion as they operate against the opponent. For example, the technique of ostracism has frequently been used to apply pressure on sections of the public not participating in the resistance campaign.

Aside from any organized attempts at such coercion, there are powerful informal pressures for conformity that also help to secure compliance. The fact that resistance occurs mostly during times of crisis, of national ferment, or of popular unrest, means there is often a greater sense of nationalism - of a particular "we" arranged against "they." When issues are involved that society says the individual should be involved with (and when the organizers of non-violent resistance are able to cast their program in such terms), there are strong pressures demanding conformity - to do what everyone else is doing.

### Consensual Validation

The technique of consensual validation - the phenomenon of simultaneous events creating a sense of validity in their own right - is often useful to coalesce public support. For example, the simultaneous occurrence of mass Congress demonstrations in widely diverse parts of India in 1930 gave a sense of validity to the complaints against the salt tax. It gave the apparent sanction of a widespread section of society and helped rally public opinion all the more. (A minority group can organize a multitude of "front" organizations, and the sense of seemingly widely separated organizations simultaneously advocating the same themes will give the impression that a large body of opinion is represented.)

These, then, are some of the factors that can be utilized in a non-violent resistance campaign to marshal widespread compliance, so essential for success. A second prerequisite for launching a non-violent resistance campaign is careful organization which will also insure training and the maintenance of discipline. In its need for discipline, some have likened Gandhi's *satyagraha* to the military. It calls upon the individual to display many of the same virtues associated with violent resistance: courage, strenuous action, enterprise, endurance; "a devotion and sense of unity with one's own kind; and order, and training." No one has ever argued that there are any fewer risks involved in non-violent action than in violent resistance - they both imply the possibility of suffering - the only distinction being that in non-violence the resister makes no attempt to physically harm the opponent although he may be faced with a violent response. Obviously, a discipline no less strenuous than that required to steel individuals to face the violence of military action is required to condition those who hope to resist non-violently the same kinds of physical threats.

The basic tactics of non-violent resistance are corollary to the efforts to secure widespread social compliance. In utilizing the various techniques of non-violent resistance, the underlying consideration must be whether they serve to legitimatize or alienate the position of the resister vis-a-vis the "audience." In order to obtain popular support and compliance, the resister's methods must seek to place the onus for what happens on the opponent.

Again, a key factor in launching non-violent resistance action is rearranging the conflict situation in such a way that the opponent is suddenly thrust the initiative, and thus also the responsibility for unfavorable developments he cannot really prevent. Thomas Schelling in *THE STRATEGY OF CONFLICT* has, in almost a devilish manner, developed a hypothetical illustration of this process: If a group of non-violent resisters were attempting to protest unfair railway labor practices, they might, he suggests, dramatically sit down on the tracks of the main railway station halting all trains and disrupting service. Such a move clearly would thrust the initiative to the railway management or government, as well as the responsibility for what happens. If the trains do not stop and run over helpless resisters, the onus is on the government; if the trains do stop, then the government has abandoned its power and weakened its authority. If the resisters are arrested and taken to jail, the responsibility for this suffering is also on the hands of the government which, under certain circumstances, might prove a stimulus for the crystallization of public opinion against the government.

### Attention-Getting Devices

Non-violent resistance in the earliest stages usually takes the

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## The Power of Non-Violent Resistance

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form of actions calculated to gain attention, or to provide propaganda for the cause, or to be a nuisance to the government and police forces. In 1930 Gandhi used this technique with magical skill: he launched the *satyagraha* campaign by walking to the sea with 78 disciples to break the salt tax laws. "Day by day the tension mounted," reports one writer, "as all India followed the elderly Mahatma plodding through the countryside on his crusade." Then the dramatic moment came; as hundreds of congressmen and government officials watched, Gandhi made salt from the sea, breaking the law and setting the rest of India into a "semi-comic frenzy of producing uneatable salt." It was a supremely successful "attention-getting device." Immediately Congress organizations set about to utilize the other attention-getting devices, such as demonstrations, mass meetings and picketing.

The creation of symbols is a universal non-violent resistance device. Even prior to the 1930 campaign, Gandhi had developed a host of symbols — from *khadi* cloth (particularly the "Gandhi cap") to the spinning wheel.

Ostracization campaigns — the refusal to speak or be friendly — were also effectively used in the Salt Satyagraha. This was documented in several British reports. In typical bureaucratic British understatement, one form of such ostracization was mentioned in an official report: during an attempt by *chaukidars* (local guards) to assist officials in making tax collections during a "no-tax" campaign, they were, said the report, "forcibly deprived of their uniforms and subjected to social boycott."

### Non-Cooperation

Techniques of non-cooperation call for a passive resister to behave normally in a slightly contrived way, but not in a way that permits police or government to accuse him of breaking normal laws. Such activities as "slow-downs," "boycotts," and forms of disassociation from government, are all examples of non-cooperation.

Nearly all Gandhi campaigns emphasized these various forms of non-cooperation; there were boycotts of British manufactured goods (vis., cloth and liquor) as well as British culture. There were innumerable *hartals*, or the voluntary closing of business activity for a day.

As a tool of non-violent resistance, non-cooperation has been widely demonstrated to be effective in disrupting the processes of society — of severely hampering and challenging the writ of a government — all in a fashion that is most difficult for the government and its police to question. For non-cooperation is only an individual altering his normal behavior in a slightly contrived way. However, when large numbers of individuals do the same, it adds up to a society behaving in a most abnormal manner.

### Civil Disobedience

Perhaps the most powerful weapon of non-violent resistance — certainly the most threatening to any government — is civil disobedience. This technique involves deliberate unlawful acts, mostly misdemeanor crimes, done in mass action. Anything beyond misdemeanors crosses the boundary of non-violent resistance. Forms of civil disobedience in the 1930 *satyagraha* included breaking the salt tax law, general tax laws (non-payment of taxes), non-rent campaigns, laws prohibiting mass meetings, and so forth.

Civil disobedience is a powerful weapon, but to be effective it must be exercised by a large number of individuals. There is a calculated risk involved: the breach of law, whether in a totalitarian state or not, automatically justifies and involves punishment by the government — jail, fines, even death. But if civil disobedience can be organized on a mass scale, it progressively becomes less profitable for the government to carry out its sanctions. The official British reports on the 1930 campaign testify to a government's dilemma in this regard: "...arrests were rendered impracticable owing to the size of the crowds which had committed breaches of some particular law."

The threatening nature of civil disobedience to a government was most cogently summarized by Lord Irwin, the Viceroy, in a speech to the legislative council in 1930:

In my judgment and in that of my Government the (non-violent resistance) campaign is a deliberate attempt to coerce established authority by mass action... . Mass action, even if it is intended by its promoters to be non-violent, is nothing but the application of force under another form, and, when it has as its avowed object the making of Government impossible, *Government is bound either to resist or abdicate.*

To "resist or abdicate" is indeed the dilemma civil disobedience presents a government. The tactics of non-violent resistance are to make counter steps by the government not only difficult (through mass action, so that the arrest of hundreds of individuals is unprofitable)—but, as noted above, to also make government accept the onus of responsibility for "repressive" acts.

Again, official British reports provide eloquent evidence of a government's dilemma in trying to stop passive defiance, yet avoid the onus attached to counter actions. The strategic success of Gandhi in 1930 is seen in the following official refrain:

In the initial stages Government endeavored to avoid making arrests on a large scale; but as the tide of ... disorder extended over the country this policy had to be abandoned. On the other hand, the clashes which have occurred between the forces of law and the populace have inevitably created a good deal of bitterness.... And Congress organizers took every opportunity of exploiting for their own purposes the emotions which these incidents aroused. *By the simple expedient of staging a procession or demonstration on a scale large enough to force the authorities to take action against it, they could now count in many places upon being able to bring about an automatic revival in popular sympathy for their cause....*

To make the official position all the more difficult, and to further complicate enforcement, Congress strategically employed women — (some emerging from *purdah* for the occasion.) This truly amazed the British, and, as the official reports remark, it "made the work of the police particularly unpleasant."

Severe repressive measures which a government may wish to use, and may be organized to use, require some justification. The violence of resisters themselves is, of course, the best justification for violent counteraction; but if resisters are non-violent, the government is faced with the dilemma of how to explain their violence or coercion. This explains the tendency of all governments when faced with non-violent resistance to emphasize any violent fringes that may emerge. This was certainly the tactic of the British in India. Time and again official British reports and statements on Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement stressed mainly the accounts of terrorist and violent acts (which largely occurred in Bengal). The British regularly repeated the theme that "despite the sincere endeavors of many of the Congress leaders to keep the Movement 'non-violent', experience again proved that it is inevitable... that an organized and strenuously conducted campaign of defiance of Government and of the law should result in serious and widespread disturbances." In the face of non-violent resistance an opponent can be expected to justify his counteraction, which is normally coercive physical force, by seeking examples of breaches in the resister's non-violence. Gandhi once temporarily suspended non-violent resistance precisely because violent reactions by some Indians threatened to undermine the basic strategy of *satyagraha*.

Another important stratagem of civil disobedience is to be selective in the laws to be breached. To be most effective, the laws should be related in some manner with the issues being protested or the demands being made. The Salt Satyagraha is again, a perfect example. The salt tax laws were indiscriminate in that they taxed both the rich and poor, being specially hard on the poor. Gandhi thus selected them for contravention "because they not only appeared to be basically unjust in themselves, but also because they symbolized an unpopular, unrepresentative, and alien government." Their contravention was, in other words, related to the long-range objectives of independence.

Conceived as a political instrument, it can be seen that non-violent resistance does not set out to, nor does it significantly accomplish individual persuasion or change of heart. This is not to

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# Voluntary Musings

## A Column of Iconoclasm

By Charles Curley

*"Nothing can defeat an idea  
except a better one."  
— Eric Frank Russell*

**Recipe for Empire:** "There is nothing perhaps more adverse to nature and reason than to hold in obedience remote countries and foreign nations, in opposition to their inclination and interest. A torrent of barbarians may pass over the earth, but an extensive empire must be supported by a refined system of policy and oppression: in the centre, an absolute power, prompt in action and rich in resources; a swift and easy communication with the extreme parts; fortifications to check the first effort of rebellion; a regular administration to protect and punish; and a well-disciplined army to inspire fear, without provoking discontent and despair."

Edward Gibbon

*DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE*  
Page 1710

**The Politicisation of Pensions:** U. S. public pension funds now run to some \$500 billion. California's alone is some \$36 billion. This is out of some \$1.5 trillion in total U.S. pension funds, or \$2.4 trillion world wide. Question. What happens when pension funds get political?

The recent spate of holier than thou disinvestments in South Africa has a bear trap in it for the unwary fund trustees. The idea is to unload stocks of companies which do business in South Africa, to force them to pull out of South Africa.

Under the current U.S. laws for pension funds, investments must be ones that a "prudent man" would make. Would a prudent man disinvest in South Africa? Just as the choice of disinvestment is a political one, so the outcome will be decided partially by political forces as well as investment ones.

The bear trap is this: what if the funds which do not divest outperform those which do? Under current U.S. investment law, the trustees who disinvested could well be sued, and for megabuck amounts. Or suppose the divested funds outperform the others?

It could be worse. Does the "prudent man" make investment decisions based on political criteria? If so, by what criteria? The opportunities for abuse of that \$500 billion abound. To give one possibility, suppose a fund's trustees refused to invest in companies doing business with the Soviet Union. It is certainly a high moral stance, but is it a prudent investment? What about funds that refuse to invest in companies that oppose big government?

**New Drugs:** Have you heard about the new mind altering drug? It's called "MBA". It makes you want to buy a BMW.

**Roman Rothbardians?** Latin libertarians? Italian individualists? In his *DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE*, Gibbon described the municipal government of Rome in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. From that description, the following sentence is taken: "...their frequent trials of robberies, rapes and murders are attested by the laws; and the weakness of these laws connives at the licentiousness of private feuds and armed associations for mutual defense." (p. 2419. Emphasis added.)

Gibbon, not having voluntarist leanings, does not note that the private feuds are inherent in human nature, the weakness of the laws inherent in the nature of the state, and the associations for mutual defence a natural response to both of the former.

**Oxymoron Collection** I have made a minor hobby of late of collecting oxymorons. These are self contradictory phrases, usually a noun and an adjective. The classic in this area is, of course, "military intelligence". (Why do you think they're so interested in artificial intelligence?) Add to this "punk music", "civil lawyer", "honest politician", "television writer", "tax reform", "Justice Department", "modern war", "Government Ethics Committee", and "civil servant".

Then there are phrases redolent with redundancy, like "criminal lawyer". Further nominations in both categories are welcome.

**Farm prices** With some \$3.2 billion in foreign aid the U.S. government has secured the Pakistani government's aid in its "war on drugs". In November of 1986, the Pakistani government offered farmers in one district of Frontier Province free seed and fertilizer, low interest loans, 600 visas to work in the Arabian Gulf area, new jobs in forestry projects and just plain handouts. No dice, said the farmers. First, they don't trust the government, and second, they are currently making some 12,000 rupees (\$910) an acre growing poppies, which is more than they would have gotten from the government, or anyone else.

Meanwhile, an Iowa acre of federally subsidised corn is good for \$375 per annum. Who says markets don't work?

**Thought for Today:** "Our managers and chief engineers don't know how to organize an industry, the deputy minister doesn't know, and neither does the minister."

Fidel Castro, 1986

## The Noose is Tightening

*Continued from page 2*

f. According to a *WALL ST. JOURNAL* report (Jan. 14, 1987, p. 13) the IRS has switched to computers in the push against non-filers. Computers produce returns for non-filers, based on "information from employers and other third parties." Under the new computer program, the IRS expects to contact over 400,000 non-filers.

g. An older provision of the tax code requires most individuals and businesses to report to the IRS any payment of "\$600 or more a calendar year to another person, other than a corporation." Reports are made on the 1099 form (the same one on which banks and most other financial institutions report annual payments of interest and dividends to the IRS).

I do not know how long the provisions concerning 1099 forms have been in the IRS Code, but it shows to what extent the State is trying to monitor financial dealings of individuals. If this regulation were widely enforced, it would become practically impossible to do business as an individual without a social security number and without having your income reported to the IRS by third parties (even though the income is not salary or wages). The party who pays an unincorporated contractor \$600 or more is liable to report that payment to the IRS at year end. For example, if you have your home painted by a free lance house painter and his bill is more than \$600, then you are required to report the payment to the IRS on a 1099 form. If you have the roof at your place of work repaired by an independent roofer and the repairs are \$600—, then your business is required to report the payment to the IRS.

One is tempted to say that the effect of such a reporting requirement would be to make the United States a police state, but we forget that every State is a police state by the very nature of the power it exercises. Certainly as people get accustomed to obeying this "1099" provision, it will become increasingly difficult to hide your "stash of cash." All significant financial transactions will be reported to the IRS one way or another. Also, it will probably become more difficult to cash checks at a bank without a social security number. Even now it appears impossible to open any sort of banking account without a social security or federal identification number.

Coupled with existing regulations regarding international transfer of currency and negotiable instruments, reporting requirements on foreign bank accounts, and domestic records of large cash transactions, we have a veritable financial gestapo in our midst. Your editor advocates breaking the "political" regula-

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## The Power of Non-Violent Resistance

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say that in politics only coercion is possible, as though politics were wholly rational and that therefore persuasion on a moral basis is irrelevant or impossible. Rather, it is simply to say that the importance and effectiveness of non-violent resistance rests in the political arena.

It is no exaggeration to say that its ability to manipulate the political dynamics of society is comparable to the effectiveness of coercive techniques of threats and terror in an insurgency. Indeed, it is instructive to note that the strategy of non-violent resistance largely parallels the approach of revolutionary insurgents. The terrorist's aim is to separate the existing government from its base of power by capturing the institutional supports upon which it rests — either at the top or, in the Mao Tse-tung tradition, at the rural base of the masses. It has been observed that revolutionaries in modern society do not so much "seize" power as destroy and recreate it. The simple creation of disorder will not automatically bring a subversive group to power. It can, however, create a vacuum into which new organizational instruments of power can move.

By all these yardsticks, the Gandhian technique is subversive, especially in the context of India in 1930. However, Gandhi found that he could accomplish the goals of the coercive subversive without terror and violence. He fashioned *satyagraha* into techniques that attained and shaped the same political ends.

Reflecting on the use and effectiveness of non-violent resistance in other parts of the world — in Europe during World War II, in the Soviet Union, with the Buddhists in South Vietnam in 1963, and certainly with the Negro in the southern part of the United States — it seems clear that non-violent resistance does not depend upon any particular attitude of the opponent or upon the nature of the political system (i.e., democratic vs. totalitarian) to be effective. The strategy and tactics of Gandhian non-violent resistance are relevant in any social conflict situation and in any society because they have achieved a fundamental insight into the dynamics of political and social change. The only aid a democratic framework provides, vs. a totalitarian, is to make the process easier, or at least safer, for the resister — although individual willingness to "suffer" and to sacrifice is as basic to non-violent struggle as it is implicit in violent resistance.

It should be stressed that we have reviewed here the potentiality of non-violent resistance when used *within* a political system. Its

effectiveness against a foreign invasion or as a tool in international relations, naturally involves a number of other, perhaps more complex, variables. However, within the terms of internal societal conflict, or when used against an outside occupier or colonial power, it is clear that *satyagraha* has continuing relevance. Contrary to many who argue that Gandhi was only successful because he was confronted by a democratic government observing the rule of law, the analysis here shows that his success was due solely to his insights into some fundamental principles of political change operative in any political system. What Gandhi did was to develop a tool — a highly sophisticated tool at that — by which he very successfully manipulated those principles. Gandhi did not so much render his British "opponents impotent through their own virtues," as some have argued, as he successfully prostrated them on their own terms. He robbed them of their political and social base of support by undermining the cooperation of millions of Indians upon which their rule ultimately rested. The lessons flowing from this are still relevant for our time—in Vietnam, Angola, Alabama, or Quebec, to mention a few.

"Is Gandhi relevant?" ask those celebrating his centenary. The answer is that he is so long as there are those willing to understand and manipulate his tools of non-violent political change. He will be so long as he is simply not dismissed as a "saint," but seen as the political revolutionary he was. As India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has written, "The ultimate justification of Gandhi is that he showed how armed strength could be matched without arms. If this could happen once, can it not happen again?"

## The Noose is Tightening

Continued from page 7

tions of the gestapo and Congress, whenever and wherever they hamper you, using any non-coercive method you can devise. There are no victims and hence these are truly "victimless crime laws." Since the ultimate power is always in the individual — in the fact that others cannot direct your energies unless you permit them to — we have the ability to ignore these silly edicts and look for ways to conduct our business out from under the thumb of Big Brother.

As we have said before, we need to breed a thorough and uncompromising disrespect for the State and its legislation. Even though the noose is tightening, we should not forget to use our imagination and creativity to preserve and add to that "stash of cash;" for "the man who truly understands freedom, will always find a way to be free."

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# The Voluntaryist

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