

PEACEWORK

GLOBAL THOUGHT AND LOCAL ACTION FOR NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE

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**Special
Issue:
100
Years of
Gandhian
Nonviolent
Action**

**Featuring:
Gandhi,
Bacic,
Starhawk,
Einstein,
King,
Orwell, &
Sheehan**

Kate Donnelly-Colt cradles Cal Donnelly-Colt at a nonviolent blockade of Wall Street in New York to protest exploitation and militarism, November 19, 1984. Photo: © Ellen Shub



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From the Editor's Desk

"In 1921, Gandhi made it clear that he had no desire to found a sect. He added, 'I am really too ambitious to be satisfied with a sect for a following.' Sixteen years later Gandhi asked his followers to forget him on his passing, to 'cleave not to my name but cleave to the principles [of truth and nonviolence].'"

— Tom Weber, Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research

In his playfully humble egotism, Mohandas Gandhi was quite honest. Gandhi was indeed ambitious, endeavoring to change the historical rules which had governed politics and social change worldwide for millennia: in particular the basic rule which dictated that armed force makes the rules.

Among the revolutions that Gandhi endeavored to undertake in his lifetime were the recognition of immigrant rights in South Africa, the abolition of war, the mobilization of millions to nonviolently decolonize India and the rest of the world, the transformation of religions into a force for peace, the empowerment of village-based political and economic self-determination, the end of a centuries-old caste system, the inclusion of women as equal participants in politics, the transformation of village sanitation systems, and the redefinition of the struggle for mutual understanding as a valuable aspect of human existence.

Some may claim that the "war on terror," and the cycles of violence in Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Israel-Palestine, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Sudan, and Uganda, among other places, are proof that Gandhi failed. The politics of violence still inflict untold suffering on millions of people each year.

And yet: South Africa did change its immigration rules, in 1914. In the decades that followed, the apartheid regimes in the US and South Africa were overthrown mainly by nonviolent action; scores of countries have been liberated by nonviolent insurrections; India banned the caste system (though it persists); a global feminist movement challenges male domination and violence worldwide; and millions of people and thousands of non-governmental organizations have been mobilized to almost double the average human life-expectancy, largely through improved sanitation.

Most issues of *Peacework* are filled with contemporary accounts of these struggles: stories about resisting war, feminist organizing, public health campaigns, struggling for social justice, speaking out for political freedom, working for economic democracy, and creating ecological alternatives. In this special expanded edition, we decided to take a longer view.

On the fifth anniversary of the murder of thousands of civilians and military personnel on September 11, 2001, we knew there would be endless re-hashing of the politics of violence in the corporate media. But September 11 is also the date when Mohandas Gandhi began his first campaign of nonviolent direct action, 100 years ago. What if we used this moment to critically reflect on 100 years of Gandhian nonviolent action?

In the first part of this issue: survivors of violence from around the world will converge in the week before September 11th to declare an alternative: the politics of reconciliation. Dave Taber reminds us to keep a historical focus when remembering victims of terror attacks. Jack DuVall sets the stage by chronicling the rise of People Power worldwide (a theme echoed towards the end of this issue by Fred Fay's and Fred Pelka's tribute to disability rights activist Justin Dart, and by Bill Quigley's account of the aftermath of Katrina one year on). The Mayor of Asheville proclaims September 11 as a day for peace, and the poet E. Ethelbert Miller alerts us to the dangers and importance of becoming allies for each other in the face of racist backlash.

Gandhi's 1906 speech initiates a large section of articles analyzing Gandhi's multiple legacies: his family, historical perspectives, analyses from around the world, assessments of his spiritual mission, and perspectives about how we may learn to abolish war and usher in social justice. Lederach's article describing the value of replacing the term "conflict resolution" with "conflict transformation" speaks to Gandhi's efforts to redefine conflict itself as something we could embrace. We also include critiques of Gandhi's work and philosophy; essays which challenge us to cleave, not to Gandhi's name, but to the principles of nonviolence, of struggling firmly and gently towards truth, he so successfully championed. ☪

Sam Diener — Sam Diener, Co-Editor

CONTENTS: SEPTEMBER 2006

Transforming Personal Grief into Global Healing: Survivors of Violence Converge to Advocate Peace	4	India's Women's Peace Corps Embodying Gandhi's Idea for a Peace Army	18
by David Potorti		by Krishna Mallick	
<i>Each of us has been personally affected by violence yet has rejected the idea of retaliating with further violence.</i>		<i>In the age of the atom bomb, unadulterated nonviolence is the only force that can confound all the tricks of violence.</i>	
September 11th: Commemorating Resistance to Terrorism Throughout History	6	Gandhi's Insights Gave People Courage to Defy Chile's Dictatorship	20
by Dave Taber		by Roberta Bacic	
<i>Also remember: "witch" burnings, a massacre by Mormon militia, Gandhi's first campaign, Attica, the coup in Chile, and Biko.</i>		<i>We suffered twice: first enduring the pain of the dictatorship's violence, and second the anguish of keeping silent out of fear.</i>	
Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth Day	7	Globalizing Nonviolence in an African Context	21
by Richard Fireman and Kim Carlyle		by Matt Meyer	
<i>The mayor of Asheville, NC declared September 11 a day to reflect on the meaning of justice, peace, and nonviolent conflict resolution.</i>		<i>Globalizing nonviolence in Africa must mean a sharing of skills, resources, and training techniques.</i>	
Looking for Omar	7	Gandhi's Constructive Program — and Ours	22
by E. Ethelbert Miller		by Joanne Sheehan	
<i>I'm trapped in the middle of one of those Bible stories — but it ain't Sunday.</i>		<i>It is easier to protest the things we don't like than to build the things we want.</i>	
People Power as Gandhi's Enduring Legacy	8	An Odyssey with Gandhi	23
by Jack DuVall		by David Cortright	
<i>Where commands are no longer obeyed, the means of violence are of no use.</i>		<i>My commitment to peace and Gandhian nonviolence began when I was drafted into the Army.</i>	
Mohandas Gandhi's Call for Mass Defiance of Anti-Immigrant Legislation	9	Gandhi's Spiritual Revolution Lives	24
by Mohandas Gandhi		Claire Schaeffer-Duffy interviews Arya Bhushan Bhardwaj	
<i>So long as there is even a handful of us true to our pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory.</i>		<i>Was Gandhi a Gandhian? Was Buddha a Buddhist? Was Christ a Christian?</i>	
Gandhi's Prisoner: Manilal Gandhi as Son and South African Dissident	10	A Pacifist Critique of Gandhi	25
Goolam Vahed reviews <i>Gandhi's Prisoner?</i>		by Sam Diener	
<i>The Life of Gandhi's Son Manilal</i> by Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie		<i>Gandhi was at times sexist, racist, and perhaps not a pacifist.</i>	
Practicing Nonviolence: An Interview with Arun Gandhi	12	Defining Conflict Transformation	26
Sam Diener interviews Arun Gandhi		by John Paul Lederach	
<i>Anger isn't evil. It's not something to be ashamed of — be ashamed only of abusing anger.</i>		<i>Conflict can be understood as the motor of change.</i>	
Reclaiming Nonviolence from Gandhian Puritanism	14	Four Principles for Organizing in a Post-Katrina World	28
by Starhawk		by Bill Quigley	
<i>We can learn from suffering — if we are truly going to change the world, we probably can't avoid it — but let's not venerate it.</i>		<i>Can our hearts stay open to both tragedy and hope?</i>	
Einstein, Orwell, and King Comment on Gandhi	16	A Revolution of Empowerment: Honoring Disability Rights Activist Justin Dart, Jr.	29
by Albert Einstein, George Orwell, and Martin Luther King		by Fred Fay and Fred Pelka	
<i>Gandhi has done more than any other person in history to reveal that social problems can be solved without methods of violence.</i>		<i>Dart defined Gandhi's message as, "Find your own truth, and then live it."</i>	
Nonviolent Peaceforce:		Pieces: Events, Gatherings, Opportunities, Resources, Campaigns	30
What to say YES to when we say NO to War	17	A Declaration of Peace: Protest to End the War	31
by Donna Howard		Weaving in Traffic	32
<i>We come into conflicts as partners of local peacemakers, hoping to keep them alive long enough to do their work.</i>		by Craig Swanson	
		<i>The mantle was passed from 1st century India, to the US in the 1800s, to early 20th century India, and back again to 1950s US.</i>	

Transforming Personal Grief into Global Healing: Survivors of Violence Converge to Advocate Peace

David Potorti is the Director of September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows.

We all had choices to make after September 11th, 2001. Whether or not you lost family or friends, whether you were overcome by anger, fear, or compassion, whether your view of the world was rearranged or reinforced, how you chose to live your life after “everything changed” shaped the collective future of our nation and our world. It was truly a “kairos moment,” a time of crisis that could be seized in a life-giving way, or ridden into a greater crisis.

For those of us who founded September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, the direction we chose was consistent with our values, and grew out of who we were. We met in November of 2001 during a symbolic walk linking the Pentagon and the site of the World Trade Center organized by Kathy Kelly and the staff of Voices in the Wilderness (now Voices for Creative Nonviolence, www.vcnv.org). We took to the streets with our small truth because we rejected the idea of bombing Afghanistan as a response to the attacks of 9/11. We did not want the losses our families had experienced — like the loss of my brother, Jim Potorti, at the World Trade Center — to be duplicated among the civilians in Afghanistan.

And though only a handful of us did the walking, we were in good company: a poll taken only days after the September attacks showed that nearly half of Americans did not support the bombing if it would mean significant Afghan civilian casualties. Even then, with fires still burning at the World Trade Center site, there was a human impulse among Americans to align themselves with their peers on the other side of the world, those who had suffered for years under the Taliban and would continue to suffer under a new bombing campaign.

These qualms were a good sign, and one reason why I remember the days after 9/11 as “the good old days,” a time when anything was possible, a moment when the whole world could have come together in common cause against precisely the kind of brutality that now has the world in flames. Then as now, it was all about choices.

Our walk received very little press back in November of 2001, but enough so that a temporary email address we set up came to the attention of the founder of the Parents’ Circle, Yitzhak Frankenthal. He had lost his son, Arik, to a Hamas kidnapping and murder. Believing that he had “failed his son because there was no peace,” he decided to gather together family members of those killed by *any* side in the cycle of violence between Israelis and Palestinians to seek together for an end to the cycle. Yitzhak emailed us in December to express common cause with our mission, and I remember his outreach being another good sign, a blip of life and compassion that echoed on our radar screen to let us know that we were not alone.

Some of those who would go on to found Peaceful Tomorrows visited their civilian counterparts in Afghanistan in January, 2002 in a delegation organized by Global Exchange and in so doing cemented the value of what might be called person-to-person diplomacy. Our delegation learned that while many reporters on the ground in Afghanistan had written articles about civilian casualties of the US bombing campaign, getting them printed at that “patriotic” time was another story. That task became much easier when those casualties could be described in the context of meetings between Afghan families and US citizens who had suffered loss on 9/11. Speaking engagements outside our borders made us aware that the face of America seen around

the world was the face of President Bush. The idea that there were other faces — and other viewpoints — elicited a sigh of relief from many around the world.

When we launched Peaceful Tomorrows as an organization on Valentine’s Day of 2002, we based our name on Martin Luther King’s observation, “Wars are poor chisels for carving out peaceful tomorrows.” The Japanese media took a special interest. Thanks to that coverage, we were contacted by the Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, which asked if we, as the survivors of those killed on 9/11, might host a delegation of *hibakusha*, atomic bomb survivors, in a visit to the World Trade Center site.

We hosted the *hibakusha* in April of 2002, shortly after my brother’s remains from the World Trade Center had been positively identified by DNA testing. That morning I visited the NY Medical Examiner’s office where I learned about the size of the bone fragment that had been recovered, and the blunt force trauma that had created it. I stood under a white tent outside the office, where there were a number of refrigerated trailers, and paid my respects to the trailer that held his remains. Then I walked to the World Trade Center site and joined the *hibakusha*, who almost 60 years earlier had been targeted so violently by our government



Delegation of *hibakusha*, atomic bombing survivors, at the Nuclear Freeze rally of 800,00 people in New York City, June 12, 1982. © Ellen Shub

and had survived the maelstrom, nursing enduring wounds, only to dedicate the rest of their lives to calling for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. It was a powerful leap of solidarity across time. Though we as a nation had hurt them so terribly, it was the *hibakusha* who came to us, the 9/11 family members, to extend their sympathy and to stand with us in solidarity. It was another connection, another realization that what we were doing was resonating with others.

As Peaceful Tomorrows grew, other connections followed. Jo Berry, who had lost her father to an IRA bomb, later arranged to meet the man who planted the bomb, in an effort to understand the sources of violence. Today, Berry runs an organization called Building Bridges for Peace. She sent a message of support that touched all of us in the early days of our organization.

Father Michael Lapsley, who had supported the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and had lost his hands to a letter bomb delivered by the government, met one of our founders, Colleen Kelly, on a post-9/11 panel in New York City. In 2004, another Peaceful Tomorrows member, Andrew Rice, participated in a “Healing of Memories” workshop led by Lapsley on Robben Island, marking the tenth anniversary of democracy in South Africa. The visit had particular significance for Rice, who lost his brother David at the World Trade Center. David Rice had studied as a Fulbright Scholar in South Africa in 1996.

Lapsley grew to become another spiritual advisor to our new group, and in 2005 joined us in Oklahoma City for commemorations marking the tenth anniversary of the Murrah Federal Building bombing. Conversations captured that weekend became the Peaceful Tomorrows DVD, *Beyond Retribution*, in which participants who lost loved ones to war and terrorism in Oklahoma City, on September 11, 2001, and in Iraq talked about methods for coping with our pain by transcending the urge for vengeance.

The support of others around the world has been critical to our ability to continue our work. If those who have suffered so terribly, and have lived under oppressive conditions that put them face to face with injustice and violence for long periods of time, could remain true to their values and find a way to focus on a struggle bigger than

their own, then surely people in the US, many of us surrounded by comfort and relative security, could find a similar place in our hearts to conduct peace work. We found ourselves returning the favor by reaching out to those who were suffering as a result of other terrorist incidents and the backlash to these attacks — family members and survivors of the Bali nightclub bombing, immigrants suffering hate crimes, civilians in Iraq who lost loved ones to the US bombing campaign, those who had lost family members to the train bombings in Spain and Britain. In doing so, we learned that we have much in common.

The Bush administration makes constant references to “dangerous people” in “dangerous parts of the world.” Wouldn’t it be better to focus on brave, visionary people in dangerous parts of the world, people who have risen above their own losses and chosen to break the cycle of violence in order to create a better world? People who share our aspirations as human beings and as world citizens? People who have something to teach us about creative and life-affirming responses to terrorism, violence, and war? These are the people who are not found on TV screens across America, or in mainstream newspapers or magazines. Their stories are not heard or honored. And their wisdom is not shared.

This fall, Peaceful Tomorrows would like to change that. We are convening a meeting of more than 30 extraordinary individuals from around the world who are devoted to cooperation, healing, and reconciliation. Together we will meet to establish an international network that will share ideas and information. Each of the men and women joining this network has been personally affected by violence yet has rejected the idea of retaliating with further violence. Instead, we have successfully built bridges between groups previously in conflict, and have formed organizations to promote justice, reconciliation, and genuine peace.

This international gathering will begin with private sessions at the Garrison Institute, and will continue with public events at sites throughout New York City in the days leading up to the fifth anniversary of 9/11. Students, 9/11 family groups, and other members of the public will hear stories from people including:

Father Romain Rurangirwa (Rwanda),

lost his entire family — parents, siblings, nieces and nephews, in-laws — along with neighbors and friends, to the 1994 massacre that took the lives of nearly 35,000 Tutsis in his village alone. Rurangirwa became a Roman Catholic priest ministering to genocide survivors. He is currently pursuing Master’s degrees in Pastoral Care and Counseling as well as Conflict Resolution at Brandeis, and plans to return to Rwanda.

Naba S. Hamid is a Professor at the University of Baghdad, who was prohibited, from pursuing any scientific activities as a result of her refusal to join the Ba’ath party. In 2003, Naba founded New Horizons For Women, to help women deal with the “multiple traumas that have robbed them of hope and skills for their future.”

Olga Takaeva is a member of the Mothers of Beslan, and was present during the 2004 Beslan school hostage crisis where armed Chechens killed hundreds of hostages, including children, after holding them for three days. As one of the coordinators of the organization For the Health of the Nation, Olga is engaged in efforts aimed at assisting people with disabilities, orphans, and parents suffering from the Beslan attack.

Jesús Abril Escusa lost his son to the March 2004 train bombings in Madrid. He became a founding member of Asociación 11-M Afectados por el Terrorismo, which operates on the principles of truth, justice, and peace.

Afifa Azim represents the Afghan Women’s Network, a non-partisan network of women’s NGOs working to empower Afghan women and ensure their equal participation in Afghan society.

Learn more about our other attendees by visiting our website, www.peacefultomorrow.org.

We believe that the fifth anniversary of 9/11 is a crucial opportunity for Americans to consider alternatives to war. This conference could be a seed from which a multitude of new initiatives to eradicate attacks on civilians and promote peace might grow worldwide. We hope that these powerful exemplars of the moral power of transcending vengeance and embracing hope can help transform our societies’ cultures of violence into cultures of peace — one person at a time, one story at a time, and one changed attitude at a time. ☪

September 11th: Commemorating Resistance to Terrorism Throughout History

Compiled by Peacework intern and freelance writer, Dave Taber, with special thanks for lists created by Democracy Now! and Working for Change columnist Geov Parrish.

Every day is historically significant for a multitude of reasons. *Peacework* offers this list, not to ascribe mystical significance to any given date, and certainly not to discount the pain inflicted by the attacks of September 11, 2001, but instead to widen our circle of understanding and compassion by also commemorating, on this day, civilians who were terrorized in other places and times, and by celebrating our potential for transcending pain and injustice through nonviolent action.

This Day in History: September 11th

September 11, 1589: Appela Huebmeyer, Barbara Huebmeyer, and Anna Schnelling were burned as “witches” in Waldsee, Germany.

September 11, 1857: Approximately 100 Mormon militia members in Utah massacred at least 120 members of a wagon train. The perpetrators, inflamed by the story that a Mormon had been persecuted and killed in Arkansas by some of the members of a wagon train then heading through Utah, and ordered by the Mormon leadership to exact vengeance as an act of faith, disarmed the wagon train under a flag of truce and massacred everyone except the youngest of the children. The perpetrators either included some members of the Paiute tribe, or (more likely, according to historian Sally Denton) disguised themselves as Paiute; the Mormon leadership later blamed the tribe for the crime. See *American Massacre* (Knopf 2003), by Sally Denton.

September 11, 1905: Vinoba Bhave, Indian land reform activist, considered by many to be one of Mohandas Gandhi’s primary successors, was born. Bhave participated in the Quit India movement and was chosen by Gandhi in 1940 to be the first Individual *Satyagrahi*, or individual civil resister, in the revived campaign against British rule. Bhave initiated the Bhoodhan

(land gift) movement, in which he walked the breadth of India asking people to consider him a son and give him land, which he redistributed to landless peasants.

September 11, 1906: Gandhi began a nonviolent resistance campaign to secure civil and political rights for Indians in South Africa. Between that time and the campaign’s victory in 1914, Gandhi and his cohorts were repeatedly beaten and imprisoned, but they maintained the discipline of nonviolent action. The campaign helped initiate a wave of mass nonviolent struggle around the world. However, during the campaign, Gandhi used the racist argument that the laws unjustly reduced the status of the Indian immigrants to that of the native Africans. (Please see Gandhi’s 1906 speech on page 9, and a critique on page 25).

September 11, 1941: Underground Norwegian trade union newspapers arranged for the writing of thousands of letters rejecting Nazification to the government. According to the website of England’s Peace Pledge Union, “When all radios were confiscated, over 300 ‘underground’ newspapers sprang up, carrying news obtained from concealed radios and urging non-cooperation with the Nazi authorities. One person would type out several copies (say 20) of each edition, and pass them on for the next 20 readers to type more copies, and so on until there were enough to go around.”

September 11, 1941: Construction commenced on the Pentagon building. See James Carroll’s book, *House of War: the Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power* (Houghton-Mifflin, 2006).

September 9-13, 1971: Approximately 1,300 inmates took control of New York State’s Attica prison to protest inhumane treatment. Prisoners held 39 guards hostage. Negotiations lasted until the 13th when Governor Nelson Rockefeller sent in state troopers and correctional officers. In the attack, gunshots killed 10 hostages and 29 inmates, and wounded 4 hostages and 85 inmates. The official version claimed that the inmates killed hostages during the attack; however, only the forces sent in by the government had guns. After the longest-running

court case in New York State history, New York settled a wrongful death lawsuit with families of the killed inmates in 1998, and compensated the families of the murdered prison employees in 2004.

September 11, 1973: Salvador Allende, the democratically elected socialist president of Chile was murdered in a CIA-backed coup. Augusto Pinochet seized control of Chile and, during his 17-year dictatorial reign, supervised the murder of at least 3,000 Chileans and the torture of thousands more (see article, p. 20).

September 11-12, 1977: Steve Biko, South African anti-apartheid activist, was assassinated in prison by prison guards. One of the preeminent voices of the anti-apartheid struggle, Steve Biko, leader of the South African Black Consciousness Movement stressing black pride and self-determination, was beaten unconscious on September 11 and shackled, naked, in the back of a van. Instead of taking him to a hospital, the van was driven 700 miles from Port Elizabeth to Pretoria. Biko, who had been arrested three weeks earlier, died from multiple injuries on September 12.

September 11, 1988: The Innu Nation launched direct action protests against low-level supersonic jet training flights over their traditional hunting grounds around Goose Bay in Labrador. The Innu claimed that the training flights and attendant sonic booms adversely affected wildlife and seriously compromised their traditional way of life.

September 11, 2002: According to peacebuttons.info, “Women In Black (Baltimore) started the first Peace Path as a response to the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center attacks. The nonviolent action presents images of peace as opposed to war and militarism. Now in its fourth year, the Path — a line of supporters along city streets in Baltimore — extends for 12 miles. Others are beginning to create September 11th Peace Paths in their own communities.”

For more analyses of and reflections about the events and immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001, please see our September 2002 commemorative issue, viewable online at www.peaceworkmagazine.org. ☪

Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth Day

Mayoral Proclamation, Asheville, NC, for September 11, 2006, originally co-written by Richard Fireman, Co-director, Caring for Creation, and Kim Carlyle, of the Network of Spiritual Progressives.

WHEREAS, September 11, 2006 marks the fifth anniversary of events that have caused this date to be associated with fear, terrorism, and war; and

WHEREAS, September 11, 2006 also marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of the nonviolent movement for justice and peace of Mahatma Gandhi; and

WHEREAS, a world that is free from war and violence will be a world in which the human community may reach its highest potential, and in which future generations may live without the threat or fear of physical, psychological, and spiritual harm; and

WHEREAS, decades after the assassinations of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., we see more polarization within our nation and between nations, we recognize that nonviolent conflict resolution is largely absent from civil society; and

WHEREAS, in the last 100 years we have begun to understand the linkages and interconnections among justice, peace, and environmental integrity, and that all aspirations for human betterment, including justice and peace, are utterly dependent upon the health of the ecosystems that support and maintain life in all its forms; and

WHEREAS, it is clear that cultural transformation of vast societies always begins with an awareness at the local level of the need for change, and we recognize that local issues affecting the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and the region of Western North Carolina are inextricably linked to the wider communities of human life and planetary life; and

WHEREAS, we understand that how we solve our local problems of poverty; a living wage; affordable housing; urban sprawl; transportation; a sustainable economy; of safe and accessible drinking water; preservation of farmland, parks, and for-

Looking for Omar

E. Ethelbert Miller is the author of several books of poetry, including How We Sleep on the Nights We Don't Make Love (Curbstone, 2004), from which this poem is reprinted.

I'm in the school bathroom
washing my hands without
soap but I'm still washing my hands.

I turn the water off
and look for a paper towel
but paper towels have been gone
since the first day of school
and it's June now.

I start to leave the bathroom
with my wet hands but then
the big boys come in talking
loud and cussing like they
rap stars or have new sneakers.

I hear the one named Pinto
talking about how someone
should get Omar after school
since he's the only Muslim
they know.

Pinto talks with an accent
like he's new in the neighborhood
too.

I don't have to ask him
what he's talking about
since everybody is talking
about the Towers and how they
ain't there no more.

My momma said it's like
a woman losing both
breasts to cancer and my daddy
was talking at the dinner table
about how senseless violence is
and Mrs. Gardner next door lost
two tall boys to drive-bys

Bullets flying into
both boys' heads
making them crumble too.

Everybody around here is
filled with fear and craziness
and now Pinto and the big boys
thinking about doing something bad.

I stare at my wet hands
dripping water on my shoes
and wonder if I should run
and tell Omar or just run.

I feel like I'm trapped
in the middle of one of those
Bible stories but it ain't
Sunday.

I hear my Momma's voice
saying
*Boy, always remember to wash
your hands but always remember
you can't wash your hands from
everything.*

*Nashville, TN, October 12, 2001.
For resources to counter the racist back-
lash, see www.both-places.afsc.org.*

ests; clean streams, rivers and wetlands;
and an energy economy that is non-
polluting, safe, secure, and does not con-
tribute to global warming, will determine
whether we and our descendants live in a
just, loving, healthy, and peaceful world;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TERRY
BELLAMY, Mayor of the City of Asheville,
do hereby proclaim, September 11, 2006,
as

PEACE ON EARTH, PEACE WITH
EARTH DAY in the City of Asheville,
North Carolina, and encourage the cit-
izens of Asheville and Western North

Carolina to reflect on the meaning of
justice, peace, and nonviolent conflict
resolution, and become living representa-
tives of the power of love in their duties as
householders and responsible citizens of
our great Democracy, by acting in a com-
passionate, non-harming manner within
human society, towards other than human
life, and to the earth itself.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal
of the City of Asheville, North Carolina,
to be affixed, this 11th day of September
2006. ☪

People Power as Gandhi's Enduring Legacy

Jack DuVall is the President of the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict and the co-author and co-director of A Force More Powerful. This essay is part of a lecture given at Michigan State University, March 15, 2006.

One hundred years ago, a mass meeting was convened in Johannesburg, South Africa by Mohandas Gandhi, an Indian lawyer outraged by the government's proposal that Indians carry registration cards. "The Old Empire Theatre was packed from floor to ceiling," Gandhi wrote. The group's most important action was to pass a resolution saying they "solemnly determined not to submit to the Ordinance." One speaker said that they "must never yield a cowardly submission to such degrading legislation."

They never did, during a long campaign that Gandhi led, of non-cooperation and civil disobedience. Defying the state, Indians burned their registration cards, marched illegally across borders, and thousands went to jail, Gandhi himself three times. They disrupted the government's racial laws and drove up the cost of enforcement. In the eighth year of civic resistance, the government withdrew the laws. One piece of one empire's contempt for people's rights was pulverized, starting that night at the Empire

Theatre. The date was September 11.

Gandhi returned home to India from South Africa and launched a great nonviolent war against British control of his homeland. Millions marched, refused to pay taxes, quit their colonial jobs, spun their own fabric to avoid buying English cloth, and began to realize that to take control of India, they first had to refuse the terms of British control. The scope of resistance sobered the few colonial leaders who understood what was happening. "England can hold India only by consent," said Sir Charles Innes, a provincial governor. "We can't rule it by the sword."

But that consent evaporated. The great political thinker Hannah Arendt defined the process well: "Where commands are no longer obeyed, the means of violence are of no use.... The sudden dramatic breakdown of power that ushers in revolutions reveals in a flash how civil obedience — to law, to rulers, to institutions — is but the outward manifestation of support and consent."

Gandhi's campaigns in India were the first stories of mass civic resistance to be reported worldwide by broadcast media. Ever since, the rate with which people have applied this new force has accelerated. The Danes obstructed German occupiers in World War II with strikes and work slow-downs. African-Americans defied and dissolved legal segregation. Polish workers refused to leave their shipyards until they'd won the right to a free trade union, from which the ruling party never recovered.

A few years later, civilian Filipinos blocked a dictator's loyal army units from attacking officers who had switched sides, the military was immobilized, and the regime was toppled. Chilean generals declined to let President Augusto Pinochet steal a plebiscite, enabling his people to push him out.

Czechs, East Germans, Mongolians and others living under Soviet client regimes choked the streets of their capitals until their rulers resigned. Black citizens boycotted South African businesses and made the country ungovernable, until a new political order was established.

In every one of these nations, governments based on the people's consent still rule today. This is not accidental. Civilian-based movements often produce sustainable democracy because ordinary people are the means of change: When you march, strike or sit in, you become a stake-holder in the results of what you achieve — you've done it, not a foreign government or a violent vanguard.

Osama bin Laden says that "oppression... cannot be demolished except in a hail of bullets." Lenin went further, saying that "real, nationwide terror" was needed to "reinvigorate" a country, suggesting violence not only as a means of liberation, but also as a social good. Yet over the last three and a half decades, of 20 transitions from authoritarian rule in which violence was used by political oppositions, only four have resulted in nations where people have political rights today. In contrast, in 31 of the 47 transitions where no opposition violence occurred, political rights are recognized. (See "How Freedom Is Won: From Civic Resistance to Durable Democracy," Freedom House, 2005.)

Those who have amplified Gandhi's legacy by consummating nonviolent struggles for democracy and self-rule include Europeans, Asians, Latin Americans, Africans, and North Americans. Civic defiance is a global phenomenon, even as its strategies develop in the basements and the barrios of a thousand different villages and cities.

People's passion to be free and independent should not ever be in doubt. Nor should our willingness to help each other. It is not for any nation to win another its rights. Those rights will be won by people who stand up to domination and learn to liberate themselves. It is only for us to stand with them. ☪



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Mohandas Gandhi's Call for Mass Defiance of Anti-Immigrant Legislation

Mohandas Gandhi was the Secretary of the British Indian Association in South Africa and a local barrister when he gave the following speech on September 11, 1906 regarding a proposal for mass defiance if impending pass-law legislation became law. The passage is available in Gandhi's collected works, www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/cwmg.html, volume 5.

Pledge of Resistance

"In the event of the Legislative Council, the local Government, and the Imperial Authorities rejecting the humble prayer of the British Indian community of the Transvaal in connection with the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, this mass meeting of British Indians here assembled solemnly and regretfully resolves that, rather than submit to the galling, tyrannous, and un-British requirements laid down in the above Draft Ordinance, every British Indian in the Transvaal shall submit himself to imprisonment and shall continue so to do until it shall please His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor to grant relief."

Mohandas Gandhi's Speech

We all believe in one and the same God, the differences of nomenclature in Hinduism and Islam notwithstanding. To pledge ourselves or to take an oath in the name of that God or with Him (sic) as witness is not something to be trifled with. If having taken such an oath we violate our pledge we are guilty before God and man (sic).

There is wisdom in taking serious steps with great caution and hesitation. But caution and hesitation have their limits, which we have now passed. The Government has taken leave of all sense of decency. We would only be betraying our unworthiness and cowardice, if we cannot stake our all in the face of the conflagration which envelops us and sit watching it with folded hands. There is no doubt, therefore, that the present is a proper occasion for taking pledges. But every one of us must think out for himself if he has the will and the ability to pledge himself. Resolutions of this nature cannot be passed by a majority vote. Only those who take a

pledge can be bound by it.

A few words now as to the consequences. Hoping for the best, we may say that, if a majority of the Indians pledge themselves to resistance and if all who take the pledge prove true to themselves, the Ordinance may not even be passed and, if passed, may be soon repealed. It may be that we may not be called upon to suffer at all.

But if on the one hand one who takes a pledge must be a robust optimist, on the other hand he (sic) must be prepared for the worst. It is therefore that I would give you an idea of the worst that might happen to us in the present struggle. It is quite possible that in spite of the present warning some or many of those who pledge themselves might weaken at the very first trial. We might have to go to jail, where we might be insulted. We might have to go hungry and suffer extreme heat or cold. Hard labor might be imposed upon us. We might be flogged by rude warders. We might be fined heavily and our property might be attached and held up to auction if there are only a few resisters left. Opulent today, we might

be reduced to abject poverty tomorrow. We might be deported. Suffering from starvation and similar hardships in jail, some of us might fall ill and even die.

If someone asks me when and how the struggle may end, I may say that, if the entire community manfully (sic) stands the test, the end will be near. If many of us fall back under storm and stress, the struggle will be prolonged. But I can boldly declare, and with certainty, that so long as there is even a handful of men (sic) true to their pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory.

A word about my personal responsibility. If I am warning you of the risks attendant upon the pledge, I am at the same time inviting you to pledge yourselves, and I am fully conscious of my responsibility in the matter. It is possible that a majority of those present here might take the pledge in a fit of enthusiasm or indignation but might weaken under the ordeal, and only a handful might be left to face the final test. Even then there is only one course open to the like of me, to die but not to submit to the law. It is quite unlikely but even if every one else flinched leaving me alone to face the music, I am confident that I would never violate my pledge. Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying this out of vanity, but I wish to put you, especially the leaders upon the platform, on your guard.

I wish respectfully to suggest it to you that, if you have not the will or the ability to stand firm even when you are perfectly isolated, you must not only not take the pledge yourselves, but you must declare your opposition before the resolution is put to the meeting and before its members begin to take pledges and you must not make yourselves parties to the resolution. Although we are going to take the pledge in a body, no one should imagine that default on the part of one or many can absolve the rest from their obligation. Every one should fully realize his responsibility, then only pledge himself (sic) independently of others and understand that he himself must be true to his pledge even unto death, no matter what others do. ☪



Protesting INS detention policies, Boston, January 9, 2003, © Ellen Shub

Gandhi's Prisoner: Manilal Gandhi as Son and South African Dissident

Goolam Vahed, of the School of Anthropology, Gender and Historical Studies, University of Kwazulu-Natal, reviews Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie's book Gandhi's Prisoner?: The Life of Gandhi's Son Manilal. Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2005. 419 pp. Photographs. \$27.00 (cloth). Excerpted from a review first published by: H-SAfrica, H-Net Reviews, June, 2005.

Mohandas K. Gandhi died almost sixty years ago. The fascination with him continues even though he and others have written voluminously about every aspect of his life. Approximately thirty books are published on Gandhi annually. *Gandhi's Prisoner?* is ostensibly a biography of Gandhi's second son Manilal (1891-1956). At the core of the book, however, is the relationship of Gandhi, a universal figure, with his sons Manilal, Harilal (1888-1948), Ramdas (1897-1969), and Devdas (1900-1957), and the different ways in which they reacted to being the children of a "Mahatma."

The book's title is taken from a letter that Gandhi wrote to Manilal in 1918, asking him to consider him a "friend" rather than as his "prisoner." The question mark was added because opinions of Gandhi the family man range from those who feel his autocratic control ruined the lives of his sons, to those who consider him above criticism. This study is underpinned by a second important objective. Existing work on South Africa from the 1920s to the 1950s, Dhupelia-Mesthrie asserts, "hardly does justice to Manilal's role.... As we celebrate our country's ten years of democracy and the heroes and heroines of the long preceding struggle, Manilal's name should now also come to the fore" (p. 23).

Dhupelia-Mesthrie has excellent credentials. She is Manilal's granddaughter and Gandhi's great-granddaughter, and an Associate Professor of History at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. The author seems, at times, to be caught between two stools, being a professional historian on the one hand and granddaughter of Manilal on the other. She states that in addition to the general problems with writing biography — "how to

phrase what must be told, how to force the seals, twist back the locks, burgle the cabinet of the soul" — she had to "take care to consider the feelings of my family" (p. 27). Although she qualifies this by stating that "there has been no censorship," this raises the broader historiographical question of objectivity when one is so close to the subject.

Manilal, born in Porbandar in 1891, joined his father in South Africa as a young child when Gandhi delayed his return to India. Gandhi comes across as a harsh patriarch at times, who sought to impose his philosophy of life on his descendants. En-route to South Africa the boys had to wear shoes and eat with knives and forks. Though unhappy, "they learnt to comply. This was the first of many lifestyle changes they would encounter; in Africa their father would impose many more" (p. 36). When Manilal was ten and forgot his glasses at home, Gandhi exhorted "we can't afford to forget such things, can we?" and made him walk back five miles to retrieve them.

Gandhi cast a long shadow over Manilal's life as he sought to control every aspect of it. Little pleasures were forbidden. Manilal was not allowed to learn to play the piano. Gandhi punished himself by fasting for seven days when Manilal was caught kissing a teenage girl at Phoenix, the place of Gandhi's residence, north of Durban. As penance, Manilal promised not to marry until Gandhi freed him from this promise (p. 109). Manilal's actions were always tempered by the fact that Gandhi would punish himself through fasting when displeased with his actions.

After they returned to India, Manilal gave financial assistance to his brother Harilal. When Gandhi found out, he punished Manilal by sending him to Madras virtually penniless and with instructions to return only when he had earned back the money he had given Harilal. He was warned not to use Gandhi's name to secure a job. Manilal sobbed years later when he recalled his struggles in Madras (p. 140). Whether Gandhi's austere disciplinary measures, strict regulations, and continuous attempt to control

Manilal's life, even from India, can be construed as parental love in the traditional sense, or as extreme, is for the reader to decide.

Responsibility was thrust on Manilal from a young age. With Gandhi spending long periods in prison and elder brother Hiralal preoccupied, Manilal was the "man of the house." His tasks, Gandhi reminded him in 1909, included being guardian of younger brothers Ramdas and Devadas, "looking after aunt Chanchi, nursing mother, and cheerfully bearing her ill temper" (p. 80). Gandhi wrote regularly to Manilal from jail, instructing him on what to read, work to do, and how to take care of the family. Manilal's political training began at the age of seventeen. Gandhi involved him in the *satyagraha* struggle between 1910 and 1913 to give him a "sense of purpose" and "calm his restless mind" (p. 85). Manilal served four prison sentences ranging from ten days to three months during this period. He was not a "passive puppet," Dhupelia-Mesthrie contends. Having helped edit *Indian Opinion*, he understood the issues and participated out of conviction (p. 89).

Manilal returned to India in 1914 and helped establish Gandhi's ashram in Ahmedabad. Phoenix Settlement and the printing of *Indian Opinion* were entrusted to Albert West, Gandhi's British devotee. West informed Gandhi in 1918 that the paper's future was in jeopardy. Gandhi asked for a volunteer to help and Manilal returned to South Africa in 1918 at the age of 26. This was the making of Manilal. He replaced West as editor in 1920, a position he held until his death in 1956: "he saved the paper and the paper saved him, for here he found a purpose in life" (p. 156). As Manilal gained in confidence, he began writing his own editorials, gave greater coverage to African issues, covered the anti-imperial struggle in India, and reported vigilantly on anti-Indianism in South Africa.

Gandhi's influential hand was also evident in Manilal's decision to marry. He had wanted to marry Fatima Gool, a Muslim from the Cape, but Gandhi objected because

she was not Hindu: “it will be like putting two swords in one sheath” (p. 175). This seems anomalous considering that Gandhi had brought up his children to believe all religions equal. However, the boys were “shaped primarily by Hinduism” even though Gandhi respected all religions (p. 40). Gandhi was concerned about the impact the marriage would have on Hindu-Muslim relations in India. He warned Manilal that if he proceeded with the marriage he would have to stop editing *Indian Opinion* and would not be able to return to India. Gandhi advised Manilal to get over the “infatuation” and “delusions” of love: “our love is between brother and sister. Whereas here the main urge is carnal pleasure” (p. 176). Whatever Manilal might have felt, “in the end, though, he could not forget whose son he was. He did not have the courage to face the consequences of defiance; there really was no future without his father’s blessing” (p. 176).

Gandhi implored Manilal to remain celibate, but on this issue Manilal disagreed with his father and married in 1927, at the age of thirty-four. However, his wife was chosen by Gandhi. She was nineteen-year-old Sushila Mashruwala, also of the *bania* caste and daughter of a wealthy property-owner and fervent Gandhi supporter (p. 183). Gandhi therefore failed to impose his views on sex and marriage on his family. However, in the book, Gandhi’s views on these matters and his family’s disregard of them are not critically explored. We learn little about family debates on sex and marriage, except that Gandhi was very fond of his grandchildren.

Manilal was intimately involved in the Natal Indian Congress (NIC). From 1920 onward, he was a member of the NIC Committee and attended South African Indian Congress (SAIC) conferences as its representative. In India in 1930 he participated in salt marches and spent nine months in prison. This raised his political profile and he returned to South Africa a hero. The experience radicalized him. Manilal supported campaigns by young radicals like Dr. Yusuf Dadoo in the Transvaal and Dr. G. M. Naicker in Natal. He was close to Dadoo, a Muslim and communist, but a staunch supporter of Nehru, Gandhi, and *satyagraha* (p. 253). While he supported African resistance,



Manilal arrested violating anti-apartheid laws, Photo www.mahatma.org

Manilal, unlike Dadoo, was only prepared to collaborate where there was “a possibility of action” (p. 260). He participated in the 1946 passive resistance struggle against segregation, spending 23 days in jail. As far as India was concerned Manilal, through *Indian Opinion*, supported Gandhi and the Indian National Congress and vehemently opposed the creation of Pakistan.

Manilal seemed to emerge from Gandhi’s shadow after his father’s death: “Had Gandhi been alive, Manilal would have been in the background. Now he spread his father’s message about the importance of fast and prayer” (p. 338). As apartheid gathered momentum in South Africa, Manilal advocated *satyagraha* as a means of resistance. Anger should not form the basis of resistance, he insisted. Whites should be won over through “love” and “self-suffering.” His weapon of choice was “spiritual armaments” (p. 344).

Manilal lacked the moral authority of his father and became increasingly isolated. One activist said that Manilal “did not understand the new Africa. So that when the resistance movement came, he was genuinely doubtful about the African’s capacity to make a success of that weapon” (p. 349). As the rest of the country moved towards joint resistance, Manilal campaigned individually against petty apartheid laws. He had reservations about the Defiance Campaign of 1952 because he believed it would turn violent. He did, however, cover the campaign in *Indian Opinion* and fasted to show solidarity with resisters (p. 352). Manilal eventually joined the campaign with a group of liberals under

Patrick Duncan, son of a cabinet minister, who led resisters into a banned location in December 1952. They were arrested and Manilal, aged 61, served 38 days of a 50-day prison sentence.

Manilal’s new political circle came to include liberals like Alan Paton and Julius Lewin, a law professor at the University of Witwatersrand. Manilal, who had resisted Indo-European Councils and White liberals in the 1920s, converted to Liberal Party politics. This became his new political home and he formally became a member of the Liberal Party in 1954. The party’s members were united by opposition to the NP and communism. One of Manilal’s last public acts was to attend the Congress of the People in June 1955, where the *Freedom Charter* was adopted. He suffered a stroke in November 1955 and died on April 5, 1956.

How are we to judge Manilal politically? Unlike Gandhi, he achieved few tangible results in the struggle against apartheid. His name is rarely mentioned when the pantheons of anti-apartheid activists are discussed, even though he spent close to fourteen years in prisons in South Africa and India. Gandhi’s credo of non-violence, which Manilal embraced, left him increasingly in the political wilderness because he was unsure how to react as the Congress Alliance moved towards confrontation with the apartheid government. He became sidelined from the anti-apartheid movement of which he should have been an integral part because of this and his revulsion for communism.

Gandhi’s Prisoner? is an absorbing study of the personal and political lives of Mahatma and Manilal Gandhi, as well as the Phoenix Settlement and *Indian Opinion* after Gandhi left South Africa. It also provides an excellent and detailed outline of political developments in South Africa and India during these decades. A large number of the splendid eighty-eight black-and-white photographs are from private collections and add considerable value. This book opens new debates relevant to post-apartheid South Africa, in particular the relationship between Indians and Africans. It is beautifully narrated, and is obligatory reading for anyone interested in Gandhi and his family, the story of Indians in South Africa, or the history of racial segregation in South Africa. ☪

Practicing Nonviolence: An Interview with Arun Gandhi

Sam Diener, Co-Editor of Peacework, conducted a phone interview with Arun Gandhi, Co-Director of the M. K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence in Memphis, TN, on July 25, 2006. The Institute is planning a conference at Georgetown University and a gathering at the Lincoln Memorial on September 11, 2006 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Gandhian nonviolent action, as well as another conference in Memphis in October.

Sam Diener (SD): What misconception about Mohandas Gandhi do you spend the most time and/or energy correcting?

Arun Gandhi (AG): Many people today associate grandfather's philosophy only with waging political conflicts, because most people I talk with in the US associate Gandhi first with the freedom struggle in India, and second as an exemplar for Martin Luther King and the political struggle for civil rights in the US. Transforming political struggles in nonviolent directions is an essential contribution. Yet what I understand of Grandfather's philosophy is that it transcends the purely political; it's also about creating economic justice and about how individuals can transform our lives to live in nonviolent ways.

Nonviolence isn't just for activists. We all need to transform ourselves so that we embody nonviolence. This is a challenge because our society surrounds us with violence. The culture of violence encourages us to engage in violent thinking, violent work, violent relationships, and violent media. So, too often, unless we are trained to consciously strive to unlearn all these habits of violence, our first response to a crisis is violence. We need to practice becoming better practitioners of nonviolence every day, just as a doctor needs to practice medicine. Sometimes people who aren't necessarily trained in nonviolent struggle will try a particular nonviolent action, will face opposition, particularly violent opposition, and then too quickly conclude that nonviolence can't work. We need to practice building our everyday repertoire of nonviolence so that when we do face crises we can draw upon

these practical, ethical, and spiritual nonviolent resources.

SD: How did you get to know your grandfather?

AG: I grew up in South Africa on Phoenix Ashram, an ashram that Mohandas started when he lived here, and which Manilal, Mohandas's son and my father, sustained along with many others. I traveled to live with Grandfather in India for 18 months when I was 12-14 years old. He was a loving grandfather, spending an hour with me every day, helping me with lessons primarily, as he did with all the kids in the ashram.

SD: Did you ever have disagreements with him?

AG: I wanted my grandfather's autograph. So many people wanted his autograph he had decided to charge people for it and donate the money to the cause. He wouldn't make an exception for me. Not only did I have to pay him, but he told me I needed to work to earn money for it; I couldn't obtain the money from my parents. I kept pestering him, and it became a running joke between us, with me trying to wheedle it out of him, and grandfather gently refusing.

SD: Did he help you personally become more nonviolent?

AG: When I traveled to India, I was filled with rage about the discrimination I faced under apartheid. Yet I was ashamed of my anger, and he helped me understand that anger is a vital resource for us to channel rather than suppress. He said, "Anger isn't evil. It's not something to be ashamed of — be ashamed only of abusing anger." He told me to write an anger journal. When I felt anger, he wanted me not to respond to the situation right away, but to write and express my anger in the journal. These days, I've heard of other people keeping anger journals, but they don't do anything with what they write except maybe re-read the material and get angry all over again.

Mohandas taught me to address each incident in the anger journal, talking about and thinking the situation through until I had decided how to constructively approach each one of the conflicts. I continued keep-

ing an anger journal for many years after I returned to South Africa. There were times I wanted to explode with rage at racist officials, but I knew it wouldn't help anybody and would ruin my life.

So I used the anger journal to help me figure out how I could help challenge racism positively.

SD: How did you decide to challenge racism?

AG: I got involved with the political struggle against apartheid as my father helped bring together the African National Congress, the Colored People's Congress, and the Indian Congress in 1952. I worked with him. Unfortunately, when they arrested leaders from different "racial" groups, the apartheid regime imposed much harsher sentences on the Black ANC leaders, sowing distrust and disunity. The apartheid regime's strategy of divide and rule was effective. Some of the young activists in the ANC responded to the intense repression by wanting to move the ANC away from its commitment to nonviolence, arguing that it wasn't violent to blow up bridges, for example. My father disagreed with this approach, and I had the opportunity to work with him on these struggles until his death in 1956. My grandfather faced a similar situation during the Quit India Campaign in 1942 when some impatient activists began blowing up bridges, arguing this wasn't violent. When a



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train derailed after a rail bombing, causing many casualties, instead of generating sympathy for the cause, it caused widespread revulsion. Grandfather channeled this revulsion to win a re-commitment to nonviolent struggle from the overwhelming majority of activists.

SD: What is Mohandas Gandhi's legacy in India today?

AG: Sunanda and I lead a tour every year to "Gandhi's India." (Sunanda and Arun share a marriage, and are co-directors of the M. K. Gandhi Institute). I'm excited about the new impetus the Gandhian *sarvodaya* (welfare of all) constructive program campaign has received from young activists. *Sarvodaya* is not just a campaign for rural land reform, which is how it's best known here. For example, in the slums of Mumbai (formerly Bombay), young Gandhians began organizing homeless day laborers. Many of these workers arrive in Bombay from poverty-stricken rural villages, but don't have places to live, and their employment is sporadic. As we organized with them, part of the requirement was to save one coin from each day of work. For people who have nothing, this takes an incredible amount of self-discipline and commitment. Yet, in this way, as a collective they saved the equivalent of \$11,000 in two years. This was enough to buy ten second-hand textile machines to begin a business. At first, this collective employed the 70 people who had literally gone hungry in some cases in order to save the money, working in three shifts around the clock. It was explicit in the charter of the enterprise that it existed not solely to serve the market, but to provide employment and help each employee help other people who live in the slums as well. It's explicitly an enterprise with a nonviolent spiritual base instead of a corporation based on the violence of exploitation. Today, this collective has grown into four large factories and a micro-credit savings bank for the poor which now has seven branch offices throughout the city.

SD: Does this enterprise cross caste and communal lines?

AG: From the beginning it crossed communal lines, with Hindu, Muslim, and Christian members. These divisions haven't been an issue. Crossing caste has been more difficult. At first, there were few low-caste

members, but now the projects are better integrated. There was a real need for self-education and dialogue about how to make the projects more inclusive. Caste was banned by law in India, as segregation was banned by law in the US, but this doesn't integrate our hearts or our organizing efforts. True integration requires spiritual struggle.

SD: With your experience in working against racism and oppression in so many cultures around the world, are there principles and/or approaches you believe are central to this work?

AG: I believe we need to learn about each other in order to change our hearts. So many conflict resolution programs, including conflict resolution initiatives in schools, just focus on resolving violent conflict, after the conflicts based on various forms of injustice have already escalated almost to the point of violence. We need to teach students to learn about each other and care about each other so that we become committed, not merely to resolve conflicts, but to working for justice for all, for *sarvodaya*. This then would truly be teaching violence prevention. In the US, there is Black history month, and Women's History Month, but they're separate, instead of integrating anti-racist and anti-sexist education throughout the year into all of our subjects. What could be more important than teaching students how to create positive relationships and work for justice? What could be more important than teaching students about the history of nonviolent struggles in this country and around the world? We could then ask students to identify the injustices of today and ask them their ideas for how they might go about transforming the situation.

SD: In theory, in the US, schools do teach about the struggles of the civil rights movement, especially around Martin Luther King day and during Black History Month, but King's radical message of principled non-violence, nonviolent direct action, and the need to challenge capitalism itself has been coopted by politicians and too many educators into platitudinous sound-bites. Has the same thing happened to Gandhi in India?

AG: Definitely. Politicians have always exploited grandfather's name and memory, even before he was killed. A martyred hero is safer than a cantankerous critic calling us to transform our lives and our societies.

Politicians in India trudge out to official functions every January 30th (anniversary of Gandhi's assassination in 1948) and October 2nd (anniversary of his birth in 1869). Even President Bush was taken to one of these events by Indian militarists. They pay homage through meaningless rituals. It's like people who go to churches, mosques, and temples to utter meaningless prayers and then return to their lives of participation in the culture of violence. Instead, we need to strive to live compassion, live respect, live love. That was grandfather's, and Martin Luther King's, true message, but it's a challenging message.

SD: Do you have ideas about how we can extend the radical legacy of Mohandas Gandhi into the future?

AG: It's a challenge because we don't want to accept any legacy as dogma, and we don't want to allow just anyone to invoke their legacies in ways which subvert the very essence of the message. I believe some people who call themselves Gandhians are stuck in dogma. Every time something happens today they want to rush out and consult grandfather's collected works as if something he said 80 years ago will contain the god-given answer to today's dilemmas. Yes, we can learn from Grandfather, but everything changes, so ideas need to change.

The easiest way to kill a philosophy is to write it in a book and worship it. Grandfather once said that when he died he wanted all of his books and papers to be burned with him so that his ideas would live on in nonviolent struggles for justice instead of fossilizing into dogma. When the Mumbai project bought sewing machines, some of the older and more dogmatic Gandhians condemned us for not using spinning wheels and not dressing in *khadi* (homespun cloth produced from hand-spun thread). At first, this turned off many young people, and motivated them to reject Gandhism. We need to understand that Grandfather promoted the spinning wheel at a particular time in order to involve millions of people in a program to promote economic and political self-determination and to create a symbol of collective resistance to British colonialism. I'm excited that a new generation of Gandhian activists in India understand this, and won't let some of the old guard scare them away from extending Grandfather's living legacy. ☪

Reclaiming Nonviolence from Gandhian Puritanism

Starhawk is a permaculture activist, member of the RANT nonviolence training collective, and author of Truth or Dare and The Fifth Sacred Thing. This essay is excerpted from her book, Webs of Power: Notes From the Global Uprising, © 2002, New Society Publishers.

Does Gandhi's Sex Life Matter?

Gandhi and King were not the only influences on the development of movements grounded in nonviolence. In the United States and in England, Quakers have long been in the forefront of struggles for social justice. Their religious pacifism influenced the course of liberation movements from the antislavery campaigns of the 1800s to the antinuclear campaigns of the 1980s.

Women pioneered many of the tactics used by Gandhi and King. Alice Paul revitalized the suffrage movement in the US when she brought back from England the tactics of direct action. In England, suffragists demanding women's right to vote chained themselves to lamp posts and broke shop windows in an earlier version of the property-damage controversy. They filled the jails and went on hunger strikes, withstanding enormous suffering when they were forcibly fed. In the US, women marched, chained themselves to the White House fence, and challenged President Wilson over the hypocrisy of fighting for democracy abroad while denying it to women at home. Nevertheless, it is Gandhi and King who again and again are cited as the authors of the non-violent philosophy, whose pictures are carried in demonstrations, whose works are quoted. Many pacifists call themselves Gandhians; I know of no one, not even any woman, who calls herself a Paulian or Pankhurstian or Ella Bakerian or Rosa Parksian. It may be a measure of the internalized sexism even among people in the movement that we still look to men as moral authorities and erase the con-

tributions of women. But for that very reason, we need to examine their legends and legacies.

For Gandhi nonviolence was not just strategic, it was deeply moral, and it went far beyond eschewing violence. *Satyagraha*, truth force or soul force, was an energetic force that could only be marshaled by long and deep preparation, much as certain yogis employ special techniques and diets in order to command special powers. It was part of a way of life that required forms of self-discipline few of today's activists are interested in undertaking: most notably, giving up sex altogether.

While no one I know of is proposing abstinence as a requirement for joining a direct action campaign, for Gandhi it was indispensable. *Satyagraha* could not be mobilized without *brahmacharya*, a comprehensive self-discipline that included sexual abstinence. And not just abstinence outside of marriage. Gandhi actually went beyond the Pope in viewing even marital sex as a sign of lack of self-control. A man's progeny were living proof of his inability to control his lusts.

Satyagraha, for Gandhi, was also not about low-risk cross-the-line actions. He waged *satyagraha* campaigns infrequently, and each campaign required a pledge from his followers to be willing to die before giving up. Gandhi used all his moral authority and the weapons of guilt and shame on his followers to get them to live up to his ideals.

And Gandhi was no anti-authoritarian. He was a Mahatma, a religious leader in an authoritarian religious tradition that included a level of veneration and obedience unlikely to appeal to most of us today. His near deification by many pacifists lies firmly within that tradition.

King was also a religious leader, a minister, functioning in a milieu in which ministers were venerated and strong leadership was expected. King held a deeply religious, Christian moral commitment to nonviolence. In the Birmingham

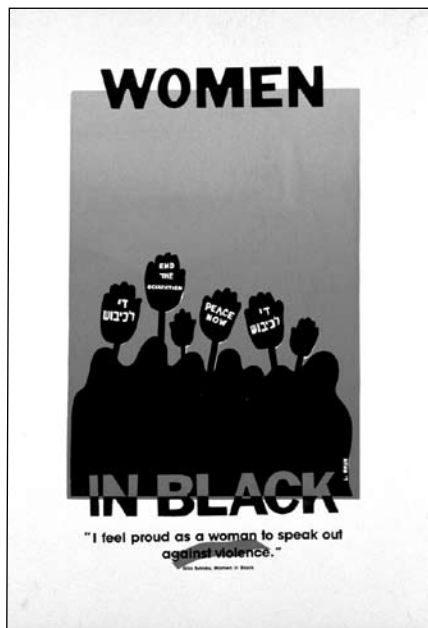
campaign of 1963, the very first pledge required of activists was to meditate on the life of Jesus every day and to pray. Three of the ten pledges involved Christ.

But King was also a fallible mortal being who, we now know, carried on a long-standing secret extramarital affair. We can't begrudge him the comfort and solace he must have needed to sustain the tensions and dangers of his work. But we can point out that he follows the pattern of male spiritual and political leaders from New Age gurus to Jim Baker to Clinton, who publicly preach a strict sexual morality while privately indulging their own needs and desires.

Does Gandhi's sex life matter? Does King's? On the one hand, no, their flaws shouldn't undercut our respect for their philosophy, their courage, their real contributions to human liberation and political struggle.

But from a woman's point of view, from an anarchist viewpoint, and from the perspective of earth-based spirituality, yes, it does. Gandhi's rejection of sexuality, of the body, leaves us firmly in the world view of patriarchy, split between body and spirit, venerating Gods that transcend the flesh, and suffering the inevitable degradation of those of us who bring that flesh into the world. That world view is a comfortable fit with Christianity as well (although certainly within both Christianity and Hinduism, strands can be found that do value nature, the erotic, and women).

The revolution we need to make includes a profound change in relationship to our experience of being a body. One of the insights of eco-feminism, the convergence of the feminist and ecology movements, is that our destruction of the environment is allowable because of the deep devaluation of nature and the body in the underlying religious and philosophical systems that shape our worldviews. And the devaluation of women — the violence, rape, and destruction perpetrated on female bodies around the globe — is



Courtesy CSPG, politicalgraphics.org.

also supported by the same philosophical and religious systems that identify women with nature and the body, and assign them both low value.

That essential mind/body split is the basis of all systems of domination, which function by splitting us off from a confidence in our inherent worth and by making integral parts of ourselves —our emotions, our sexuality, our desires — bad and wrong.

When we are bad, we deserve to be punished and controlled. Punishment systems lie at the root of violence. Marshall Rosenberg, a teacher of nonviolent communication, describes how violence is justified by the split between the deserving and undeserving: “You have to make violence enjoyable for domination systems to work ... You can get young people to enjoy cutting off the arms of other young people in Sierra Leone because of the thinking that you are giving people what they deserve.... When you can really justify why people are bad, you can enjoy their suffering.” And so we see people who deplore the violence of the attacks on the World Trade Towers, who empathize and suffer with the victims, gleefully demanding that we bomb Afghanistan back to the stone age because the Afghans have been defined as deserving of punishment.

As human beings, we always have a

somewhat problematic relationship to our body. The body is the source of pleasure — it is life itself. But it is also the source of pain, need, discomfort, and deprivation, and ultimately it suffers death. A liberated world, a world that could come into balance with the natural systems that sustain life, a world that values women, must also value life, embodiment, physicality, flesh, sex.

Nonviolence And Suffering

Both King and Gandhi believed in the transcendent value of suffering. Now, a certain asceticism is helpful if you are asking people to risk physical discomfort, injury, imprisonment, or even death. A belief in the value of suffering is a useful thing to have when you are voluntarily putting yourself in a position in which you are likely to suffer.

But embracing suffering is problematic for women, who have always been taught to suffer and sacrifice for others. Conditioned to swallow our anger, to not strike back, we have not had a choice about accepting blows without retaliation. Nonviolence puts a high moral value on those behaviors, encourages men to practice them, and develops them as a political strategy. Yet women’s empowerment involves acknowledging our anger, owning our rage, allowing ourselves to be powerful and dangerous as well as accommodating and understanding.

And from the perspective of an earth-based spirituality, which values pleasure, the erotic, the beauty and joy of this life, suffering is sometimes inevitable but never desirable. We can learn from it; if we are truly going to change the world, we probably can’t avoid it — but we don’t seek it or venerate it. Instead, we share it as much as possible through solidarity with each other.

One of Gandhi’s strong principles was that we accept the suffering and the consequences of our actions, that we don’t try to avoid or evade punishment but welcome it. That position creates a powerful sense of freedom and fearlessness. If we accept the inevitability of punishment, if part of the power of our action is to voluntarily go to jail, we move beyond fear and beyond the system’s ability to

use our fear to control us. But often the way this principle plays out is that the focus becomes the arrest rather than the action.

There’s something to be said for doing a strong action and getting away with it. There’s even more to be said for conceiving of an action that does not derive its impact from an arrest, but from what it actually is and does. And if we do choose an arrest strategy, let’s do it for a purpose we’ve thought about and clearly defined, not just by default.

Authority And Virtue

The underlying moralism in Gandhi’s formulation of nonviolence is a subtle thread, but it encourages other moralisms that contribute to the worthy/sexy dichotomy. If we hold a punitive relationship to the body’s needs, we assume a posture of internal violence toward the self that extends to other strong emotions and passions. And we become judgmental toward others, rigid in our thinking and viewpoints. Any behavior that does not fit our model is seen as “violent,” and violent people are seen as deserving of punishment. So our very “nonviolence” puts us into an authoritarian, dominating mode. Gandhi and King both exemplified religious authority and top-down styles of leadership. They were good, benevolent father figures (although how good they were to their own children is another issue), but dependence on any sort of father figure is not a route to empowerment for women, nor for anyone who wants to function as a liberated, full human being. Anti-authoritarians rightly criticize that model of leadership as keeping us all childlike, released from true responsibility for our lives.

Nonviolence does not have to be practiced in an authoritarian manner. The Quaker tradition of consensus and non-hierarchical organization is a counterbalancing force in nonviolent movements. The Quaker-influenced Movement for a New Society, which introduced affinity groups, consensus, and horizontal power structures to the antinuclear movement in the seventies and eighties, pioneer

continued on page 25

Einstein on Gandhi

Compiled by the Gandhiserve Foundation, Rathausstrasse 51a, 12105 Berlin, Germany, www.gandhiserve.org, which operates a compendious online archive of Gandhi material and a Gandhi-related News Digest list-serve.

"I believe that Gandhi's views were the most enlightened of all the political men (sic) in our time. We should strive to do things in his spirit: not to use violence in fighting for our cause, but by non-participation in anything you believe is evil."

- Albert Einstein

Einstein's Letter to Gandhi

September 27, 1931

Respected Mr. Gandhi!

I use the presence of your friend in our home to send you these lines. You have shown, through your works, that it is possible to succeed without violence even with those who have not discarded the method of violence. We may hope that your example will spread beyond the borders of your country and will help to establish an international authority, respected by all, that will take decisions and replace war conflicts.

With sincere admiration,

Yours A. Einstein.

I hope that I will be able to meet you face to face some day.

An Excerpt From Einstein's Notes

(translated from the German):

Mahatma Gandhi's life achievement stands unique in political history. He has invented a completely new and humane means for the liberation war of an oppressed country, and practiced it with greatest energy and devotion. The moral influence he had on the consciously thinking human being of the entire civilized world will probably be much more lasting than it seems in our time with its overestimation of brutal violent forces....

We may all be happy and grateful that destiny gifted us with such an enlightened contemporary, a role model for the generations to come. ☺

Orwell's Reflections on Gandhi

The following is the conclusion to "Reflections on Gandhi" by George Orwell, published in Partisan Review in 1949, reprinted from www.readprint.com. The famous first phrase of the essay is, "Saints should always be judged guilty until they are proved innocent...."

I have never been able to feel much liking for Gandhi, but I do not feel sure that as a political thinker he was wrong in the main, nor do I believe that his life was a failure.

It is curious that when he was assassinated, many of his warmest admirers exclaimed sorrowfully that he had lived just long enough to see his life work in ruins, because India was engaged in a civil war which had always been foreseen as one of the byproducts of the transfer of power. But it was not in trying to smooth down Hindu-Moslem rivalry that Gandhi had spent his life. His main political objective, the peaceful ending of British rule, had after all been attained....

The British did get out of India without fighting, an event which very few observers indeed would have predicted until about a year before it happened. On the other hand, this was done by a Labour government, and it is certain that a Conservative government... would have acted differently. But if... there had grown up in Britain a large body of opinion sympathetic to Indian independence, how far was this due to Gandhi's personal influence?

And if, as may happen, India and Britain finally settle down into a decent and friendly relationship, will this be partly because Gandhi, by keeping up his struggle obstinately and without hatred, disinfected the political air? That one even thinks of asking such questions indicates his stature.

One may feel, as I do, a sort of aesthetic distaste for Gandhi, one may reject the claims of sainthood made on his behalf (he never made any such claim himself...), one may also reject sainthood as an ideal and therefore feel that Gandhi's basic aims were anti-human and reactionary: but regarded simply as a politician, and compared with the other leading political figures of our time, how clean a smell he has managed to leave behind! ☺

Martin Luther King's Tribute to Gandhi

This tribute, marking the tenth anniversary of the assassination of Mohandas Gandhi, appeared jointly in the Hindustan Times and Peace News on January 30, 1958. It is excerpted from the Papers of Martin Luther King website, www.stanford.edu/group/King, © The Estate of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mahatma Gandhi has done more than any other person in history to reveal that social problems can be solved without resorting to primitive methods of violence. In this sense he is more than a saint of India. He belongs — as they said of Abraham Lincoln — to the ages. In our struggle against racial segregation in Montgomery, Alabama, I came to see, at a very early stage, that a synthesis of Gandhi's method of non-violence and the Christian ethic of love is the best weapon available to Negroes for this struggle for freedom and human dignity. It may well be that the Gandhian approach will bring about a solution to the race problem in America. His spirit is a continual reminder to oppressed people that it is possible to resist evil and yet not resort to violence.

The Gandhian influence in some way still speaks to the conscience of the world as nations grapple with international problems. If we fail, on an international scale, to follow the Gandhian principle of nonviolence, we may end up by destroying ourselves through the misuse of our own instruments. The choice is no longer between violence and nonviolence. It is now either nonviolence or non-existence.

I myself gained this insight from Gandhi. When I was in theological school, I thought the only way we could solve our problem of segregation was an armed revolt. I felt that the Christian ethic of love was confined to individual relationships. I could not see how it could work in social conflict. Then I read Gandhi's ethic of love as revealed in Jesus but raised to a social strategy for social transformation. This lifts love from individual relationships to the place of social transformation. This Gandhi helped us to understand, and for this we are grateful a decade after his death. ☺

Nonviolent Peaceforce: What to say YES to when we say NO to War

Donna Howard helped establish the Nonviolent Peaceforce and currently serves on its International Governance Council, 425 Oak Grove Street, Minneapolis, MN, 55403, 612/871-0005, www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org, dhoward@nonviolentpeaceforce.org.

“Of course we will win. All they have is guns.”
– Aung San Suu Kyi

War gets the headlines and militarism gets the budget. It is a tragic knee-jerk reaction to conflict that will continue until we demonstrate an alternative so strong and effective that it gets both headlines and the resources it deserves. That has not happened yet, though third party nonviolent intervention (TPNI) has a long and demonstrated history of success in Gandhi’s implementation of and vision for a *shanti sena* (Peace Army), and in the work of nonviolent intervention teams from Peace Brigades International, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Fellowship of Reconciliation, the International Solidarity Movement, and so on. These groups do not answer to any political authority and share the common vision of getting enough people involved so peacekeeping “armies” can be deployed at a moments notice to anywhere in the world. It is this combined growth and viability that will eventually become the alternative to war that can no longer be ignored.

Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) is a trained, international civilian nonviolent peace force. We send teams into areas of conflict to pre-

vent death and destruction and protect human rights, thus creating the space for local groups to struggle nonviolently, enter into dialogue, and seek peaceful resolution.

NP currently has a team of 30 in Sri Lanka providing accompaniment as unarmed bodyguards for civil society activists, offering a protective presence in villages and at public events, monitoring volatile situations, consulting with local people on options for what to do in crisis situations, providing safe places to meet, and much more. Our team there has seen the beginnings of a re-emergence of civil society in communities where fear of violence had driven it underground. Local and regional dialogues between different groups caught up in the conflict have begun to replace communal violence in particular places. Mothers have been able to reclaim children who were abducted as child soldiers. Yet Sri Lanka remains on the brink of return to war. It is far from possible that only 30 people can prevent war even when they are dedicated, highly trained, and competitively selected from around the world.

One way to expand and increase the visibility of TPNI is to align with global entities such as the United Nations. The Global Action Agenda presented by the Secretary General advocates a high priority for civilian unarmed peacekeeping and highlights NP along with 10 other organizations. NP and UNICEF partnered in Sri Lanka for protection of children from abduction as child-soldiers.

NP is creating a global model of third party nonviolent intervention. Our staff, field team members, and Governing Council members come from all the world’s regions and religions, are balanced in gender and diverse in age. We therefore come into the conflict as interveners without a shared bias except toward nonviolence. We come as partners of local peace-makers who alone know how to resolve the discord and create a lasting peace. And we come hoping to keep them alive long enough

to do their work.

Our field team members are paid in order to increase the legitimacy and professionalism of nonviolent conflict intervention and to assure that the role is equally accessible to peacekeepers from richer and poorer countries (though the cash they have available to them on-site is calibrated to local prices so as to reduce their disruptive effect on local economies and to help focus attention on their peacemaking role).

We consciously rooted ourselves in the Gandhian idea of *Shanti Sena*. During our convening event in Delhi we gathered in the garden where Gandhi was shot, praying and singing in many languages and spiritualities. The Mahatma’s granddaughter, Ela Gandhi, spoke gently then, assuring us, “My grandfather would be very happy today.”

All combatants are trained to do is fight. We must be there to protect those who have the creativity and strength to choose a future not filled with retaliation and death. I work with the Nonviolent Peaceforce to stand with the civilians caught in the cross-fire, with elders who remember a time when neighbors weren’t enemies, with parents who want to create a peaceful life for their children, with young people who want to create a peaceful world, and with nonviolent activists worldwide.

Each year since September 11, 2001, NP has encouraged people to work that day annually for peace and donate their wages (or some other amount) for our conflict intervention work. This year the centennial celebration of *satyagraha* is very empowering for us. “Peaceforce” is our translation of Gandhi’s *satyagraha*, and we hope our work manifests his vision. We are asking everyone to sign a statement resolving to break the cycle of violence: “I choose to break the cycle of violence. I will seek to resolve my own conflicts without violence; and I will encourage nonviolent responses to conflict by my neighbors, governments, and civilians worldwide.” For a kit designed to help you hold a September 11th “break the cycle” gathering, please see www.nvpf.org/np/english/workadayforpeace/toolkit.asp.html. ☪



Impact of war on Sri Lanka. Image courtesy Nonviolent Peaceforce, © Donna Howard.

India's Women's Peace Corps: Embodying Gandhi's Idea for a Peace Army

Krishna Mallick is Chair of the Philosophy Department, Salem State University, and author of An Anthology of Nonviolence: Historical and Contemporary Voices.

One of Mohandas Gandhi's lasting legacies is the idea that we could replace militaries with *shanti senas*, unarmed peace brigades. In 1938, he wrote, "Some time ago I suggested the formation of Peace Brigades whose members would risk their lives in dealings with riots, especially communal. The idea was that this brigade should substitute [for] the police and even the military." During his lifetime, he was only able to implement the *shanti sena* concept on a limited scale, though the results in stopping the Hindu-Moslem violence in Calcutta in 1947, for example, were nothing short of astounding. It is worth explaining Gandhi's conception of *shanti sena* in detail before exploring a contemporary implementation of the idea, the Mahila Shanti Sena (Women's Peace Corps).

Gandhi believed that peace should also be waged like war is waged. Gandhi said, "A soldier of peace, unlike the one of the sword, has to give all his (sic) spare time to the promotion of peace alike in war time as in peace time. His work in peace time is... [the] prevention of, [and] also that of preparation for, war time."

In his article in *Gandhi Marg*, Jan – March 2002, "Mahatma Gandhi's Peace Army: A Paradigm," M. William Baskaran explains in great detail the five major integrally related guiding principles of an ideal *shanti sainik* (member of a peace army). For each of the guiding principles, Baskaran explains the means *shanti sainiks* could use to pursue these principles (utilizing language and concepts which, at times, post-date Mohandas Gandhi). To summarize Baskaran's ideas:

I. Search for Truth

Gandhi pursued Truth throughout his life. He made a distinction between absolute Truth (which only God could know) and relative truth. As it is impossible for us to know the absolute Truth, he suggested that we need to make conscious, constant, efforts to seek

the truth as we understand it, and to appreciate the truth in others. The following are the some of the means to pursue Truth:

Nonviolent Communication — expressing oneself directly and listening intently to what others have to say. Engaging in compassionate dialogue to build constructive relationships, even with opponents.

Transparency — Being open to oneself as well as to others.

Pluralism — Respect of religions and beliefs other than one's own.

Conscientization — This is the process of learning to understand oneself and one's relationships with nature, culture, and power. Both the use of the spinning wheel to produce homespun cloth (and boycott British goods) and the salt *satyagraha* were campaigns designed, among other things, to conscientize millions about the power Indians had to declare independence from Great Britain by practicing self-determination.

Transformation — This refers to a willingness to change when we come to appreciate new perspectives or more complicated truths.

II. Stopping and preventing direct violence

By this, Gandhi means the peaceful resolution of conflict and responding to violence with determined nonviolent resistance. Gandhi said, "In the age of the atom bomb, unadulterated nonviolence is the only force that can confound all the tricks of violence put together."

The following are the means:

Skills for Peace-Making and the Peaceful Resolution of Conflict — Adopting a win-win approach to counseling, dialogue, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and legal and judicial proceedings.

Crisis Intervention — Putting oneself in between parties in conflict, undertaking dispute management.

Alternative Defense — Deter and defeat internal and external attacks by developing a human wall against any invading army and organizing nonviolent civilian defense by

refusing to cooperate with any invader.

Disarmament — Follow unilateral/bilateral/multilateral approaches in stopping the production and deployment of all kinds of weapons. It also means abolishing the existing conventional, nuclear, and other kind of lethal weapons. Gandhi said, "Peace will never come until the great powers courageously decide to disarm themselves."

III. Removing Structural Violence

At present, one of the crucial problems is structural violence, the prevalence of inequality, injustice, and exploitation. This has to be challenged and new structures have to be built. For that, the following means are required:

Nonviolent Direct Action (*satyagraha*)—This involves non-cooperation and self-suffering for the issues of justice and freedom. It becomes *satyagraha* when it is associated with truth, love, and spirituality. Nonviolent direct action needs planning, strategy, training and leadership to counter violence.

Constructive Work (also called constructive program) — a long-term strategy to build parallel and alternative peace structures in all spheres of life.

Nonviolent Organization and Managerial Skills — developing institutions based on the principles of the democratic participation of everyone involved, care for others, and the avoidance of exploitation.

IV. Nonviolent Ethics and Values

Shanti sainiks must repudiate all kinds of lethal force — individual killing, the mass killing of war, and instead nourish the values of love, compassion, reconciliation, and service towards others. To practice these values, the following is recommended:

Relief, Rehabilitation, and Humanitarian Assistance — when natural and/or human-caused disasters happen, *shanti sainiks* should be available to help.

Alternative Lifestyles — Gandhi proposed giving up materialistic consumer culture and

the cultivation of a self-sufficient nonviolent lifestyle.

Interpersonal and Intergroup Relationships — Cultivation of positive inter-group and interpersonal relationships across communal, caste, and other lines.

Eco-friendliness — Reverence for all living beings is expected. No harm should be done to the environment.

V. Inner Peace

A *shanti sainik* must have inner peace, as without inner peace it cannot be transmitted outside.

The following training is required:

Training for Peace and Nonviolence — Gandhi said, “just as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for nonviolence.”

Peace Games — Instead of competitive games, cooperative games should be played to build a peaceful society.

Transformative Practices — Practices such as yoga, meditation, prayer, and self-introspection should be practiced.

The Women's Peace Corps

Gandhi insisted that the power of organized nonviolence is stronger and longer lasting than the power of might. The Mahila Shanti Sena (Women's Peace Corps) was founded in 2002 at Vaishali Sabha (Vaishali Assembly) in the northeast Indian state of Bihar in order to embody these principles.

The co-sponsoring organization is Shramabharati, founded in 1952, which has

run primary schools, health camps, women's peace training, small-scale industrial workshops and other programs.

One of the main reasons behind starting the Mahila Shanti Sena was the amendment of the Indian Constitution in 1992 giving rural villages autonomy in governance as well as the reservation of 30% of seats in all elected bodies for women. The latter amendment has led to the election of thousands of rural women to village councils (*Panchayats*).

As most of these women are illiterate, a little training in the area of peace, democracy, and development has been very helpful. This raises mass awareness among women to realize their strength and power, which in turn, can influence policy priorities at the local level in a way that meets the needs of women, children, families, and neighborhoods. With this training they develop courage and dare to ask questions in their village council.

Mahila Shanti Sena consists of at least 5 or 10 women from each village. The membership is voluntary and involves training ranging from three to five days in peace building, the practices of democracy, and economic development. Initially, through lectures, discussions, and role-playing around issues like the status and rights of women in India, barriers to women's advancement, such as dowry, child marriage, alcoholism among men, domestic violence, economic dependence and others, women learn conflict resolution techniques and work to identify possible solutions to local issues. Village council governance is also discussed. Then, these women take an oath to remain non-partisan and work across party lines to create peace in the village.

On October 31, 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security. This resolution reaffirms “the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and [stresses] the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.” Mahila Shanti Sena stands as a proof of this central role of women in creating and maintaining peaceful communities

by following the guiding principles of *shanti sena* — compassionate communication, dialogue, respecting all religions and castes, developing skills for peacemaking, nonviolent ethics and values and others. Mahila Shanti Sena has now spread to other parts of India including Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and others.

Mahila Shanti Sena as a rural women's development project is likely to be more successful due to the following reasons:

First, it is a grassroots movement with assistance from the Gandhian organization, Shramabharati Khadigram, that has spent more than fifty years focusing on the needs of the rural people in Bihar, one of the poorest and most illiterate states in India.

Second, it does not have any political agendas and refuses funding from political parties. It is funded by the financial contributions of women participants themselves and other private institutions. Most of the women involved in the movement are volunteers and are committed to making positive changes in their communities.

Third, it is a movement that includes men and women from any caste and all socio-economic strata.

Fourth, it is non-hierarchical and is based on a collaborative partnership method. Like Gandhi's own life, it is experimental and is subject to self-assessment, with the flexibility to make changes when necessary.

Lastly, its focus is on peace building, conflict resolution, and problem solving skills. Village women in India are faced with violence at different levels. With these simple tools, women are able to deal with violence in a more constructive way.

Other organizations modeled on *shanti sena* are better known in the West, including Peace Brigades International (PBI) and Witness for Peace, which have advanced the concept of nonviolent intervention and have achieved success in Central America. The Nonviolent Peaceforce (see page 17) was founded in India in 2002 by seventy member organizations in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and North America. It is coordinating its first field project in Sri Lanka. All of these organizations and many more have been inspired, to a large extent, by Gandhi's concept of *shanti sena*: responding to violence through transformative nonviolent action. ☪

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Gandhi's Insights Gave People Courage to Defy Chile's Dictatorship

Roberta Bacic is a Chilean human rights researcher and activist who now lives in Northern Ireland. She has worked with War Resisters International's Dealing with the Past Program.

On September 11, 1973, the Chilean junta, backed by the CIA and the Nixon Administration, overthrew the democratically elected government of Socialist President Salvador Allende. Priscilla Hayner, in her book *Unspeakable Truths, Confronting State Terror and Atrocity* (2001) outlines the devastating impact: "The regime espoused a virulent anti-communism to justify its repressive tactics, which included mass arrests, torture (estimates of the number of people tortured range from 50,000 to 200,000), killings, and disappearances." The dictatorship assassinated, tortured, and exiled thousands of political opponents and visionaries.

Under these conditions, a foreboding silence, the result of threats and terror, hung over Chile. Some of us wondered, "could Gandhian insights about the power of nonviolence help the struggle to defy the terror?"

Nonviolence refers to a philosophy and strategy of conflict resolution, a means of fighting injustice, and — in a broader sense — a way of life, developed and employed by Gandhi and by followers all around the world. Nonviolence, then, is action that does not do or allow injustice.

Crying Out the Truth

A few of us decided to try to inspire others to speak up against the dictatorship by "crying out the truth." We faced a double suffering: the pain involved in enduring the dictatorship's violence, and the suffering caused by keeping silent out of fear. To not cry out while those we love were killed, tortured, and disappeared was unendurable. Clandestine pamphlets and leaflets were printed. Slogans that denounced human rights violations were

painted on the walls at night at great risk to safety. Underlying these actions was the principle of active nonviolence: since there is injustice, the first requirement is to report it, otherwise we are accomplices. The clandestine actions helped spread the principle of telling the truth and acting on it. Yet, despite the risks, we needed to move beyond clandestine protests: we needed to move the protests against the Chilean junta into the public arena.

Activating the Public Movement against Torture

José Aldunate, a Jesuit priest who became the leader of the Sebastian Acevedo Movement Against Torture in Chile, says in his memoirs, "A comrade came to us and brought up the fact (of torture). We educated ourselves about torture and about the dynamics of nonviolence. We watched a film on Mahatma Gandhi. I was more motivated [to protest against] poverty, but I responded to the discipline of the group. We deliberated and decided to undertake a nonviolent demonstration to denounce torture... to break the barriers of silence and hiding with regards to torture, we had an obligation to denounce it in public. We needed to shake the population's conscience."

On September 14, 1983, ten years after the regime took power, the anti-torture movement was born in an action in front of the headquarters of the National Investigation Center, 1470 Borgoño St., in Santiago. Around 70 persons interrupted traffic, unfurling a banner which read "Torturing Done Here." They shouted their denunciation and sang a hymn to liberty. The group returned to this scene to denounce the regime's crimes against humanity at least once a month until 1990.

In order to act, we needed to openly defy the State of Emergency provisions decreed by the junta in order to terrorize the population. We needed to break through our own sense of powerlessness, isolation, and fear.

The movement denounced torture. It left to other entities the task of investigating and making declarations. It had no meeting place, no secretariat, no infrastructure. It met in the streets and plazas when it was time to act. It had no membership list. Participants came by personal invitation, as the movement had to avoid infiltration from the secret police and other repressive institutions. Instructions were passed from person to person. Participants were mainly trained during the actions themselves, where we evaluated each action on the spot.

Participants faced legal and illegal sanctions when detained and prosecuted as they often were. Tear gas, beatings, detention, and prosecution were common practices used in retaliation against demonstrators. Torture was also a possible consequence of being arrested. Not only Sebastian Acevedo movement participants faced these sanctions, also reporters and journalists willing to report on the actions and the issues that were exposed.

At some of the actions, there were as many as 300 participants. Some 500 people participated in total. There were Christians and non-Christians, priests, monks, slum dwellers, students, aged persons, homemakers, and members of various human rights movements; people of every class, ideology, and walk of life.

The main goal was to get rid of torture in Chile. The means chosen was to shake up national awareness (consciousness raising) and rouse the conscience of the nation until the regime would get rid of torture or the country would get rid of the regime. In 1988, after a widespread anti-intimidation campaign, the nonviolent "Chile Sí, Pinochet No" campaign helped, to Pinochet's shock, to defeat a plebiscite designed to ratify Pinochet's rule.

Efforts to end the culture of impunity that arose during the Pinochet years, and to engage in national reconciliation, continue, but nonviolent protest provided an important means, amongst others, to overthrow the dictatorship. ☪

Globalizing Nonviolence in an African Context

Matt Meyer is a co-convenor of the War Resisters International (WRI) Africa Working Group, and author of Time is Tight: Urgent Tasks for Educational Transformation - Eritrea, South Africa, and the USA (Africa World Press, 2006) and Guns and Gandhi in Africa. Meyer interviewed several members of the WRI working group at the WRI triennial Conference in Germany, July 2006, which focused on Globalizing Nonviolence. Among other tasks, the working group is gearing up to promote nonviolent perspectives at the 2007 World Social Forum, to be held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Marianne Ballé Moudombou, an activist from Cameroon who represents the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD), reminded us that globalization is not a recent phenomenon, but began with slavery. “Today,” she stated, “we still face crucial issues regarding the connection between militarization and globalization. Refugees are the most obvious symbol and result of institutionalized racism and capitalism. So refugee emancipation has been a major priority for AAWORD, along with our work for the closing of all French military bases on the African continent.” Noting that the Western powers don’t want African people, or even the African Union, to have the power to help themselves, Moudombou suggested that Africans explore ways to empower themselves according to their own cultures and traditions.

As the sole African woman on the Women’s Security Council in Germany

(where she currently resides), Moudombou emphasized the importance of ongoing work throughout Africa and amongst Africans living in Europe in support of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The resolution, adopted in 2000, marked the first time the Security Council addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women.

Recognizing the undervalued and underutilized contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and peace-building, the resolution stressed the importance of women’s equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security. “We have the power to protect our own people!” Marianne asserted. “We’ve been taught to be Anglophone against Francophone – but we are finding ways of working together. We must unite to make a better world.”

Chesterfield Samba, the operations manager of Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), helped organize a recent GALZ conference, attended by twenty-seven groups throughout Africa. Despite this achievement, differences that emerged during the conference underlined how clashing cultures, beliefs, and religious perspectives on the continent have made organizing together quite difficult. Chester also warned, “donor dependency has caused some groups to lose focus.” There are many examples of African groups adopting Western terms; even the terms gay or lesbian sometimes create difficulties where unity might have been possible.

Western corporate media coverage portray the whole of the African continent as a horrible place, when — in fact — there are many positive things going on in the continent. It is true, he added, that constitutions are sometimes just for the rich, and groups sometimes are working so hard just to survive that other organizing needs get lost. “But we now have an excellent opportunity to globalize our skills,” he concluded. “Globalizing nonviolence in Africa must mean a sharing of

skills, resources, and training techniques.”

Light Wilson Agwana shared stories of the Sudanese Organization for Nonviolence and Development (SONAD), for which he serves as executive director. SONAD was founded in 1994 as a response to the marginalization of youth in the decision making process of the country. Adhering to the belief and conviction that just, peaceful, and democratic societies can be achieved by people who are conscious and aware of their political and civil rights, SONAD believes that nonviolence is the best way to resolve conflict and achieve a just and lasting peace. “SONAD is an organization with nonviolence at its center,” stated Light. “For SONAD, this means a commitment to justice without force that destroys or causes injuries to one’s enemies. We believe that the nonviolent movement should analyze injustice from a critical perspective, working to overcome injustices in ways that liberate both the oppressed and the oppressor.”

Their work is mainly done through five-day workshops on the themes of nonviolence and conflict transformation; civic and human rights education; women’s empowerment; HIV/AIDS education; and capacity/institution building at the grassroots level. The violence in the Darfur region is of special concern to the people of SONAD and all of us working for an end to war and genocide.

WRI’s Triennial concluded with remarks from European Parliament member **Tobias Pfluger**, an expert on EU/NATO militarization. I was honored to moderate that plenary, as Pfluger, who is also a member of the WRI Council, discussed the questionable motives of the large “peacekeeping force” in the Congo. “The EU is a neocolonial party,” Pfluger stated at a special session on the Congo, “and they have an African plan. If they can’t accomplish their goals through economic means, they’ll do so through military means.”

The WRI is united in its opposition to all war and militarism, from the production and trading of small arms to the waging of large scale wars and “ethnic cleansing.” For WRI’s African associates, globalizing nonviolence is not just a goal — it’s a necessity. ☪



Chileans defy the dictatorship and denounce torture.
Image: Roberta Bacic archive.

Gandhi's Constructive Program — and Ours

Joanne Sheehan is on the staff of War Resisters League/New England. She is a member of a study group on constructive program in Southeastern Connecticut and facilitates workshops on the topic.

“Nonviolence for Gandhi was more than just a technique of struggle or a strategy for resisting military aggression; it was intimately related to the wider struggle for social justice, economic self-reliance, and ecological harmony as well as the quest for self-realization.” (*The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense*, Robert Burrowes, SUNY Press)

The nonviolence movement in the West has, for the most part, ignored what Gandhi believed was key to social change: constructive program.

Gandhi stated that there were three elements needed for social transformation: personal transformation, political action, and constructive program. In the US we mostly focus on political action, in particular on protest and civil disobedience.

Constructive program is “building the new society in the shell of the old.” In his introduction to the booklet, *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place*, Gandhi said that constructive program is the construction of “complete Independence by truthful and nonviolent means.” As people who are struggling for independence from an empire that is trying to rule us and the world, we need to develop our own truthful and nonviolent means.

The core elements of the constructive program that Gandhi believed would be necessary for the transformation and liberation of India involved programs to embody equality, liberate education, promote economic self-reliance, and create a clean environment. Equality meant creating ashrams, political campaigns, and cooperative enterprises across communal lines (Hindu/Muslim/Sikh, etc.), embodying gender equality, and transcending caste distinctions, especially “untouchability.” Gandhi saw a need for mind-opening education for children and adults. The economic self-reliance campaigns involved, most famously, spinning homemade cloth and the salt *satyagraha*, but also included the diversification

of crops, the creation of other village industries, and the development of labor unions. Environmental efforts focused on the whole community getting involved in creating village sanitation systems, which meant, for Hindus, overtly flouting caste norms.

The process of working on constructive program has fundamental benefits, the first of which is to provide immediate assistance to those in greatest need. As people come together (constructive programs are community, not individual, action), they build constituencies for social change. Constructive work provides opportunities for us to develop the skills we need to build a new society.

As Burrowes describes it, “*For the individual*, [constructive program] meant increased power-from-within through the development of personal identity, self-reliance, and fearlessness. *For the community*, it meant the creation of a new set of political, social, and economic relations.” In cases where political revolutions have taken place but the population is not organized to exercise self-determination, the creation of a new society has been extremely difficult. In some cases, the usurpation of power by a new dictatorship has been the result; in others there has been political regime change without fundamental social or economic transformation.

The society we presently live in is very different from India in the first half of the 20th century. But as we look at the social, economic and environmental problems we face today, the similarities as well as the differences are striking. Can the problems of militarism, racism, poverty, sexism, classism, heterosexism, lack of access to affordable health care, housing, and decent education, and the need for immigrant rights and sustainable agriculture be transformed through a constructive program? While there are many projects that address these issues, a constructive program is a holistic approach to what needs to be changed, a vision based on non-violent principles. Burrowes explains, “*At the community level*, then, the constructive program is that part of the strategy designed to facilitate the development of new social structures that foster political participation, cultural diversity, economic self-reliance, and

ecological resilience.”

Challenges In Creating Our Own Constructive Program

Gandhi's constructive program was rooted in the reality of the extreme poverty of India. While we certainly have poverty in the US, and a growing gap between the rich and the poor, most of us need to *reduce* our consumption. Our challenge is to develop a *society* that does not consume more than its fair share of the earth's resources, reducing our consumption of non-renewable energy within a framework of self-reliance.

Who should create such a vision for our society? What should the process be? Can a document such as the Earth Charter, a synthesis of values, principles, and aspirations created through an international consultation, serve as a framework for a present day constructive program, with communities working on the projects they feel are most needed? It is essential that there be a common vision and principles that link us together.

There are examples of projects in the US which are potential components of a comprehensive constructive program: the growth of community land trusts, the development of cooperatives, the creation of battered women's shelters and rape crisis centers, the proliferation of mediation centers, the amplified interest in alternative public schools, the blossoming of sustainable agriculture, the exponential spread of free software, and the increased interest in community-controlled economic development all contain the seeds for building an alternative society.

While developing a constructive program can be the answer to the often asked questions “but what are you *for*?” and “how can we be *proactive* rather than reactive?,” is there enough of a perceived need to mobilize people? It is easier to protest the things we don't like than to build the things we want. It takes a sustained level of organizing to create a new society. But what if we don't?

For a copy of Gandhi's pamphlet, Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place, contact WRL-NE, POB 1093, Norwich, CT 06360, 860/887-6869, wrln@peoplepc.com. ☪

An Odyssey with Gandhi

David Cortright is the author, most recently, of Gandhi and Beyond: Nonviolence for an Age of Terrorism (Paradigm, 2006), and of the recently reissued Soldiers in Revolt: GI Resistance During the Vietnam War (Haymarket, 2005).

My commitment to peace and Gandhian nonviolence began when I was drafted into the Army during the Vietnam War. As I learned about war and militarism firsthand, I experienced what theologian John Howard Yoder later told me was a crisis of conscience.

I came to see the war as unjust and immoral and began to speak out for peace as part of the GI movement, openly opposing the war while on active duty. I recognized after discussions with antiwar colleagues and reading more about US

policy that the Vietnam War was part of a larger system of militarism and nuclear insanity that I also had to oppose.

Thus began a lifelong commitment to peace that has led most recently to my current position as professor of peace studies at the Kroc Institute at the University of Notre Dame.

My decision to write *Gandhi and Beyond* was a response to the persistent and often difficult questions of students. Nonviolence is nice in theory, but is it really practical? Are the beliefs and principles of Gandhi and King still relevant in a world gripped by the fear of terrorism? Will nonviolence work against adversaries who are seemingly without conscience and who ruthlessly attack civilians, as the Nazis did? As I grappled with these questions, I found a deeper meaning in nonviolence. I recognized that the Gandhian method at its core is a search for truth. Nonviolence is much more than a method of social action. It is a philosophy of life, a radically different way of being and doing. An inquiry into nonviolent social change became for me a quest for truth and the meaning of life.

I found it difficult to study Gandhi. My attempts to comprehend his message were impeded by the man himself. Every time I tried to approach Gandhi I found myself intimidated and overwhelmed not only by the scale of his accomplishments but also by his austerity and eccentricities. I was turned off by his extreme asceticism and his bizarre and offensive views toward women and sexuality. When I attempted to read his autobiography, *My Experiments in Truth*, I recoiled at his puritanical preachments and guilt-ridden battles against sexual “temptation.”

Gandhi practiced celibacy, I knew, but he seemed to want everyone else to do the same. The students in my class asked pointed and skeptical questions about Gandhi’s practice in his later years of sleeping naked next to young women in order to test his commitment to celibacy. All of these challenges forced me to address Gandhi’s limitations on gender issues. The chapter on these issues in the book, “Gender Matters,” attempts to incorporate the insights of pacifist feminists.

The most important insights I take from Gandhi are the commitment to action and the practicality of the method of nonviolent mass action. He developed core principles to guide this method: 1) a commitment to truth and the meticulous collection of facts, 2) persuasion and dialogue with the adversary, 3) a willingness to sacrifice and suffer, and 4) the use of direct action and mass non-cooperation. Dr. King developed a similar typology of the four steps in every nonviolent campaign in his incomparable *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*.

Through the creative application of these principles, Gandhi’s successors have achieved great advances for justice in numerous settings around the world. As I learned these core concepts, I realized that they apply to some of my own experiences in the GI movement, especially the willingness to sacrifice. When fellow soldiers and I made the decision to speak out against the war, we knew there would be a price to pay. We were willing to take that risk, however, because we were so outraged by the war and simply could not continue business as usual.

We were prepared to make sacrifices, but we were also committed to continuing the struggle and standing up for truth, regardless of the consequences. There is no better formula for achieving social justice and peace. It is the ideal to which I have tried to remain committed through the years, in my writing and activist commitments. I’m trying to follow in the footsteps of Gandhi, to take the long march with him to the sea. ☸



Activists Paul Watson and Rob Hunter risk their lives to protect baby harp seals in Canada from hunters, 1976. The campaign still continues, www.harpseals.org. © 1976 Patrick Moore/Greenpeace.

Gandhi's Spiritual Revolution Lives

Indian activist and author Arya Bhushan Bhardwaj is the founder of Gandhi-in-Action, an organization that promotes Gandhian non-violence internationally. Mr. Bhardwaj, who has a masters in sociology, formerly worked for the Rajghat School of Nonviolence, the Gandhi Peace Foundation, and the Indian Ministry of Human Resource Development. His father and grandfather were imprisoned during India's struggle for independence from Great Britain. Gandhi-in-Action, B-29 Mangal Pandey Marg, Bhajanpura, New Delhi-110053. Phone: 0091 11 22562448, +91 9811443566. Claire Schaeffer-Duffy is a frequent contributor to the National Catholic Reporter and a member of the Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker Community in Worcester, MA. They talked on July 6, 2006.

Claire Schaeffer-Duffy (CS): For many people, Gandhi's significance is his application of nonviolence to a political struggle. In your book *Living Nonviolence* you describe him as a "spiritual revolutionary," whose lifelong goal was "to see God face to face." Can you explain?

Arya Bhardwaj (AB): There is no doubt Gandhi applied the principle of nonviolence to the socio-political issues facing humanity during his life time, through his symbolic political actions in South Africa (1894–1915) and later in India (1916–1948). He did succeed up to certain extent. His ultimate goal was something more. He wanted humanity to change from the traditional ways of solving problems through physical-conflict . . . to adopt new ways of nonviolent social-change. He did not fully succeed in his effort.

To change minds is difficult. From time immemorial society has relied on violent ways which have dominated the human mind. Gandhi had full faith in the human heart's ability to change. He was optimistic and continued his ceaseless effort in this direction, throughout his life. Therefore, I say, Gandhi was a spiritual revolutionary.

The human being has been gifted with three-dimensional-growth: physical, mental and spiritual. But the human psyche seldom applies all three faculties. This is the biggest limitation with ordinary human

beings. Gandhi tried to use all three faculties that were God's gift to him.... Only when one uses all three faculties can one understand an integral approach to life and the concept of God.

CS: In your writings and talks, you refer frequently to the Gandhian concept of *swaraj* (self-rule). What is *swaraj* and why do you think it is so essential to constructing a nonviolent society?

AB: The Sanskrit word *swaraj* comes from *Swa* + *Raj*. 'Swa' means mine and 'Raj' means Rule. The main conflict that has been persisting all over the world is over the meaning of "Swa."

Most people think it is merely the physical (individual) 'I' which matters. The real meaning of 'I' can be truly understood only through an integral approach towards life where the physical 'I' remains marginal and the individual becomes one with others. It is only this real 'I' which remains ever lasting and universal. To reach a stage in life where one realizes that there is none other than that real 'I' — this was Gandhi's real goal in life.

CS: You have said that "identifying oneself and feeling one with others is the way that leads to God;" yet today the world seems more divided than ever. Political leaders speak of "a clash of civilizations" and religious fundamentalism is on the rise. What is a Gandhian response to these divisions? Specifically, how are Gandhians in India responding to Hindu fundamentalism?

AB: I do not think that this is a "clash of civilizations." True civilizations never clash actually speaking; it is a clash of narrow minded 'Swa' and the true 'Swa' as I have tried to explain earlier. It is the result of so-called democracy that the present clashes exist, whether it is in the name of Hindu fundamentalism (in Kashmir) or Muslim fundamentalism (the Middle East, Iraq, both inter-religion and intra-religion) or Christian fundamentalism (in Northern Ireland, intra-religion) or Buddhist fundamentalism (in Sri Lanka) or for any other illogical reasons.

We have to understand that in the age of mega-computers, supersonic jets, the

internet, and globalization, geo-political boundaries have become meaningless. It is only the political mis-leadership that unfortunately has been promoting this dead concept.

The problems of the common person around the globe are the same: poverty, hunger, socio-economic injustice, mental slavery and fear of death. These can be fought — in a united way rather than through fragmented clashes. The only sane way is to use all three faculties (physical, mental, and spiritual) that have been gifted to human beings. We have to "think positively, act locally, and live globally."

CS: Are you pessimistic or optimistic about the relevance of Gandhi's teachings for India of the 21st century?

AB: I do not think in isolation. I have been humbly trying to promote Gandhi's ideas at the global level for the last 22 years. It does not matter much that Gandhi was born in India. Gandhi's relevance is the same for India as well as for the whole globe. [His message] is as important today as it was when he was alive 58 years ago.

The mistake 'Gandhians' in India have been making is to identify themselves as a special people. They foolishly tried to make themselves a superior class, holier than thou. It has resulted in their reduction in numbers day by day. By contrast, Gandhi said, "I am humbler than a particle of dust."

Was Gandhi a Gandhian? Was Buddha a Buddhist? Was Christ a Christian? Buddha, Christ, and Gandhi were people who thought in an integral way and reached the position of "real human beings." People may call them God. I have no objection. But how they reached that level is a matter of practice.

In democracy, people's headcount matters. What is inside the head does not matter. This is the main limitation of the system and this is the root cause of the violence that we are helplessly witnessing today. It has to be changed, and it will be changed. I have full faith in a three dimensional approach of human beings. It is a matter of time. It may not be achieved in my life time. It does not matter. My simple goal is to go on striving until my last breath. ☪

Reclaiming Nonviolence

Continued from page 15

an empowering model of organizing.

But at times the Quaker influence in the nonviolence movement also contributed to the drift toward morality plays. Quaker pacifism involves a process of deep discernment, of constant self-questioning, of asking, “Are my actions in alignment with my values? Does my conscience allow me to participate in this act or comply with this procedure?” This process of deep self-examination imparts a clarity and purity to actions, and can serve as an important inner compass.

But if the main measure of an action’s success becomes how closely it allows us to conform to our personal moral values, we can lose sight of whether or not it is actually effective. When our actions again and again are ignored or seem to have little immediate impact on the wrongs we protest, we can unconsciously give up hope of actually winning.

There are many different modes of a politics of despair. We usually associate that phrase with the secret, militant cells of the seventies that carried out political bombings and robberies in a last desperate hope that the extremity of their acts would spark a revolution. But it could equally be applied to those who act simply to be virtuous in the face of doom and lose sight of the possibility of victory.

Such actions may be admirable and inspirational. But our time and attention can become focused on the minutia of moral choices in an action: Should I stand up or sit down when the police come? Should I walk with them or go limp? Should I voluntarily place my hand on the pad to be fingerprinted or make them pick it up and place it there? It’s not that those questions shouldn’t be asked, they can be valuable in helping us define our goals and limits.

But when we don’t go beyond them to ask, “What is the objective of this action? How does each of my choices further that objective?” then we undercut our chances of being effective. And they reinforce the system’s focus on individuals as isolated actors instead of encouraging us to ask, “How do we collectively take power?” ☪

A Pacifist Critique of Gandhi

Sam Diener is Co-Editor of Peacework.

To make a hero out of someone dehumanizes them almost as much as demonizing them does. It serves no one to turn Mohandas Gandhi into a plaster saint (or a stone *ganesha*).

Many of Gandhi’s statements and actions were reprehensible, some of which are mentioned elsewhere in this issue (such as the treatment of his children, see page 10). There isn’t space for a full critique, but a few themes are important to mention. One of Gandhi’s contributions to nonviolent thought is the idea that a true dedication to nonviolence requires striving for the complicated truth. As we appreciate Mohandas Gandhi’s many contributions to the development of nonviolent struggle, we can’t, if we are to appraise his legacy honestly, ignore his faults as well.

Misogyny

Gandhi campaigned vigorously to include women in every non-cooperation campaign, and organized against *purdah*. Yet, Gandhi, in his old age, regularly slept naked next to young girls, including his nieces, in order, he said, to test his commitment to *brahmacharya*, or celibacy. No matter how some try to contextualize these actions, from my perspective, he was abusing these girls.

His views about rape were misogynist. Gandhi wrote in *Harijan*, for example, that women “must develop courage enough to die rather than yield to the brute in man.” Gandhi claimed, if women are fearless, “However beastly the man, he will bow in shame before the flame of her dazzling purity.”

Gandhi opposed contraception (he had a famous debate with Margaret Sanger on the subject). His “idealization” of women as being superior at self-sacrifice, a quality he saw as being required of *satyagrahis*, is another form of stereotyping.

Racism

Gandhi often utilized racist arguments to advance the cause of Indians in South Africa. For example, addressing a public meeting in Bombay on September 26, 1896, following his return from South Africa, Gandhi said,

“Ours is one continued struggle against degradation sought to be inflicted upon us by the European, who desire to degrade us to the level of the raw *kaffir*, whose occupation is hunting and whose sole ambition is to collect a certain number of cattle to buy a wife with, and then pass his life in indolence and nakedness.” (*Collected Works, Volume II*, page 74). The word *kaffir* (or *keffir*) is a derogatory term used in South Africa for native Africans. Gandhi never, as far as I’ve read, publicly opposed the racist oppression of black Africans in South Africa.

Pacifism?

Gandhi was, at best, an inconsistent pacifist, in the sense of opposing all wars, a fact pointed out by pacifists such as Bart de Ligt in the 1930s. Gandhi supported the British war effort in several wars, including the Boer War, the Zulu Rebellion (though he later came to believe the British were wrong in that struggle), and World War I. His role was mainly to organize and participate in ambulance corps, but his personal participation earned him the British Empire’s War Medal. Even after he proclaimed “war is wrong, is an unmitigated evil,” he defended his participation based on his perceived “duty as a citizen of the British Empire.” He acknowledged that he was “guilty of the crime of war,” and eventually repudiated the Empire, but didn’t repudiate his actions. (See *Gandhi on War and Peace*, by Rashmi-Sudha Puri).

Caste-Based Worldview

While Gandhi undeniably campaigned vigorously against untouchability, Dalit leaders such as Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar opposed the use of Gandhi’s term for “untouchables” (“*harijan*,” or “children of god”) as condescending, and claimed Gandhi never fully renounced a caste-based worldview.

Contemporary peace and social justice movements are still struggling to overcome misogyny, racism, the call of nationalist duty, and oppression based on caste and class. Applying the best of Gandhian principles of nonviolence helps us compassionately critique the actions of Mohandas Gandhi the person, and ourselves. ☪

Defining Conflict Transformation

John Paul Lederach is a conflict transformation practitioner who provided consultation and direct mediation in a range of situations from the Miskito/Sandinista conflict in Nicaragua to Somalia, Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, and the Philippines. Lederach is a scholar with the Joan Kroc Institute of Conflict Studies at the University of Notre Dame and a Distinguished Scholar with the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University. Lederach is the author of Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies. This selection is excerpted from The Little Book of Conflict Transformation (May 2003; \$4.95, © Good Books) used by permission. All rights reserved.

I propose the following definition:

Conflict transformation is to *envision* and *respond* to the *ebb and flow* of social conflict as *life-giving opportunities* for creating *constructive change processes* that *reduce violence, increase justice* in *direct interaction and social structures*, and respond to real-life problems in *human relationships*.

The meaning and implications of this definition will be easier to understand if we analyze the italicized components. Imagine conflict transformation as a person on a journey, comprised of a head, heart, hands, and legs.

Head

The head refers to the conceptual view of conflict – how we think about and therefore prepare to approach conflict. In the head we find the attitudes, perceptions, and orientations that we bring to creative conflict transformation. Our definition uses the terms *envision* and *respond*.

Envision is active, a verb. It requires an intentional perspective and attitude, a willingness to create and nurture a goal that provides direction and purpose.

A transformational perspective is built upon two foundations:

a capacity to envision conflict positively, as a natural phenomenon that creates potential for constructive growth, and

a willingness to respond in ways that maximize this potential for positive change.

A transformational approach recognizes that conflict is a normal and continuous dynamic within human relationships. Moreover, conflict brings with it the potential for constructive change. Positive change does not always happen, of course. As we all know too well, many times conflict results in long-standing cycles of hurt and destruction. But the key to transformation is a proactive bias toward seeing conflict as a potential catalyst for growth.

Respond suggests that vision must result in action, engaging the opportunity. The tilt is toward involvement. *Respond* recognizes that the deepest understanding comes from the learning process of real-life experience.

Both foundations – *envision and respond* – imply a certain level of “head” work. They represent the ways we think and orient ourselves as we approach the conflicts in our lives, relationships, and communities.

Ebb and flow: We often see conflict primarily in terms of its rise and fall, its escalation and de-escalation, its peaks and valleys. In fact, we often focus on a singular peak or valley, a particular iteration or repetition of a conflict episode. A transformational perspective, rather than looking at a single peak or valley, views the entire mountain range.

Perhaps it is helpful here to change our metaphor to one that is less static. Rather than narrowly focusing on the single wave rising and crashing on the shore, conflict transformation starts with an understanding of the greater patterns, the ebb and flow of energies, times, and even whole seasons, in the great sea of relationships.

The sea as a metaphor suggests that there is a rhythm and pattern to the movements in our relational lives. At times the sea movements are predictable, calm, even soothing. Periodically, events, seasons, and climates combine to create great sea changes that affect everything around them.

A transformational approach seeks to understand the particular episode of conflict not in isolation, but as embedded in the greater pattern. Change is understood both at the level of immediate presenting issues and that of broader patterns and issues. The sea is constantly moving, fluid, and dynamic. Yet at the same time it has shape and form

and can have monumental purpose.

Heart

The heart is the center of life in the human body. Physically, it generates the pulse that sustains life. Figuratively, it is the center of our emotions, intuitions, and spiritual life. This is the place from which we go out and to which we return for guidance, sustenance, and direction. The heart provides a starting and a returning point. Two ideas form such a center for conflict transformation.

Human relationships: Biologists and physicists tell us that life itself is found less in the physical substance of things than in the less visible connections and relationships between them. Similarly, in conflict transformation relationships are central. Like the heart in the body, conflicts flow from and return to relationships.

Relationships have visible dimensions, but they also have dimensions that are less visible. To encourage the positive potential inherent in conflict, we must concentrate on the less visible dimensions of relationships, rather than concentrating exclusively on the content and substance of the fighting that is often much more visible. The issues over which people fight are important and require creative response. However, relationships represent a web of connections that form the larger context, the human eco-system from which particular issues arise and are given life.

To return for a moment to our sea image, if an individual wave represents the peak of issues visibly seen in the escalation of social conflict, relationships are the ebb and flow of the sea itself. Relationships -- visible and invisible, immediate and long-term -- are the heart of transformational processes.

Life-giving opportunities: The word *life-giving* applied to a conflict situation reminds us of several things. On one hand, the language suggests that life gives us conflict, that conflict is a natural part of human experience. On the other, it assumes that conflict creates life like the pulsating heart of the body creates rhythmic blood flow.

Conflict flows from life. As I have emphasized above, rather than seeing conflict as a threat, we can understand it as provid-

ing opportunities to grow and to increase understanding of ourselves, of others, of our social structures. Conflicts in relationships at all levels are the way life helps us to stop, assess, and take notice. One way to truly know our humanness is to recognize the gift of conflict in our lives. Without it, life would be a monotonously flat topography of sameness and our relationships would be woefully superficial.

Conflict also creates life: through conflict we respond, innovate, and change. Conflict can be understood as the motor of change, that which keeps relationships and social structures honest, alive, and dynamically responsive to human needs, aspirations, and growth.

Hands

We refer to our hands as that part of the body capable of building things, able to touch, feel and affect the shape that things take. Hands bring us close to practice. When we say “hands-on,” we mean that we are close to where the work takes place. Two terms of our definition stand out in this regard.

Constructive: Constructive can have two meanings. First, at its root it is a verb: to build, shape, and form. Second, it is an adjective: to be a positive force. Transformation contains both these ideas. It seeks to understand, not negate or avoid, the reality that social conflict often develops violent and destructive patterns. Conflict transformation pursues the development of change processes which explicitly focus on creating positives from the difficult or negative. It encourages greater understanding of underlying relational and structural patterns while building creative solutions that improve relationships. Its bias is that this is possible, that conflict is opportunity.

Change processes: Central to this approach are *change processes*, the transformational component and the foundation of how conflict can move from being destructive toward being constructive. This movement can only be done by cultivating the capacity to see, understand, and respond to the presenting issues in the context of relationships and ongoing change processes. What are the processes that the conflict itself has generated? How can these processes be altered, or other processes initiated, that will move the conflict in a constructive direction? A focus on

process is key to conflict transformation.

Conflict transformation focuses on the dynamic aspects of social conflict. At the hub of the transformational approach is a convergence of the relational context, a view of conflict-as-opportunity, and the encouragement of creative change processes. This approach includes, but is not driven by, an episodic view of conflict. Conflict is viewed within the flow and the web of relationships. As we shall see, a transformational lens sees the generation of creative “platforms” as the mechanism to address specific issues, while also working to change social structures and patterns.

Legs and Feet

Legs and feet represent the place where we touch the ground, where all our journeys hit the road. Like the hands, this is a point of action, where thought and heartbeat translate into response, direction, and momentum. Conflict transformation will be only utopian if it is unable to be responsive to real-life challenges, needs, and realities.

A transformational view engages two paradoxes as the place where action is pursued and raises these questions: How do we address conflict in ways that reduce violence and increase justice in human relationships? And how do we develop a capacity for constructive, direct, face-to-face interaction and, at the same time, address systemic and structural changes?

Reduce violence and increase justice: Conflict transformation views peace as centered and rooted in the quality of relationships. These relationships have two dimensions: our face-to-face interactions and the ways we structure our social, political, economic, and cultural relationships. In this sense, peace is what the New Sciences call a “process-structure”: a phenomenon that is simultaneously dynamic, adaptive, and changing, and yet has a form, purpose, and direction that gives it shape. Rather than seeing peace as a static “end-state,” conflict transformation views peace as a continuously evolving and developing quality of relationships. Peace work, therefore, is characterized by intentional efforts to address the natural ebb and flow of human conflict through non-violent approaches, which address issues and increase understanding, equality, and respect in relationships.

To reduce violence requires that we address the presenting issues and content of an episode of conflict, and also its underlying patterns and causes. This requires us to address justice issues. While we do that, we must proceed in an equitable way toward substantive change. People must have access and voice in decisions that affect their lives. In addition, the patterns that create injustice must be addressed and changed at both relational and structural levels.

Direct interaction and social structures: As suggested above, we need to develop capacities to envision and engage in change processes at all levels of relationships: interpersonal, inter-group, and social-structural. One set of capacities points toward direct, face-to-face interaction. The other set underscores the need to see, pursue, and create change in our ways of organizing social structures, from families to complex bureaucracies, from the local to the global.

Conflict transformation suggests that a fundamental way to promote constructive change on all these levels is dialogue. Dialogue is essential to justice and peace on both an interpersonal and a structural level. It is not the only mechanism, but it is an essential one.

We typically think of dialogue as direct interaction between people or groups. Conflict transformation shares this view. Many of the skill-based mechanisms that are called upon to reduce violence are rooted in the communicative abilities to exchange ideas, find common definitions to issues, and seek ways forward toward solutions.

However, a transformational view believes that dialogue is necessary for both creating and addressing social and public spheres where human institutions, structures, and patterns of relationships are constructed. Processes and spaces must be created so that people can engage and shape the structures that order their community life, broadly defined. Dialogue is needed to provide access to, a voice in, and constructive interaction with, the ways we formalize our relationships and in the ways our organizations and structures are built, respond, and behave.

At its heart, conflict transformation focuses on creating adaptive responses to human conflict through change processes which increase justice and reduce violence. ☯

Four Principles for Organizing in Our Post-Katrina World

Bill Quigley is a human rights lawyer and law professor at Loyola University New Orleans. You can reach him at Quigley@loyno.edu

Katrina turned our world upside down. Our social justice communities have had to start over in many ways. Many of our usual friends and organizations are literally gone—over 200,000 from the City of New Orleans alone are still displaced.

The Gulf Coast is in a “self-help” mode. If you have the resources to help yourself, go right at it. If you need help from the community, especially from the government, you are out of luck.

Everyone saw who was left behind when Katrina hit: the elderly, the children, the disabled, the prisoners, those in hospitals and nursing homes, those without cars, the working poor. Guess who is being shut out of the rebuilding of New Orleans? The same people—left behind again for the same reasons.

We have had to start over. Here are some reflections on four of the many organizing principles we are learning as we start over.

Tragedy and Hope

We fight two tendencies as we struggle for justice. One is to focus only on the terrible things that have happened and those that

continue to happen. The other is to look only for the good in order to keep our spirits up and our optimism for the future well-fed.

Either one of these approaches without the other will rob us of the ability to stay balanced in the long-term struggle for justice.

Pain and devastation are very real. Over 1000 people died directly, thousands more have died since. Homes and neighborhoods remain destroyed.

But, despite the odds, neighborhoods are showing signs of life as formerly isolated neighbors are introducing themselves to one another and working together to build their communities. Volunteers from across the country have generously come to help out and to provide some of the basics we need.

The hardest thing in the world is to have a heart that is totally open to both tragedy and hope. But that is exactly what we need.

Race and Poverty Over and Over and Over

What neighborhoods are going to be rebuilt? Where are people going to go to school? Who is going to get assistance and when? No decision is made in our community without the dimensions of race and poverty being part of the discussion—usually the unstated part.

Plus, all of a sudden, half the workforce in our city is Latino. This is very new for us. We never had day labor corners before. Politicians are blaming the newest brown workers for the problems of black workers. Everyone conveniently overlooks the fact that black workers were treated poorly before the hurricanes. All of a sudden it is the fault of those new guys.

Most of our civil rights issues have usually been black and

white. Now we have an additional group at the table. We are having trouble making room. Our justice ideas have to expand.

It is impossible to overstate the continuing need for clear racial and economic justice analysis in order to avoid re-creating the problems of the past.

Growing Importance of Human Rights

Our community is starting to see some connections between the displacement of over 200,000 people from their homes and the displacement of other peoples across the globe.

We are surprised to find that the United Nations Principles on Internally Displaced Persons apply to us.

We feel in our bones we have a right to return. But there is little in our traditional civil rights law that creates a right to return home. A human rights analysis is helping us create a framework for our struggle to return.

Solidarity

Several local organizations have adopted the slogan “Solidarity not charity.”

People are coming to help us from all over. We appreciate it. But there is something unsettling in being the object of charity.

We know there are neighborhoods in every city in this country where people have been left behind. Places where the schools don't work, where people do not have jobs. Every city has a little Katrina in it. It is more concentrated in New Orleans right now. It is easier to see here.

Use your time with us to develop relationships with us, but also use it to help people see the Katrinas in your own community as well.

Then we will all understand why Australian aboriginal activist Lila Watson challenged us: “If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us struggle together.”

We need your solidarity. Let us struggle together. ☪



A volunteer and a resident construct a shelter for a tent city, Survivors Village, outside a New Orleans public housing complex slated for demolition. HUD plans to demolish over 2/3 of its pre-Katrina units. The United Front for Affordable Housing protests. Photo: June, 2006 © Diane Greene Lent.

A Revolution of Empowerment: Honoring Disability Rights Activist Justin Dart, Jr.

Fred Fay and Fred Pelka (author of The ABC Clio Companion to the Disability Rights Movement) are activists for the civil rights of people with disabilities. This belated but still timely obituary is excerpted from a longer piece available at the American Association for People with Disabilities website, www.aapd.org.

"Beloved colleagues in struggle... Our lives, our children's lives, the quality of the lives of billions in future generations hangs in the balance. I cry out to you from the depths of my being. Humanity needs you! Lead! Lead! Lead the revolution of empowerment!"

— Justin Dart, Jr.

Justin Dart, Jr., a leader of the international disability rights movement and a renowned human rights activist, died on June 21, 2002 at his home in Washington DC. He is survived by his wife Yoshiko Saji, their extended family of foster children, his many friends and colleagues, and millions of disability and human rights activists all over the world.

Dart was a leader in the disability rights movement for three decades, and an advocate for the rights of women, people of color, and gays and lesbians. The recipient of five presidential appointments and numerous honors, Dart was also a highly successful entrepreneur, using his personal wealth to further his human rights agenda by generously contributing to organizations, candidates, and individuals, becoming what he called "a little PAC for empowerment."

Until the end, Dart remained dedicated to his vision of a "revolution of empowerment."

Dart never hesitated to emphasize the assistance he received from those working with him, most especially his wife of more than thirty years, Yoshiko Saji. Time and again Dart stressed that his achievements were only possible with the help of hundreds of activists, colleagues, and friends. "There is nothing I have achieved, and no addiction I have overcome, without

the love and support of specific individuals who reached out to empower me... There is nothing I have accomplished without reaching out to empower others." Dart protested the fact that he and only three other disability activists were on the podium when President Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act, believing that "hundreds of others should have been there as well." After receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Dart sent out replicas to hundreds of disability rights activists across the country, writing "this award belongs to you."

A turning point was Dart's discovery in 1949 of the philosophy of Mohandas K. Gandhi. Dart defined Gandhi's message as, "Find your own truth, and then live it." This theme too would stay with him for the rest of his life. Dart attended the University of Houston from 1951 to 1954. He wanted to be a teacher, but the university withheld his teaching certificate because he was a wheelchair user. During his time in college, Dart organized his first human rights group — a pro-integration student group at what was then a whites-only institution.

Dart went into business in 1956, building several successful companies in Mexico and Japan. He used his businesses to provide work for women and for people with disabilities. It was during this time he met his wife, Yoshiko.

The final turning point in Dart's life came during a visit to Vietnam in 1966, to investigate the status of rehabilitation in that war-torn country. Visiting a "rehabilitation center" for children with polio, Dart instead found squalid conditions where disabled children were left on concrete floors to starve. "That scene," he would later write, "is burned forever in my soul. For the first time in my life I understood the

reality of evil, and that I was a part of that reality."

The Darts moved to Texas in 1974, and immersed themselves in local disability activism. His work in Texas became a pattern for what was to follow: extensive meetings with the grassroots, followed by a call for the radical empowerment of people with disabilities, followed by tireless advocacy until victory was won.

Dart is best known for his work in passing the Americans with Disabilities Act. In 1988, the Darts toured the country, visiting every state, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the District of Columbia, holding public forums attended by more than 30,000 people. Everywhere he went, Dart touted the ADA as "the civil rights act of the future."

While taking pride in passage of the ADA, Dart was always quick to list all the others who shared in the struggle: Robert Silverstein and Robert Burgdorf, Patrisha Wright and Tony Coelho, Fred Fay, and Judith Heumann, among many others. And Dart never wavered in his commitment to disability solidarity, insisting that all people with disabilities be protected by the law and included in the coalition to pass it — including mentally ill "psychiatric survivors" and people with HIV/AIDS. Dart called this his "politics of inclusion," a companion to his "politics of principle, solidarity, and love." ☪



The Disabled Peoples Liberation Front blockades an inaccessible Boston movie theater, 1987. © Ellen Shub.

PIECES

EVENTS

IWW Solidarity Night, 9/9, 8-11 pm; Democracy Center, 45 Mt. Auburn St, Cambridge MA; suggested donation \$10; an evening of musical entertainment to benefit the Starbucks Workers Union, with performers Evan Greer (Riot Folk Collective), Jake & the Infernal Machine, Clara Hendricks, & Bill Bumpus; IWW Starbucks Workers Union, 347 Maujer St #C, Brooklyn NY 11206; www.iww.org

Salem State Peace Institute, 9/11, 7-9 pm; Forten Hall (4th Floor of library), Salem State University, Salem, MA; watch a film about Gandhi & participate in a discussion led by Krishna Mallick (professor of Peace Studies) & James Hoover (professor of History of India)

The Punishment of Virtue: Inside Afghanistan after the Taliban, 9/11, 6:30 pm; Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington St (at Milk St), Boston MA; with Sarah Chayes, former NPR correspondent in Afghanistan & later staff in Kandahar of Afghanistan for a Civil Society; presentation followed by Q&A moderated by Robin Young of WBUR; wheelchair accessible; sponsored by Ford Hall Forum, 716 Columbus Ave #565; Boston MA 02120; 617/373-5800; www.fordhallforum.org

The Death of Innocents: An Eyewitness Account of Wrongful Execution, 9/12, 6:30 pm; Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington St (at Milk St), Boston MA; with Sister Helen Prejean; wheelchair accessible; sponsored by Ford Hall Forum, 716 Columbus Ave #565; Boston MA 02120; 617/373-5800; www.fordhallforum.org

You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train (film & discussion), 9/21, 7 pm; New Art Center, 61 Washington Park, Newtonville MA; \$15; This acclaimed film, directed by Deb Ellis & Denis Mueller, looks at the amazing life of the renowned historian, activist, & author Howard Zinn. Following the screening there will be a Question & Answer session with Howard Zinn; tickets available at the door or in advance by calling 617/964-3424.

Pat Farren Memorial Lecture with Marge Piercy, 11/8, 7 pm (6 pm reception); Cambridge Friends Meetinghouse, Cambridge MA; \$10-50; to reserve seats, make checks to Peacework/AFSC with "Marge Piercy" in the memo line & send to Peacework, AFSC, 2161 Mass. Ave., Cambridge MA 02140; 617/661-6130; www.peaceworkmagazine.org

CAMPAIGNS

September 11th Is a Choice: Choosing the Path of Nonviolence, 9/11-21; September 11, 5th anniversary of the terrible attacks in the US & 100th anniversary of Gandhi's historic speech calling for nonviolent resistance to injustice, is symbolic of a basic choice that we all must face: Do we respond to deep hurt with a practice of revenge, or do we choose a practice of nonviolence & determination not to give up our inherent humanity? The Seattle Center for Peace offers many resources & ideas for ways to choose & promote practical alternatives to violence: nonviolence pledge cards, wristbands commemorating the pledge, events listings, educational materials, & more; for more information contact Sandy Fox, 206/322-9899; seattlecenterforpeace@yahoo.com; www.seattlecenterforpeace.org

Support Nonviolent Peaceforce: Work a Day for Peace, 9/11; NP, whose civilian unarmed peacekeeping teams are working Sri Lanka & other areas of conflict, offers a program for any group to gather & reflect on September 11 & act positively for change; suggested activities & discussion questions for a 1- to 2-hour gathering are provided, along with a pledge of nonviolence & ways to support NP's work in the US & abroad; NP, 425 Oak Grove, Minneapolis MN 55403; www.nvpf.org

Software Freedom Day, 9/16; organize your own event to participate in a worldwide celebration of Free & Open Source Software; for ideas & more information, www.softwarefreedomday.org

Keep Space for Peace Week, 10/1-8; international week of protest to stop the militarization of space; for information on events or to get involved, contact the Global Network Against Nuclear Weapons & Power in Space, 207/729-0517; POB 652, Brunswick ME 04011; www.space4peace.org

Peace & Justice for Guam: The US plans to station 8000 more troops on the island of Guam in the weeks after September 11, 2006, as part of its increasing direction of military resources toward Asia; US military bases occupy more than one-third of this nation's 35 square miles; to support a campaign of protest by leaders of the Chamorro people of Guam, sign an on-line petition at: www.PetitionOnline.com/haleta/petition.html; to learn more, contact The Chamorro Nation, POB 6132, Merizo, Guam 96916

Home from Iraq Now Ballot Question; On 11/7, 139 MA towns will vote whether to approve a referendum calling for the US to end the war in Iraq and bring the troops home; To help with the AFSC/UFJP campaign, contact Paul Shannon: 617/497-5273, pshannon@afsc.org

OPPORTUNITIES

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law of the Boston Bar Association seeks Office Manager; letter & résumé to LCCR, 294 Washington St #443, Boston MA 02108; www.lawyerscom.org (no phone calls please)

PeaceWriting Annual International Writing Awards; seeking book-length manuscripts about the causes, consequences, & solutions to violence & war, & about the ideas & practices of nonviolent peacemaking & the lives of nonviolent peacemakers; cash prizes for non-fiction, fiction/poetry/play, & children's literature; deadline 12/1; for guidelines & more information, contact PeaceWriting, 2582 Jimmie Ave, Fayetteville, AR 72703-3420; 501/442-4600; jbennet@uark.edu

World Peace Tour to Bhutan, 2/1326/07; Sacred Himalaya Travel in collaboration with the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism is hosting a trip focused on peace in a culture where kindness & compassion are practiced as a way of life. With a flexible schedule, meet Bhutan's warm-hearted people, offer blessings for peace, attend a rural festival. For details visit www.iipt.org/worldpeacetravel/index.htm

GATHERINGS

¡La Lucha Continua! Centro Presente invites you to participate in a week of national action, 9/7; Washington, DC; tell Congress to stop the separation of families & the deportations; for information or to reserve a seat on the Centro Presente bus from Boston, contact CP, 54 Essex St #2, Cambridge MA 02139; 617/497-9080

A Retreat for the Isolated Activist, 9/21-28; Ferdinand, IN; A retreat for peace & justice activists within the Christian community who have felt separated from the mainstream in these past few years of national division & conflict; with Margaret Silf (*Sacred Spaces & Inner Compass*); participants may come for either or both three-day sessions, 9/21-24, "Companions of Christ: The Art of Detachment & Ways of Living True" or, 9/24-28, "Coming Home to Our True Selves: The Search for Security, the Power of Fear, & the Possibility

A Declaration of Peace

The Declaration of Peace is a nationwide campaign to establish by September 21, 2006 a concrete and rapid plan for peace in Iraq, including:

- A prompt timetable for withdrawal of troops and closure of bases
- A peace process for security, reconstruction, and reconciliation
- A shift of funding from war to meeting human needs

If this plan for peace is not created and activated by Congress by September 21, Declaration signers across the US will engage in nonviolent action in Washington, DC and in communities throughout the nation.

From September 21-28, just before Congress adjourns for the fall elections, Declaration signers will take action — and support a comprehensive peace process — by taking part in nonviolent action, marches, rallies, demonstrations, interfaith services, candlelight vigils, and other creative ways to declare peace at the US Capitol and in cities and towns across the country.

More than 180 organizations are participating in the Declaration of Peace movement. Sign The Declaration of Peace (available at www.declarationofpeace.org) — and take tangible, nonviolent action to end this war and to declare a new era of peace and justice.

For information, contact Declaration of Peace, 2501 Harrison St, Oakland CA 94612; 773/777-7858; www.declarationofpeace.org. ☎

of Authentic Freedom.” For more information visit www.broadwayumc.org/publications/retreatbrochure3.pdf

Common Ground Country Fair, 9/22-24; Maine Organic Farmers & Growers Association Fairgrounds, Unity ME; a celebration of rural & healthy living; sponsored by MOFGA, 207/568-4142; www.mofga.org

Protest the Christening of the USS Samson Aegis Destroyer, 9/16, 9 am; Bath Iron Works, Washington St, Bath ME; contact Jack Bussell, Veterans for Peace, 207/772-1442; jfabussell@gwi.net

Declaration of Peace March, 9/30, 1 pm; Concord, NH; New Hampshire's peace & faith communities will join together to protest the war in Iraq & demand action to bring peace, demonstrating locally as other activists converge in Washington, DC & around the country; contact New Hampshire Peace Action, 603/746-4235; www.nhpeaceaction.org

Not In Our Town National Gathering, 10/6-8; Bloomington IL; NIOT is a media & grassroots organizing project that encourages community response to hate violence; NIOT, c/o The Working Group, POB 70232, Oakland CA 94612-0232; 510/268-9675; www.theworkinggroup.org/gathering

Promoting & Practicing Peace in Perilous Times: A Gandhian Conference on Nonviolence

10/13-14; Memphis TN; with keynotes by Arun Gandhi, Helen Prejean, Frida Berrigan, Victor La Cerva, & Roz Nichols; M. K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, 139 Oakdale St, Memphis TN 38112; 301/452-2824; www.gandhiconference.org

Second International Conference on Islamic Feminism

11/3-5; Barcelona, Spain; with Ziba Mir Hosseini, Ayesha Imam, Shaheen Sardar Ali, & many other presenters; to learn more or to register (deadline 10/20) visit www.feminismeislamic.org

Creating Change 2006, 11/8-12; Kansas City, MO; an organizing conference for the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender community; with Matt Forman, Oscar De La O, Marjorie Hill, Rinku Sen., & Olga Vives; workshops, seminars, & a National Religious Leadership Roundtable; sponsored by the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, 1325 Massachusetts Ave NW #600, Washington DC 20005; 202/393-5177; www.thetaskforce.org

RESOURCES

Revolutionary Heroes Women Warriors 2007 Wall Calendar; \$15 +\$3 she (bulk discounts available); a unique 13-month calendar

honors daily rebels, radicals, & revolutionaries of different times & contexts; each day features a brief biographical sketch & image of a historic woman change agent such as Lillian Madeira Nagoya, South African apartheid resister; Anna Louise Strong, radical pacifist American journalist; Yamada Wake, Japanese journalist & activist, & hundreds more; proceeds benefit the Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Bigotry & Human Rights; make checks payable to “Myers Center/Simmons” & send to Myers Center, Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston MA 02115-5898; 617/521-2171; www.sheroescalendar.org

Fellowship of Reconciliation seeks to replace violence, war, racism, & economic injustice with nonviolence, peace, & justice; FOR's Task Force on Latin America & the Caribbean works for the demilitarization of US policy in Latin America & maintains a team of human rights international observers in Colombia who have increased the security of courageous Colombian communities engaged in nonviolent resistance. FOR, POB 271, Nyack NY 10960; 845/358-4601; www.forusa.org

New England No Nukes Resources; t-shirts with beautiful sunflower design, Stop Vermont Yankee buttons, bumper stickers, nuclear impact maps of the region: Citizens Awareness Network, POB 83, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; 802/787-4276; www.nukebusters.org

Exile: Conversations with Pramoedya Ananta Toer – Interviews with André Vitchek & Rossie Indira, edited by Nagesh Rao; \$16 pb; 180 pp; The first ever book-length interview with an artist who gave expression to a revolutionary vision of Indonesian cultural identity & was exiled for 10 years in the Buru island internment camp; also new from Haymarket Books, *Independent Politics: The Green Party Strategy Debate*, edited by Howie Hawkins; Haymarket Books, POB 180165, Chicago IL 60618; 773/583-7884

The Engaged Spiritual Life: A Buddhist Approach to Transforming Ourselves & the World, by Donald Rothberg; \$16 pb; 272 pp; for anyone who has wondered how to manage a meaningful balance between spiritual practice & social justice; Beacon Press, 25 Beacon St, Boston MA 02108-2892; 617/742-2110; www.beacon.org

After the Guns Have Stopped: Searching for Reconciliation in Burundi, by Theoneste Bizimana & Anna Sandidge; A report from the African Great Lakes Initiative of the Friends Peace Teams; Hear from 18 individuals & their response to the violence — not the cries of those in the midst of conflict, but the mature thoughts of people who, more than a decade after the violence began, are healing; FPT, African Great Lakes Initiative, 1001 Park Ave, St. Louis MO 63104; www.aglionline.org ☎

Weaving in Traffic

Craig Swanson is a political cartoonist and essayist whose work, emblazoned on t-shirts and other paraphernalia, can be found at <http://store.perspicuity.com>. This piece is excerpted from a longer essay available on Swanson's site.

Henry David Thoreau was a poet, essayist, and naturalist. He spent a night in jail for not paying his poll-tax, but made the act a medium for protesting both the United States' war in Mexico and slavery. Mr. Thoreau is credited for inventing the concept of civil disobedience (which he writes about in his essay of the same name). As for Mr. Thoreau's influences, one of the sources of his ideas is the Hindu classic, the *Bhagavadgita*, (Sanskrit for "Song of the Lord").

In the beginning of the 20th century, we find Mohandas K. Gandhi exploring ways of bringing about social change through nonviolent resistance. Gandhi claimed that he first got the idea for organizing mass civil

disobedience by reading Thoreau's essay. Gandhi's brilliance was his ability to create techniques for applying Thoreau's theory; Gandhian nonviolent resistance took shape as strikes, boycotts, and protest marches.

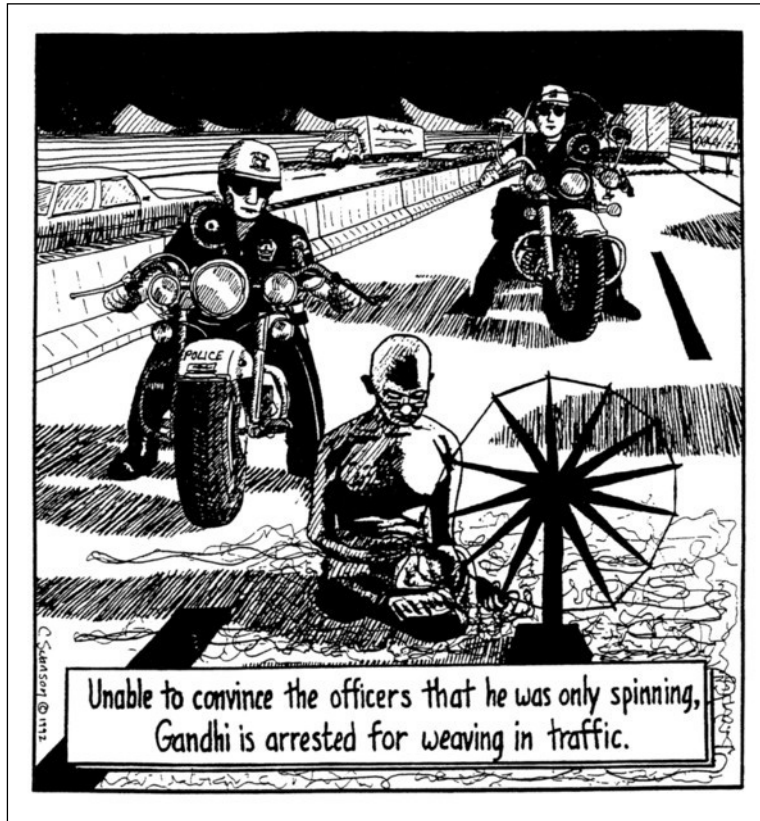
Twenty years after Gandhi's death, Martin Luther King, Jr. was listening to

a speech by Dr. Mordecai Johnson, the president of Howard University, describing Gandhi's life and teachings. King was so impressed that he immediately read as much as he could about Gandhi and through him discovered the tools that he would use in helping to lead the US Civil Rights Movement.

And so the mantle was passed from 1st century India, to mid-19th century United States, to early 20th century India, and back again to mid-20th century United States.

I think of this as my first detailed cartoon. I had read about Gandhi's life, so I was bound to weasel him into one of my cartoons sooner or later.

Gandhi's image is from a fairly well-known photograph by Margaret Bourke-White. The scenery is inspired by George Herriman (author of *Krazy Kat*). The cops came from a picture book on Los Angeles that my Grandmother gave me (a book I would never have imagined ever using). So many of my cartoons are montages of images from all over the place. That might be most of the fun. ☺



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