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INTRODUCTION  
TO  
NON-VIOLENCE

PACIFIST

RESEARCH

BUREAU

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**INTRODUCTION**  
  
**TO**  
  
**NON-VIOLENCE**  
  
*By*

# **THEODORE PAULLIN**

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## DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean different things."



In the writings of pacifists and non-pacifists concerning theories of and experiences with non-violence, there is a clear lack of uniformity in the use of words.

The present booklet, introducing the Bureau's new series on *Non-Violent Action in Tension Areas*, distinguished by green covers, critically examines pacifist terminology. But it does more, for it analyzes various types of non-violence, evaluates examples of non-violence referred to in previous literature, and points to new sources of case material.

Dr. Theodore Paullin, Assistant Director of the Bureau, is the author of this study. The manuscript has been submitted to and reviewed by Professor Charles A. Ellwood and Professor Hornell Hart, both of the Department of Sociology, Duke University; and by Richard B. Gregg, author of several works on the philosophy and practice of non-violence. Their criticisms and suggestions have proved most helpful, but for any errors of interpretation the author is responsible.

The Pacifist Research Bureau frankly bases its work upon the philosophy of pacifism: that man should exercise such respect for human personality that he will employ only love and sacrificial good will in opposing evil and that the purpose of all human endeavor should be the creation of a world brotherhood in which cooperative effort contributes to the good of all. A list of pamphlets published or in preparation appears on the back cover.

HARROP A. FREEMAN,  
Executive Director

*Any organization ordering 500 or more copies of any pamphlet published by the Pacifist Research Bureau may have its imprint appear on the title page along with that of the Bureau. The prepublication price for such orders is \$75.00 for each 500 copies.*



## PREFACE

The purpose of the present study is to analyze the various positions found within the pacifist movement itself in regard to the use of non-violent techniques of bringing about social change in group relationships. In its attempt to differentiate between them, it makes no pretense of determining which of the several pacifist positions is ethically most valid. Hence it is concerned with the application of non-violent principles in practice and their effectiveness in achieving group purposes, rather than with the philosophical and religious foundations of such principles. It is hoped that the study may help individuals to clarify their thinking within this field, but the author has no brief for one method as against the others. Each person must determine his own principles of action on the basis of his conception of the nature of the universe and his own scale of ethical values.

The examples chosen to illustrate the various positions have been taken largely from historical situations in this country and in Europe, because our traditional education has made us more familiar with the history of these areas than with that of other parts of the world. It also seemed that the possibilities of employing non-violent methods of social change would be more apparent if it was evident that they had been used in the West, and were not only applicable in Oriental societies. It is unfortunate that this deliberate choice has eliminated such valuable illustrative material as the work of Kagawa in Japan. The exception to this general rule in the case of "Satyagraha" has been made because of the wide-spread discussion of this movement in all parts of the world in our day.

I want to acknowledge with great appreciation the suggestions I have obtained from the preliminary work done for the Pacifist Research Bureau in this field by Russell Curtis and Haridas T. Muzumdar.

THEODORE PAULLIN

July 1, 1944



## INTRODUCTION TO NON-VIOLENCE





# I. INTRODUCTION: ON TERMS

"In the storm we found each other." "In the storm we clung together." These words are found in the opening paragraphs of *"Hey! Yellowbacks!" The War Diary of a Conscientious Objector*. Ernest L Meyer uses them to describe the psychological process by which a handful of men—a few professors and a lone student—at the University of Wisconsin grew into unity because they opposed the First World War, when everyone around them was being carried away in the enthusiasm which marked the first days of American participation. If there had been no storm, they might not have discovered their affinity, but as it was, despite the disparity of their interests and backgrounds, they found themselves in agreement on the most fundamental of their values, when all the rest chose to go another way. By standing together they all gained strength for the ordeals through which each must go, and they were filled with the spirit of others before them and far removed from them, who had understood life in the same way.[\[1\]](#)

The incident may be taken as symbolic of the experience through which pacifists have gone in this Second World War, too. Men and women of many creeds, of diverse economic backgrounds, of greatly divergent philosophies, with wide variations in education, have come together in the desire to sustain one another and aid one another in making their protest against war. Each in his own way has refused to participate in the mass destruction of human life which war involves, and by that refusal has been united by the strongest bonds of sympathy with those of his fellows who have done likewise. But it is the storm that has brought unity. When the skies clear, there will be a memory of fellowship together, but there will also be a realization that in the half light we have seen only one aspect of each other's being, and that there are enormous differences between us. Our future hope of achieving the type of world we want will demand a continuation of our sense of unity, despite our diversities.

At present pacifism is no completely integrated philosophy of life. Most of us would be hard pressed to define the term "pacifist" itself. Despite the fact that according to the Latin origins of the word it means "peace maker," it is small wonder that our non-pacifist friends think of the pacifist as a negative obstructionist, because until the time came to make a negative protest against the evil of war we ourselves all too often forgot that we were pacifists. In other times, if we have been peace-makers at all, we have thought of ourselves merely as doing the duty of citizens, and, in attempting to overcome some of the causes of conflict both within our domestic society and in the relations between nations, we have willingly merged ourselves with other men of goodwill whose aims and practices were almost identical to ours.

Since the charge of negativism strikes home, many pacifists defend themselves by insisting that they stand primarily for a positive program, of which war-resistance is only a pre-requisite. They oppose war because it is evil in itself, but they oppose it also because the type of human brotherhood for which they stand can be realized only when war is eliminated from the world. Their real aim is the creation of the new society—long and imperfect though that process of creation may be. They share a vision, but they are still groping for the means of moving forward towards its achievement. They are generally convinced that some means are inappropriate to their ends, and that to use such means would automatically defeat them; but they are less certain about the means which *will* bring some measure of success.

One section of the pacifist movement believes that it has discovered a solution to the problem in what it calls "non-violent direct action." This group derives much of its inspiration from Gandhi and his non-

violent movement for Indian independence. For instance, the Fellowship of Reconciliation has a committee on non-violent direct action which concerns itself with applying the techniques of the Gandhi movement to the solution of pressing social issues which are likely to cause conflict within our own society, especially discrimination against racial minorities. As a "textbook" this group has been using Krishnalal Shridharani's analysis of the Gandhi procedures, *War Without Violence*.<sup>[2]</sup> The advocates of "non-violent direct action" believe that their method can bring about the resolution of any conflict through the ultimate defeat of the forces of evil, and the triumph of justice and goodwill. In a widely discussed pamphlet, *If We Should Be Invaded*, issued just before the outbreak of the present war, Jessie Wallace Hughan, of the War Resisters League, maintained that non-violent resistance would be more effective even in meeting an armed invasion than would reliance upon military might.<sup>[3]</sup>

Many pacifists have accepted the general thesis of the advocates of non-violent direct action without analyzing its meaning and implications. Others have rejected it on the basis of judgments just as superficial. Much confusion has crept into the discussion of the principle and into its application because of the constant use of ill-defined terms and partially formulated ideas. It is the purpose of the present study to analyze the positions of both the friends and opponents of non-violent direct action within the pacifist movement in the hope of clarifying thought upon this vitally important question.

Before we can proceed with our discussion, we must make a clear distinction between non-violence as a principle, accepted as an end in itself, and non-violence as a means to some other desired end. Much of the present confusion in pacifist thought arises from a failure to make this distinction.

On the one hand, the absolute pacifist believes that all men are brothers. Therefore, he maintains that the supreme duty of every individual is to respect the personality of every other man, and to love him, no matter what evil he may commit, and no matter how greatly he may threaten his fellows or the values which the pacifist holds most dear. Under no circumstances can the pacifist harm or destroy the person who does evil; he can use only love and sacrificial goodwill to bring about conversion. This is his highest value and his supreme principle. Though the heavens should fall, or he himself and all else he cherishes be destroyed in the process, he can place no other value before it. To the pacifist who holds such a position, non-violence is imperative *even if it does not work*. By his very respect for the personality of the evil-doer, and his insistence upon maintaining the bond of human brotherhood, he has already achieved his highest purpose and has won his greatest victory.

But much of the present pacifist argument in favor of non-violence is based rather upon its expediency. Here, we are told, is a means of social action that *works* in achieving the social goals to which pacifists aspire. Non-violence provides a moral force which is more powerful than any physical force. Whether it be used by the individual or by the social group, it is, in the long run, the most effective way of overcoming evil and bringing about the triumph of good. The literature is full of stories of individuals who have overcome highwaymen, or refractory neighbors, by the power of love.<sup>[4]</sup> More recent treatments such as Richard Gregg's *Power of Non-Violence*<sup>[5]</sup> present story after story of the successful use of non-violent resistance by groups against political oppression. The history of the Gandhi movement in India has seemed to provide proof of its expediency. Even the argument in Aldous Huxley's *Ends and Means*, that we can achieve no desired goal by means which are inconsistent with it, still regards non-violent action as a *means* for achieving some other end, rather than an *end* in itself.<sup>[6]</sup>

So prevalent has such thinking become among pacifists, that it is not surprising that John Lewis, in his closely reasoned book, *The Case Against Pacifism*, bases his whole attack on the logic of the pacifist position upon the theory that pacifists *must*, as he does, hold other values above their respect for individual human personalities. Even in speaking of "absolute" pacifism he says, "The most fundamental

objection to war is based on the conviction that violence and the taking of human life, being themselves wrong, cannot lead to anything but evil."[\[7\]](#) Thus he defines the absolute pacifist as one who accepts the ends and means argument of Huxley, which is really an argument based upon expediency, rather than defining him correctly as one who insists that violence and the taking of human life are the greatest evils, under any conditions, and therefore cannot be justified, even if they could be used for the achievement of highly desirable ends.

Maintaining as Lewis does that respect for every human personality is not their highest value, non-pacifists attack pacifism almost entirely on the ground that in the present state of world society it is not expedient—that it is "impractical." Probably much of the pacifist defense of the position is designed to meet these non-pacifist arguments, and to persuade non-pacifists of goodwill that they can really best serve *their* highest values by adopting the pacifist technique. Such reasoning is perfectly legitimate, even for the "absolutist," but he should recognize it for what it is—a mere afterthought to his acceptance of non-violence as a principle.

The whole absolutist argument is this: (1) Since violence to any human personality is the greatest evil, I can never commit it. (2) But, at the same time, it is fortunate that non-violent means of overcoming evil are more effective than violent means, so I can serve my highest value—respect for every human personality—and at the same time serve the other values I hold. Or to say the same thing in positive terms, I can achieve my other ends *only* by employing means which are consistent with those ends.

On the other hand, many pacifists do in fact hold the position that John Lewis is attacking, and base their acceptance of pacifism entirely on the fact that it is the best means of obtaining the sort of social or economic or political order that they desire. Others, in balancing the destruction of violent conflict against what they concede might be gained by it, say that the price of social achievement through violent means is too high—that so many of their values are destroyed in the process of violence that they must abandon it entirely as a means, and find another which is less destructive.

Different as are the positions of the absolute and the relative pacifists, in practice they find themselves united in their logical condemnation of violence as an effective means for bringing about social change. Hence there is no reason why they cannot join forces in many respects. Only a relatively small proportion, even of the absolutists, have no interest whatever in bringing about social change, and are thus unable to share in this aspect of pacifist thinking.

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[1\]](#) Ernest L. Meyer, "*Hey! Yellowbacks!*" (New York: John Day, 1930), 3-6.

[\[2\]](#) Krishnalal Shridharani, *War Without Violence* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1939); *Selections from War Without Violence* was published by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, 2929 Broadway, New York, as a pamphlet, in 1941.

[\[3\]](#) Jessie Wallace Hughan, *If We Should Be Invaded: Facing a Fantastic Hypothesis* (War Resisters League, New York, 1939). A new edition with the title *Pacifism and Invasion* was issued in 1942.

[\[4\]](#) Many later writers have selected their examples from the large number presented by Adin Ballou, *Christian Non-Resistance: In All Its Important Bearings* (Philadelphia: Universal Peace Union, 1910); first published in 1846.

- [5] Richard B. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1934). A new and revised edition of this book is to be published by Fellowship Publications, N. Y., 1944.
- [6] Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means: An Inquiry into the Nature of Ideals and the Methods Employed for Their Realization* (New York: Harpers, 1937).
- [7] John Lewis, *The Case Against Pacifism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1940), 23.

# Definition of Terms

Both in pacifist thought and in the criticisms of pacifism, a great deal of confusion arises because of the inexact use of terms. We have already seen that pacifists of many shades of opinion are united in their refusal to participate in war. In this objection there is a negative quality. The very word "non-violence" used in the title of this study suggests this same negative attitude, and it was not long ago that pacifists were generally known as "non-resistants." Although some of those who oppose participation in war still insist upon calling themselves "non-resistants"[\[8\]](#) many of the modern pacifists disclaim the term because it is negative, and insist that the essence of pacifism is the element of active goodwill toward all men.[\[9\]](#) Yet when confronted with evil, even he who thinks of his pacifism as a positive attitude must decide not only what means he *will* use to oppose evil, but what means he *will not* use. At the moment when the society of which he is a part insists that every one of its members participate in an enterprise to employ these proscribed means, the pacifists of all shades of opinion become "conscientious objectors." To what is it exactly that they object?

Most answers to this question would say that they oppose "the use of force," "violence," "coercion," or in some cases, any "resistance" to evil whatever. But pacifists themselves have not been agreed upon the meanings and implications of these terms, and the opponents of pacifism have hastened to define them in such a way as to deny validity to the pacifist philosophy. Before we can proceed with our discussion we must define these terms for ourselves, as we shall use them in the present study.

*Force* we may define as physical or intangible power or influence to effect change in the material or immaterial world. *Coercion* is the use of either physical or intangible force to compel action contrary to the will or reasoned judgment of the individual or group subjected to such force. *Violence* is the willful application of force in such a way that it is physically or psychologically injurious to the person or group against whom it is applied. *Resistance* is any opposition either physical or psychological to the positive will or action of another. It is the negative or defensive counterpart of coercion.

The very diversity of terms used to describe the pacifist position shows that none of them satisfactorily expresses the essence of the pacifist philosophy. Among those commonly used are: (1) non-resistance, (2) passive resistance, (3) non-violent resistance, (4) super-resistance, (5) non-violent non-cooperation, (6) civil disobedience, (7) non-violent coercion, (8) non-violent direct action, (9) war without violence, and (10) Satyagraha or soul force.[\[10\]](#)

Of these terms only "non-resistance" implies acquiescence in the will of the evil-doer; all the rest suggest an approval of resistance. Every one of them, even "non-resistance" itself, contemplates the use of some intangible moral force to oppose evil and a refusal to take an active part in committing evil. At least the last five indicate the positive desire to change the active policy of the evil-doer, either by persuasion or by compulsion. As we shall see, in practice they tend to involve a coercive element. Only in their rejection of violence are all these terms in agreement. Perhaps we are justified in accepting *opposition to violence* as the heart of the pacifist philosophy. Under the definition of violence which has been suggested, this would amount to virtually the same thing as saying that the pacifist has such respect for every human personality that he cannot, under any circumstances whatsoever, intentionally inflict permanent injury upon any human being either physically or psychologically. This statement deserves further examination.



All pacifists approve the use of "force," as we have defined it, and actually do use it, since it includes such things as "the force of love," "the force of example," or "the force of public opinion."[\[11\]](#) There are very few pacifists who would draw the line even at the use of *physical* force. Most of them would approve it in restraining children or the mentally ill from injuring themselves or others, or in the organized police force of a community under the proper safeguards of the courts and law.[\[12\]](#)

Many pacifists are also willing to accept coercion, provided it be non-violent. The strike, the boycott, or even the mass demonstration involve an element of coercion as we have defined that term. Shridharani assures us that despite Gandhi's insistence to the contrary, "In the light of events in India in the past twenty years as well as in the light of certain of Gandhi's own activities, ... it becomes apparent that Satyagraha does contain the element of coercion, if in a somewhat modified form."[\[13\]](#) Since to some people "coercion" implies revenge or punishment, Shridharani would, however, substitute the word "compulsion" for it. Gandhi himself and many of his followers would claim that the techniques of Satyagraha are only a marshalling of the forces of sympathy, public opinion, and the like, and that they are persuasive rather than coercive. At any rate a distinction, on the basis of the spirit in which they are undertaken, between types of action which are outwardly similar seems perfectly valid.

There are other pacifists who would even accept a certain element of violence, as we have defined it, provided it were not physical in nature. Some persons with boundless good will feel that even physical violence may be justified on occasion if it is not accompanied by hatred toward its object.[\[14\]](#) However, there would be few who consider themselves pacifists who would accept such a position.

We are again forced to the conclusion that it is violence as we have defined it to which the pacifist objects. At this point, the chief difference between the pacifist and the non-pacifist is that the latter defines violence as does Clarence Case, as "the *unlawful or unregulated* use of destructive physical force against persons or things."[\[15\]](#) Under such a definition, war itself, since it is sanctioned by law, would no longer involve violence. Thus for the non-pacifist it is ethically acceptable to use lawful violence against unlawful violence; for the pacifist, violence against any personality is never ethically justified.[\[16\]](#)

On the other hand, a very large group of pacifists insist upon discarding these negative definitions in favor of one that is wholly positive. Maurice L. Rowntree has said: "The Pacifist way of life is the way that brings into action all the sense and wisdom, all the passion of love and goodwill that can be brought to bear upon the situation."[\[17\]](#)

In this study, no attempt will be made to determine which of the many pacifist positions is most sound ethically. Before any person can make such a determination for himself, however, it is necessary that he understand the differences between the various approaches to the problem of influencing other people either to do something which he believes should be done, or to refrain from doing something which he feels ought not to be done.

It might be helpful for us in our thinking to construct a scale at one end of which we place violence coupled with hatred, and at the other, dependence only upon the application of positive love and goodwill. In the intermediate positions we might place (1) violence without hatred, (2) non-violence practiced by necessity rather than because of principle, (3) non-violent coercion, (4) Satyagraha and non-violent direct action, and (5) non-resistance.

We need, at the outset, to recognize that we are speaking primarily of the relationships between social groups rather than between individuals. As Reinhold Niebuhr has so ably pointed out, our ethical

concepts in these two areas are greatly at variance with one another.<sup>[18]</sup> The pacifist principles are already widely accepted as ideals in the affairs of individuals. Every ethical religion teaches them in this area, and the person who rejects them is definitely the exception in our western society, until the violent man is regarded as subject to the discipline of society in general.

Our real concern in this study is with non-violent means of achieving group purposes, whether they be defensive and conservative in character, or whether they be changes in the existing institutions of the social order. The study is not so much concerned with the religious and ethical bases of these techniques as it is with a consideration of their application in practice, and their effectiveness in achieving the purposes which the group in question has in view. We shall begin at one end of our scale and proceed to discuss each type of action in turn.

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[8]</sup> Guy F. Hershberger makes a definite distinction between non-resistance and pacifism. He says that the former term describes the faith and life of those "Who cannot have any part in warfare because they believe the Bible forbids it, and who renounce all coercion, even nonviolent coercion." He goes on to say, "Pacifism, on the other hand, is a term which covers many types of opposition to war. Some modern so-called pacifists are opposed to all wars, and some are not. Some who oppose all wars find their authority in the will of God, while others find it largely in human reason. There are many other differences among them." "Biblical Nonresistance and Modern Pacifism," *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XVII, (July, 1943), 116.

Hershberger is here defining pacifism broadly to include the European meaning of opposition to war, but not necessarily a refusal to take part in it. In the United States, and generally in Great Britain, the term is ordinarily applied only to those who actually refuse participation in war.

<sup>[9]</sup> See Devere Allen, *The Fight for Peace* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), 531-540.

<sup>[10]</sup> On the origins of these terms see Haridas T. Muzumdar, *The United Nations of the World* (New York: Universal, 1942), 201-203.

<sup>[11]</sup> John Haynes Holmes, using the older term rather than "pacifist," has said, "The true non-resistant is militant—but he lifts his militancy from the plane of physical, to the plane of moral and spiritual force." *New Wars for Old* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1916), xiii.

<sup>[12]</sup> Cecil John Cadoux, *Christian Pacifism Re-examined* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1940), 15-16; Leyton Richards, *Realistic Pacifism* (Chicago: Willett, Clark, 1935), 3.

<sup>[13]</sup> Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, 292.

<sup>[14]</sup> John Lewis says, "We must draw a sharp distinction between the use of violence to achieve an unjust end and its use as police action in defence of the rule of law." *Case Against Pacifism*, 85.

<sup>[15]</sup> Clarence Marsh Case, *Non-Violent Coercion* (New York: Century, 1923), 323. Italics mine.

<sup>[16]</sup> C. J. Cadoux has clearly stated his position in these words: "He [the pacifist] will confine himself to those methods of pressure which are either wholly non-coercive or are coercive in a strictly non-injurious way, foregoing altogether such injurious methods of coercion as torture, mutilation, or homicide: that is to say, he will refrain from war." *Christian Pacifism*, 65-66.

[17] Maurice L. Rowntree, *Mankind Set Free* (London: Cape, 1939), 80-81.





## II. VIOLENCE WITHOUT HATE

Occasions may arise in which a man who genuinely abhors violence confronts an almost insoluble dilemma. On the one hand he may be faced with the imminent triumph of some almost insufferable evil; on the other, he may feel that the only available means of opposing that evil is violence, which is in itself evil.[\[19\]](#)

In such a situation, the choice made by any individual depends upon his own subjective scale of values. The pacifist is convinced that for him to commit violence upon another is itself the greatest possible evil. The non-pacifist says that some other evils may be greater, and that the use of this lesser evil to oppose them is entirely justified. John Lewis bases his entire *Case Against Pacifism* upon this latter assumption, and says that in such a conflict of values, pacifists "continue to be pacifists either because there is no serious threat, or because they do not expect to lose anything, or perhaps even because they do not value what is threatened."[\[20\]](#) The latter charge is entirely unjustified. The pacifist maintains his opposition to violence in the face of such a threat, not because he does not value what is threatened, but because he values something else more.

Cadoux has phrased it, "Pacifism is applicable only in so far as there exist pacifists who are convinced of its wisdom. The subjective differences are of vital importance, yet are usually overlooked in arguments on the subject."[\[21\]](#) This means that our problem of considering the place of violence and non-violence in human life is not one of purely objective science, since the attitudes and beliefs of pacifists (and non-pacifists) themselves become a factor in the situation. If enough people accepted the pacifist scale of values, it would in fact become the true basis for social interaction.[\[22\]](#)

In our western society, the majority even of those who believe in the brotherhood of man, and have great respect for the dignity of every human personality, will on occasion use violence as a means to attempt the achievement of their goals. Since their attitude is different from that of the militarist who would place violence itself high in his scale of values, it would pay us to consider their position.

## FOOTNOTES:

[18] Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (New York: Scribner's, 1932). See especially his consideration of coercion and persuasion in the two realms of individual and social conduct, pages xxii-xxiii.

[19] As Cadoux puts it, "Broadly speaking, almost the whole human race believes that it is occasionally right and necessary to inflict injurious coercion on human beings, in order to prevent the perpetration by them of some intolerable evil." *Christian Pacifism Re-examined*, 97.

[20] Lewis, 62.

# Revolutionary Anarchism

The revolutionary Anarchists belong essentially in this group. As Alexander Berkman has put it, "The teachings of Anarchism are those of peace and harmony, of non-invasion, of the sacredness of life and liberty;" or again, "It [Anarchism] means that men are brothers, and that they should live like brothers, in peace and harmony."[\[23\]](#) But to create this ideal society the Anarchist feels that violence may be necessary. Berkman himself, in his younger days, was able to justify his attack upon the life of Frick at the time of the Homestead Strike in 1893 in these words:

"But to the People belongs the earth—by right, if not in fact. To make it so in fact, all means are justifiable; nay advisable, even to the point of taking life.... Human life is, indeed, sacred and inviolate. But the killing of a tyrant, of an enemy of the People, is in no way to be considered as the taking of a life.... To remove a tyrant is an act of liberation, the giving of life and opportunity to an oppressed people."[\[24\]](#)

Later, Berkman insisted that a successful revolution must be non-violent in nature. It must be the result of thoroughgoing changes in the ideas and opinions of the people. When their ideas have become sufficiently changed and unified, the people can stage a general strike in which they overthrow the old order by their refusal to co-operate with it. He maintains that any attempt to carry on the revolution itself by military means would fail because "government and capital are too well organized in a military way for the workers to cope with them." But, says Berkman, when the success of the revolution becomes apparent, the opposition will use violent means to suppress it. At that moment the people are justified in using violence themselves to protect it. Berkman believes that there is no record of any group in power giving up its power without being subjected to the use of physical force, or at least the threat of it.[\[25\]](#) Thus in effect, Berkman would still use violence against some personalities in order to establish a system in which respect for every personality would be possible. Actually his desire for the new society is greater than his abhorrence of violence.

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[21\]](#) Cadoux, *Christian Pacifism Re-examined*, 116-117.

[\[22\]](#) The way in which a whole social order can differ from that of the West, merely because it chooses to operate on the basis of different assumptions concerning such things as the aggressive nature of man is well brought out in the study of three New Guinea tribes living in very similar environments. Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (London: Routledge, 1935).

[\[23\]](#) Alexander Berkman, *What Is Communist Anarchism?* (New York: Vanguard, 1929), x-xi, 176.

[\[24\]](#) Alexander Berkman, *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* (New York: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1912), 7.

[\[25\]](#) Berkman, *Communist Anarchism*, 217-229, 247-248, 290.



# Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln represented the spirit of moderation in the use of violence. He led his nation in war reluctantly and prayerfully, with no touch of hatred toward those whom the armies of which he was Commander-in-Chief were destroying. He expressed his feeling in an inspiring way in the closing words of his Second Inaugural Address, when the war was rapidly drawing to a victorious close:

"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness to do the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

# The Church and War

The statements of British and American churchmen during the present war call to mind these words of Lincoln. At Malvern, in 1941, members of the Church of England declared: "God himself is the sovereign of all human life; all men are his children, and ought to be brothers of one another; through Christ the Redeemer they can become what they ought to be." In March, 1942, American Protestant leaders at Delaware, Ohio, asserted: "We believe it is the purpose of God to create a world-wide community in Jesus Christ, transcending nation, race and class."[\[26\]](#) Yet the majority of the men who drew up these two statements were supporting the war which their nations were waging against fellow members of the world community—against those whom they professed to call brothers. Like Lincoln they did so in the belief that when the military phases of the war were over, it would be possible to turn from violence and to practice the principles of Christian charity.[\[27\]](#)

There is little in human history to justify their hope. There is much to make us believe that the violent attitudes of war will lead to hatred and injustice toward enemies when the war is done. The inspiring words of Lincoln were followed by the orgy of radical reconstruction in the South. There is at least as grave a doubt that the spirit of the Christian Church will dominate the peace which is concluded at the end of the present war.

The question arises insistently whether violence without hate can long live up to its own professions.

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[26\]](#) number of these religious statements are conveniently brought together in the appendix to Paul Hutchinson's *From Victory to Peace* (Chicago: Willett, Clark, 1943). For a statement of a point of view similar to the one we are discussing here, see also Charles Clayton Morrison, *The Christian and the War* (Chicago: Willett, Clark, 1942).

[\[27\]](#) Bernard Iddings Bell has expressed the attitude of such churchmen: "Evil may sometimes get such control of men and nations, they have realized, that armed resistance becomes a necessity. There are times when not to participate in violence is in itself violence to the welfare of the brethren. But no Christian moralist worth mentioning has ever regarded war *per se* as other than monstrous, or hoped that by the use of violence anything more could be accomplished than the frustration of a temporarily powerful malicious wickedness. War in itself gives birth to no righteousness. Only such a fire of love as leads to self-effacement can advance the welfare of mankind." "Will the Christian Church Survive?" *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 170, October, 1942, 109.

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### III. NON-VIOLENCE BY NECESSITY

The use of non-violent resistance does not always denote devotion to pacifist principles. Groups who would gladly use arms against an enemy if they had them often use non-violent means simply because they have no others at their disposal at the moment. In contrast to the type of action described in the preceding section, such a procedure might be called "hate without violence." It would probably be better to call it "non-violence by necessity."

The group using non-violence under such circumstances might have in view one of three purposes. It might hope through its display of opposition and its own suffering to appeal to the sense of fair play of the group that was oppressing it. However, such a hope can exist only in cases where the two opposing parties have a large area of agreement upon values, or homogeneity, and would have no basis when the oppressing group looked upon the oppressed as completely beneath their consideration. It is unlikely that it would have much success in changing the policy of a nation which consciously chose to invade another country, although it might affect individual soldiers if their cultural background were similar to that of the invaded people.[\[28\]](#)

An invader usually desires to gain something from the invaded people. In order to succeed, he needs their cooperation. A second way of thwarting the will of the invader is to refuse that cooperation, and be willing to suffer the penalties of such refusal. Since the invaded territory would then have no value, the invader might leave of his own accord.

A third possibility is for the invaded people to employ sabotage and inflict damage upon the invader in the belief that his invasion can be made so costly that it will be impossible for him to remain in the conquered territory. Such sabotage easily merges into violence.

In the preceding paragraphs, the enemy of the group using non-violence has been referred to as the "invader," because our best examples of this type of non-violent opposition are to be found in the histories of conquered people opposing the will of occupying forces. A similar situation may exist between a colonial people and the home government of an imperial power, since in most cases their position is essentially that of a conquered people, except that their territory has been occupied for a longer period of time.

#### FOOTNOTE:

[\[28\]](#) Franklin H. Giddings said, "In a word, non-aggression and non-resistance are an outcome of homogeneity." "The Gospel of Non-Resistance," in *Democracy and Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1900), 356. See also Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*, 248; Lewis, *Case Against Pacifism*, 185-186.

# Non-Violent Resistance to Invaders

Stories of the use of this sort of non-violence occur in our press every day, as they find their way out of the occupied countries which are opposing the Nazi invaders with every means at their disposal. In these countries the vast majority of the people are agreed in their determination to rid themselves of Nazi control. Such common agreement is the first requisite for the success of this method of resistance. When the people of the territory refuse to inform the police about individuals who are committing unlawful acts against the invaders, it is virtually impossible for the latter to check the expansion of non-cooperation or sabotage. Similarly, if the whole population refuses to cooperate with the invader, it is impossible for him to punish them all, or if he did, he would be destroying the labor force whose cooperation he desires, and would have defeated himself in the very process of stamping out the opposition to his regime.

Hitler himself has discovered that there is a difference between military occupation and actual conquest. In his New Year's proclamation to the German people in 1944, he attempted to explain the Nazi reverses in North Africa and Italy in these words:

"The true cause of the difficulties in North Africa and the Balkans was in reality the persistent attempts at sabotage and paralyzation of these plutocratic enemies of the fascist people's State.

"Their continual sabotage not only succeeded in stopping supplies to Africa and, later on, to Italy, by ever-new methods of passive resistance, thus preventing our soldiers and the Italians standing at their side from receiving the material wherewithal for the conduct of the struggle, but also aggravated or confused the situation in the Balkans, which had been cleared according to plan by German actions."[\[29\]](#)

Opposition to the German invader has taken different forms in different countries. In Denmark, where there was no military resistance to the initial invasion, the subtle opposition of the people has made itself felt in innumerable ways. There are many stories such as that of the King's refusal to institute anti-Jewish laws in Denmark on the ground that there was no Jewish problem there since the Danes did not feel themselves to be inferior to the Jews. Such ideological opposition makes the Nazis angry, and it also makes them uncomfortable, since they do hold enough values in common with the Danes to understand perfectly the implications of the Danish jibes. Such psychological opposition merges into sabotage very easily. For instance when the Germans demanded ten torpedo boats from the Danish navy, the Danes prepared them for delivery by taking all their guns and equipment ashore, and then burning the warehouse in which these were stored. The Nazis even forbade the press to mention the incident, lest it become a signal for a nationwide demonstration of solidarity.[\[30\]](#)

Other occupied countries report the same type of non-violent resistance. There are strikes of parents against sending their children to Nazi-controlled schools, strikes of ministers against conforming to Nazi decrees, demonstrations, malingering, and interference with internal administration. Such events may appear less important than military resistance, but they make the life of an occupying force uneasy and unhappy.[\[31\]](#)

Calls for non-violent preparation for the day of delivery go out constantly in the underground press. While urging solidarity in illegal acts among the French population at home, one French appeal even gave instructions to Frenchmen who might go to work in Germany:



"If you respond to Laval's appeal, I know in what spirit you will do so. You will wish to slow down German production, establish contacts with all the Frenchmen in Germany, and create the strongest of Fifth Columns in the enemy country."[\[32\]](#)

Over a long period of time such action cannot help having an effect upon the success of the invader. Since the grievance of the peoples of the occupied countries is a continuous one, there is no prospect that their resistance will relax until they have freed themselves of their oppressors.

### FOOTNOTES:

[\[29\]](#) *New York Times*, Jan. 1, 1944, page 4, columns 2-7.

[\[30\]](#) C. H. W. Hasselriis, "Nothing Rotten in Denmark," in *The New Republic*, June 7, 1943, Vol. 108: 760-761.

[\[31\]](#) The publications of the various governments in exile are filled with such stories. See such periodicals as *News of Norway* and *News from Belgium*, which can be obtained through the United Nations Information Service, 610 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

[\[32\]](#) *Resistance*, Feb. 17, 1943, reprinted in *Free World*, July, 1943, Vol. 6, 77.

# Chinese Boycotts Against Foreigners

We can find many other examples of the use of these non-violent methods under similar circumstances. The Chinese made use of the boycott repeatedly to oppose foreign domination and interference in their internal affairs in the years before the outbreak of the present war against Japan. Clarence Case lists five significant Chinese boycotts between 1906 and 1919. The last one was directed against foreigners *and the Chinese government* to protest the action of the Peace Conference in giving Japan a predominant interest in Shantung. As a result the government of China was ousted, and the provisions of the treaty revised. Japan felt the effects of the boycott more than any other country. Case says of the Japanese reaction:

"As for the total loss to Japanese trade, various authorities have settled upon \$50,000,000, which we may accept as a close approximation. At any rate the pressure was great enough to impel the Japanese merchants of Peking and Tientsin, with apparent ruin staring them in the face, to appeal to their home government for protection. They insisted that the boycott should be made a diplomatic question of the first order and that demands for its removal should be backed by threats of military intervention. To this the government at Tokio 'could only reply that it knew no way by which the Chinese merchants, much less the Chinese people, could be made to buy Japanese goods against their will.'" [\[33\]](#)

This incident calls to mind the experience of the American colonists in their non-violent resistance to Great Britain's imperial policy in the years following 1763, which we shall discuss more at length in the next section.

# Egyptian Opposition to Great Britain

Another similar example is that of the Egyptian protest against British occupation of the country in 1919. People in all walks of life went on strike. Officials boycotted the British mission under Lord Milner, which came to work out a compromise. The mission was forced to return to London empty handed, but finally an agreement was reached there with Saad Zaghloul Pasha, leader of the Egyptian movement, on the basis of independence for the country, with the British retaining only enough military control to safeguard their interest in the Suez Canal. After the acceptance of the settlement in 1922, friction between Egypt and Great Britain continued, but Egypt was not sufficiently united, nor were the grievances great enough to lead to the same type of successful non-cooperation practiced in 1919.[\[34\]](#)

It must be recognized that in most cases such as those we have been considering, violence would be used by the resisters if they had it at their disposal. However, the occasional success of non-violence even under such circumstances is proof of the possible expediency of this method. When it has failed, it has done so because the resisters were not sufficiently committed to their purpose to carry it out in the face of possible death. It appears from this experience that complete solidarity and commitment is required for the success of non-violent methods when used in this way, just as they are if such methods are used as a matter of principle. It must be recognized that the self-discipline necessary for the success of a non-violent movement must be even more rigorous than the imposed discipline of a military machine, and also that there is a chance that the non-violent resisters will fail in their endeavor, just as there is a virtual certainty that one side in a military conflict will be defeated.[\[35\]](#)

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[33\]](#) Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*, 330-339. The last sentence is quoted from *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 7, 1920.

[\[34\]](#) A. Fenner Brockway, *Non-Co-operation in Other Lands* (Madras: Tagore and Co., 1921), 25-39; Charles E. Mullett, *The British Empire* (New York: Holt, 1938), 622-627.

Pacifist literature has also made much of the Hungarian independence movement in the 1860's under Francis Deak, which refused to pay taxes to the Austrian government, or to co-operate in other ways. However, it would appear that outside pressures were as important in the final settlement establishing the Dual Monarchy in 1867 as was the Hungarian movement of non-cooperation. The pacifist writers generally follow the account in Brockway, *Non-Co-operation*, 1-24. He in turn follows the book of Arthur Griffith, *The Resurrection of Hungary*, published in 1904 in order to induce the Irish to use non-co-operation in their struggle against the English. For some of the other factors involved see A. J. P. Taylor, *The Hapsburg Monarchy 1815-1918* (London: Macmillan, 1941), 101-151.

[\[35\]](#) On the discipline required see Gregg, *Power of Non-Violence*, 266-294. Lewis, to prove the ineffectiveness of non-violence, quotes Joad: "There have been only too many occasions in history in which the meeting of violence by non-violence has led not to the taming of the violent, but to the extinction of the non-violent." *The Case Against Pacifism*, 184.

## IV. NON-VIOLENT COERCION

In the last section we were considering the non-violent resistance of groups which had no choice in their means of opposing the will of an invader, but who would have chosen violence if the weapons of violence had been available to them. In those cases there was no question but that the choice rested upon the expediency of the moment rather than upon principle. In the cases of non-violence by necessity the purposes of the resisting groups were defensive and negative, designed to induce the withdrawal of the invader rather than to induce him to follow actively a different policy.

In this section we are concerned with the action of groups designed to modify the conduct of others in order to promote their own ideals. We are concerned with people who presumably have a possible choice of methods to accomplish their purposes. They might rely upon persuasion and education of their opponents through emotional or intellectual appeals; but such action would have no coercive element in it, so we shall consider it in a later section. Or they might attempt to coerce their opponents, either by violent or non-violent means. For the present we are interested only in the latter through its usual manifestations: the strike, the boycott, or other organized movements of non-cooperation.[\[36\]](#)

At first sight such methods do not appear to be coercive in nature, since they involve merely an abstention from action on the part of the group offering the resistance. Actually they are coercive, however, because of the absolute necessity for inter-group cooperation in the maintenance of our modern social, economic, and political systems. Under modern conditions the group against whom the resistance is directed must have the cooperation of the resisting group in order to continue to survive. When that cooperation is denied, the old dominant group is forced to make concessions, *even against its will*, to the former subordinate group in order to regain the help that they have refused to render under the old conditions.[\[37\]](#)

The non-violent resisters themselves are also dependent upon inter-group cooperation. Hence the outcome of this type of struggle usually depends upon which of the two parties to the conflict can best or longest dispense with the services of the other. If the resisters are less able to hold out than the defenders, or if the costs of continued resistance become in their eyes greater than the advantages which might be gained by ultimate victory, they will lose their will to resist and their movement will end in failure.

In all such struggles, both sides are greatly influenced by the opinions of parties not directly concerned in the immediate conflict, but who might give support or opposition to one side or the other depending upon which could enlist their sympathies. Because of the deep-seated dislike of violence, even in our western society, the side that first employs it is apt to lose the sympathy of these third parties. As E. A. Ross has put it:

"Disobedience without violence wins, *if it wins*, not so much by touching the conscience of the masters as by exciting the sympathy of disinterested onlookers. The spectacle of men suffering for a principle *and not hitting back* is a moving one. It obliges the power holders to condescend to explain, to justify themselves. The weak get a change of venue from the will of the stronger to the court of public opinion, perhaps of world opinion."[\[38\]](#)

The stakes in such a struggle may be great or small. They range all the way from the demand of a labor union for an increase of five cents an hour in wages, to that of a whole people demanding political independence from an imperial master, or a revolutionary change in the economic or political power of

the community.

The decision of the resisters to use non-violent means of opposition to gain their ends may be based either upon principle or upon expediency. In the former case they would say that the purposes they have in mind would not be worth attaining if their achievement were to involve physical violence toward other human beings; in the latter they would act on the basis of the conclusion that in view of all the factors involved their purposes could best be served by avoiding violence. These factors would include the likelihood of counter-violence, an estimate of the relative physical strength of the two parties to the conflict, and the attitude of the public toward the party that first used violence. In practice the action of those who avoid violence because they regard it as wrong is very little different from that of those who avoid it because they think that it will not serve their ends. But since there is a moral difference between them, we shall postpone the consideration of Satyagraha, or non-violent direct action on the basis of principle, until the next section. It would deserve such separate treatment in any case because of the great amount of attention which it commands in pacifist circles all over the world.

At the outset it is necessary to dispel the idea that non-violent resistance is something esoteric and oriental, and that it is seldom used in western society. This type of action is used constantly in our own communities, and the histories of western peoples present us with a large number of examples of the use of non-violent action in political and revolutionary conflicts. In the following discussion, the point of view is that of the West.

### FOOTNOTES:

[36] Clarence Marsh Case, "Friends and Social Thinking" in S. B. Laughlin (Ed.), *Beyond Dilemmas* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1937), 130-137; Cadoux, *Christian Pacifism Re-Examined*, 24-25, and the chart on page 45.

[37] Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*, 330. John Lewis says, "Non-violence can be as completely coercive as violence itself, in which case, while it has the advantage of not involving war, it cannot be defended on spiritual grounds." *Case Against Pacifism*, 110.

[38] In his "Introduction" to Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*.

# The Labor Strike

The most common type of non-violent conflict is the ordinary labor strike. In a strike, the workers withdraw their cooperation from the employer until he meets their demands. He suffers, because as long as they refuse to work for him it is impossible for him to produce the goods or services upon the sale of which his own living depends. Usually he is fighting for no principle during such a strike, so that he is apt to calculate his monetary loss from it against the advantages he would have to surrender in order to reach an agreement. When he concludes that it would be cheaper to give in, it is possible for the management and the strikers to arrive at a settlement. If the employer does feel that the principle of control of an enterprise by its owner is at stake, he may hold out longer, until he actually loses more by the strike than he would by conceding the demands of the strikers, but even then he balances psychological cost against monetary cost, and when the latter overweighs the former he becomes receptive to a settlement.

During the strike the workers are going through much the same process. A strike from their point of view is even more costly than it is to the employer. It is not to be entered upon lightly, since their very means of sustenance are at stake. They too have to balance the monetary costs of their continued refusal to cooperate against the gains that they might hope for by continued resistance, and when the cost becomes greater than the prospective gain they are receptive to suggestions for compromise. They too may be contending for the principle of the right of organization and control over their own economic destinies, so that they may be willing to suffer loss for a longer period than they would if they stood to gain only the immediate monetary advantages, but when immediate costs more than overweigh ultimate psychological advantages, they too will be willing to capitulate.

In the meantime the strikers have to see to it that the employer does not find someone else with whom he can cooperate in order to eliminate his dependence upon them. Hence they picket the plant, in an attempt to persuade others not to work there. If persuasion is not effective, they may resort to mass picketing, which amounts to a threat of violence against the persons who would attempt to take over their jobs. On occasion the threat to their jobs becomes so great that in order to defend them they will resort to violence against the strikebreaker. At this point, the public, which is apt to be somewhat sympathetic toward their demands for fair wages or better working conditions, turns against them and supports the employer, greatly adding to his moral standing and weakening that of the strikers, until the strikers, feeling that the forces against them are too great, are apt to give way. The employer will find the same negative reaction among the public if he tries to use violence in order to break the strike. Hence, if he does decide to use violence, he tries to make it appear that the strikers are responsible, or tries to induce them to use it first. It is to their advantage not to use it, even when it is used against them. Labor leaders in general understand this principle and try to avoid violence at all costs. They do so not on the basis of principle, but on the basis of expediency.[\[39\]](#)

In the great wave of enthusiastic organization of labor that swept over the United States in 1936 and 1937, American labor copied a variant of the strike, which had been used earlier in Hungary and in France.[\[40\]](#) Instead of leaving the property of the employer and trying to prevent others from entering it to take their places, workers remained on a "sit down strike" within the plants, so that the employer would have been forced to use violence to remove them in order to operate the factory. These strikes were based in part upon the theory that the worker had a property right to his job, just as the employer did to his capital equipment. Such strikes were for a time more successful than the older variety, because strike-breaking

was virtually impossible. However, it was not long before public opinion forced the abandonment of the technique. It was revolutionary in character, since it threatened the old concept of private property. The fear of small property holders that their own possessions would be jeopardized by the success of such a movement, made them support the owners of the plants against the strikers, who were then forced to give way. In this case the public's fear of revolutionary change was greater than their dislike of violence, so they even supported the use of physical force by the employers and the police authorities to remove the strikers from the plants. The very effectiveness of the method which labor was employing brought about its defeat, because the public was not yet persuaded to accept the new concept of the property right of the laborer to his job.

### **FOOTNOTES:**

[39] A. J. Muste, *Non-Violence in an Aggressive World* (New York: Harper, 1940), 70-72.

[40] Barthelemy de Ligt, *The Conquest of Violence: An Essay on War and Revolution* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1938), 131-132.



# The Boycott

The boycott is a more indirect type of non-cooperation than the strike, in most cases.<sup>[41]</sup> This word originated in Ireland in 1880 when a Captain Boycott, an agent for an Irish landlord, refused the demands of the tenants on the estate. In retaliation they threatened his life, forced his servants to leave him, tore down his fences, and cut off his food supplies. The Irish Land League, insisting that the land of Ireland should belong to its people, used this method of opposition in the years that followed. Its members refused to deal with peasants or tradesmen who sided with the government, but they used acts of violence and intimidation as well as economic pressure. The government employed 15,000 military police and 40,000 soldiers against the people, but they succeeded only in filling the jails. The struggle might well have won land for the Irish peasant, if Parnell, who had become leader of the Irish movement, had not agreed to accept the Gladstone Home Rule Bill of 1886 in exchange for calling off the opposition in Ireland. The Bill was defeated in Parliament and the Irish problem continued.<sup>[42]</sup>

In later usage, the word "boycott" has been applied almost exclusively to the refusal of economic cooperation. Organized labor in America used the boycott against the goods of manufacturers who refused to deal with unions, and it is still used in appeals to the public not to patronize stores or manufacturers who deal unfairly with labor.

The idea of economic sanctions, which played so large a part in the history of the League of Nations in its attempts to deal with those who disregarded decisions of the League, is essentially similar to the boycott. In fact much of the thinking of the pacifist movement between the two wars maintained that economic sanctions would provide a non-violent but coercive substitute for war, in settling international controversies.<sup>[43]</sup>

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[41]</sup> "The boycott is a form of passive resistance in all cases where it does not descend to violence and intimidation. The fact that it is coercive does not place it beyond the moral pale, for coercion ... is a fact inseparable from life in society." Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*, 319.

<sup>[42]</sup> De Ligt, 114-117; Carleton J. H. Hayes, *A Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), II, 496.

<sup>[43]</sup> De Ligt, 218-241.



# Non-Violent Coercion by the American Colonies

The western world has repeatedly employed non-violent coercion as a political as well as an economic technique. Strangely enough, many Americans who are apt to scoff at the methods of the Indian independence movement today forget that the American colonists used much the same methods in the early stages of their own revolt against England. When England began to assert imperial control over the colonies after 1763, the colonists answered with protests and refusals to cooperate. Against both the Stamp Act of 1765 and the Townshend Duties of 1767, they adopted non-importation agreements whereby they refused to import British goods. To be sure, the more radical colonists did not eschew violence on the basis of principle, and the direct action by which they forced colonial merchants to respect the terms of the non-importation agreements was not always non-violent. The loss of trade induced British merchants to go to Parliament on both occasions and to insist successfully upon the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766 and the Townshend Duties in 1770. In the face of non-cooperation practiced by the vast majority of the colonists, the British government had been forced to give way in order to serve its own best interests.[\[44\]](#)

In 1774, when the Continental Congress established the Continental Association in order to use the same economic weapon again, the issues in the conflict were more clearly drawn. Many of the moderate colonists who had supported the earlier action, denounced this one as revolutionary, and went over to the loyalist side. The radicals themselves felt less secure in the use of their economic weapon, and began to gather arms for a violent rebellion. The attempt of the British to destroy these weapons led to Lexington and Concord.[\[45\]](#) What had been non-violent opposition to British policy had become armed revolt and civil war. It was a war which would probably have ended in the defeat of the colonists if they had not been able to fish in the troubled waters of international politics and win the active support of France, who sought thus to avenge the loss of her own colonies to Great Britain in 1763. We have here an example of the way in which non-violent resistance, when used merely on the basis of expediency, is apt to intensify and sharpen the conflict, until it finally leads to war itself.[\[46\]](#)

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[44\]](#) Curtis Nettels says of the Stamp Act opposition, "The most telling weapons used by the colonists were the non-importation agreements, which struck the British merchants at a time when trade was bad." *The Roots of American Civilization* (New York: Crofts, 1938), 632. Later he says, "The colonial merchants again resorted to the non-importation agreements as the most effectual means of compelling Britain to repeal the Townshend Acts." *Ibid.*, 635.

For a good account of this whole movement see also John C. Miller, *Origins of the American Revolution* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1943), 150-164, 235-281.

[\[45\]](#) Miller, 355-411.

[\[46\]](#) Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*, 308-309.

# **Irish Opposition to Great Britain After 1900**

After centuries of violent opposition to British occupation, the Irish tried an experiment in non-violent non-cooperation after 1900. Arthur Griffith was inspired to use in Ireland the techniques employed in the Hungarian independence movement of 1866-1867. His Sinn Fein party, organized in 1906, determined to set up an independent government for Ireland outside the framework of the United Kingdom. When the Home Rule Act of 1914 was not put into operation because of the war, Sinn Fein gained ground. In the elections of 1918, three fourths of the successful Irish candidates were members of the party, so they met at Dublin as an Irish parliament rather than proceeding to Westminster. In 1921, after a new Home Rule Act had resulted only in additional opposition, the British government negotiated a settlement with the representatives of the "Irish Republic," which set up the "Irish Free State" as a self-governing dominion within the British Commonwealth. The Irish accepted the treaty, and the Irish problem was on its way to settlement, although later events were to prove that Ireland would not be satisfied until she had demonstrated that the new status made her in fact independent. Her neutrality in the present war should dispel all doubts.[\[47\]](#)

## FOOTNOTE:

[47] Brockway, *Non-Co-operation*, 71-92; William I. Hull, *The War Method and the Peace Method: An Historical Contrast* (New York: Revell, 1929), 229-231; Hayes, *Modern Europe*, II, 498-501, 876-879, 952-953.

# Strikes with Political Purposes

British workers themselves have made use of strikes with political significance. In 1920, transport workers refused to handle goods destined to be used in the war against the Bolshevik regime in Russia, and thus forced Britain to cease her intervention.<sup>[48]</sup> In 1926, the general strike in Britain had revolutionary implications which the Government and the public recognized only too well. Hence the widespread opposition to it. The leaders of the strike were even frightened themselves, and called it off suddenly, leaving the masses of the workers completely bewildered.<sup>[49]</sup>

In Germany, non-cooperation has also been used successfully. In 1920, a general strike defeated the attempt of the militarists to seize control of the state in the Kapp Putsch. In 1924, when the French Army invaded the Ruhr, the non-violent refusal of the German workers to mine coal for France had the support of the whole German nation. As the saying was at the time, "You can't mine coal with bayonets." Finally the French withdrew from their fruitless adventure.<sup>[50]</sup>

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[48]</sup> Allen, *Fight for Peace*, 633-634; Huxley, *Ends and Means*, 169-170.

<sup>[49]</sup> Berkman, *Communist Anarchism*, 247-248.

<sup>[50]</sup> Oswald Garrison Villard's "Preface" to Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, xiv-xv.

# Non-Violence in International Affairs

In the international field, we also have examples of the use of non-violent coercion. Thomas Jefferson, during the struggle for the recognition of American neutral rights by Britain and France, attempted to employ the economic weapons of pre-revolutionary days. His embargo upon American commerce and the later variants on that policy, designed to force the belligerents to recognize the American position, actually were more costly to American shippers than were the depredations of the French and the British, so they forced a reversal of American policy. The war against England that followed did not have the support of the shipping interests, whose trade it was supposedly trying to protect. It was more an adventure in American imperialism than it was an attempt to defend neutral rights, so it can hardly be said to have grown out of the issues which led to Jefferson's use of economic sanctions. The whole incident proves that the country which attempts to use this method in international affairs must expect to lose its own trade in the process. The cause must be great indeed before such undramatic losses become acceptable.[\[51\]](#)

The same principle is illustrated in the attempt to impose economic sanctions on Italy in 1935 and 1936. The nations who made a gesture toward using them actually did not want to hinder Italian expansion, or did not want to do so enough to surrender their trade with Italy. The inevitable result was that the sanctions failed.

The success of non-violent coercion is by no means assured in every case. It depends upon (1) the existence of a grievance great enough to justify the suffering that devolves upon the resisters, (2) the dependence of the opposition on the cooperation of the resisters, (3) solidarity among a large enough number of resisters, and (4) in most cases, the favorable reaction of the public not involved in the conflict. When all or most of these factors have been present, non-violent coercion has succeeded in our western society. On other occasions it has failed. But one who remembers the utter defeat of the Austrian socialists who employed arms against Chancellor Dolfuss in 1934 must admit that violent coercion also has its failures.[\[52\]](#)

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[51\]](#) Louis Martin Sears, *Jefferson and the Embargo* (Durham, N. C.: Duke University, 1927); Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1812* (New York: Macmillan, 1925).

[\[52\]](#) De Ligt, 131. For other statements concerning the virtual impossibility of violent revolution today see De Ligt, 81-82, 162-163; Horace G. Alexander, "Great Possessions" in Gerald Heard, *et. al.*, *The New Pacifism* (London: Allenson, 1936), 89-91; Huxley, *Ends and Means*, 178-179; Lewis, *Case Against Pacifism*, 112-113.

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## V. SATYAGRAHA OR NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

There is a distinction between those who employ non-violent methods of opposition on the basis of expediency and those who refuse to use violence on the basis of principle. In the minds of many pacifists the movement for Indian independence under the leadership of Mohandas K. Gandhi stands out as the supreme example of a political revolt which has insisted on this principle, and hence as a model to be followed in any pacifist movement of social, economic, or political reform. Gandhi's Satyagraha, therefore, deserves careful analysis in the light of pacifist principles.

Western critics of Gandhi's methods are prone to insist that they may be applicable in the Orient, but that they can never be applied in the same way within our western culture. We have already seen that there have been many non-violent movements of reform within our western society, but those that we have examined have been based on expediency. Undoubtedly the widespread Hindu acceptance of the principle of *ahimsa*, or non-killing, even in the case of animals, prepared the way for Gandhi more completely than would have been the case in western society.

# The Origins of Satyagraha

Shridharani has traced for us the origins of this distinctive Hindu philosophy of *ahimsa*. It arose from the idea of the sacrifice, which the Aryans brought to India with them at least 1500 years before Christ. From a gesture of propitiation of the gods, sacrifice gradually turned into a magic formula which would work automatically to procure desired ends and eliminate evil. In time the Hindus came to believe that the most effective type of sacrifice was self-sacrifice and suffering, accompanied by a refusal to injure others, or *ahimsa*.<sup>[53]</sup> Only the warrior caste of *Kshatriyas* was allowed to fight. In his autobiography, Gandhi brings out clearly the pious nature of his home environment, and the emphasis which was placed there upon not eating meat because of the sacred character of animal life.<sup>[54]</sup>

It is not surprising that a logical mind reared in such an environment should have espoused the principle of non-killing. In his western education Gandhi became acquainted with The Sermon on the Mount, and the writings of Tolstoy and Thoreau, but he tells us himself that he was attracted to these philosophies because they expressed ideas in which he already believed.<sup>[55]</sup>

In fact, the Hindese have long employed the non-violent methods of resistance which Gandhi has encouraged in our own day. In 1830, the population of the State of Mysore carried on a great movement of non-cooperation against the exploitation by the native despot, during which they refused to work or pay taxes, and retired into the forests. There was no disorder or use of arms. The official report of the British Government said:

"The natives understand very well the use of such measures to defend themselves against the abuse of authority. The method most in use, and that which gives the best results, is complete non-cooperation in all that concerns the Government, the administration and public life generally."<sup>[56]</sup>

In about 1900 there was a great movement of non-cooperation under the leadership of Aurobindo Ghose against the British Government in Bengal. Ghose wanted independence and freedom from foreign tribute. He called upon the people to demonstrate their fitness for self-government by establishing hygienic conditions, founding schools, building roads and developing agriculture. But Ghose had the experience Gandhi was to have later. The people became impatient and fell back on violence; and the British then employed counter-violence to crush the movement completely.<sup>[57]</sup>

The term "Satyagraha" itself was, however, a contribution of Gandhi. It was coined about 1906 in connection with the Indian movement of non-violent resistance in South Africa. Previously the English term "passive resistance" had been used, but Gandhi tells us that when he discovered that among Europeans, "it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterized by hatred and that it could finally manifest itself as violence," he was forced to find a new word to carry his idea. The result was a combination of the Gujarati words *Sat*, meaning truth, and *Agraha*, meaning firmness—hence "truth force," or as it has been translated since, "soul force."<sup>[58]</sup>

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[53]</sup> Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, 165-167.

<sup>[54]</sup> M. K. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, translated by Mahadev Desai and Pyrelal

Nair (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Press, 1927-1929), the earlier portions of Vol. I.

[55] *Ibid.*, I, 322; Shridharani, 167.

[56] Quoted by De Ligt, *Conquest of Violence*, 89.

[57] *Ibid.*, 89-90.

[58] Gandhi, *Experiments with Truth*, II, 153-154.



# The Process of Satyagraha

Shridharani, who considers himself a follower of Gandhi, has given us a comprehensive analysis of Satyagraha as a mass movement. He begins his discussion with this statement of the conditions under which it is possible:

"Satyagraha, as an organized mass action, presupposes that *the community concerned has a grievance which practically every member of that community feels*. This grievance should be of such large proportions that it could be transformed, in its positive side, into a 'Cause' rightfully claiming sacrifice and suffering from the community on its behalf."[\[59\]](#)

This necessity for community solidarity is often overlooked by followers of Gandhi who advocate reforms by means of non-violent direct action in our western society. Given the grievance of British rule, Shridharani believes that the Hindese were willing to accept Satyagraha first because, unarmed under British law, no other means were available to them, and then because they were predisposed to the method because of the Hindu philosophy of non-violence and the mystic belief that truth will triumph eventually since it is a force greater than the physical.[\[60\]](#)

The first step in Satyagraha is negotiation and arbitration with the adversary. Under these terms Shridharani includes the use of legislative channels, direct negotiations, and arbitration by third parties.[\[61\]](#) In reading his discussion one gets the impression that under the American system of government the later stages of Satyagraha would never be necessary, since the Satyagrahi must first exhaust all the avenues of political expression and legislative action which are open to him. If any sizeable group in American society displayed on any issue the solidarity required for successful use of this method, their political influence would undoubtedly be great enough to effect a change in the law, imperfect though American democracy may be.

The second step in Satyagraha is agitation, the purpose of which is to educate the public on the issues at stake, to create the solidarity that is needed in the later stages of the movement, and to win acceptance, by members of the movement, of the methods to be employed.[\[62\]](#) According to Fenner Brockway, the failure of Satyagraha to achieve its objectives is an indication that the people of India had not really caught and accepted Gandhi's spirit and principles.[\[63\]](#) This means that on several occasions the later stages of Satyagraha have been put into action before earlier stages of creating solidarity on both purpose and method have been fully completed. Despite Gandhi's tremendous influence in India, the movement for Indian independence has not yet fully succeeded. In view of the fact that so many of the people who have worked for independence have failed to espouse Gandhi's principles whole-heartedly, if independence be achieved in the future it will be difficult to tell whether or not it was achieved because the Indian people fully accepted these principles. Many seem to have done so only in the spirit in which the American colonists of the eighteenth century employed similar methods during the earlier stages of their own independence movement.[\[64\]](#)

Only after negotiation and arbitration have failed does Satyagraha make use of the techniques which are usually associated with it in the popular mind. As Shridharani puts it, "Moral suasion having proved ineffective the Satyagrahis do not hesitate to shift their technique to compulsive force."[\[65\]](#) He is pointing out that in practice Satyagraha is coercive in character, and that all the later steps from mass

demonstrations through strikes, boycotts, non-cooperation, and civil disobedience to parallel government which divorces itself completely from the old are designed to *compel* rather than to *persuade* the oppressors to change their policy. In this respect it is very similar to the movements of non-violent resistance based on expediency which were considered in the preceding section.

## FOOTNOTES:

[59] Shridharani, 4. Italics mine.

[60] *Ibid.*, 192-209.

[61] *Ibid.*, 5-7.

[62] *Ibid.*, 7-12.

[63] A. Fenner Brockway, "Does Noncoöperation Work?" in Devere Allen (Ed.), *Pacifism in the Modern World* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1929), 126.

[64] Nehru in his autobiography expresses strong differences of opinion with Gandhi at many points. In one place he says: "What a problem and a puzzle he has been not only to the British Government but to his own people and his closest associates!... How came we to associate ourselves with Gandhiji politically, and to become, in many instances, his devoted followers?... He attracted people, but it was ultimately intellectual conviction that brought them to him and kept them there. They did not agree with his philosophy of life, or even with many of his ideals. Often they did not understand him. But the action that he proposed was something tangible which could be understood and appreciated intellectually. Any action would be welcome after the long tradition of inaction which our spineless politics had nurtured; brave and effective action with an ethical halo about it had an irresistible appeal, both to the intellect and the emotions. Step by step he convinced us of the rightness of the action, and we went with him, although we did not accept his philosophy. To divorce action from the thought underlying it was not perhaps a proper procedure and was bound to lead to mental conflict and trouble later. Vaguely we hoped that Gandhiji, being essentially a man of action and very sensitive to changing conditions, would advance along the line that seemed to us to be right. And in any event the road he was following was the right one thus far; and, if the future meant a parting, it would be folly to anticipate it." Jawaharlal Nehru, *Toward Freedom* (New York: John Day, 1942), 190-191.

[65] Shridharani, 12. He lists and discusses 13 steps in the development of a campaign of Satyagraha, pp. 5-43.

# The Philosophy of Satyagraha

It seems clear that Satyagraha cannot be equated with Christian pacifism. As Shridharani has said, "In India, the people are not stopping with mere good will, as the pacifists usually do, but, on the contrary, are engaged in direct action of a non-violent variety which they are confident will either mend or end the powers that be," and, "Satyagraha seems to have more in common with war than with Western pacifism."<sup>[66]</sup>

Gandhi's campaign to recruit Indians for the British army during the First World War distinguishes him also from most western pacifists.<sup>[67]</sup> In an article entitled "The Doctrine of the Sword," written in 1920, Gandhi brought out clearly the fact that in his philosophy he places the ends above the means, so far as the mass of the people are concerned:

"Where the only choice is between cowardice and violence I advise violence. I cultivate the quiet courage of dying without killing. But to him who has not this courage I advise killing and being killed rather than shameful flight from danger. I would risk violence a thousand times rather than the emasculation of the race. I would rather have India resort to arms to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner remain a helpless victim of her own dishonour."<sup>[68]</sup>

Both pacifists and their opponents have noted this inconsistency in Gandhi's philosophy. Lewis calls Gandhi "a strange mixture of Machiavellian astuteness and personal sanctity, profound humanitarianism and paralysing conservatism."<sup>[69]</sup> Bishop McConnell has said of his non-violent coercion, "This coercion is less harmful socially than coercion by direct force, but it is coercion nevertheless."<sup>[70]</sup> And C. J. Cadoux has declared:

"The well-known work of Mr. Gandhi, both in India today and earlier in Africa, exemplifies rather the power of non-co-operation than Christian love on the part of a group; but even so, it calls for mention ... as another manifestation of the efficacy of non-violent methods of restraint."<sup>[71]</sup>

Gandhi's own analysis of his movement places much emphasis on the mystical Hindu idea of self-inflicted suffering. In 1920, he said, "Progress is to be measured by the amount of suffering undergone by the sufferer."<sup>[72]</sup> This idea recurs many times in Gandhi's writings. The acceptance of such suffering is not easy; hence his emphasis upon the need of self-purification, preparation, and discipline. Because of the violence used by many of his followers during the first great campaign in India, Gandhi came to the conclusion that "before re-starting civil disobedience on a mass scale, it would be necessary to create a band of well-trained, pure-hearted volunteers who thoroughly understood the strict conditions of Satyagraha."<sup>[73]</sup>

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[66]</sup> *Ibid.*, xxvii, xxx.

<sup>[67]</sup> Speech at Gujarat political conference, Nov., 1917, quoted by Case, *Non-violent Coercion*, 374-375. See also Shridharani, 122, note.

<sup>[68]</sup> Quoted in Lewis, *Case Against Pacifism*, 107. A slightly different version is reprinted in Nehru,

[69] Lewis, *Case Against Pacifism*, 99. He goes on to say, "He is anti-British more than he is anti-war. He adopts tactics of non-violence because that is the most effective way in which a disarmed and disorganized multitude can resist armed troops and police. He has never suggested that when India attains full independence it shall disband the Indian army. The Indian National Congress ... never for one moment contemplated abandoning violence as the necessary instrument of the State they hoped one day to command." Pp. 99-100.

[70] Francis J. McConnell, *Christianity and Coercion* (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1933), 46.

[71] Cadoux, *Christian Pacifism*, 109.

[72] *Young India*, June 16, 1920, quoted by Shridharani, 169.

[73] Gandhi, *Experiments*, II, 509-513.

# The Empirical Origins of Gandhi's Method

Gandhi's autobiography brings out the origins of many of his ideas. We have already noted the importance of his Hindu training. He arrived empirically at many of his specific techniques. For instance, he describes in some detail a journey he made by coach in 1893 in South Africa, during which he was placed on the driver's seat, since Indians were not allowed to sit inside the coach. Later the coachman desired his seat and asked him to sit on the footboard. This Gandhi refused to do, whereupon the coachman began to box his ears. He describes the rest of the incident thus:

"He was strong and I was weak. Some of the passengers were moved to pity and they exclaimed: 'Man, let him alone. Don't beat him. He is not to blame. He is right. If he can't stay there, let him come and sit with us.' 'No fear,' cried the man, but he seemed somewhat crestfallen and stopped beating me. He let go my arm, swore at me a little more, and asking the Hottenot servant who was sitting on the other side of the coachbox to sit on the footboard, took the seat so vacated."[\[74\]](#)

He had a similar experience in 1896 when his refusal to prosecute the leaders of a mob which had beaten him aroused a favorable reaction on the part of the public.[\[75\]](#) Gradually the principle developed that the acceptance of suffering was an effective method of winning the sympathy and support of disinterested parties in a dispute, and that their moral influence might go far in determining its outcome.

On his return to India after his successful campaign for Indian rights in South Africa, Gandhi led a strike of mill workers in Ahmedabad. He established a set of rules, forbidding resort to violence, the molestation of "blacklegs," and the taking of alms, and requiring the strikers to remain firm no matter how long the strike took—rules not too different from those that would be used in a strike by an occidental labor union.[\[76\]](#) Speaking of a period during this strike when the laborers were growing restive and threatening violence, Gandhi says:

"One morning—it was at a mill-hands' meeting—while I was still groping and unable to see my way clearly, the light came to me. Unbidden and all by themselves the words came to my lips: 'Unless the strikers rally,' I declared to the meeting, 'and continue the strike till a settlement is reached, or till they leave the mills altogether, I will not touch any food.'"

Gandhi insisted that the fast was not directed at the mill owners, but was for the purification of himself and the strikers. He told the owners that it should not influence their decision, and yet an arbitrator was now appointed, and as he says, "The strike was called off after I had fasted only for three days."[\[77\]](#) The efficacy of the fast was thus borne in on Gandhi.

In the Kheda Satyagraha against unjust taxation, which was the first big movement of the sort in India, Gandhi discovered that "When the fear of jail disappears, repression puts heart into people." The movement ended in a compromise rather than the complete success of Gandhi's program. He said of it, "Although, therefore, the termination was celebrated as a triumph of Satyagraha, I could not enthuse over it, as it lacked the essentials of a complete triumph."[\[78\]](#) But even though Gandhi was not satisfied with anything less than a complete triumph, he had learned that when a people no longer fears the punishments that an oppressor metes out, the power of the oppressor is gone.[\[79\]](#)

## FOOTNOTES:

[74] *Ibid.*, I, 268-269.

[75] Of the incident he says, "Thus the lynching ultimately proved to be a blessing for me, that is for the cause. It enhanced the prestige of the Indian community in South Africa, and made my work easier.... The incident also added to my professional practice." *Ibid.*, I, 452-457.

[76] *Ibid.*, II, 411-413.

[77] *Ibid.*, II, 420-424.

[78] *Ibid.*, II, 428-440.

[79] See the quotation from Gandhi in Shridharani, 29.

# Non-Cooperation

It will be impossible for us here to consider in detail the great movements of non-cooperation on which Gandhi's followers have embarked in order to throw off British rule. In 1919 and again in the struggle of 1920-1922, Gandhi felt forced to call off the non-cooperation campaigns because the people, who were not sufficiently prepared, fell back upon violence.<sup>[80]</sup> In the struggle in 1930, Gandhi laid down more definite rules for Satyagrahis, forbidding them to harbor anger, or to offer any physical resistance or to insult their opponents, although they must refuse to do any act forbidden to them by the movement even at the cost of great suffering.<sup>[81]</sup> The movement ended in a compromise agreement with the British, but the terms of the agreement were never completely carried out. Repressive measures and the imprisonment of Gandhi checked the non-cooperation movement during the present war, at least temporarily.

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[80]</sup> Gandhi, *Experiments*, II, 486-507; Shridharani, 126-129.

<sup>[81]</sup> The rules, first published in *Young India*, Feb. 27, 1930, are given by Shridharani, 154-157.

# Fasting

Gandhi also made use of the fast in 1919, 1924, 1932, 1933, 1939, and 1943 to obtain concessions, either from the British government or from groups of Hindese who did not accept his philosophy.<sup>[82]</sup> Of fasting Gandhi has said:

"It does not mean coercion of anybody. It does, of course, exercise pressure on individuals, even as on the government; but it is nothing more than the natural and moral result of an act of sacrifice. It stirs up sluggish consciences and it fires loving hearts to action."<sup>[83]</sup>

Yet Gandhi believed that the fast of the Irish leader, MacSweeney, when he was imprisoned in Dublin, was an act of violence.<sup>[84]</sup>

In practice, Satyagraha is a mixture of expediency and principle. It is firmly based on the Hindu idea of *ahimsa*, and hence avoids physical violence. Despite Gandhi's insistence upon respect for and love for the opponent, however, his equal insistence upon winning the opponent completely to his point of view leads one to suspect that he is using the technique as a means to an end which he considers equally fundamental. He accepts suffering as an end in itself, yet he knows that it also is a means to other ends since it arouses the sympathy of public opinion. He regards non-cooperation as compatible with love for the opponent, yet we have already seen that under modern conditions it is coercive rather than persuasive in nature. Despite Gandhi's distinction between his own fasts and those of others, they too involve an element of psychological coercion. We are led to conclude that much of Gandhi's program is based upon expediency as well as upon the complete respect for every human personality which characterizes absolute pacifism.

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[82]</sup> See the list given by Haridas T. Muzumdar, *Gandhi Triumphant! The Inside Story of the Historic Fast* (New York: Universal, 1939), vi-vii.

<sup>[83]</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>[84]</sup> *Ibid.*, 90. Lewis quotes Gandhi thus: "You cannot fast against a tyrant, for it will be a species of violence done to him. Fasting can only be resorted to against a lover not to extort rights, but to reform him." *Case Against Pacifism*, 109.



# The American Abolition Movement

The West also has had its movements of reform which have espoused non-violence as a principle. The most significant one in the United States has been the abolition crusade before the Civil War. Its most publicized faction was the group led by William Lloyd Garrison, who has had a reputation as an uncompromising extremist. Almost every school boy remembers the words with which he introduced the first issue of the *Liberator* in 1831:

"I *will* be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice.... I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD."

He lived up to his promise during the years that followed, and it is no wonder that Parrington called him "the flintiest character amongst the New England militants."[\[85\]](#) In the South they regarded him as an inciter to violence, and barred his writings from the mails.

Garrison's belief in "non-resistance" is less often stressed, yet his espousal of this principle was stated in the same uncompromising terms as his opposition to slavery. In 1838 he induced the Boston Peace Convention to found the New England Non-Resistance Society. In the "Declaration of Sentiments" which he wrote and which the new Society adopted, he said:

"The history of mankind is crowded with evidences proving that physical coercion is not adapted to moral regeneration; that the sinful dispositions of men can be subdued only by love; that evil can be exterminated from the earth only by goodness."[\[86\]](#)

Throughout his long struggle against slavery, Garrison remained true to his principles of non-resistance. But his denunciations of slavery made more impression on the popular mind, and aided in stirring up much of the violent sentiment in the North which expressed itself in a crescendo of denunciation of the slave owners. In the South, where anti-slavery sentiment had been strong before, a new defensive attitude began to develop. As Calhoun said of the northern criticism of slavery:

"It has compelled us to the South to look into the nature and character of this great institution, and to correct many false impressions that even we had entertained in relation to it. Many in the South once believed that it was a moral and political evil; that folly and delusion are gone; we see it now in its true light, and regard it as the most safe and stable basis for free institutions in the world."[\[87\]](#)

In the North the violent statements of the abolitionists aroused a physically violent response. Mobs attacked abolition meetings in many places, and on one occasion Garrison himself was rescued from an angry Boston mob. This violence in turn aroused many men like Salmon P. Chase and Wendell Phillips to espouse the anti-slavery cause because they could not condone the actions of the anti-abolitionists.[\[88\]](#) Garrison himself proceeded serenely through the storms that his vigorous writings precipitated.

Feelings rose on both sides, and many who heard and accepted the Garrisonian indictment of slavery knew nothing of his non-resistance principles.[\[89\]](#) Others, who did, came reluctantly to the conclusion that a civil war to rid the country of the evil would be preferable to its continuance. In time the struggle was transferred to the political arena, where men acted sometimes on the basis of interest and not always on the basis of moral principles. The gulf between the sections widened, and civil war approached.

As abolitionists themselves began to express the belief that the slavery issue could not be settled without bloodshed, Garrison disclaimed all responsibility for the growing propensity to espouse violence. In the *Liberator* in 1858 he said:

"When the anti-slavery cause was launched, it was baptized in the spirit of peace. We proclaimed to the country and to the world that the weapons of our warfare were not carnal but spiritual, and we believed them to be mighty through God to the pulling down even of the stronghold of slavery; and for several years great moral power accompanied our cause wherever presented. Alas! in the course of the fearful developments of the Slave Power, and its continued aggressions on the rights of the people of the North, in my judgment a sad change has come over the spirit of anti-slavery men, generally speaking. We are growing more and more warlike, more and more disposed to repudiate the principles of peace.... Just in proportion as this spirit prevails, I feel that our moral power is departing and will depart.... I will not trust the war-spirit anywhere in the universe of God, because the experience of six thousand years proves it not to be at all reliable in such a struggle as ours....

"I pray you, abolitionists, still to adhere to that truth. Do not get impatient; do not become exasperated; do not attempt any new political organization; do not make yourselves familiar with the idea that blood must flow. Perhaps blood will flow—God knows, I do not; but it shall not flow through any counsel of mine. Much as I detest the oppression exercised by the Southern slaveholder, he is a man, sacred before me. He is a man, not to be harmed by my hand nor with my consent.... While I will not cease reprobating his horrible injustice, I will let him see that in my heart there is no desire to do him harm,—that I wish to bless him here, and bless him everlastingly,—and that I have no other weapon to wield against him but the simple truth of God, which is the great instrument for the overthrow of all iniquity, and the salvation of the world."[\[90\]](#)

Yet Garrison's fervor for the emancipation of the slaves was so great that when the Civil War came, he said of Lincoln and the Republicans:

"They are instruments in the hand of God to carry forward and help achieve the great object of emancipation for which we have so long been striving.... All our sympathies and wishes must be with the Government, as against the Southern desperadoes and buccaneers; yet of course without any compromise of principle on our part."[\[91\]](#)

Although Lincoln insisted that the purpose of the North was the preservation of the Union rather than emancipation, eventually he did free the slaves. It would seem that Garrison, for all his non-resistance declarations, bore some of the responsibility for the great conflict.

In this case, as in the case of Satyagraha, the demand for reform by non-violent means was translated into violence by followers who were more devoted to the cause of reform than they were to the non-violent methods which their leaders proclaimed.

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[85\]](#) Vernon Louis Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1930), II, 352.

[\[86\]](#) The "Declaration" is reprinted in Allen, *Fight for Peace*, 694-697.

[\[87\]](#) Quoted in Avery Craven, *The Coming of the Civil War* (New York: Scribners, 1942), 161.

- [88] Jesse Macy, *The Anti-Slavery Crusade* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1919), 69-70.
- [89] For the many elements in the abolition movement, see Gilbert Hobbs Barnes, *The Antislavery Impulse, 1830-1844* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1933).
- [90] Wendell Phillips Garrison, *William Lloyd Garrison* (New York: Century, 1889), III, 473-474.
- [91] Letter to Oliver Johnson, quoted in Allen, *Fight for Peace*, 449-450.
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## VI. NON-RESISTANCE

The preceding section of this study dealt with those who rejected physical violence on principle, and who felt no hatred toward the persons who were responsible for evil, but who used methods of bringing about reform which involved the use of non-physical coercion, and in some cases what might be called psychological violence. These advocates of non-violent direct action not only resisted evil negatively; they also attempted to establish what they considered to be a better state of affairs.

This section will deal with true non-resistance. It is concerned with those who refuse to resist evil, even by non-violent means, for the most part basing their belief upon the injunction of Jesus to "resist not evil." For them, non-resistance becomes an end in itself, rather than a means for achieving other purposes. They are less concerned with reforming society than they are with maintaining the integrity of their own lives in this respect. If they have a social influence at all, it is only because by exhortation or, more especially by the force of example, they induce others to accept the same way of life. However, in their refusal to participate directly in such evil as war, even non-resistants do actually resist evil.

# The Mennonites

The Mennonites are the largest and most significant group of non-resistants. For over four hundred years they have maintained their religious views, and applied them with remarkable consistency.<sup>[92]</sup> Their church grew out of the Anabaptist movement, which had its origins in Switzerland shortly after 1520. The Anabaptists believed in the literal acceptance of the teachings of the Bible, and their application as rules of conduct in daily life. Since they did not depend for their interpretations upon the authority of any priesthood or ministry, differences grew up among them at an early date. The more radical wing, from which the Mennonites came, accepting the Sermon on the Mount as the heart of the Gospel, early refused to offer any physical resistance to evil.<sup>[93]</sup> Felix Manz, who was executed for his beliefs in 1527, declared, "No Christian smites with the sword nor resists evil."<sup>[94]</sup> Hundreds of other Anabaptists followed Manz into martyrdom without surrendering their faith.

In a day before conscription had come into general use, the Anabaptists suffered more for their heresy and their political views than they did for their non-resistance principles. In their belief in rendering unto Caesar only those things which were Caesar's and unto God the things that were God's, they came into conflict with the authorities of both church and state. The established church they refused to recognize at all, and they came to regard the state only as a necessary instrument to control those who had not become Christians. Far in advance of the times they adopted the principle of complete separation of church and state, which for them meant that no Christian might hold political office nor act as the agent of a coercive state, although he must obey its commands in matters which did not interfere with his duty toward God. On the basis of direct scriptural authority, they placed the payment of taxes in the latter category.<sup>[95]</sup>

The modern Mennonites are descended from the followers of Menno Simons, who was born in the Netherlands in 1496. In 1524 he was ordained as a Catholic priest, but he soon came to doubt the soundness of that religion, and found his way into Anabaptist ranks, where he became one of the leading expounders of the radical principles, placing great emphasis upon non-resistance. In his biblical language, he thus stated his belief on this point:

"The regenerated do not go to war, nor engage in strife. They are the children of peace who have beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and know of no war. They render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. Their sword is the sword of the Spirit which they wield with a good conscience through the Holy Ghost."<sup>[96]</sup>

In time the followers of Menno Simons gained in influence, while branches of the Anabaptist movement which did not follow the principle of non-resistance died out. Here and there other non-resistant groups such as the Hutterites and the Moravian Brethren continued.<sup>[97]</sup>

Ultimately the Mennonites found their way into several parts of Europe, from the North Sea to Russia, in their search for a home where they might be free from persecution. The founding of Germantown in the new Pennsylvania colony in 1683 marked the beginning of a migration which in the years that followed brought the more radical of them to America.<sup>[98]</sup> With the coming of conscription in Europe, those who held most strongly to their non-resistant principles came to the United States to escape military service. Those who remained in Europe gradually gave up their opposition to war, but those in America have largely maintained their original position.<sup>[99]</sup>

Today they still refrain from opposing evil, and believe in the separation of church and state, which to them means a refusal to hold office and, in many cases, to vote or to have recourse to the courts. They pay their taxes and do what the state demands, as long as it is not inconsistent with their duty to God. In case of a conflict in duty, service to God is placed first. Since they do not believe that it is possible for the world as a whole to become free of sin, they maintain that the Christian must separate himself from it. They make no attempt to bring about reform in society by means of political action or other movements of the sort which we have considered under non-violent direct action.[\[100\]](#)

Since the term "pacifist" has come into general use to designate those opposed to war, the Mennonites have usually made a distinction between themselves as "non-resistants" and the pacifists, who, they claim, are more interested in creating a good society than they are in following completely the admonitions of the Bible. They also disclaim any relationship to such non-resistants as Garrison or Ballou, even though these men reached substantially the same conclusion about the nature of the state, or with Tolstoy who even refused to accept the support of the state for the institution of private property. The American non-resistants they regard primarily as reformers of human society, and Tolstoy as an anarchist who rejected the state altogether, rather than accepting it as a necessary evil.[\[101\]](#) In so far as the Mennonites have used social influence at all, it has been through the force of example, and in their missionary endeavors to win other individuals to the same high principles which they themselves follow.

## FOOTNOTES:

- [92] See the pamphlet by C. Henry Smith, *Christian Peace: Four Hundred Years of Mennonite Peace Principles and Practice* (Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Publication Office, 1938).
- [93] C. Henry Smith, *The Story of the Mennonites* (Berne, Ind.: Mennonite Book Concern, 1941), 9-30.
- [94] John Horsch, *Mennonites in Europe*, (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1942), 359.
- [95] Smith, *Story of the Mennonites*, 30-35.
- [96] Quoted by Horsch, 363.
- [97] *Ibid.*, 365.
- [98] Smith, *Story of the Mennonites*, 536-539.
- [99] Smith, *Christian Peace*, 12-15.
- [100] Edward Yoder, *et al.*, *Must Christians Fight: A Scriptural Inquiry* (Akron, Pa.: Mennonite Central Committee, 1943), 31-32, 41-44, 59-61, 64-65.
- [101] *Ibid.*, 62-63; and for a full discussion of the attitude see Guy F. Hershberger, "Biblical Non-resistance and Modern Pacifism" in *Mennonite Quarterly Rev.*, XVII (July, 1943), 115-135.

# The New England Non-Resistants

The Mennonites are undoubtedly right in making a distinction between their position and that of the relatively large group of "non-resistants" which arose in New England during the middle of the nineteenth century. We have already noted the "Declaration of Principles" written by Garrison and accepted by the New England Non-Resistance Society in 1838. Despite the fact that Garrison insisted that an individual ought not to participate in the government of a state which used coercion against its subjects, his life was devoted to a campaign against the evil of slavery. In the "Declaration" itself he said:

"But, while we shall adhere to the doctrine of non-resistance and passive submission to enemies, we purpose, in a moral and spiritual sense, to speak and act boldly in the cause of GOD; to assail iniquity in high places, and in low places; to apply our principles to all existing civil, political, legal and ecclesiastical institutions; and to hasten the time, when the kingdoms of this world will have become the kingdoms of our LORD and of his CHRIST, and he shall reign forever."[\[102\]](#)

Garrison was essentially a man of action; the real philosopher of the non-resistance movement was Adin Ballou, a Universalist minister of New England who devoted his whole life to the advancement of its principles. In 1846 he published his *Christian Non-Resistance: In All Its Important Bearings*, in which he set forth his doctrine, supported it with full scriptural citations, and then presented a catalogue of incidents which to his own satisfaction proved its effectiveness, both in personal and in social relationships.

Although Ballou listed a long series of means which a Christian non-resistant might not use, he insisted that he had a duty to oppose evil, saying:

"I claim the right to offer the utmost moral resistance, not sinful, of which God has made me capable, to every manifestation of evil among mankind. Nay, I hold it my duty to offer such moral resistance. In this sense my very non-resistance becomes the highest kind of resistance to evil."[\[103\]](#)

Nor did Ballou condemn all use of "uninjurious, benevolent physical force" in restraining the insane or the man about to commit an injury to another. He finally defined non-resistance as "simply non-resistance of injury with injury—evil with evil." Rather, he believed in "the essential efficacy of good, as the counter-acting force with which to resist evil."[\[104\]](#)

In applying his principle rigorously, Ballou, like the Mennonites, came to the conclusion that the non-resistant could have nothing to do with government. If he so much as voted for its officials, he had to share the moral responsibility for the wars, capital punishment, and other personal injuries which were carried out in its name. He insisted:

"There is no escape from this terrible moral responsibility but by a conscientious withdrawal from such government, and an uncompromising protest against so much of its fundamental creed and constitutional law, as is decidedly anti-Christian. He must cease to be its pledged supporter, and approving dependent."[\[105\]](#)

Like the Mennonites, he saw that the reason that governments were unchristian was that the people themselves were not Christian; but unlike the Mennonites he maintained that they might eventually become



so, and that it was the duty of the Christian to hasten the day of their complete conversion. "This," he said,

"is not to be done by voting at the polls, by seeking influential offices in the government and binding ourselves to anti-Christian political compacts. It is to be done by pure Christian precepts faithfully inculcated, and pure Christian examples on the part of those who have been favored to receive and embrace the highest truths."<sup>[106]</sup>

The Mennonites believed that man was essentially depraved; Ballou believed that he was perfectible.<sup>[107]</sup>

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[102]</sup> Allen, *Fight for Peace*, 696.

<sup>[103]</sup> Ballou, *Christian Non-Resistance*, 3.

<sup>[104]</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-25.

<sup>[105]</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>[106]</sup> *Ibid.*, 223-224.

<sup>[107]</sup> Perhaps this is the point at which to insert a footnote on Henry Thoreau, whose essay on "Civil Disobedience" is said to have influenced Gandhi. Although he lived in the same intellectual climate that produced Garrison and Ballou, he was not a non-resistant on principle. For instance, he supported the violent attack upon slave holders by John Brown just before the Civil War. He did come to substantially the same conclusions, however, on government. He refused even to pay a tax to a government which carried on activities which he considered immoral, such as supporting slavery, or carrying on war. On one occasion he said, "They are the lovers of law and order who observe the law when the government breaks it." Essentially, Thoreau was a philosophical anarchist, who placed his faith entirely in the individual, rather than in any sort of organized social action. See the essay on him in Parrington, II, 400-413; and his own essay on "Civil Disobedience" in *The Writings of Henry David Thoreau* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1906), IV, 356-387.

# Tolstoy

Many people regard the writings of Count Leo Tolstoy as the epitome of the doctrine of non-resistance. Tolstoy arrived at his convictions after a long period of inner turmoil, and published them in *My Religion* in 1884. In the years that followed, his wide correspondence introduced him to many others who had held the same views. He was especially impressed with the 1838 statement of Garrison, and with the writings of Ballou, with whom he entered into correspondence directly.[\[108\]](#)

However, he went further than Ballou, and even further than the Mennonites in his theory, which he formulated fully in *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, published in 1893. He renounced the use of physical force completely even in dealing with the insane or with children.[\[109\]](#) He severed all relations with government, and went on to insist that the true Christian might not own any property. He practiced his own doctrines strictly.

Tolstoy had quite a number of followers, and a few groups were established to carry out his teachings. These groups have continued to exist under the Soviet Union, but their present fate is obscure. His works greatly influenced Peter Verigin, leader of the Dukhobors, who shortly after 1900 left Russia and settled in Canada in order to find a more hospitable environment for their communistic community, and to escape the necessity for military service.[\[110\]](#)

However, Tolstoy's theory is so completely anarchistic that it does not lend itself to organization. Hence his chief influence has been intellectual, and upon individuals. We have already noted the great impact that his works made on Gandhi, while he was formulating the ideas which were to result in Satyagraha.

Neither in the case of Gandhi, nor of Peter Verigin, however, were Tolstoy's doctrines applied in completely undiluted form. The Mennonites also disclaim kinship with him on the grounds that he sought a regeneration of society as a whole in this world.[\[111\]](#)

For most men the doctrine of complete anarchism has seemed too extreme for practical consideration, but it would seem that Tolstoy arrived at the logical conclusion of a system of non-resistance based on the premise that man should not combat evil, nor have any relationship whatever with human institutions which attempt to restrain men by means other than reliance upon the force of example and goodwill.

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[108\]](#) Aylmer Maude, *The Life of Tolstoy*, (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1910), II, 354-360, where the letters to and from Ballou are quoted at length. See also Count Leo N. Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, translated by Leo Wiener (Boston: Dana Estes & Co., 1905), 6-22.

[\[109\]](#) In a letter to L. G. Wilson, Tolstoy said: "I cannot agree with the concession he [Ballou] makes for employing violence against drunkards and insane people. The Master made no concessions, and we can make none. We must try, as Mr. Ballou puts it, to make impossible the existence of such people, but if they do exist, we must use all possible means, and sacrifice ourselves, but not employ violence. A true Christian will always prefer to be killed by a madman, than to deprive him of his liberty." Maude, *Tolstoy*, II, 355-356.

[110] J. F. C. Wright, *Slava Bohu: The Story of the Dukhobors* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1940), 99.

[111] Hershberger says of him: "He identified the kingdom of God with human society after the manner of the social gospel. But since he believed in an absolute renunciation of violence for all men, Tolstoy was an anarchist, repudiating the state altogether. Biblical nonresistance declines to participate in the coercive activities of the state, but nevertheless regards those as necessary for the maintenance of order in a sinful society, and is not anarchistic. But Tolstoy found no place for the state in human society at all; and due to his faith in the goodness of man he believed that eventually all coercion, including domestic police, would be done away." *Mennonite Qu. Rev.*, XVII, 129-130.



## VII. ACTIVE GOODWILL AND RECONCILIATION

The term "resistance" has occurred frequently in this study. As has been pointed out, this word has a negative quality, and implies opposition to the will of another, rather than an attempt to realize a positive policy. The preceding section dealt with its counterpart, "non-resistance," which has a neutral connotation, and implies that the non-resister is not involved in the immediate struggle, and that for him the refusal to inflict injury upon anyone is a higher value than the achievement of any policy of his own, either positive or negative.

Non-violent coercion, Satyagraha, and non-violent direct action, on the other hand, are definitely positive in their approach. Each seeks to effectuate a specified change in the policy of the person or group responsible for a situation which those who organize the non-violent action believe to be undesirable. However, even in such action the negative quality may appear. Satyagraha, for instance, insofar as it is a movement of opposition or "resistance" to British rule in India is negative, despite its positive objectives of establishing a certain type of government and economic system in that country.

The employment of active goodwill is another approach to the problem of bringing about desired social change. Its proponents seek to accomplish a positive alteration in the attitude and policy of the group or person responsible for some undesirable situation; but they refuse to use coercion—even non-violent coercion. Rather they endeavor to convince their opponent that it would be desirable to change his policy because the change would be in his own best interest, or would actually maintain his own real standard of values.

Many of those who would reject all coercion of an opponent practice such positive goodwill towards him, not because they are convinced that their action will accomplish the social purposes which they would like to achieve, but rather because they place such an attitude toward their fellowmen as their highest value. They insist that they would act in the same way regardless of the consequences of their action, either to the person towards whom they practice goodwill or to themselves. They act on the basis of principle rather than on the basis of expediency. In this regard they are like many of the practitioners of other methods of non-violence; but unlike them they place their emphasis on the positive action of goodwill which they *will* use, rather than upon a catalogue of violent actions which they will not use.

To those who practice the method of goodwill all types of education and persuasion are available. In the past they have used the printed and spoken word, and under favorable circumstances even political action. They hope to appeal to "that of God in every man," to bring about genuine repentance on the part of those who have been responsible for evil. If direct persuasion is not effective, they hope that their exhibition of love towards him whom others under the same circumstances would regard as an enemy may appeal to an aspect of his nature which is temporarily submerged, and result in a change of attitude on his part. If it does not, these advocates of goodwill are ready to suffer the consequences of their action, even to the point of death.

# Action in the Face of Persecution

The practice of positive goodwill is open to the individual as well as to the group. Since he does what he believes to be right regardless of the consequences, he will act before there are enough who share his opinion to create any chance of victory over the well organized forces of the state or other institutions which are responsible for evil. The history of the martyrs of all ages presents us with innumerable examples of men who have acted in this way. Socrates is of their number, as well as the early Christians who insisted upon practicing their religion despite the edicts of the Roman empire. Jesus himself is the outstanding example of one who was willing to die rather than to surrender principle. It cannot be said of these martyrs that they acted in order to bring about reforms in society. They suffered because under the compulsion of their faith they could act in no other way, and at the time of their deaths it always looked as though they had been defeated. But in the end their sacrifices had unsought results. The proof of their effectiveness is declared in the old adage that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

If we seek examples from relatively recent times, we may find them in the annals of many of the pacifist sects of our own day. Robert Barclay, the Quaker apologist of the late seventeenth century, stated the position which the members of the Society of Friends so often put to the test:

"But the true, faithful and Christian suffering is for men to profess what they are persuaded is right, and so practise and perform their worship towards God, as being their true right so to do; and neither to do more than that, because of outward encouragement from men; nor any whit less, because of the fear of their laws and acts against it."[\[112\]](#)

The early Quakers suffered severely under the laws of England in a day when religious toleration was virtually unheard of. George Fox himself had sixty encounters with magistrates and was imprisoned on eight occasions; yet he was not diverted from his task of preaching truth. It has been estimated that 15,000 Quakers "suffered" under the various religious acts of the Restoration.[\[113\]](#) But they continued to hold the principles which had been stated by twelve of their leaders, including Fox, to King Charles shortly after his return to England:

"Our principle is, and our practice always has been, to seek peace and ensue it; to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God; seeking the good and welfare, and doing that which tends to the peace of all.



"When we have been wronged, we have not sought to revenge ourselves; we have not made resistance against authority; but whenever we could not obey for conscience sake, we have suffered the most of any people in the nation...."[\[114\]](#)

These sufferings did not go unheeded. Even the wordly Samuel Pepys wrote in his diary concerning Quakers on their way to prison: "They go like lambs without any resistance I would to God they would either conform or be more wise and not be caught."[\[115\]](#)

In Massachusetts, where the Puritans hoped to establish the true garden of the Lord, the lot of the Quakers

was even more severe. Despite warnings and imprisonments, Friends kept encroaching upon the Puritan preserve until the Massachusetts zealots, in their desperation over the failure of the gentler means of quenching Quaker ardor, condemned and executed three men and a woman. Even Charles II was revolted by such extreme measures, and ordered the colony to desist. After a long struggle the Quakers, along with other advocates of liberty of conscience, won their struggle for religious liberty even in Massachusetts. There can be little doubt that their sufferings played an important part in the establishment of religious liberty as an American principle.[\[116\]](#)

In our own day the conscientious objector to military service, whatever his motivation and philosophy, faces a social situation very similar to that which confronted these early supporters of a new faith. For the moment there is little chance that his insistence upon following the highest values which his conscience recognizes will bring an end to war, because there are not enough others who share his convictions. He takes his individual stand without regard for outward consequences to himself, because his conviction leaves him no other alternative. But even though his "sufferings" do not at once make possible the universal practice of goodwill towards all men, they may in the end have the result of helping to banish war from the world.

### FOOTNOTES:

[\[112\]](#) Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity; being an Explanation and Vindication of the Principles and Doctrines of the People Called Quakers* (Philadelphia: Friends' Book Store, 1908), Proposition XIV, Section VI, 480.

[\[113\]](#) A. Ruth Fry, *Quaker Ways: An Attempt to Explain Quaker Beliefs and Practices and to Illustrate them by the Lives and Activities of Friends of Former Days* (London: Cassell, 1933), 126, 131.

[\[114\]](#) Quoted by Margaret E. Hirst, *The Quakers in Peace and War: an Account of Their Peace Principles and Practice* (New York: George H. Doran, 1923), 115-116.

[\[115\]](#) Quoted in Fry, *Quaker Ways*, 128-129.

[\[116\]](#) Hirst, 327; Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies* (London: Macmillan, 1923), 3-135.

# Coercion or Persuasion?

A man who is willing to undergo imprisonment and even death itself rather than to cease doing what he believes is right knows in his own heart that coercion is not an effective means of persuasion. The early Quakers saw this clearly. Barclay stated his conviction in these words:

"This forcing of men's consciences is contrary to sound reason, and the very law of nature. For man's understanding cannot be forced by all the bodily sufferings another man can inflict upon him, especially in matters spiritual and super-natural: 'Tis argument, and evident demonstration of reason, together with the power of God reaching the heart, that can change a man's mind from one opinion to another, and not knocks and blows, and such like things, which may well destroy the body, but never can inform the soul, which is a free agent, and must either accept or reject matters of opinion as they are borne in upon it by something proportioned to its own nature."[\[117\]](#)

And William Penn said more simply, "Gaols and gibbets are inadequate methods for conversion: this forbids all further light to come into the world."[\[118\]](#)

Other religious groups who went through experiences comparable to those of the Friends came to similar conclusions. The Church of the Brethren, founded in 1709 in Germany, took as one of its leading principles that "there shall be no force in religion," and carried it out so faithfully that they would not baptize children, on the ground that this act would coerce them into membership in the church before they could decide to join of their own free will. The Brethren have refused to take part in war not only because it is contrary to the spirit of Christian love, and destroys sacred human life, but also because it is coercive and interferes with the free rights of others.[\[119\]](#)

For the person who believes in the practice of positive goodwill towards all men, the refusal to use coercion arises from its incompatibility with the spirit of positive regard for every member of the human family, rather than being a separate value in itself. In social situations this regard may express itself in various ways. It may have a desirable result from the point of view of the practitioner, but again we must emphasize that he does what he does on the basis of principle; the result is a secondary consideration.

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[117\]](#) Barclay, *Apology*, Prop. XIV, Sec. IV, 470.

[\[118\]](#) Fry, *Quaker Ways*. 59-60.

[\[119\]](#) D. W. Kurtz, *Ideals of the Church of the Brethren*, leaflet (Elgin, Ill.: General Mission Board, 1934?); Martin G. Brumbaugh in *Studies in the Doctrine of Peace* (Elgin, Ill.: Board of Christian Education, Church of the Brethren, 1939), 56; the statement of the Goshen Conference of 1918 and other statements of the position of the church in L. W. Shultz (ed.), *Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Church of the Brethren on War and Peace*, mimeo (Elgin: Bd. of Chr. Ed., Church of the Brethren, 1935); and the pamphlet by Robert Henry Miller, *The Christian Philosophy of Peace* (Elgin: Bd. of Chr. Ed., Church of the Brethren, 1935).





# Ministering to Groups in Conflict

One expression of this philosophy may be abstention from partisanship in conflicts between other groups, in order to administer impartially to the human need of both parties to the conflict.

In this connection much has been made of the story of the Irish Quakers during the rebellion in that country in 1798. Before the conflict broke into open violence the Quarterly Meetings and the General National Meeting recommended that all Friends destroy all firearms in their possession so that there could be no suspicion of their implication in the coming struggle. During the fighting in 1798 the Friends interceded with both sides in the interests of humanity, entertained the destitute from both parties and treated the wounds of any man who needed care. Both the Government forces and the rebels came to respect Quaker integrity, and in the midst of pillage and rapine the Quaker households escaped unscathed. But Thomas Hancock, who told the story a few years later, pointed out that in their course of conduct the Friends had not sought safety.

"It is," he said, "to be presumed, that, even if outward preservation had not been experienced, they who conscientiously take the maxims of Peace for the rule of their conduct, would hold it not less their duty to conform to those principles; because the reward of such endeavor to act in obedience to their Divine Master's will is not always to be looked for in the present life. While, therefore, the fact of their outward preservation would be no sufficient argument to themselves that they had acted as they ought to act in such a crisis, it affords a striking lesson to those who will take no principle, that has not been verified by experience, for a rule of human conduct, even if it should have the sanction of Divine authority."[\[120\]](#)

It is in this same spirit that various pacifist groups undertook the work of relief of suffering after the First World War in "friendly" and "enemy" countries alike, ministering to human need without distinction of party, race or creed. The stories of the work of the American Friends Service Committee and the *Service Civil* founded by Pierre Ceresole are too well known to need repeating here.[\[121\]](#) It should not be overlooked that in this same spirit the Brethren and the Mennonites also carried on large scale relief projects during the interwar years.

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[120\]](#) Thomas Hancock, *The Principles of Peace Exemplified in the Conduct of the Society of Friends in Ireland During the Rebellion of the year 1798, with some Preliminary and Concluding Observations* (2nd ed., London, 1826), 28-29. All the important features of the story are summarized in Hirst, 216-224.

[\[121\]](#) Lester M. Jones, *Quakers in Action: Recent Humanitarian and Reform Activities of the American Quakers* (New York: Macmillan, 1929); Rufus M. Jones, *A Service of Love in War Time* (New York: Macmillan, 1920); Mary Hoxie Jones, *Swords into Plowshares: An Account of the American Friends Service Committee 1917-1937* (New York: Macmillan, 1937); Willis H. Hall, *Quaker International Work in Europe Since 1914* (Chambery, Savoie, France: Imprimeries Reunies, 1938). On *Service Civil*, see Lilian Stevenson, *Towards a Christian International, The Story of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation* (Vienna: International Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1929), 27-31, and Alan A. Hunter, *White Corpuses in Europe* (Chicago: Willett, Clark, 1939), 33-42.



# The Power of Example

A social group that acts consistently in accordance with the principles of active goodwill also exerts great influence through the force of its example. A study of the Quaker activities in behalf of social welfare was published in Germany just before the First World War, by Auguste Jorns. She shows how, in relief of the poor, education, temperance, public health, the care of the insane, prison reform, and the abolition of slavery, the Quakers set about to solve the problem within their own society, but never in an exclusive way, so that others as well as members might receive the benefits of Quaker enterprises. Quaker methods became well known, and in time served as models for similar undertakings by other philanthropic groups and public agencies. Many modern social work procedures thus had their origins in the work of the Friends in a relatively small circle.[\[122\]](#)

## FOOTNOTE:

[\[122\]](#) Auguste Jorns, *The Quakers as Pioneers in Social Work*, trans. by Thomas Kite Brown (New York: Macmillan, 1931).

# Work for Social Reform

The activity of Quakers in the abolition of slavery both in England and America, especially the life-long work of John Woolman in the colonies, is well known. Here too, the first "concerned" Friends attempted to bring to an end the practice of holding slaves within the Society itself. When they had succeeded in eliminating it from their own ranks, they could, with a clear conscience, suggest that their neighbors follow their example. When the time came, Quakers were willing to take part in political action to eradicate the evil. The compensated emancipation of the slaves in the British Empire in 1833 proved that the reform could be accomplished without the violent repercussions which followed in the United States. [\[123\]](#)

Horace G. Alexander has pointed out that the person who voluntarily surrenders privilege, as the American Quakers did in giving up their slaves, not only serves as a witness to the falsehood of privilege, but can never rest until reform is achieved.

"The very fact," he says, "that he feels a loyalty to the oppressors as well as to the oppressed means that he can never rest until the oppressors have been converted. It is not their destruction that he wants, but a change in their hearts." [\[124\]](#)

Such an attitude is based upon a faith in the perfectibility of man and the possibility of the regeneration of society. It leads from a desire to live one's own life according to high principles to a desire to establish similar principles in human institutions. It rejects the thesis of Reinhold Niebuhr that social groups can never live according to the same moral codes as individuals, and also the belief of such groups as the Mennonites that, since the "world" is necessarily evil, the precepts of high religion apply only to those who have accepted the Christian way of life. Instead, the conviction of those who hold this ideal that it is social as well as individual in its application leads them into the pathways of social reform, and even into political action.

## FOOTNOTES:

[\[123\]](#) Henry J. Cadbury, *Colonial Quaker Antecedents to British Abolition of Slavery*, An address to the Friends' Historical Society, March 1933 (London: Friends Committee on Slavery and Protection of Native Races, 1933), reprinted from *The Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, July, 1933; Jorns, 197-233.

[\[124\]](#) Horace G. Alexander in Heard, *et al.*, *The New Pacifism*, 93.

# Political Action and Compromise

The Quakers, for instance, have been noted for their participation in all sorts of reform movements. Since every reform in one sense involves opposition to some existing institution, Clarence Case has been led to call the Quakers "non-physical resisters;"<sup>[125]</sup> but since their real objective was usually the establishment of a new institution rather than the mere destruction of an old one, they might better be called "non-violent advocates." They were willing to advocate their reforms in the public forum and the political arena. Since, as Rufus Jones has pointed out, such action might yield to the temptation to compromise with men of lesser ideals, there has always been an element in the Society of Friends which insisted that the ideal must be served in its entirety, even to the extent of giving up public office and influence rather than to compromise.<sup>[126]</sup> In Pennsylvania the Quakers withdrew from the legislature when it became necessary in the existing political situation to vote support of the French and Indian war, but they did so not because they did not believe in political action, in which up to that moment they had taken part willingly enough, but rather because under the circumstances of the moment it was impossible to realize their ideals by that means.<sup>[127]</sup>

Ruth Fry, in discussing the uncompromising attitude of the Friends on the issue of slavery, has well described the process of Quaker reform:

"One cannot help feeling that this strong stand for the ultimate right was far more responsible for success than the more timid one, and should encourage such action in other great causes. In fact, the ideal Quaker method would seem to be patient waiting for enlightenment on the underlying principle, which when seen is so absolutely clear and convincing that no outer difficulties or suffering can affect it: its full implications gradually appear, and its ultimate triumph can never be doubted. Any advance towards it, may be accepted as a stepping stone, although only methods consistent with Quaker ideals may be used to gain the desired end. Doing anything tinged with evil, that good may come, is entirely contrary to their ideas."<sup>[128]</sup>

She goes on to say, "As ever, the exact line of demarcation between methods aggressive enough to arouse the indolent and those beyond the bounds of Quaker propriety was indeed difficult to draw."<sup>[129]</sup>

In such a statement we find a conception of compromise which is different from that usually encountered. In it the advocate of the ideal says that for the time being he will accept less than his ultimate goal, provided the change is in the direction in which he desires to move, but he will not accept the slightest compromise which would move away from his goal.

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>[125]</sup> Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*, 92-93.

<sup>[126]</sup> Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, 175-176.

<sup>[127]</sup> Jones, *Quakers in the Colonies*, 459-494; Isaac Sharpless, *A Quaker Experiment in Government* (Philadelphia: Alfred J. Ferris, 1898), 226-276.

<sup>[128]</sup> Fry, *Quaker Ways*, 171-172.

[129] *Ibid.*, 177.

# The Third Alternative

The logical pursuit of such a principle leads even further than the type of compromise which Ruth Fry has described, to the establishment of a new basis of understanding which may not include any of the principles for which the parties in conflict may have been striving, and yet which brings about reconciliation.

Eric Heyman, speaking in religious terms, has said of this process of discovering a new basis of understanding through the exercise of positive goodwill, even toward an oppressor:

"That is the way of God, and it is therefore the way of our discipleship as reconcilers; the way of non-resistance to evil, of the total acceptance of the consequences of evil in all their lurid destructiveness, in order that the evil doer may be reconciled to God.... The whole consequences of his presence, whether small or great must be accepted with the single realisation that the whole process of the world's redemption rests upon the relationship which the Christian is able to create between himself and his oppressor. This course has nothing in common with resistance; it is the opposite of surrender, for its whole purpose and motive is the triumphing over evil by acceptance of all that it brings.... The resistance of evil, whether by way of violence or 'non-violence' is the way of this world. Resignation to evil is the way of weak surrender, and yields only a powerless resentment; at its best it is non-moral, at the worst sheerly immoral. Acceptance of evil is the triumphant answer of the redeemer. In the moment of his acceptance he knows of a certainty that he has overcome the world."[\[130\]](#)

This process of finding a new basis of relationship has been called "a third alternative, which produces no majority rule and no defeated minority."[\[131\]](#) The Quakers have long used this method in arriving at decisions within their own meetings. They refuse to make motions and take votes which produce clearcut divisions within the group, but insist that no action shall be taken until all divergent points of view have been expressed, and a statement drawn up which embodies "the sense of the meeting" and is acceptable to all. As Elton Trueblood has said, "The overpowering of a minority by calling for a vote is a kind of force, and breeds the resentment which keeps the method of force from achieving ultimate success with persons."[\[132\]](#) Douglas Steere has described the process in these words:

"This unshakable faith in the way of vital, mutual interaction by conciliatory conference is held to be applicable to international and interracial conflict as it is to that between workers and employer, or between man and wife. But it is not content to stop there. It would defy all fears and bring into the tense process of arriving at this joint decision a kind of patience and a quiet confidence which believes, not that there is no other way, but that there is a 'third-alternative' which will annihilate neither party."[\[133\]](#)

M. P. Follett, twenty years ago, wrote a book entitled *Creative Experience*, in which she supported this same conclusion on the basis of scientific knowledge about the nature of man, society and politics. Speaking of the democratic process she said:

"We have the will of the people ideally when all desires are satisfied.... The aim of democracy should be integrating desires. I have said that truth emerges from difference. In the ballot-box there is

no confronting of difference, hence no possibility of integrating, hence no creating; self-government is a creative process and nothing else.... Democracy does not register various opinions; it is an attempt to create unity."[\[134\]](#)

It might be said that in so far as democracy has succeeded, it has done so because of its adherence to this principle. The division of a society into groups which are unremittingly committed to struggle against each other, whether by violent or non-violent means, until one or the other has been annihilated or forced to yield outwardly to its oppressors for the time being, will inevitably destroy the loyalty to a common purpose through which alone democracy can exist.

The contrast between the British and American attitudes toward the abolition of slavery presents us with a case in point. In Great Britain, the Emancipation Act contained provisions for the compensation of the slave owners, so that it became acceptable to them. In the United States the advocates of abolition insisted that since slavery was sin there could be no recognition of the rights of the owners. Elihu Burritt and his League of Universal Brotherhood were as much opposed to slavery as the most ardent abolitionists, yet of the League Burritt declared: "It will not only aim at the mutual pacification of enemies, but at their conversion into brethren."[\[135\]](#) Burritt became the chief advocate of compensated emancipation in the United States. Finally the idea was suggested in the Senate and hearings had been arranged on the measure.

"But," Burritt said, "just as it had reached that stage at which Congressional action was about to recognize it as a legitimate proposition, 'John Brown's raid' suddenly closed the door against all overtures or efforts for the peaceful extinction of slavery. Its extinction by compensated emancipation would have recognized the moral complicity of the whole nation in planting and perpetuating it on this continent. It would have been an act of repentance, and the meetest work for repentance the nation could perform."[\[136\]](#)

The country was already too divided to strive for this "third alternative," and, whether or not slavery was one of the prime causes of the Civil War, it made its contribution to creating the feeling which brought on the conflict. In the light of the present intensity of racial feeling in the United States, it can hardly be said that the enforced settlement of the war gave the Negro an equal place in American society or eliminated conflict between the races.

One of the virtues of the method of reconciliation of views in seeking the "third alternative" is that it can be practiced by the individual or a very small group as well as on the national or international scale. James Myers has described its use within the local community in the "informal conference." In such a conference, the person or group desiring to create better understanding or to eliminate conflict between elements of the community calls together, without any publicity, representatives of various interests for a discussion of points of view, with the understanding that there will be no attempt to reach conclusions or arrive at any official decisions. James Myers' experience has indicated that the conferences create an appreciation of the reasons for former divergence of opinion, and a realization of the possibilities of new bases of relationship which have often resulted in easing tensions within the community and in the solution of racial, economic and social conflicts.[\[137\]](#)

Even on the international level, individuals may make some contribution toward the elimination of conflicts, although, in the face of the present emphasis upon nationalism, and the lack of common international values to which appeal may be made, their labors are not apt to be crowned with success. As in all the cases which we have been considering, however, concerned individuals and groups may act



in this field because they feel a compulsion to do so, regardless of whether or not their actions are likely to be successful in producing the desired result of reconciliation, and the discovery of the third alternative.[\[138\]](#)

## FOOTNOTES:

- [130] Eric Heyman, *The Pacifist Dilemma* (Banbury, England: Friends' Peace Committee, 1941), 11-12.
- [131] Carl Heath, "The Third Alternative" in Heard, *et al.*, *The New Pacifism*, 102.
- [132] D. Elton Trueblood, "The Quaker Method of Reaching Decisions" in Laughlin, *Beyond Dilemmas*, 119.
- [133] Douglas V. Steere, "Introduction" to Laughlin, *Beyond Dilemmas*, 18.
- [134] M. P. Follett, *Creative Experience* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1924), 209.
- [135] Quoted in Allen, *Fight for Peace*, 428.
- [136] Quoted in *Ibid.*, 437.
- [137] James Myers, *"Informal Conferences" a New Technique In Social Education*, Leaflet (New York: Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 1943).
- [138] See George Lansbury, *My Pilgrimage for Peace* (New York: Holt, 1938); Bertram Pickard, *Pacifist Diplomacy in Conflict Situations: Illustrated by the Quaker International Centers* (Philadelphia: Pacifist Research Bureau, 1943).



## VIII. CONCLUSIONS

Those who do not share the pacifist philosophy are prone to insist that the pacifists place far too much emphasis upon the refusal to employ physical force. These critics maintain that force is non-moral in character, and that the only moral question involved in its use is whether or not the purposes for which it is employed are "good" or "bad." They fail to realize that these concepts themselves arise from a subjective set of values, different for every social group on the basis of its own tradition and for every individual on the basis of his own experience and training.

The "absolute" pacifist places at the very apex of his scale of values respect for every human personality so great that he cannot inflict injury on any human being regardless of the circumstances in which he finds himself. He would rather himself suffer what he considers to be injustice, or even see other innocent people suffer it, than to arrogate to himself the right of sitting in judgment on his fellow men and deciding that they must be destroyed through his action. For him to inflict injury or death upon any human being would be to commit the greatest iniquity of which he can conceive, and would create within his own soul a sense of guilt so great that acceptance of any other evil would be preferable to it.

The person who acts on the basis of such a scale of values is not primarily concerned with the outward expediency of his action in turning the evil-doer into new ways, although he is happy if his action does have incidental desirable results. He acts as he does because of a deep conviction about the nature of the universe in which all men are brothers, and in which every personality is sacred. No logical argument to act otherwise can appeal to him unless it is based upon assumptions arising out of this conviction.

Those who place their primary moral emphasis upon respect for human personality are led to hold many other values as well as their supreme value of refusing to use violence against their fellow men. Except in time of war, when governments insist that their citizens take part in mass violence, the absolute pacifist is apt to serve these other values, which he shares with many non-pacifists, without attracting the attention which distinguishes him from other men of goodwill. He insists only that in serving these subsidiary values he must not act in any way inconsistent with his highest value.

Many pacifists, and all non-pacifists, differ from the absolutists in that they place other values before this supreme respect for every human personality. The pacifists who do so, refuse to inflict injury on their fellows not because this is itself their highest value, but because they believe other less objectionable methods are more effective for achieving their highest purposes, or because they accept the argument that the means they use must be consistent with the ends they seek. They would say that it is impossible to achieve universal human brotherhood by methods which destroy the basis for such brotherhood.

Such persons assess non-violence as a *tactic*, rather than accepting it as a value in itself. John Lewis comes to the conclusion that under certain circumstances violence is a more effective method. Gandhi believes in non-violence both as a principle and as the most effective means of achieving his purposes. Every individual who looks upon non-violence as only a means, rather than as an end in itself, will accept or reject it on the basis of his estimate of the expediency of non-violent methods. Some come to the conclusion that violence can never be effective and therefore refuse to use it under any circumstances; others decide on each new occasion whether violence or non-violence will best serve their ends in that particular situation. In such cases the question is one of fact; the decision must be based upon the available evidence.

From the diversity of opinions that exist at the present time it is obvious that the social sciences are not yet ready to give an unequivocal answer to this question of fact. Since the values that men hold subjectively are themselves social facts which the scientist must take into account, and since they vary from age to age, community to community, and individual to individual, it may never be possible to find the final answer. Meanwhile the individual facing the necessity for action must answer the question for himself on the basis of the best information available to him. Even if he refuses to face the issue for himself and accepts the prevalent idea of our own day that violence is an effective means of achieving desirable purposes, he has actually answered the question without giving thought to it.

The potential tragedy of our generation is that the whole world has been plunged into war on the basis of the prevalent assumption that violence is an effective means of achieving high social purposes. Even that part of the planning for peace that is based upon maintaining international order by force rests upon this same assumption. If the assumption be false, mankind has paid a terrible price for its mistake.

Another assumption on which the advocates of violence act is that the use of physical force in a noble cause inevitably brings about the triumph of that cause. History gives us no basis for such an assumption. There is much evidence that force sometimes fails, even when it is used on the "right" side. Although the sense of fighting in a righteous cause may improve the morale and thus increase the effectiveness of an army, actually wars are won by the *stronger* side. It is a curious fact that on occasion both opposing armies may feel that they are fighting on the side of righteousness. Napoleon summarized the soldier's point of view when he said that God was on the side of the largest battalions. During the uncertain process of violent conflict, the destruction of human life—innocent and guilty alike—goes on.

Just as there is evidence that violence used in a righteous cause is not always successful, there is evidence that non-violent methods sometimes succeed. Without attempting to give the final answer to the question whether violence creates so much destruction of human values that its apparent successes are only illusory, we can say that the success or failure of both violence and non-violence is determined by the conditions under which both are used, and attempt to discover the circumstances under which they have been effective.

(1) No great social movement can arise unless the grievance against the existing order is great and continuous, or the demand for a new order is so deeply ingrained in the minds of the people in the movement that they are willing to expend great effort and undergo great sacrifices in order to bring about the desired change.

(2) The group devoted to the idea of change must be large enough to have an impact on the situation. This is true whether the group desires to use violent or non-violent methods. In any case there will be a balancing of forces between those desiring change and those who oppose it. All of the non-violent techniques we have considered require sufficient numbers so that either their refusal of cooperation, their participation in politics, or their practice of positive goodwill has a significant effect upon the whole community.

(3) The group that has a strong desire to bring about social change may be augmented in strength by the support of other elements in the population who do not feel so strongly on the issue. The less vigorous support of such neutrals may be the element that swings the balance in favor of the group desiring change. This "third party" group may also remain indifferent to the conflict. In that case the result will be determined solely by the relative strength of the direct participants. In any case, the group desiring change will be defeated if it alienates the members of the third party so that they join the other side. This latter consideration gives a great advantage to the practitioners of non-violence, since in our own day people

generally are disposed to oppose violence, or at least "unlawful" violence, and to sympathize with the victims of violence, especially if they do not fight back. A definite commitment on the part of the reformers not to use violence may go far toward winning the initial support of the group neutral in the conflict.

(4) These conditions of success must be created through the use of education and persuasion prior to taking action. The sense of grievance or the desire for social change must be developed in this way if it does not already exist. Even such a violent movement as the French Revolution grew out of a change in the intellectual climate of France created by the writers of the preceding century. Only when a large enough group has been won over to the cause of reform by such an educational campaign can the second requisite for success be obtained. Finally, much educational work must be done among the less interested third parties in order to predispose them to favor the changes advocated and to sympathize with the group taking part in the movement of reform.

The final result of any social conflict is determined by the balancing of forces involved. Violence itself can never succeed against a stronger adversary, so those who desire to bring about social change or revolution by violence have to begin with the process of education to build a group large enough to overcome the violent forces which are likely to be arrayed against them. Even a violent revolution must be preceded by much non-violent educational preparation. But even when the group using violence has become large enough to overcome the physical force arrayed against it, its victory rests upon the coercion of its opponents rather than upon their conversion. Though defeated, the opponents still entertain their old concepts and look forward to the day of retribution, or to the counter-revolution. A social order so established rests upon a very unstable foundation. Revolutionaries have attempted in such circumstances to "liquidate" all the opposition, but it is doubtful that they have ever been completely successful in doing so. The ruthless use of violence in the process of liquidation has usually alienated third parties against the regime that uses it, and thus augmented the group that might support the counter-revolution.

Advocates of non-violence must start in the same way as the violent revolutionaries to build their forces through persuasion and education. They must assess properly the attitude of the third party and carry on educational work with this group until it is certain that it will not go over to the other side at the moment of action.

By the time a revolutionary or reforming group was large enough to use violence successfully, and to weather the storm of the counter-revolution or reaction, it would already have won to its side so large a portion of the community that it could probably succeed without the use of violence. This would certainly be true in a country like the United States. We must ask the question as to whether the energy consumed in the use of violence might not bring better results if it were expended upon additional education and persuasion, without involving the destruction of human life, human values, and property which violence inevitably entails.

Even most of the ardent advocates of war and violent revolution admit that violence is only an undesirable necessity for the achievement of desirable ends. Non-violent methods pursued with the same commitment and vigor would be just as likely to succeed in the immediate situation as violence, without bringing in their train the tremendous human suffering attendant upon violence. More important is the fact that a social order based upon consent is more stable than one based upon coercion. If we are interested in the long range results of action, non-violence is much more likely to bring about the new society than is violence, because it fosters rather than destroys the sense of community upon which any new social order must be founded.



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