

Chapter 18: The Promises and Realities of Decolonization: 18-4a Nonviolent Resistance  
Book Title: The Earth and Its Peoples: A Global History 7th Edition Update, AP® Edition  
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## 18-4a Nonviolent Resistance

An inspirational figure for nonviolent resistant was Mohandas Gandhi. Many times during the 1930s Gandhi threatened to fast “unto death,” and several times he came close to death, to protest the violence of both the police and his followers and to demand independence. He was repeatedly arrested and spent a total of six years in jail. But every arrest made him more popular. He became a figure of adulation not only in his own country but also in the Western media. In the words of historian Percival Spear, he made the British “uncomfortable in their cherished field of moral rectitude,” and he gave Indians the feeling that theirs was the ethically superior cause.

Activists in the American civil rights movement against racial segregation, discrimination, and disfranchisement picked up Gandhi’s strategies with good effect, but also much sacrifice. In the 1960s, the Baptist minister and talented orator Martin Luther King, Jr. led a heroic campaign for voting rights and racial integration that brought about the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965. Nonviolent resistance was also the guiding principle of a massive antiwar movement that—combined with growing economic problems—prompted President Lyndon Johnson not to seek reelection in 1968. Elsewhere that year, nonviolent protesters briefly raised the prospect of a democratic revolution in Czechoslovakia’s capital of Prague before Soviet forces crushed the protest movement. Around the same time, the decades-long incarceration of the stoic leader of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela, in a South African prison island became an antiapartheid rallying call among peace and justice activists around the world.

### AP® Exam Tip

Consider how individuals like Martin Luther King, Jr., promoted the practice of nonviolence as a way to bring about political change.

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