

---

# Nonviolent Sanctions

News from the Albert Einstein Institution

---

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

Fall 1993/Winter 1994

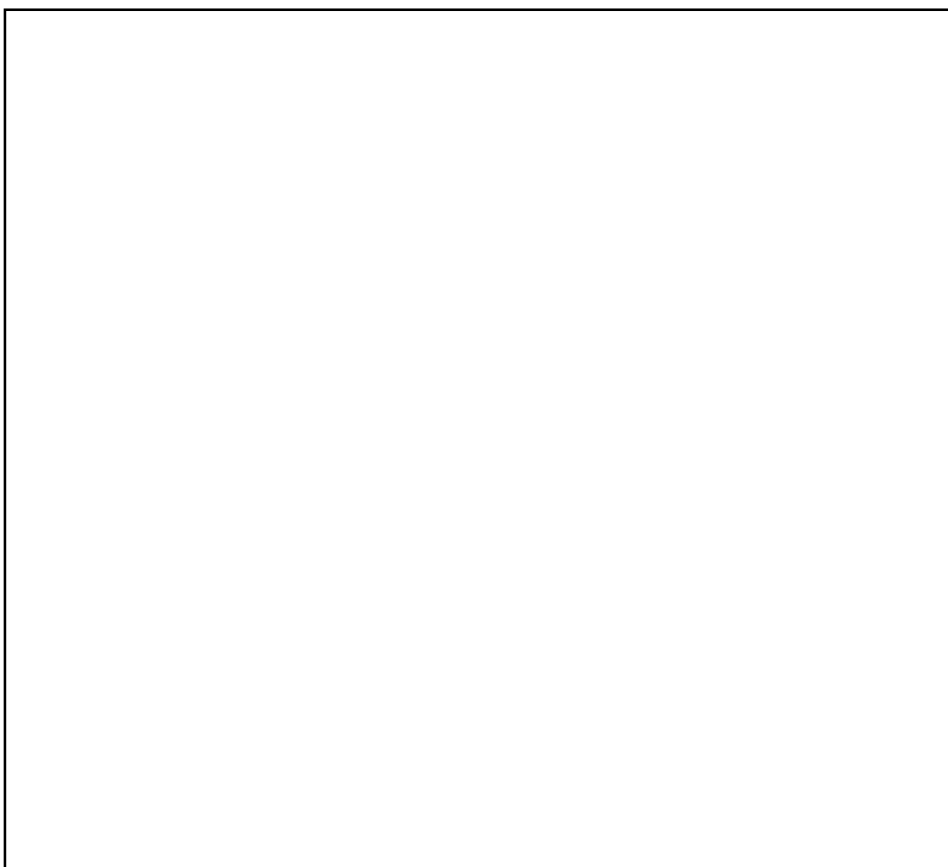
## Einstein Institution Celebrates Tenth Anniversary

**M**ore than one hundred people attended the Albert Einstein Institution's tenth anniversary symposium and reception held December 6 at the Sheraton Commander Hotel in Cambridge, Mass. The symposium, "Responding to a Decade of Struggle: Advancing the Study and Use of Strategic Nonviolent Action," gave participants an overview of what researchers at the Einstein Institution have learned over the past ten years about the strategic use of nonviolent action. The symposium also addressed plans and prospects for the future of this important and growing field.

"When the Albert Einstein Institution was established ten years ago," AEI board member Elizabeth Defeis explained, "its mission of advancing the study and use of strategic nonviolent action was considered visionary—its practical application in this complex world was questioned. Noncooperation, mass strikes, economic boycotts were seldom thought of as weapons for oppressed people. However, recent events have proven the power of such nonviolent activities—as for example in the Philippines in the Soviet Union, and in Czechoslovakia."

Among the speakers were AEI staff members Christopher Kruegler, Gene Sharp, Ronald McCarthy, and Barbara Harmel; AEI board members Peter Ackerman, Elizabeth Defeis, and Joanne Leedom-Ackerman; and past and present AEI fellows Glenn Eskew, Brian Mandell, and Margaret Scranton. Doug Bond, director of the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions at Harvard University; Donald Horowitz, professor of law and political science at Duke University; and Myung-Soo Lee, research director of the East Asian Legal Studies Program at the Harvard Law School also spoke at the symposium.

In this double issue of *Nonviolent Sanctions*, we highlight several presentations given during the symposium. ■



*AEI President Christopher Kruegler opens the tenth anniversary symposium.*

---

## Consulting on Nonviolent Action: Learning from the Past Ten Years

by Gene Sharp  
Senior Scholar-in-Residence

**L**ast summer, I was in Manerplaw, the jungle headquarters of the Burmese pro-democracy opposition on the Thai-Burma border, to conduct a section of a "Political Defiance Strategist's Course" for opposition leaders. The course, which was developed with partial funding from the Einstein Institution, is part of an independent program designed and conducted by our colleague, Robert Helvey. At the end of the last session, one of the

course's greatest skeptics remarked: "If we had known in 1988 what we know today, we would not be in Manerplaw." In September 1988, the nonviolent uprising by the Burmese opposition was brutally repressed by the military junta, a version of which remains in power today.

I recount this statement not to concur necessarily with its veracity—I do not know if the opposition would now be in power in Rangoon had it known more about nonviolent struggle in 1988. Rather, this statement

*(continued on p. 3)*

# AEI Friends Send Congratulations on Tenth Anniversary

Dear Friends,

From the first days of Gene Sharp's visions emanating from the Center for International Affairs at Harvard, as a war-weary neophyte, I have found his proposals a breath of fresh air. They were so practical and feasible as he presented them—taking into consideration the reality of man's aggressive instincts.

The National Conference on Nonviolent Sanctions in Cambridge in 1990 was a most dramatic demonstration of personal interactions between front line foreign and domestic activists—Gene's visions took focus before our eyes!

To be a part of all this during my visits to Cambridge meant a great deal to me. With tapes and publications to share, I have tried to carry on here, despite my failing health.

I send my warm congratulations to the Institution in all it has accomplished, and I wish you all well in the next decade facing a nuclear alternative.

— *Annette B. Cottrell*  
*Hillsboro, NH*

Dear Friends,

The Albert Einstein Institution (AEI) should be justly proud of its contributions in resolving the problems of war, genocide

and dictatorship. As information about nonviolent struggle becomes more widely available through distribution and translations of AEI-sponsored research and its more responsive consultation activities, we will see it more often being selected as the option of choice in resolving conflicts associated with the distribution of political power in society.

— *Robert Helvey*  
*Charleston, WV*

Dear Friends,

Congratulations on reaching your tenth anniversary, and particularly for the achievements you have recorded in advancing the theory and dynamics of nonviolent action. For those of us operating in the far-flung corners of the world, your efforts have been both inspirational and instrumental to whatever successes we have been able to achieve. I, for one, owe no one a greater intellectual debt than my friend Gene Sharp. And more recently, my gratitude also extends to the members of the two institutions he has created.

— *Ralph Summy*  
*Peace & Conflict Studies Program*  
*The University of Queensland, Australia*

# Hazel McFerson Joins AEI Board

At its December 6 meeting, the AEI Board of Directors said goodbye to outgoing board member Phil Bogdonoff and welcomed a new board member, Hazel M. McFerson.

On the board's behalf, Gene Sharp offered thanks and appreciation to Bogdonoff for his years of service to the Albert Einstein Institution. AEI President Christopher Kruegler presented Bogdonoff with a Revere Bowl, a reproduction of the "Liberty Bowl" crafted by revolutionary and silversmith Paul Revere in 1768 to commemorate an early act of nonviolent resistance to British rule by the Massachusetts Assembly. Bogdonoff, who will be moving on to the Advisors Council, said that he looks forward to continued involvement with the Einstein Institution in the years ahead.

Joining the board is Hazel M. McFerson, a Commonwealth Associate Professor of Government and Politics and Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. She holds a B.A. in sociology from the University of Massachusetts at Boston, a Masters in international politics from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and a Ph.D. in politics from Brandeis University. She has also held the positions of Associate Director of Academic Affairs at the Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education in Boston and Program Social Science Analyst for the U.S. Agency for International Development in Mogadishu, Somalia (1985-87). Professor McFerson has written on ethnic and race relations in the United States, Africa, and the South Pacific, on African-American and African politics, on women in development, and on conflict analysis and resolution in the United States, the Caribbean, Africa, and the South Pacific.

Also serving on the Einstein board of directors are: Peter Ackerman, Elizabeth F. Defeis, Chester Haskell, Christopher Kruegler, Joanne Leedom-Ackerman, Richard C. Rockwell, Thomas C. Schelling, and Gene Sharp.

## In Memoriam: Johan Jørgen Holst

Johan Jørgen Holst, foreign minister of Norway and an advocate of civilian-based defense, died January 13, 1994. He was 56.

Holst was instrumental in bringing together Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization for secret talks in Norway last year that led to the signing of the September 13 peace accord.

In 1990, he gave the keynote speech at the Einstein Institution's first conference on nonviolent sanctions, and he wrote one of the Institution's first monographs, *Civilian-Based Defense in* ■ *New Era*.

Gene Sharp, Senior Scholar-in-Residence

## Consulting on Nonviolent Action: Learning from the Past Ten Years

(Continued from p. 1)

testifies to something else: people in opposition movements often see nonviolent struggle as a relevant and viable course of action once it is brought to their attention. Outreach and consulting in this field can have a profound impact.

### The Art of Consulting

Consulting on nonviolent struggle at the Einstein Institution is guided by two realizations. While we possess greater knowledge about this technique of struggle than do most practitioners, we must simultaneously remember that there are definite limits to our present level of understanding. Consulting must strike a balance between these two poles.

In the past ten years, we have engaged in a wide range of consulting activities. We have met with Panamanians opposing the Noriega dictatorship; Taiwanese seeking greater democratic rights and self-determination; Tibetans seeking restored independence; Russians who had helped defeat the August 1991 hard-line coup; Norwegians examining defense options; Swedish defense

officials; Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian independence leaders and defense officials; international war resisters; Palestinian Intifada leaders in the West Bank; Palestinian Liberation Organization officials in Tunis; members of the Israeli Knesset; the Israeli Institute for Military Studies; Thai officials and others concerned about preserving civilian government; and pro-democracy forces in Burma.

In our consulting work, we stay out of electoral politics, and we remain open to speaking to opposing parties in a conflict. However, our commitment to democracy and freedom and our desire to see people liberate themselves from oppression inform our choice of speaking partners. Einstein personnel, themselves, do not become participants in a conflict by engaging in civil disobedience, nor do we participate in strategic decision making. We are prepared, however, to share our ability to analyze conflicts strategically and to offer critical analyses of a group's existing strategies or, as often is the case, lack thereof.

Consulting is a very sensitive and difficult skill which requires more than deep knowledge of nonviolent struggle and strategy. Personnel must possess great tact, humility with merited confidence, and the ability to be flexible in the midst of frequently changing circumstances and heavy demands. They must also be good listeners, capable of analyzing what they have heard.

Those engaged in consulting often must confront preconceived stereotypes held by dialogue partners. Consulting partners have often expressed surprise at our strategic approach to nonviolent struggle, having expected a sermon on moral nonviolence or lessons on loving one's opponent. After a particularly involved meeting with Salah Khalaf and other top PLO officials in Tunis in 1989, a senior Palestinian official pulled Mubarak Awad aside (Mubarak and I were part of a delegation to Tunis to discuss nonviolent struggle) and exclaimed: "But none of you mentioned peace."

We are, of course, interested in peace; however, not at any price. Our consultations on nonviolent struggle are meant to inform people of a powerful option for achieving their goals and an alternative to

violence that may help build a more secure and lasting peace.

Terminology is, thus, a sensitive aspect of our consulting work. Precise language is of extreme importance in enabling persons and groups to consider seriously the merits of the type of struggle being presented. For example, among many persons in the Burmese democratic opposition, the word "nonviolence" is anathema, while Bob Helvey's term "political defiance" has great appeal. In Lithuania, the notion of "nonviolent defense" immediately conjures up the painful memory of the Lithuanian army remaining in its barracks as the Soviets occupied the country in 1940. On the other hand, the terms "civilian-based defense" and "civil-total defense" (that is, CBD as a key component in a defense policy that includes military strategies) do not create such an association.

An awareness and sensitivity of the historical background and current situation of the group struggle, including the emotions attached to that history and to the present plight, is required to establish credibility and rapport. It is essential to be able to get relevant persons and groups to recall from their own experience and history insights into nonviolent struggle and thereby to see this general type of action as something which is already their own, not a foreign import.

As I met initially with former Estonian Defense Minister Hain Rebas, my citation of examples of Estonian nonviolent resistance (coupled with my handing him a draft Estonian translation of one of my works) prompted him to react favorably to the inclusion of nonviolent resistance in his country's defense policy. He even went to his files and pulled out an account he had written of Estonian resistance to a Communist-inspired coup attempt in Tallinn in 1924!

Consulting is (or at least should be) a mutual and reciprocal process. Consultants should always be prepared to learn a great deal from the persons and groups with whom they may be working, as well as from the whole experience. Such a "feedback cycle of consulting" will greatly increase the consultant's understanding, skills, and effectiveness for future outreach work.

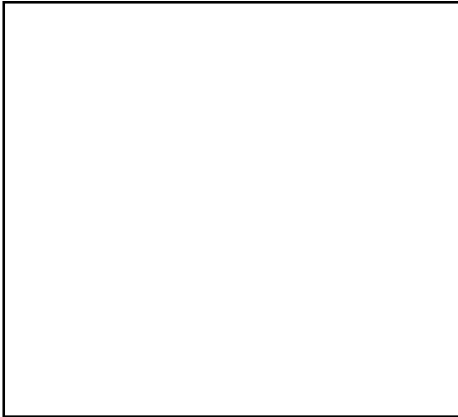
(Continued on p. 11)

Gene Sharp is senior scholar-in-residence and founder of the Albert Einstein Institution. He has consulted with groups around the world about nonviolent struggle, and his writings have appeared in twenty languages.

---

# The Development of Civilian-Based Defense

by Christopher Kruegler  
AEI President



*Christopher Kruegler (right) addresses the symposium as Doug Bond, director of the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions, looks on.*

---

Civilian-based defense (CBD) is the preferred term for the national security application of nonviolent action. It is predicated on the assumption that, while the prototypical history of nonviolent action has left a great deal to chance, the deliberate application of this technique by the state and a whole society could be a very different matter. The resources, planning capabilities and legitimacy that many states enjoy (at least, relatively cohesive states) could add up to a qualitative leap in the effectiveness of nonviolent action. For many small states, CBD may represent the best defense alternative, in that they may have no comparative advantage to develop conventional and other military forms of defense.

From its first articulation as a formal policy construct by Sir Stephen King-Hall at the Royal United Services Institute in 1957 to my dissertation as the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions's first predoctoral fellow in 1983, CBD was a policy without a country. This is still true, but a lot has changed in ten years to bring us closer to the day when this is not the case.

In 1983, the U.S. Catholic Bishops

---

*Christopher Kruegler is president of AEI and is a former director of the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions. He and Peter Ackerman are the co-authors of Strategic Nonviolent Conflict (Praeger Publishers, 1994).*

Conference's pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response," was released. This letter undoubtedly represents the single-most popular exposure ever for the CBD concept. It had something of a domino effect, with other national religious organizations and denominations following suit. It was not unprecedented, but neither was it usual for a Catholic teaching letter to massively cite a secular authority. Gene Sharp's ideas on CBD are prominent in the context of the letter, as well as some of the subsequent ones that it inspired. These publications correctly understood CBD as representing an alternative to the traditional dichotomy between just war and pacifism as the only approaches to the problem of war.

In 1985, Sharp's book, *Making Europe*

---

*In several of the most strategically significant countries in the world, nonviolent action is now a key part of recent, lived experience.*

---

*Unconquerable*, was published. A debate was immediately joined when some people said, in effect, "But Gene, half of Europe has already been conquered." Sharp got the better of the exchange by replying, "Not for long it isn't." He was, of course, the only self-styled realist to actually predict, in broad outline at least, the pattern that the downfall of Soviet Communism would follow in the last paragraph of that under-recognized book.

Then, came the great social movements from 1986 to 1989, which inaugurated what can be called the era of people power: with the Philippines insurrection, the liberalization of Chile, the Intifada, the continuing struggle under the State of Emergency in South Africa, the Chinese democracy movement, the Civilian Crusade in Panama, and, of course, the velvet revolutions of East Central Europe.

Why were these so important to the development of CBD? After all, we have always insisted on making a hard distinction between the phenomenon of nonviolent struggle and its application as a matter of defense policy by the state. The relevance for CBD is that there has always been an important relationship between these distinct phenomena. The one, which is actual, has always served to show what the other, which is hypothetical, might look like. Thus, periods of peak interest in CBD have traditionally followed periods of rich activity in the arena of nonviolent action.

The important issue, which creates a real window of opportunity for CBD, is that in several of the most strategically significant countries in the world, nonviolent action is now a key part of recent, lived experience. When people are tested by an acute crisis or conflict, they tend to do what they know. For a huge slice of humanity living today and for the next several decades, the basic repertoire in response to conflict does and must include the methods of nonviolent action.

Even more significantly, nonviolent action is now part of the formative experience of many heads of state and defense elites in certain countries. Civic Forum, Sajudis, Solidarity, and the African National Congress are all entities that cut their political teeth as fighting organizations, and now many of them have acceded to government. Whether they will make the connection between their resistance experiences and their potential application in the realm of defense remains to be seen.

Many small states like Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, where the AEI has been especially active, are certainly not going to put all their security eggs in the basket of civilian-based defense. But they are going to continue thoughtful and deliberate development of the CBD alternative as a component of their overall strategy, and we are going to continue to be with them as they carry on in that direction. ■

# What We Have Learned from AEI Fellows

by Ronald M. McCarthy  
Director, Fellows Program

**T**he purpose of the Einstein Institution Fellows Program is to promote and encourage significant contributions to the study of nonviolent action. Its primary goal is the advancement of knowledge about the strategic use of nonviolent action in relation to problems of political violence. Through this program, the Einstein Institution offers its support to scholars conducting research on the history, characteristics, and potential applications of nonviolent action. Since 1989, we have selected five classes of Fellows for a total of sixteen individual researchers.

During this time, we have supported researchers in Germany, India, the Baltics, Mexico, Northern Ireland, the Philippines, Moscow, Panama, and Sri Lanka.

I would like to highlight some of the findings made by our Fellows. Paul Routledge, our most experienced Fellow in studying traditional, highly situated communities, traveled to southeastern India to research a resistance movement against the development of a missile range there. When Routledge returned, he demonstrated

to us the importance of place and specificity in the understanding of nonviolent action. He showed that general theories must leave room for the specific influences of place and space.

Another of our researchers, Nils Muiznieks, spent some time in Latvia and is of Latvian descent. Like Routledge, he also discovered the relationship between place and macro-political change. He identified the importance of the Soviet Union's era of glasnost as an opening or space for the Latvian independence movement to develop. He also observed the significance of history. Some of the first demonstrations that he covered in Latvia were in the capital square and were known as the "calendar demonstrations," to commemorate the great dates of the history of their people. Thus, macro-political change, place, and history have all shown their importance in the understanding of nonviolent action.

In research of this kind, Fellows have discovered first that nonviolent action is not the sole possession of any ideological group; is neither the sole possession of modern societies nor of traditional ones; and is not the sole possession of the East or of the West.

Another important part of the work we have seen so far is that some beliefs that had not yet been tested do not hold up to scrutiny. For example, when the Palestinian intifada broke out several years ago, one of the arguments made was that a little bit of

violence is a good thing—for the reason that it allows the people to mobilize and to express their rage, but does not reduce the moral force of the protest. Einstein Fellow Edy Kaufman tried to test this by looking at Israeli public opinion in the late years of the intifada. He found that, in the view of Israeli public opinion, this was not the case at all. Palestinians may have believed violence to be limited and minor, but it was perceived by the

Israeli populace to be hardly self-limiting. They perceived almost all Palestinian actions as violent, and intentionally so—and not as an expression of protest.

One of the most important issues studied by the Fellows is whether or not nonviolent action makes a difference to the outcome of a conflict. Two Fellows have suggested that it does. Both scholars studied events that took place during World War II in Germany and Eastern Europe. Nathan Stoltzfus looked at a spontaneous demonstration that took place in Berlin at the height of the war when the Christian wives of Jewish men had mobilized in an attempt to rescue their husbands from jail. One unexpected finding was that, in fact, many of the men were released by the Nazis and survived the war, despite the fact that they remained in Germany. Another Fellow, David Kitterman, a historian from Northern Arizona University, studied the actions of German functionaries who refused to shoot people—Jews, Gypsies, other civilians—again in Eastern Europe at the height of World War II. He found, somewhat to his surprise, that very few of such people were effectively punished for saying no to their orders.

Over the recent years, the Fellows' research has strongly supported and demonstrated the strength of the nonviolent struggle perspective. Chris Kruegler and I argue in our recent publication that researchers can recognize when nonviolent action is happening by looking for the methods that Gene Sharp originally identified. Aside from just giving us a list, the methods function as indicators of the presence of nonviolent action, irrespective of other factors such as explicit commitments.

The application of the 198 methods to the research process has justified the focus of the Institution and of the Fellows program, as opposed to other approaches to conflict, conflict studies, and conflict resolution. Studying the dynamics of nonviolent direct action is our unique contribution to the area of conflict analysis. Over the last few years, we have demonstrated this to be a valid and productive approach. My thanks to all the Fellows who have worked so hard to demonstrate this. ■

---

*Ron McCarthy is the AEI Fellows Program director and is an associate professor of sociology at Merrimack College in Andover, Mass. He is also a former visiting scholar in the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions.*

*Symposium participants take a look at the publications display.*

---

# Filling the Jail: Nonviolent Strategies in the Birmingham Civil Rights Campaign

by Glenn T. Eskew  
Former Einstein Fellow

**T**he historical example of the Birmingham campaign illustrates the effectiveness of nonviolent sanctions during the civil rights movement. In planning demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., intended to use moral persuasion to achieve its goals of desegregating public accommodations and gaining equal access to employment. The Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, the SCLC's executive director, planned a limited protest designed to pressure merchants into convincing municipal leaders to rescind segregation ordinances. The initial strategy in Birmingham, therefore, had nothing to do with staged confrontations with a violent Bull Connor or with mass arrests to fill the jail. King and Walker targeted a handful of lunch counters for sit-ins to emphasize a black boycott of white businesses. With little fanfare, the campaign began on April 3, 1963. A week later, the SCLC confronted the dangers of having limited the movement to a strategy of long-term economic sanctions, for a disinterested national press and lukewarm support within the black community hindered movement activities.

Unwilling to wait on the boycott, the Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth, leader of the indigenous Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, initiated protest marches against city hall. King and Walker had rejected such a tactic because Birmingham's city commissioners feared no political reprisal from the largely disenfranchised black community. The Albany Movement had unsuccessfully confronted the political structure by trying to fill the jail. In Birmingham, King wanted to avoid the problems the SCLC had experienced in Albany. He, therefore, kept the strategy narrowly focused on the

merchants. By initiating protest marches, Shuttlesworth demonstrated how fluid movement strategy could be, for he broadened the nonviolent sanctions to include spontaneous demonstrations. The change bolstered the weak campaign by bringing a new urgency to the fore.

Following the arrest of marchers later in the week, Public Safety Commissioner T. Eugene "Bull" Connor sicced dogs on black bystanders. As reporters captured images of police brutality, Walker realized that staged confrontations which resulted in violence benefited movement objectives by increasing press coverage of the event. Although the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's James Forman objected to the departure from moral persuasion, King remained silent as Walker planned more nonviolent provocations. Movement strategy had broadened once again.

Not having anticipated the mass arrests, the movement quickly exhausted bail money which had been collected in advance. Although King considered leaving Birmingham to raise more funds, he realized that his reputation as a leader depended on his going to prison. While an incarcerated King composed "Letter from Birmingham Jail," the movement lost ground. It nearly expired during his court trial the following week. April ended with the SCLC facing a defeat worse than Albany.

The boycott had met with limited success. Although area merchants agreed to consider desegregation, the local owners of department stores wielded little influence over either the municipal politicians or the industrial and financial elite that dominated the white power structure in Birmingham. Therefore, focusing on economic sanctions alone proved a flawed strategy. While it opened up bi-racial communication to discuss movement objectives, it failed to pressure the city to accept desegregation. Several service-consumer economy executives had led a businessmen's reform movement to remove Bull Connor from office and to ameliorate local race relations. They believed the civil rights demonstrations created a negative image of Birmingham in the national media, and they joined

the merchants in the bi-racial negotiations structured to stop the marches. The near collapse of the civil rights campaign suspended the white overtures for peace.

The movement lacked volunteers to make its new strategy of protest marches work. Since 1956, Shuttlesworth had led a core group of several hundred dedicated Christians who believed that God would help them defeat segregation. Through the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, they had recreated community in Birmingham, but the religious nature of the local movement limited its mass appeal. Also a handful of independent student activists supported Shuttlesworth. In April, the few black protesters who went to jail each weekday came from these two groups. James Bevel realized that alienation prevented most of black Birmingham from participating in the protest. To solve the shortage of volunteers, he proposed the SCLC use school children. Bevel recognized in the students a sense of community created by shared experiences in school. King hesitated, but others believed the black youth could provide SCLC with unlimited activists. Out of desperation, the movement tapped the young.

On May 2, 1963, hundreds of singing school children marched down the steps of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church—and into the arms of waiting policemen. A perplexed Bull Connor summoned school buses to transport the youngsters to jail. Throughout the campaign, Connor had followed Albany Police Chief Laurie Pritchett's example of peacefully detaining the demonstrators. His surveillance had informed him that the campaign had run out of volunteers. Connor had not expected so many protesters; much less, so many young ones.

With the Children's Crusade, the movement returned to its unsuccessful Albany strategy of filling the jail. This time, however, it worked. By the end of the day, the municipal facility overflowed with students. Unlike Pritchett, Connor had not adequately prepared for large numbers. Unable to make mass arrests on May 3, he deployed firemen around the Sixteenth

(Continued on p. 11)

---

*Glenn Eskew is an assistant professor of history at Georgia State University. He was an Einstein Fellow from 1991 to 1993. His doctoral dissertation focused on the civil rights movement in Birmingham, Alabama.*

# 12 Strategic Principles for Nonviolent Conflict

by Peter Ackerman  
AEI Board Member

**T**he book which I co-authored with Christopher Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict*, has as its central thesis: that the quality of strategic choices made by nonviolent protagonists matters significantly to the outcome of nonviolent struggle. This central thesis attacks two red herrings: first, that uncontrollable external factors will always reduce the potential of nonviolent action; and second, that the willingness of opponents to use violence will circumscribe the effectiveness of nonviolent action.

The reason these two red herrings persist is that they have been important factors in certain historical campaigns. They tell far from the whole story, however. Many observers have glimpsed how, in many conflicts, nonviolent action has frequently transformed the early weaknesses of an inferior military posture into unexpected winning strengths. A primary goal for our book is to focus on why this is so, and why it has occurred with some regularity in this century.

Gene Sharp kick-started this field by showing how the willingness to disobey can undermine the opponents' capacity to rely on repression to govern. This insight forms a basis of Sharp's key study published in 1973, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. Researchers, policy makers, and real-time protagonists have derived tremendous benefit from Sharp's work. And recent events from South Africa to the Philippines to East Central Europe offer confirming evidence of the validity of Gene's insights.

But, since there have also been failures of nonviolent action, can we simply conclude that as long as people grit their teeth and continue to disobey, authoritarian rule is eventually doomed? Often, there are huge costs accompanying nonviolent action which both sides bear, sometimes un-

equally. The allocation of these costs often creates a volatile atmosphere for choosing the winner.

More than two decades ago, our colleague, Tom Schelling, noted how "... the tyrant and his subjects are in somewhat symmetrical positions. *They* can deny *him* most of what *he* wants—they can, that is, if they have the disciplined organization to refuse collaboration. And *he* can deny *them* just about everything *they* want—he can deny it by using the force at his command. They can deny him the economic fruits of conquest, he can deny them the economic fruits of their own activity. They can deny him the satisfaction of ruling a disciplined country, he can deny them the satisfaction of ruling themselves. They can confront him with chaos, starvation, idleness and social breakdown, but he confronts them with the same thing and, indeed, most of what they deny him they deny themselves. It is a bargaining situation in which either side, if adequately disciplined and organized, can deny most of what the other wants, and it remains to see who wins."

Chris and I came together to write our book because we believed the answer to the question "who wins" is very important. We see nonviolent action as having complex consequences, which vary considerably from campaign to campaign and which rarely leave either side unscathed. We share the view that answering the question "who wins" requires shifting from Sharp's initial focus on "politics" to Schelling's concern with the interactive factors—that is, strategy.

In order to demonstrate the possibilities of strategic nonviolent conflict, Chris and I offer a set of twelve principles that should serve as an explanatory framework. These principles were designed to be just as useful to the researcher as to the nonviolent protagonist in the middle of battle.

The book's twelve strategic principles are derived from three discrete bodies of knowledge and evidence. The first is a set of six case studies which occurred in this century. Not all of the cases were successful, but they did feature heavy reliance on nonviolent action by one side.

These are the six cases we developed:

- ❑ The first Russian revolution of 1904–1906;
- ❑ Resistance to the Franco-Belgian occupation of the Ruhr in 1923;
- ❑ The Indian independence movement from 1929 to 1931;
- ❑ Danish resistance to German occupation from 1940 to 1945;
- ❑ The nonviolent insurrection in El Salvador in 1944;
- ❑ The Polish Solidarity movement of 1980 and 1981.

The second field we explored was strategic theory from Sun Tzu to Clausewitz to Sir Basil Liddell-Hart. This field is uniquely suited to our central thesis because strategic theory dwells on the interactive and perceptual factors between protagonists in conflict. Sun Tzu, for example, argues that the best possible strategic doctrine is one that seeks to conquer the opponent without engaging him militarily. This body of knowledge highlights the dimensions of strategic choice confronting the nonviolent strategist including the important distinctions between policy (which defines a group's objectives), strategy (which coordinates the allocation of the group's resources and formulates plans to secure objectives in the face of the adversary's resistance), and tactics (which focus on the logistics of specific encounters with the opponent). *(Continued on p. 10)*

---

*Peter Ackerman is on the Einstein Institution's board of directors and is managing director of Rockport Financial Limited. He is co-author with Christopher Kruegler of Strategic Nonviolent Conflict (Praeger Publishers, 1994), a comparative study of six cases of mass nonviolent struggle, leading to the construction of a comprehensive strategic model.*

# The Case Study in Nonviolent Action Research

by Margaret E. Scranton  
Former Einstein Fellow

**T**he research I conducted with support from an Einstein Institution Fellowship concerned nonviolent struggle in Panama, but I do not want to talk about my case study today. Instead, I want to propose a slightly different answer to the question: what have we learned in ten years? My assertion is that those of us engaged in understanding nonviolent struggle have become a community. We have an institutional presence (the Albert Einstein Institution) and a specialized language (although we quarrel over meaning among ourselves); we engage in dialogue about common concerns, and we depend intellectually upon one another. Thus, I want to: 1) consider where and how those of us who use a case study method fit into this community, and 2) report, based on my

---

*Margaret Scranton is professor of political science at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She received an Einstein Fellowship last year to study the National Civic Crusade of Panama and its role in the opposition to the Noriega government.*

experience with the Panamanian case, on the types of scholarship I depended upon to conduct my research.

I want to begin by asking you to consider a matrix that describes the parameters of our community and the cell in that matrix that you—your concerns or your research—inhabit. Along the vertical axis (see Figure 1) are arrayed three types of theory, ranging from 1) “concepts” that classify or define actors, attributes, and behavior; to 2) “middle range theories” of nonviolent conflict, which explain aspects of nonviolent struggle (use of appeals or strikes, for example), stages or outcomes of struggles (such as origins or types of success), and settings; to 3) “general theory,” which provides either a theory of conflict or politics, or a comprehensive framework for understanding nonviolent conflict. Along the horizontal axis—moving from the most particular to the most comprehensive empirical base—are “single case” studies, studies based on a “sample of cases,” and studies encompassing a “universe of cases.”

My research on nonviolent struggle in Panama, belongs in the upper north-west cell (cell #1 in the matrix in Figure 1): a

study of a single case using a comprehensive framework. Gene Sharp’s classic work, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, belongs in the upper north-east cell (#3), as a general theory of nonviolent action based on and relevant to the universe of cases. If we tentatively place the studies conducted by scholars holding Einstein fellowships from 1988-1992 on the matrix, we find most of this work to be concentrated in the single case column. Fifteen out of seventeen studies analyzed a single case; one of those (Huxley) included comparative assessments. Only two studies used a sample of cases: Muizniek’s study covered the Baltic states and Routledge investigated two communities in India.

To illustrate the dependence of a case study on the community, I completed a matrix illustrating influences on my own work. I relied heavily on scholarship along the north-east vector; that is, studies that can be placed in cell #3, general theory for the universe of cases, and cell #5, middle range theory for a sample of cases. I would put the following scholars and works in cell #3: Sharp’s *Politics*; Schelling on strategy and bargaining; Bond on transforming struggle; Easton on system and instability; Lasswell on politics and perceptions; and Edelman on symbols, threats, and reassurance.<sup>1</sup> In filling this cell, I noticed immediately that my dependence extends beyond the nonviolent conflict community to the broader political science communities concerned with conflict, power, and the nature of politics. I could put numerous works in cell #5; such as the vast literature on regimes and democratic transitions, Routledge on “place,” and Parkman on civil insurrections. Studies in cell #7, studies with concepts relevant to the Panamanian case, would obviously compete for top frequency counts in my matrix, indicating the deep dependence of any case study on scholarship about that particular site. The other cell with scholarship that I found myself consulting extensively, but with less frequency, was cell #6, middle range theories applicable to the universe of cases. For example, to help me understand the nature of the struggle between oppositionists and the

*Margaret Scranton (left) with Randall Forsberg (center), executive director of the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies; and Suzanne Pearce (right), board member, Civilian-Based Defense Association.*



		EMPIRICAL RESEARCH		
		Single Case	Sample of Cases	Universe of Cases
THEORY BUILDING	<b>General Theory:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theories of Conflict/Politics</li> <li>Comprehensive Nonviolent Struggle Framework</li> </ul>	<i>Cell #1</i>	<i>Cell #2</i>	<i>Cell #3</i>
	<b>Middle Range:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspects of Nonviolent Struggle</li> <li>Stages/Outcomes</li> <li>Settings</li> </ul>	<i>Cell #4</i>	<i>Cell #5</i>	<i>Cell #6</i>
	<b>Concepts:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actors</li> <li>Attributes</li> <li>Behavior</li> </ul>	<i>Cell #7</i>	<i>Cell #8</i>	<i>Cell #9</i>

Panamanian military, which was only partly played as a nonviolent struggle (or which can be considered as a nonviolent struggle embedded in a broader power contest), I relied on middle range theories about power and leverage strategies and social movements.

If we consider the needs of anyone conducting research on a single case, namely those of us whose work inhabits the left-most column of the matrix, the part of the nonviolent struggle community on which we depend the most is located in the right-most column, cells #3, #6, and #9. As noted above, I found useful work in cell #3 (general theory/universe of cases). I would have preferred, for both cells #5 and #6, to rely on middle range theories that pertained to findings based on cases of nonviolent struggle. Not enough scholarship from our community is available at the level of middle range theories and concepts, particularly in terms of findings about concepts based on empirical studies of large samples or a universe of cases. Now, of course, I can use Ackerman and McCarthy's just

released study of six cases and their theory of strategic performance. I would have appreciated, however, more empirical work establishing normal parameters for the behavior and actors I was investigating. What, for example, is the normal length of a business strike supporting demands for regime change? Were the Panamanian strikes averaging a few days or weeks abnormally short or average, on a global basis and for Latin America?

Thus, I would like to conclude, in terms of the growth and progress of our community, that the production of solid and generalizable case studies (the left-most column of the matrix) will depend upon more work being done by inhabitants of the other two columns, particularly, the right-most column. Academic knowledge, the intellectual core of our community, is cumulative. None of us can cover all the cells in the matrix and we must therefore depend upon each other's work. For case studies to contribute most effectively to our understanding of nonviolent struggle, their scholarship must be grounded in theories and findings developed using

samples and universes of cases. This is why I am interested in large data projects, such as Bond's PANDA project, that will establish parameters that both describe our universe of cases of nonviolent action, and allow us to make comparisons to the universe of (violent) conflict and war, as well.

I, therefore, conclude with an exhortation to those of us who research single cases: let us not just accumulate more case studies; let us, instead, strive to be cumulative. Let us contribute to our community. ■

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> With no space constraints, my list would be even longer, but the following illustrate my point: Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (London: Oxford University, 1960); Harold D. Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (New York: Peter Smith, 1950); Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1964).

## 12 Strategic Principles for Nonviolent Conflict

(Continued from p. 7)

The final body of work we pulled together was the somewhat scattered writings about nonviolent action. These works range from treatises on the moral and political underpinning of Gandhi's *satyagraha* to Boserup and Mack's useful study, *War Without Weapons*, to Sharp's work. As a body of literature, it reflects a wide variety of perspectives and intentions, from those concerned with ending the bestiality of warlike behavior to those seeking to unlock the potential of civilians to defend themselves with strikes, boycotts, protests, and other nonviolent sanctions.

The twelve principles distilled from the fields of strategic theory and nonviolent action and from the six case studies have been ordered into three classifications: principles of development, principles of engagement, and principles of conception. Principles of development address "what can be done to create the most advantageous environment for strategic nonviolent conflict to succeed." While the tasks enumerated by these principles are continued through all phases of nonviolent struggle, they mostly embody the initial requirements that need attention prior to overt engagement with an opponent. These five principles are:

- 1) Formulate functional objectives;
- 2) Develop organizational strength;
- 3) Secure access to critical material resources;

4) Cultivate external assistance.

5) Expand the repertoire of sanctions

Principles of engagement address the question, "Once the conflict is joined, how should the nonviolent protagonists interact with their opponents so that their nonviolent sanctions will have maximum effect?" The friction and chaos resulting from the clash of opposing wills requires continuous fine tuning and review. The four principles of engagement are:

6) Attack the opponent's strategy for consolidating control;

7) Mute the impact of the opponent's violent weapons;

8) Alienate the opponents from their expected bases of support;

9) Maintain nonviolent discipline.

Finally, the principles of conception address the question, "How should the nonviolent strategist think about what he has already done, and what should he attempt to do to maintain pressure on the opponent as the conflict continues to its conclusion?" The sequence and order of available options and the expected routes to victory are explored by adhering to these three principles of conception. They are:

10) Assess events and options in the light of levels of strategic decision making;

11) Adjust offensive and defensive operations according to the relative vulnerability of the protagonists;

12) Sustain continuity between sanc-

tions, mechanisms, and objectives.

Unfortunately, I do not have the space to elaborate on the substance of each principle with concrete examples. We recognize that these twelve principles without historic illustration are abstract. Our book, through the analysis of each campaign, is designed to make them concrete and operational for the reader.

Throughout the book, we explicitly reject the notion that the twelve principles could ever constitute a mechanistic formula for success. Conflict is too fluid, dynamic, unpredictable, and historically unique to abide by a simple set of rules. Just because a nonviolent protagonist follows any of these twelve principles to the letter, he is not assured of success. Defeat is always possible against a competent and violent adversary. Instead of claiming the principles are the Holy Grail pointing the way to automatic victory, we chose to arrive at a more modest, yet defensible conclusion: as the nonviolent protagonist strives to conform to as many of the principles as possible—by being what we call comprehensive—he dramatically expands the chances for victory.

These twelve principles can be useful in two ways. First, they can *describe* with greater sophistication to the observer who is gaining the upper hand in a conflict. They can show the subtle weaknesses and strengths of each side as each phase of the struggle unfolds. Second, the principles can

(Continued on p. 12)

Panel speakers from left to right: Elizabeth Defeis, Ron McCarthy, Glenn Eskew, Peter Ackerman, Margaret Scranton, Doug Bond, and Christopher Krueger.

## Consulting on Nonviolent Action: Learning from the Past Ten Years

(Continued from p. 3)

Further, our ability and willingness to go personally to meet with groups at times when they are currently facing serious difficulties—as in Nablus, Vilnius, and Panama City—is greatly appreciated and helps to bring lasting credibility and respect. In our subsequent visits to Lithuania, our hosts have invariably referred to our first visit to the barricaded parliament building in April 1991—an obvious reference point attesting to our willingness to respond when the chips are down.

Consulting with individuals who are involved in acute conflict is a vital and dynamic element of our work at the Einstein Institution. At the same time, such activities can only reach a limited number of people, and usually only those in leadership positions. Nonviolent struggle, however, generally does not operate on the basis of tightly controlled pockets of information. Knowledge must be widespread. Without access to published resources, preferably in the indigenous language, knowledge of nonviolent struggle and its analytical and strategic framework will remain limited to key persons and groups in a particular conflict. Therefore, in addition to supplying English-language publications and offering personal presentations and consulting, translations and publications have become a vital part of our outreach activities.

In the past ten years, the Einstein Institution has supported the translation of works on nonviolent action into sixteen languages: Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Burmese, Italian, Dutch, Thai, Arabic, Hebrew, Portuguese, Tamil, French, Spanish, Polish, Chinese, and Korean. Currently, we have ten translation projects underway.

The circulation and translation of our materials can have unimaginable impact. For example, we have been told by defense officials in all three Baltic countries that our work on civilian-based defense formed the basis of much of their defense preparations during the January 1991 Soviet offensive. In a subsequent meeting with the Lithuanian parliamentary committee on national security, Defense Minister Audrius Butkevicius held up a copy of my book, *Civilian-Based Defense*, and exclaimed: “I would rather have this book than an atomic bomb.” No author would dare to dream that the half-life of his or her work could have nuclear proportions.

Often in the past, people have passively submitted to oppression because they did not know what else to do. Or, they have resorted to violence because they believed it was their only alternative to submission, even though they knew they would most likely be defeated. Even when they have resorted to nonviolent struggle, they usually had to improvise it anew. Therefore, it has long been my view that:

“Knowledge of the nature and use of nonviolent struggle is power potential. With new knowledge of this option and confidence in its capacity, people in situations in which they otherwise would passively submit, be crushed, or use violence, will most likely apply alternative nonviolent sanctions. . . . Knowledge of how to act, how to organize, and how skillfully to transform one’s power potential into

---

*Knowledge of the  
nature and use of  
nonviolent struggle is  
power potential.*

---

effective power in nonviolent struggle enables even otherwise disfranchised people . . . to wield effective power and to participate in the determination of their own lives and society.”

Our consulting and translation programs, together with other activities of the Institution, seek to impart this “power potential.” By making available knowledge of the nature of nonviolent struggle, its requirements, and its strategic principles, people facing or anticipating acute conflicts can then evaluate this option and make a choice to use these means, to capitulate, or to use violence. If they choose nonviolent struggle, they will be better able to formulate and wield a wise strategy which will increase their chances of success.

There is a genuine hunger for the kind of knowledge and insights which we are able to offer. Everywhere I have traveled in the past ten years—from Vilnius to Bangkok, from Beijing to Chihuahua—people have expressed a sincere desire to learn more about our approach. I would like to thank everyone in this room who, in one way or another, has made this important work possible. ■

## Filling the Jail: Nonviolent Strategies in the Birmingham Civil Rights Campaign

(Continued from p. 6)

Street Baptist Church in an effort to contain the demonstrations to the black neighborhood. When the school children left the sanctuary, Connor ordered firemen to blast the nonviolent youngsters with high-powered fire hoses.

Coverage of the brutality shocked the country and embarrassed the Kennedy Administration. Following the weekend, the Children’s Crusade resumed, and Connor, responding to the negative publicity, returned to his earlier “nonviolent” posture of arresting the protesters. He commanded the Four-H dormitory at the state fair ground as a holding pen. The campaign had stretched municipal resources to the limit.

Movement activists realized that with the jail full, Birmingham was at the breaking point. They planned a “general strike” for May 7, 1963 to force the white power structure to negotiate movement demands. Beginning the protests an hour earlier than usual, hundreds of school children caught officers by surprise. Young boys and girls bounded over the barricades on their way to the business district. As thousands of black people filled the downtown streets and sidewalks, civil order collapsed in the heart of the city at the height of the day. Policemen were powerless to arrest the nonviolent protesters. That afternoon the industrial and financial elite agreed to several of the movement’s demands. Three days later, the white power structure and the SCLC announced a truce.

Nonviolent sanctions in the form of massive street protests forced Birmingham and the nation to confront racial discrimination in the South. The Children’s Crusade proved the turning point in the civil rights movement; by filling the jail, nearly three thousand school children created a local and national crisis in race relations. In response to Birmingham and the hundreds of subsequent demonstrations across the country, the Kennedy Administration proposed the sweeping civil rights bill of 1963. Passed by Congress as a tribute to the martyred president, the watershed Civil Rights Act of 1964 addressed the movement’s demands by opening the system to African Americans. ■

---

## 12 Strategic Principles for Nonviolent Conflict

(Continued from p. 10)

*prescribe* to the contestant the kinds of nonviolent sanctions that are going to have the highest value and suggest those which are most likely to lead to failure. Here, we recognize context is all important and that the same nonviolent sanctions used in the same sequence may work in one campaign, but not necessarily in another.

By the end of our book we have conducted seventy-two separate analyses to support the utility of our principles. We arrive at seventy-two permutations by exploring in each of the six cases whether or not the nonviolent protagonists exhibited behavior that conformed or failed to

conform to each of the twelve principles. Further, we analyze whether conforming behavior led to success and whether nonconforming behavior led to failure. We were looking hard for exceptional relationships between behavior and consequences that could contradict the principles. For example, we were looking for instances when excessive emphasis on organization turned out to be counter-productive, or when it became useful to break nonviolent discipline or when it proved useful; to go on the all-out offensive without consideration of the opponents' strengths.

In only one instance of the seventy-two possibilities was a principle clearly contradicted. And in only seven instances was conformity or lack of conformity to the principles completely irrelevant to the

outcome of the campaign.

There were many other conclusions from these seventy-two permutations we studied. They are too numerous to mention now. But before I conclude, let me refer to one finding that gets back to the "red herring" I mentioned earlier. We found no correlation between those violent opponents who started the fight with the most ruthless intentions and the greatest military prowess and those who actually won. The Tsar in Russia, Martínez in El Salvador and the Germans in Denmark did not fair as well as the skillful Viceroy in India, the French and Belgians in the Ruhr or Jaruzelski through the imposition of Marshall Law in Poland in 1981. Early odds favoring military prowess and ruthlessness turned into bad bets by the end.

The question is: what do we have now that we did not have ten years ago? With the completion of *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict*, we have a testable framework that allows us to analyze a wide range of cases on a consistent basis. Since our basic focus is with who wins and who loses, this framework may also encourage realistic assessment of nonviolent action as an alternative in conflicts yet to unfold. ■

***Nonviolent Sanctions* (ISSN 1052-0384) is a quarterly publication of the Albert Einstein Institution, 50 Church Street, Cambridge, MA 02138. Phone: (617) 876-0311. The Albert Einstein Institution is a nonprofit organization advancing the study and use of strategic nonviolent action in conflicts throughout the world. Independent and nonsectarian, it does not endorse political candidates and is not an advocate of any political organization.**

**President: Christopher Kruegler  
Editor: Roger S. Powers**

**Assistant Editor: Kimberley A. Pyles  
Photographer: Donald T. Young**

Please note that we have moved to: 50 Church Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

---

## The Albert Einstein Institution

50 Church Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Address Correction Requested

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Boston, MA



Printed on Recycled Paper