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Popular Empowerment

HUMAN NEEDS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF POWER

Most people in our society* do not participate to a significant degree in the decisions and actions which shape their lives and institutions, and which determine the direction of the society as a whole. This is a major indication that we do not yet implement adequately the ideals of our heritage.

* Our society here specifically refers to American society, but the discussion also applies to other Western societies, and also -- sometimes to an even larger degree -- to other modern large-scale political systems.

"We" - most members of our society - say that we believe in the worth of human beings, freedom, justice, peace, economic well-being, and related principles. If so, we have a responsibility both to try to implement these principles in the world in which we now live, and also to do what we can to build a society which more closely approximates those ideals for succeeding generations. Sometimes the effort to implement our ideals means preserving the best parts of our present society which put these principles into practice. That is insufficient, however, for despite these positive achievements, our society has major shortcomings which need to be corrected. In these cases, implementing our ideals means seeking fundamental changes.

CONSIDERING HUMAN NEEDS

Our society fails to meet basic human needs, and these are even understood far too narrowly. Our extremely restricted view of these needs is a major cause of the failures of past efforts to build a better society.

It is of course true that without food, clothing, shelter from the elements, and fuel for warmth and cooking - and work to produce or obtain them - life could not exist. It is shocking that these needs are not being met for all people, and that control over them is not usually in the hands of the people who need them. That fact should shock us even more than the hunger and other results of deprivation, for with control in their own hands people could provide their own physical necessities.

Physical necessities are not the only basic human needs, however, and providing them alone does not produce an ideal society. Those necessities can be effectively supplied in prisons. In addition to our basic physical needs, human beings have other biological, psychological, social, and even "political" needs. Let us look briefly at these. They may appear very simple, or inappropriate to structural analysis. Yet, without this broader awareness we are likely to repeat past mistakes in our efforts to build a society which meets human needs more adequately - mistakes which derive from concerns to provide only food, housing, or jobs, for example, while neglecting other less tangible needs.

As human beings, we need to love and to be loved. We need sharing, tenderness, and to be needed by others. As a species, we need to reproduce and to rear our children. We need to learn the ways of our society, and hopefully others, and to learn and share the heritages of our past. We need to learn who we are, to develop self-respect and appreciation of our capacities and worth. We need joys, relaxation, creativity, opportunities to grow and to change, and to satisfy our curiosities as we seek new knowledge, insights, and truths. We need to develop our minds, our intellectual capacitates, our ability to think and to reason. Our capacities to relate to each other, to other forms of life, and to the world and universe of which we are a part, all need developing. We need to identify with others, to belong to groups, and to have group pride. We need protection from dangers and attacks and from threats to our lives. Our groups need to survive against both cultural and physical threats.

Very importantly, as individuals and groups we also need the capacity for power to determine how we shall live. We need power to control our lives, to withstand the forces that would mold us, harm us, or destroy us, a capacity to shape our lives and futures, even in the face of hostile forces. Most of the proposed remedies for our social ills have given too little attention to these wider human needs and particularly to this need for effective power.

Unless we are able to meet these various needs that go beyond our physical necessities, we lack the qualities and capacities of human beings. Therefore, our efforts to meet human needs more adequately ought to be directed toward meeting all of them, not only our physical ones. Efforts to provide physical necessities must not negatively affect provision of our less tangible requirements or our need for power to control our lives. To the contrary, efforts to meet any human needs ought to be compatible with, and where possible actively to assist, the meeting of all of them. That will produce qualitatively different results from efforts based on a more restricted focus. Meeting these broader human needs more adequately will also help us to solve the problems of dictatorship, genocide, war, and systems of social oppression which have been discussed in previous chapters.

OUR PROBLEMS AND THE CONCENTRATION OF POWER

All of our grave social, economic, and political problems involve at some point a serious maldistribution of power.* That is to say that effective power has become highly concentrated in certain parts of the population and institutions, and, most seriously, in the hands of the State apparatus. Other groups, or even the general population, are then in comparison weak, and therefore vulnerable to the will of the power group.

The power capacity of specific groups in a society at a certain time is by no means inevitable or unchangeable. It is the result of: (I) the degree to which the various groups have mobilized the sources of power at their disposal ~ that is, their power potential; (2) the relationships between the different degrees of effective power which the respective groups currently possess; and (3) the degree to which the social, economic, and political structures are flexible and responsive to the will of all sections of the population. The existing distribution of power is very real, but it is not permanent, and it will not be sustained under all conditions. Indeed, it can at times change dramatically. Such a change occurs when the sources of power at the disposition of relatively weak groups are mobilized to a far greater degree than previously, so that their effective power increases and comes closer to realizing ~heir power potential. A major change in the distribution of power also happens when the sources of power at the disposal of the established powerful groups are weakened or withdrawn, thereby reducing drastically their effective power. Unless the sources of power of weaker groups are mobilized, or the sources of power of established powerful groups are reduced, or both, the subordinated and oppressed groups inevitably remain in essentially the same relative positions, despite any other particular changes in the society. (These other changes may even include the correction of specific grievances, provision of new services, and installation of a new person or group in the position of ruler.)

* "Power" here means the capacity of people to act in order to achieve objectives even in the face of opposition: the combination of all the various influences and pressures which they can exert. These include both sanctions and the capacity to work together, as well as other influences such as authority.

Wherever one looks at a situation which one group or another regards as a "problem," one encounters an actual or a perceived inequitable distribution of power. These groups may include, for example: exploited economic classes, harassed religious minorities, populations of attacked or occupied countries, the victims of attempts at genocide, suppressed peoples under domestic dictators, nations under colonial empires, despised ethnic or racial groups, and a large number of others. In all such cases the problem exists because one group has the power to impose its will on a weak group. "For the tyrant has the power to inflict only that which we lack the strength to resist," as Krishnalal Shridharani wrote.[1] The maldistribution of power makes such problems possible.

Therefore, if we are concerned not only with correcting a specific problem, but also with preventing the emergence in its wake of other potentially more grave ones, the distribution of power must be fundamentally altered.

Our society seems to be moving toward both increased concentration of effective power in the State and certain institutions, and -toward increased power for certain groups which traditionally have had little power. Clearly, there are opposing trends. On the one hand, for example, workers can organize, strike, and boycott, Afro-Americans can demonstrate and use their votes, and women are beginning to throw off their mantle of oppression, challenging stereotypes, and establishing new social patterns. As a result of such action, these and other groups now possess relatively more power than they did a few decades ago. On the other hand, however, much of the thrust of change in our society has been in the opposite direction, especially in our economic and political life. The overall trend has been toward larger institutions, increased centralization, and stronger elite controls. Furthermore, as discussed in several previous chapters, on the world level this century has seen a growth of dictatorships, often in more severe forms, the growth and permeation of violence throughout society, a failure to create a society with both economic well-being and political freedom, increased capacity for genocide, disrespect for human life and dignity, efforts to control human minds, and the multiplication of military weaponry and destructive capacity. Most people feel powerless to reverse these developments.

PAST REMEDIES INADEQUATE

Over the decades and centuries, people have become more aware of their responsibility to alleviate the shortcomings of society in meeting human needs, and they have advocated and instituted a variety of changes toward those ends. Often these have been emergency measures ~ to provide food during famines, shelter following floods and bombings, and clothing to protect against the cold. These measures are still important, and must be evaluated in terms of their capacity to relieve emergency needs. But programs which are instead intended to meet human needs in the long term, on a regular basis, require more rigorous standards of evaluation.

From this perspective, many programs, both past and present, have proven inadequate. First, existing programs and policies frequently ignore certain psychological, social, and "political" needs. Second, a program or policy may, for a variety of reasons, fail to accomplish the intended objective. Third, the effort may provide only temporary or limited relief from the most pressing consequences of the problem, while leaving the problem itself unresolved. At times, focus is shifted away from required fundamental changes. Fourth, even a well-designed program may be so mangled in application as to be ineffective; the substance of the program may be sacrificed to other considerations, such as powerful interest groups or incompatible political objectives.

In some cases, the present approaches to meet human needs suffer from more fundamental inadequacies. Probably the gravest of these is the failure of most programs and policies to empower people so that they gain positive control over their own lives and society. In fact, whatever else existing "remedies" may do, most of them contribute in the long run to the further disempowering of people.

PROBLEMS WITH RELIANCE ON THE STATE APPARATUS

Many people who want to resolve human problems and meet human needs more adequately assume that the basic way to act is to secure the intervention of some higher level of government. This may take a variety of forms: executive orders, a new law, a constitutional change, a government-financed and administered policy, State

ownership, or other means. The common aim is to provide the proper corrective action by doing something for people. This approach stands in sharp contrast to one which would actively involve people themselves in dealing independently and directly with their own problems.

State action of various types has differed in its effectiveness in dealing with the original specific problem or need. Even when such government programs are reasonably successful in meeting the particular immediate need -- hunger, housing, and the like -- it is the result of the power of the State or the institution responsible, while the people who have benefited remain themselves at least as powerless as before. They are at best the beneficiaries of the decisions and actions of others; they have not themselves reshaped their lives and society by their own efforts. The causal maldistribution of power has not been corrected, but often exacerbated. The result may be new, more severe, problems.

In contrast, changes resulting from their own efforts could have contributed significantly to increased self-respect, capacity to work together to provide their own needs, and ability to defend themselves -- in short the ability to wield effective power to control their own lives and society. Empowering change is likely to help people to deal with other problems in the future, and to ensure that the gains they make will not be reversed unless they choose to do so.

On the other hand, reliance on other groups and higher levels of government, executive orders, legislation, court decisions, and the like to make desired changes suffers from a very serious disadvantage: that which is thus given may be as easily, and even more quickly, taken away. At some time in the future when the mood of the country shifts, new problems take precedence, or new forces gain control of the legislature, courts, or executive, the policy may in the same manner be reversed. The State apparatus may be removed as the provider and protector. It may even be turned against those who had earlier benefited from the newly-abandoned policy.

THE GROWTH OF STATE POWER

It may be no accident that the problems of dictatorship, genocide, war, systems of social oppression, and popular powerlessness have grown in severity during the same time frame that our political,

economic, and even many social institutions have increased in size, have come more severely under elite control, and become highly centralized. The centralization in these institutions is often extreme and has widespread serious consequences. These centralizing tendencies are even more marked in the particular institution of the State. The most elemental view of twentieth century politics should reveal that it is precisely the concentration of power and expansion of control by the State which is a major source of the capacity to inflict the problems which have devastated so many people and societies. Rethinking politics and developing realistic measures to deal with our most grave problems require that we reconsider and reevaluate the expansion of the State to meet the various legitimate needs of people and society.

The growth of the State is continuing in most parts of the world, with only limited counter-tendencies. The State, of course, is not the same as the society as a whole. The State is a particular institution, a particular structure of government ~ there are other possible ones which includes as parts of the system of political control a permanent bureaucracy to administer its programs and measures, a permanent police and penal system to punish antisocial persons and often dissidents, and a permanent military system to threaten and fight against foreign enemies and domestic uprisings. All these are under the command of the person or group which occupies the position of "ruler" at the head of the State.

This growth of the State, and of other institutions, in absolute and relative size, elite control, and centralization, has taken a variety of forms, and is the result of diverse influences. It has often been in response to pressing needs, and to weaknesses and inadequacies of earlier less centralist institutions. At other times, the growth of central controls by ever larger institutions has come without conscious choice, and in response to other changes.

The scale, technology, and severity of modern wars, combined with the requirements of an effective military system, have contributed very significantly to the growth of political centralization. The need for effective command, control of resources, transportation, manpower, and military secrets is among the significant factors which have operated to produce that result. In the United States the Civil War clearly contributed to political centralization, which was later greatly accelerated by the First World War and the Second

World War. Two other major factors which have contributed to the general concentration of power and growth of centralized institutions are the large-scale technologies which have been chosen for development over smaller-scale technologies, and also the types of energy which have been selected for use in place of decentralized alternatives. Both of these have contributed to the massive growth of centralized, large-scale economic institutions, variously controlled by the elites of national and multinational corporations, or by heads of bureaus, Party leaders, and State officials. Commonly, when the growth of centralization and State power has occurred as a result of these various factors, the factors themselves, and sometimes even the process of centralization, have gone unnoticed, or have been seen as necessary. Hence, the resulting growth of centralism and State power has aroused little opposition.

Much expansion of the power of the State itself and weakening of the effective power of the populace has also resulted from ignoble motives and deliberate efforts by rulers to establish or perpetuate their domination. Also, the State often becomes interlocked with other institutions in controlling the society. When noticed, such expansion of the State is often seen as threatening and, when the populace is capable of resisting this expansion of State controls and the agencies of regimentation and repression, this growth of State power may arouse opposition in the name of freedom or justice.

STATE POWER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

In contrast to those situations, much of the growth of the State apparatus has often occurred as a result of noble, and even humane, motives. Many people who have sought social change have viewed the single institution which combined a permanent bureaucracy with legitimated capacity for political violence as very useful to them - if only they could gain control of it and use it for their own ends. The State has therefore been used in order to meet more adequately various physical human needs, and often to control large-scale economic institutions, or oppressive practices of one section of the society against another. When reformers and revolutionaries have sought to impose controls over powerful economic groups, classes, or institutions, they have usually done so by establishing State regula-

tions over them or by transferring actual ownership of the economy to the State.

When the expansion of State controls and the State itself is instead carried out for humane purposes by a political democracy, and even by authoritarian systems, significant opposition may not develop. The expansion is often then intended, or perceived as aimed, to improve the lives of people; few persons will then wish to be, or be seen to be, supporters of past injustices and opponents of new social and economic services. The expansion may, therefore, meet very little opposition ~ except from adversely affected vested interests, and from persons more opposed to "big government" than to past injustices and deprivations. However, this is far from the whole story.

At times the advocates of social change by State action have relied upon liberal democratic processes. These reformers have accepted liberal constitutional democracy, with its procedures, restrictions, and individual rights. These people assume that political freedom and use of the State to effect social change are compatible. It is consequently common in American society and many others to assume that if we have a problem we must seek the intervention or take-over of an ever higher level of government which possesses the machinery of control, the legal apparatus, the financial resources, and the police and military systems, to utilize for that good cause.

More extreme advocates of change have resorted to coup d'état or guerrilla warfare to seize the State. Once they have gained control of the State, these advocates of social change have rarely been willing to exercise restraint in using the capacities of the State and to respect democratic procedures and the rights of those who disagree with them. To the contrary, generally no procedures, limitations, or calendars have been permitted to interfere with their perceived mission: to achieve total change by full use of State power.

Highly important differences exist in the consequences of these two approaches; those must not be minimized. However, both approaches contribute to the growth of State power -- neither contributes to empowerment of the populace. A major factor underlying the inadequacies of both approaches is the failure to appreciate sufficiently the importance of all of the human needs presented earlier in this chapter, not only the physical needs of food, shelter, clothing, and protection from the elements. Sometimes -- not always -- in terms of meeting human physical needs, the services and changes

provided by State intervention have been significantly improved in quantity and quality as compared to earlier arrangements. That cannot be ignored. Nor should we be satisfied with poverty, injustice, and inadequate provision of the material needs of people. The point instead is that even when a plan to deal with such problems by State action succeeds in correcting the outward effects of the specific problems, something else very serious happens which is not intended: one more step is taken in shifting effective power from the people themselves and from the nongovernmental institutions of the society to the State apparatus. Thereby, the people who were already too weak -- the problem itself is evidence of this -- become even weaker than they were, and the non-State institutions which were capable of limiting the power of the ruler become enfeebled without the compensating strengthening of other *loci* of power.

The strategy of relying upon the State to make needed social and economic changes, instead of using some other means of action and different institutions, not only does not empower the people who are already weak; that strategy actively contributes to increasing the concentration of effective power in the State. As discussed in Chapter Two, "Social Power and Political Freedom," this may strongly facilitate the development of dictatorships. Nor has State action contributed to democratization even within the economic institutions. While elite controls and the absence of participation by workers and consumers were characteristics of large corporations for many decades, and have been accentuated in multinational corporations, these are not corrected by State intervention. State regulation and ownership of economic institutions have reduced neither their size, the degree of centralization, nor elite controls within them. Instead, State intervention has increased all three of these within the specific enterprises and in the economy generally. The "solution" applied to genuine social and economic needs has resulted in consolidation, increased centralization, and yet another level of management, taking control still further from workers, consumers, and specialists. These people become less and less participants in those institutions, and more and more the "workers," "staff," "consumers," and "clients" of those who are "in charge" -- those who "know" what should be done.

On the political level, the extension of this centralization and elite control has been widely associated with a real or perceived reduction in the extent, quality, and effectiveness of popular partici-

pation and control of political institutions and public policies. This has often been accompanied by the denigration of localism, and outright dissolution of small-scale institutions and services - even schools, rail transportation, health facilities, and post offices. The growth of State controls over the economy has resulted in a major expansion of the size of the State itself, a growth of the scale of our institutions, enhancement of elite controls, centralization of decision-making, growth of bureaucratization, increases in the areas of society under State control or absorbed by the State, and an increasing powerless dependency of ·the people. The theory and slogans of democratic control are, however, often still espoused.

DANGERS FOR POLITICAL FREEDOM

That strategy is dangerous for political freedom, as well as for the ability to meet adequately the several human needs beyond basic physical requirements for life. In that strategy the loci of power come increasingly under centralized State control, or are outright destroyed. As a direct consequence, the rest of the society becomes weak in comparison to the State apparatus. This process can be a continuing and circular one. As the weakening of the independent institutions of the society and the lower levels of government continues, the concentration of effective power in the hands of the central State grows. The institutionalized capacity of the State for political violence and the bureaucracy also usually expand. The result is that the relative and absolute strength of the population declines. The population becomes increasingly powerless and subject to manipulation and control by those in command of the State apparatus. Without new influences to reverse the process, the increase in the maldistribution of effective power continues to grow cumulatively. The power of the State grows, while the capacity of people to act to save themselves continues to lessen.

When this has occurred, whoever can control the State apparatus is likely to have little trouble in controlling the society for their own purposes. This happens even when those purposes are very different ones from those of the earlier social reformers and revolutionaries who used the centralized State simply to meet human needs more adequately and to build a better society. A State apparatus which is strong enough to free us is also strong enough to enslave us.

Once the society's *loci* of power are weakened or destroyed, the bureaucracies are established and expanded, and the population is reduced to dependency on the State for its material needs, once the police systems are centralized and enlarged, and the military system is expanded as a separate institution from the rest of society which can be turned against the country's own people, then the State machinery is prepared for potential effective use by tyrants. At this point, the State may be used for different objectives, and with greater ruthlessness, than originally intended, and may be applied to oppress the population which it claimed to serve. That political machine may also be seized from democratically chosen rulers by usurpers. In the wrong hands this State can be highly dangerous, for it can impose tyranny, wage wars, establish or defend social oppression, control people's minds, and commit genocide. It is this machinery which makes modern tyranny possible. Bertrand de Jouvenel, a prominent French political philosopher, has perceived this more sharply than most of us:

> Had Hitler succeeded Maria Theresa on the throne, does anyone suppose that it would have been possible for him to forge so many up-to-date weapons of tyranny? Is it not clear that he must have found them ready prepared? The more we think on these lines, the better we can appreciate the problem which faces our Western world.[2]

It is possible, of course, that such developments may not occur; the State may not be shifted to autocratic purposes. Constitutional barriers, legal limitations, and traditions may be respected. No facilitating crisis may occur, and no would-be political savior, power-hungry leader, or messianic party may arise. The factors which prevent the shift to tyranny are highly important, and must not be neglected or go unappreciated. They must not, however, be permitted to comfort us into neglecting the problem.

The ways in which the State is operated and controlled vary widely. Liberal constitutional procedures may be very precise about provisions to allow popular participation in the selection of those who will make the decisions and issue the instructions in the name of the State. Such constitutions and laws may also set boundaries against the intrusion of the State into certain activities or aspects of individual or social life, and issue guarantees of personal liberties against State interference. Other systems in control of the State

apparatus not only may not have such procedures, restrictions, and guarantees, they may repudiate all such limits to full pursuit of the ruler's objectives. Those may include extension of the power and profit of the system, restructuring of the institutions of the society, extermination of an unwanted group, pursuit of a foreign enemy, or even remaking the nature of human beings. The differences between the systems which significantly limit the effective control by the State and those which reject such limits are highly important.

The growth of State power and the increase in centralization of power and controls throughout the world have occurred to a significant degree even in the United States. This is true in spite of the fact that its original political system was deliberately designed to be decentralized with a very weak State apparatus. The American political system was once an extreme example of a multilayered federalism with a relatively weak federal government. This was structured so as to maximize democratic qualities and to avoid the dangers of tyranny which were perceived to be intrinsic to highly centralized government which possessed the capacity for violent repression of the populace.

Even if the most severe dangers from the weakening of the society and strengthening of the State do not occur, that political society is not, to say the least, a vital practicing democracy. The people remain passive recipients of the benefactions of the administrators, without the vitality and participation of running their own lives and their own society.

VULNERABLE DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTIONS

When the society is weak and the State is strong traditional liberal democratic legal and constitutional measures are inadequate to prevent destruction of the constitution. There can be no guarantee against such attempts. It is not enough to establish electoral and governmental procedures of fair play, nor to seek to persuade all political bodies to adhere to democratic principles and practices. Laws and constitutional restrictions are insufficient barriers to those who are willing to violate the laws and to destroy the constitution.

The Watergate activities of the Nixon administration demonstrated that high American officials were willing deliberately to disobey existing laws, and to claim the right to do so, in order to

implement their will, and even to usurp the established electoral procedures. The proposal, therefore, of disturbed Congressmen and Senators to enact new laws to prohibit such activities demonstrated their failure even to understand the nature and gravity of the problem: how to prevent usurpation by those willing deliberately to disobey both statutes and the constitution and to manipulate elections, in order to remain in office. Something more than a new law is obviously required to do that.

It must be made impassible for those who wish to become tyrants and who are willing to sweep aside democratic institutions and humane considerations to seize and to maintain effective control of the State apparatus, and by means of that of the society as a whole.

Among the ways in which this expanded State apparatus may be shifted to imposition of tyranny are these: First, no abrupt shift may occur, but instead the governmental apparatus and the society may gradually be brought under progressively more thorough and severe elite control, and step by step the constitution altered in practice to become an increasingly authoritarian system. Second, persons chosen for executive positions by constitutional means, as a president, prime minister, or chancellor, may deliberately exceed or expand the constitutional boundaries. With or without a declaration of emergency, enabling legislation, or constitutional amendment, he or she may carry out an executive usurpation. Under certain conditions, this could be done in the United States by an elected president -- perhaps a more ruthless and intelligent "Richard Nixon" -- who wished to be free of constitutional barriers and to remain in office without the possibility of removal. Third, a political party, military group, police or intelligence body, or combination of these, with or without foreign assistance, may conduct a coup d'état, ousting the old ruler and establishing themselves in control of the State apparatus. Fourth, successful foreign military invaders may either establish themselves or their puppets at the head of the State in the occupied country, and use it for their own objectives.

The combination of bureaucracy, police, prisons, and military forces, all under a single command, makes possible the turning of that combined State power from serving the members of the society to control, repression, and on occasion, war, against its own population. In modern times, the State is always stronger than any other single institution of the society. Where those societies have been

weakened because of neglect, attrition, or deliberate attacks, or even because of a well-intentioned extension of controls over the society, the economy, and lower levels of government, those who have seized control of the State apparatus are likely thereby to gain the power to retain it. They can then use the State for their own ends. The only alternatives available for blocking their success seem to be the will and capacity to wage either a bloody civil war or a massive noncooperation struggle. Seizure of the State is an obvious and permanent danger to anything which might be called democracy, liberty, and freedom. A weak society facing a strong State apparatus commanded by a power-hungry ruler is in a most dangerous situation.

The long-term costs to a society of meeting its needs and correcting its ills by expansion of the State apparatus may therefore be extremely high: reduced democratic qualities, growth of alienation, an increased sense of powerlessness, greater vulnerability to further extension of elite domination, and even political usurpation. Advocates of social change therefore need to reverse the perpetual strategy of enlisting the State apparatus to provide human needs, to right wrongs, and to build a new society.

EMPOWERMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE CHANGE

In the light of the tragedies of recent decades, and the dangers in the future, we have at least three fundamental responsibilities which we need to fulfill if we are to meet human needs more adequately: (I) to right wrongs, lift oppression, and achieve positive conditions for human life; (2) to help ourselves to become empowered in order to achieve internal and societal self-liberation, and, (3) to remove from human society political violence which not only harms and kills people but also, as discussed in the previous chapter, provides the institutionalized capacity which is the prerequisite for some of our most serious problems. If we are to fulfill those responsibilities adequately, we can no longer repeat the programs of the past, but instead must seek new ways to meet the needs of people today, and those of tomorrow's societies.

We need to understand why a maldistribution of power has harmful effects on society which violate the ideals which most people in our society espouse. We also need to understand what produces

this maldistribution of power. Without understanding the causes which produce these effects, we are unlikely to be able to correct them. Similarly, if we are to have the capacity to achieve a more equitable distribution of power in our society, we need to examine more closely what components are involved in the distribution of effective power among people and institutions.

A seriously inequitable distribution of power may result from a variety of factors. Two such, closely interrelated, factors, are: which types of groups wield the power, and what kind of power it is. To a greater degree than has usually been thought, the type of power may at times strongly influence, or even determine, which types of groups wield that power. We shall explore this more fully later in this chapter. Both the types of power and which groups wield it are related to the type of ultimate sanction which is applied as a source of power. Therefore, the subject of sanctions requires major attention in any consideration of how to achieve acceptable social change, and of how to implement more fully our ideals in social and political life.

SANCTIONS AND SOCIETY

The provisions of the formal constitution concerning the selection of members of the ruling group and the right to individual liberties are not the ultimate determinants of the distribution of effective power in the political system, much less in the political society as a whole, as we saw in Chapter Two, "Social Power and Political Freedom." Nor, important as they are, do the number and vitality of the society's *loci* of power alone determine that distribution. The type of ultimate sanction relied upon also, to a high degree, helps to determine the distribution of effective power in the society.

Sanctions are clearly one of the important sources of political power.[3] Because that is so, and because the sanctions of institutionalized political violence are prerequisites for such grave problems as dictatorships, genocide, war, and systems of social oppression, we must give adequate attention to the possible impacts of different types of sanctions on the distribution of effective power in the social and political system. Our past failure to do so may explain to a

significant degree our inability to solve our gravest problems.

All societies require sanctions of some type.* Sanctions here mean punishments, pressures, and means of action used to penalize, thwart, and alter the behavior of other persons, groups, institutions, or States. Internally, sanctions are used to maintain stability and order in face of hostile and injurious behavior, to keep a subordinate group in subjection, to resist challenge to the established system, to conduct acute internal conflicts, and to achieve conformity to socially determined minimally acceptable behavior, especially when normative constraints have broken down. Externally, sanctions are used to achieve goals against an unwilling opponent, and to ward off external intimidation and attacks. That is, sanctions are applied as the final means of action to wield power in acute conflicts, either defensively or offensively, which have not been otherwise resolved under acceptable terms and conditions. People and institutions use sanctions to apply pressure and to wage conflict. Sanctions may be violent or nonviolent in form.

SYSTEMIC CONSEQUENCES OF DIFFERENT SANCTIONS

Generally, sanctions have not been perceived as having social and political impact beyond their immediate influence on individuals, social conditions, and the objectives at issue. The nature of the ultimate sanction relied upon by the society - whether violent or nonviolent - has not been seen as a significant factor shaping the lasting character of the society itself, including its institutions and its internal distribution of effective power. Occasionally the influence of military systems and wars on political centralization has been noted, or even their impacts on the creation and growth of the State as a unique institution. Most people have usually assumed, however, that since violence was believed to be the only effective ultimate sanction, the best one could do in face of such influences was to apply ameliorative measures to limit, adjust, or regulate the use of such violence, as by legal and constitutional procedures and prohibitions. The political consequences of reliance on violent sanctions or the possibility of

* See the discussions on sanctions in Chapter Ten, "Seeking a Solution to the Problem of War," and Chapter Eleven, "The Societal Imperative."

effective alternatives to them have not usually been explored much further than this.

Increasingly, however, the widespread confidence in violent sanctions has been challenged by claims that they themselves create or aggravate several serious problems. For example, it is at times argued by a variety of people that: (1) the destructive capacity of violent sanctions has reached unacceptable levels; (2) satisfactory ways to deal with certain types of political violence - as terrorism, genocide, and nuclear weapons - have not been found; (3) reliance on violence to struggle against an opponent with continued superior capacity for violence tends to force one's own group into submission, self-destruction, or struggle by attrition of both sides; and (4) undesirable long-term structural consequences of political violence as the society's ultimate sanction appear to exist. These contentions are only illustrative of others which merit investigation.

To a degree hitherto unrecognized, the nature of the ultimate sanction used by a society may determine the nature of that society. Obviously, the sanctions will not be the only influential factors, and the degree to which they will shape the society and political system will differ from case to case. The nature of those sanctions, however, may be far more important in shaping the society than any other single factor, including both ideals and economics.

Violent sanctions and nonviolent sanctions appear to have very different consequences in shaping the nature of the society, the distribution of effective power within it, and the forms and character of its political system. Institutionalized violent sanctions appear to contribute causally to increased centralization of effective power. This occurs in the form of increased centralization in decision-making, in the structure of the political system, and in the control of the capacity to apply the sanctions themselves. On the other hand, nonviolent sanctions appear to contribute causally to decentralization and diffusion of effective power. This occurs in the form of decentralization in decision-making, in the structure of the society as a whole as well as the political system, and in the control of the capacity to apply the sanctions - even by members of the society who have long perceived themselves to be powerless. If this is true, the choice of violent or nonviolent sanctions will have profound long-term consequences for that society.

However, for most people the question of choosing between two

types of ultimate sanctions has never arisen. It has been assumed that the most serious and effective sanctions can only be violent. The ultimate sanction has been perceived, almost by definition, to be violent, both for the State apparatus and also for the people and revolutionaries, for whom it was believed to be the *ultima ratio populi*, the ultimate resource of the people. We have rarely even noticed the widespread existence of alternative nonviolent sanctions, nor examined whether they might be instrumentally effective for meeting the need of sanctions for objectives which benefit human beings, as distinct from those which harm or oppress them. As a result of these assumptions and this perception of political reality, the question has rarely been asked as to whether violent sanctions and nonviolent sanctions may have different consequences for the structure and character of the society as a whole.

PROBLEMS OF LIBERATION BY VIOLENCE

In earlier centuries, faced with an oppressive ruler, the population armed with the weapons of violence had a fair chance of winning by waging a violent mass revolution or civil war, using fairly conventional strategies. Karl Mannheim, a German political sociologist, argued that the nature of those weapons prior to the developments of the twentieth century effectively diffused power in the society, and that this was at the heart of the development of political democracy:

> The secret of the democratization which took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries lay in the simple fact that one man means one gun, the resistance of one thousand individuals one thousand guns.[4]

> The guarantee of the general democratization of the preceding century lay not only in industrialization but also in the fact of universal conscription which, especially after a lost war, could become the means of general insurrection.[5]

The capacity of the subjects to deal with internal rulers who had outraged the citizens, or with foreign invaders, was therefore considerable. The right of each man to be armed with the weapons of war was seen to be significantly related to the preservation of freedom and to popular control of the ruler. For example, the Swiss have the strong tradition of each home having a rifle above the hearth, and the

colonial and newly-independent Americans insisted on the right of the citizens to "bear arms."

In the intervening decades significant changes took place in the weaponry of violent conflict, in the technology of transportation and communication, and in political organization. The capacity to wield military power become concentrated in the hands of the ruler. This tended to restore the distribution of power to a condition similar to that of certain societies before the period of democratization described above. In some earlier social orders, wrote Mannheim, where minorities could gain control of the instruments of military power, they could monopolize effective power in the society. That earlier possibility under certain circumstances, with the changes in weaponry, technology, and political organization, now became almost universal, he argued. It was not the number of people willing to fight in a mass violent uprising or civil war, or in a war against an invader which was then most important. It was the weapons which were available. These were normally effectively concentrated under the control of the ruler. Therefore, Mannheim argued in 1949: "In the decisive political conflicts of the near future ... the greatest significance must be attached to the *concentration of the instruments of military power.*"[6] This meant that the traditional means of violent rebellion to achieve liberation became remnants of responses to an earlier stage of military technology and political organization, remnants which had little to do with current military and political realities.

> [T]he techniques of revolution lag far behind the techniques of Government. Barricades, the symbols of revolution, are relics of an age when they were built up against cavalry.[7]

Understandably, in response to this situation groups wishing to remove entrenched unpopular rulers have shifted to other means of doing so in place of mass violent revolution and civil war with relatively conventional strategies. These alternatives which have developed to a significantly greater degree than previously, in both use and sophistication, are coup d'état, guerrilla war, and nonviolent struggle. Before their fuller development, Mannhein had predicted that the concentration of military power would "be followed by a new kind of revolutionary strategy...."[8] Interest and practice of these objectives has grown for a variety of political objectives. This is especially true of coup d'état and guerrilla war. Both revolutionary

groups and established governments, including those of both the Soviet Union and the United States, have been actively interested in both techniques to advance their foreign policy objectives. Users of the coup d'état have accepted the concentration of weaponry, but sought to seize control of it quickly along with the rest of the State. Guerrilla warriors, on the other hand, have combined a political struggle for the loyalty and cooperation of the population with unorthodox military strategies. (These strategies are at least used at the initial stages of a struggle, until the guerrillas amass sufficient military weaponry and disciplined troops to shift to conventional frontal warfare.)

LIMITATIONS OF COUPS D'ETAT

As a quick seizure of the State from the previous ruling group, the coup d'état[9] appears to have certain advantages. It avoids protracted struggle and immense casualties. Once control of the State is consolidated, that apparatus with its bureaucratic, police, and military branches can be actively applied to maintain control over the population and society. Not only active supporters of the coup but also all those persons who simply wish to avoid protracted internal civil war are likely to submit to the new regime. Only a relatively small number of active conspirators and military or para-military units, along with widespread passive submission of government employees, minor officials, and the general population are required for success. The coup d'état, however, is not an instrument of popular empowerment.

When successful, a coup d'état will establish a new person or group in the position of ruler in command of the State apparatus. This ruler mayor may not exercise that power with more self-restraint or for different ends than did the earlier ruler. The coup may or may not accompany or follow expressions of popular discontent with the previous ruler. The coup may even take place against popular wishes and establish a more autocratic regime. A regime brought to power by a coup would clearly continue to depend upon institutionalized political violence for its existence and as its ultimate sanction. The coup maintains, and at times even furthers, the concentration of effective political and military power, rather than

diffusing power throughout the society. This technique possesses no characteristics which operate intrinsically in the short or long run to increase popular control over the ruler or to empower the population. To the contrary, the strong tendency is for continuation of the concentration of effective power in the hands of those occupying the position of ruler.

CENTRALIZING EFFECTS OF GUERRILLA WARFARE

Guerrilla warfare[10] is different in many ways from coups d'état, and within the former are considerable variations. Guerrilla warfare requires considerable support among the civilian population, and in its early stages commonly involves small bands of guerrilla fighters using hit-and-run tactics in an apparently highly decentralized way. It is therefore thought by some persons that guerrilla warfare contributes to empowering people and to decentralizing effective power in the society. This effect may occur in early stages, although it is easy to exaggerate it even at that point.

The long-term results clearly concentrate effective power in the hands of the regime. If the guerrilla struggle fails, the old regime will have been forced to become increasingly autocratic and regimented in the military struggle against the attackers. If the guerrillas succeed, then in the later stages of the military struggle, the rebels' own military capacity grows significantly in numbers, weaponry, and centralized organization; it is transformed into conventional military forces able to fight positional war and to conquer and hold territory and cities. Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) wrote of "the great strategic task of developing guerrilla warfare into mobile warfare."

> Guerrilla warfare [he wrote] will not remain the same throughout this long and cruel war, but will rise to a higher level and develop into mobile warfare. Thus the strategic role of guerrilla warfare is twofold, to support regular warfare and to transform itself into regular warfare:[11]

The final stage of a successful guerrilla war is conventional frontal war, as occurred in Vietnam. This requires the development and expansion of organized and disciplined military institutions. These continue after the success against the enemy, even if in reconstituted forms. That means the creation of a powerful lasting military

system, powerful especially in relation to the other institutions of the society and other branches of the political system. They become a part of the new order's institutionalized capacity for political violence to advance its objectives and to defend itself against internal and external attackers. Hence, the military establishment would be capable of exerting effective pressures, controls, and even of seizing the State in a coup after victory.

One result of a successful guerrilla war is almost inevitable: a far more powerful military establishment relative to the society's civil institutions will exist after the revolution than the former oppressor wielded. As discussed in the previous chapter, the recently institutionalized political violence can be shifted to new purposes which it was never originally intended to serve. These may include repression of the population in service to either the new revolutionary regime or to a group which has seized or manipulated control of the State. In any case, the capacity for effective struggle is now concentrated in an institution of the State, rather than diffused among the population generally. Another guerrilla struggle against oppression by the new regime would at best take much time and - as in most guerrilla wars - involve immense casualties and social destruction. In addition, as long as the population accepts the belief that power derives from violence, the population will perceive itself to be powerless vis-à-vis the new State with its enhanced institutionalized capacity for political violence. Thus, guerrilla war cannot be described as contributing in the long run to increased popular empowerment, much less to reduced reliance on institutionalized political violence.

Therefore, both coup d'état and guerrilla war are types of political violence which become institutionalized and which, in the long run, concentrate effective power in the hands of whatever ruler can gain command of the State apparatus. Aldous Huxley argued:

> A violent revolution does not result in any fundamental change in human relations; it results merely in a confirmation of the old, bad relations of oppressor and oppressed, or irresponsible tyranny and irresponsible passive obedience. In de Ligt's own phrase, "the more violence, the less revolution."[12]

When coup d'état or guerrilla warfare succeed in removing a particular despot, that is all that has happened; those techniques are not capable of abolishing despotism itself, or of establishing lasting controls over the power of rulers. To do so would require changes in

the underlying social condition, the diffusion of effective power throughout the society, and increased ability of the population to control their rulers and any elite by possession of sanctions and means of struggle, and capacity to use them, to defend and advance themselves, their principles, and their institutions.

CONSEQUENCES, OF INSTITUTIONALIZED POLITICAL VIOLENCE

The failure of violent sanctions to empower people generally and to remove the capacity for central domination and dictatorship appears to be rooted in the nature of those sanctions as such, especially in their institutionalized forms. Only atomistic violence by isolated individuals, perpetrated for whatever reason, can be said to decentralize power and to empower individuals, and even then only those individuals who commit it. That empowerment is very limited, however, for the only power which accrues to those particular individuals is the power to kill and destroy, not to create or construct.

When violent sanctions are intended to enforce the established system, to oust an existing regime, to attack internal or foreign opponents, or to defend against attacks, that violence cannot be spontaneous, haphazard, atomized, or decentralized. It cannot be the Spontaneous expression of frustration and hostility. It cannot even be directed by diverse political wills. To succeed for such objectives, that violence must be organized and coordinated, and possess a command system. Such violence must be institutionalized. Advance preparations, a structure, and a command system are required not only to avoid chaos of numerous uncoordinated acts of small-scale violence; they are also required to produce the maximum instrumental effectiveness.

The institutions for applying political violence are unique in the society, precisely because only they are constantly equipped to apply their violence against the other institutions and the population of the society, that is, they can be turned to attack and suppress the rest of the society. Political violence, therefore, is not a neutral technique as has usually been assumed - which can be used for any and all causes without having special side-effects which help to shape the society which uses it, as well as the group or society against which it is used.

Institutionalized political violence in the State helps to determine who rules and who is ruled. That is to say, that capacity to apply violent sanctions helps to determine stratification by political class.* The consequences of the society's ultimate sanction on the distribution of effective power in the society therefore have profound significance for those persons and groups which wish to end oppression and enhance freedom and social justice.

Significant reasons exist which explain why the institutionalized capacity for political violence tends to structure the society toward elitist domination, toward centralized structures in society, economics, and especially politics, and toward the impotence and helplessness of the population. The pressure for centralization and the potential for internal oppression are produced by that institutionalization of political violence which can be shifted to other purposes than originally intended, as discussed in the previous chapter, by the command system and other requirements of those institutions (particularly in crises), and by the disproportionately large effective power capacity of those institutions vis-à-vis the civilian ones. (The last factor can be altered if the civilians do not accept violence as the ultimate source of power and if they learn to transform their power potential into effective power by organization and effective use of nonviolent forms of sanctions, such as economic and political noncooperation.)

The requirements of institutionalized political violence for effectiveness contribute directly and indirectly to wider centralization and regimentation. For example, during actual war the demands for military weaponry, manpower, efficiency, central decision-making, secrecy, economic controls, silencing of opposition, and clear lines of action regardless of legal provisions produce especially powerful centralizing influences. For the defeated side, the results may be more blatant in the form of a military government imposed by the victor. But even for the winning side similar effects are produced on the society and political system. Certain political sociologists and

* Attention must also be paid to social class and economic class dynamics and relationships, and their roles in politics. Stratification is, however, not only social and economic but also political, and it is valid to speak of "political class" in addition to other forms. (See Gaetano Mosca, The Ruling Class [New York and London: McGraw Hill, 1939], and Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959].)

anthropologists, such as Bronislaw Malinowski, have pointed to the apparent causal interrelationships between war and dictatorships, to the tendency for dictatorships often to be expansionist and belligerent, and, conversely, for war to erode or corrupt democratic processes and to increase the dictatorial characteristics of that society.[13] The developments in the technologies of modern military weaponry, transportation, communication, computers, police methods, and other fields continue to aggravate this problem. They combine to increase the capacity of institutionalized political violence to overwhelm, dominate, and suppress the rest of the society.

Countervailing forces to the centralizing impact of institutionalized political violence may exist which modify or restrain the tendencies toward centralization and expansion of the command system. These forces may even prevent the more extreme consequences of the institutionalized capacity for violence. The potential for internal violent action against the rest of the society, or even against the established government itself may not be utilized in a given situation. However, the potential and the pressures are there; they always exist when the society relies on institutionalized political violence to provide its ultimate sanction. Favorable conditions will increase the chances that that potential and those pressures will prevail. Those conditions exist when the independent institutions (*loci* of power) of the society are weak, when their capacity for resistance by other sanctions is negligible, when the crisis facing the society is severe, and when the scale and intensity of the political violence are extreme. When these all occur simultaneously the dangers of the growth of centralization and the expansion of the command system will be great. These may then overwhelm the rest of the society, and significantly modify the character of the society as a whole.

The danger becomes very real when those in command of the institutions of violence are unwilling to abide by established procedures and standards of legitimacy. Most of the coups d'état which have occurred in recent decades have been actively carried out by certain military units, while others acquiesced to the take-over.

In other contexts, too, the side effects of the use and expansion of institutionalized political violence have scarred the original objectives. In the Soviet Union, for example, efforts to achieve justice through the path of political dictatorship for the proletariat commanded by the elite of an elite Party, relying in part upon the army,

political police, prisons, camps, and executions, resulted in a tyranny and political terror under Josef Stalin which was far more extreme than any tsar had ever been capable of imposing. It included the deaths of millions of people in the 1930s in the collectivization and other programs, the creation of one of the world's largest military establishments, and a continuing elite control and regimentation of the economy and political system.

SUBMISSIVENESS AND THE DOCTRINE OF VIOLENCE

In addition to structural consequences, reliance on institutionalized political violence has other serious results for the society. These are psychological -- really political-psychological. They affect the attitudes and feelings of people whose resulting behavior may have profound political effects. If the population believes that the "real" power derives from violence, that it "comes out of the barrel of a gun," then whoever has the guns will find it much easier to control the population. Those who wield the guns are then seen to be nearly omnipotent by those persons without guns -- or at least with fewer guns, smaller ones, guns not wielded by professional troops or not backed by the technology and means of combined modern police, prison, and military systems. It is true that the power *potential* of the people without guns may be very great, and that under appropriate conditions they could mobilize that potential into effective power capacity by noncooperation and defiance to destroy a well-equipped dictatorship. Nevertheless, as long as the people *believe* in the omnipotence of those wielding superior violence, they will be unlikely to mobilize their own power potential. The doctrine that "power comes out of the barrel of a gun" therefore leads to the submission of the people to violent rulers.

The psychological effect on the perpetrator of violence caused by submission of the population to that violence is also extremely important. Submission to violence teaches the perpetrator of that violence to use it again next time. This may have severe political consequences, contributing to the expansion and increasing severity of violence by those who want their own way. Both Mohandas K. Gandhi and B. F. Skinner have pointed to this effect. On the other hand, both of them have insisted that the withholding of both counter violence and submission to the will of the attacker will tend to

reduce future attacks. This response teaches the attacker that the desired objectives cannot be gained by violent means.* Unless this happens, however, the continued application of violence, submission to it, and renewed application of the successful pattern of violence to gain one's objectives will in turn contribute to the centralizing institutional effects which we have discussed above.

The structural tendencies of institutionalized violence in the hands of the State being what they are, whoever uses the State's full capacities with the intent of developing an equalitarian society will fail. At the very least, if the *quantum* of institutionalized political violence remains approximately the same as before, the forces producing centralization, class rule, elitist controls, and the capacity to dominate the population which derive from this source will remain. If the *quantu*m of institutionalized political violence is increased -- as for such reasons as the use of significant violence to seize control of the State or to maintain that control, or expansion of police or military systems to deal with domestic or foreign crises - and if the society's *loci* of power have been weakened while effective power has been shifted to the State, then the distribution of effective power in the society resulting from the use of the State apparatus is likely to be more inequitable than under the previous system. The capacity of the State -- whoever controls it -- to impose domination on the populace will have grown, even under a new political flag which once symbolized the will of the people. Clearly, reliance on violence to empower the people does not work.

It is therefore especially ironic and tragic that the doctrine that "power comes out of the barrel of a gun" -- which is compatible with an oppressive elitist system -- was adopted by various groups which sought revolution against oppression in the name of the people. That doctrine is so crude a reflection of the nature of political power that not even Adolph Hitler subscribed to it. That doctrine ignores the diverse sources of power and the different kinds of power. It also ignores the very important question of who shall wield power, and the consequences of the doctrine on the society and political system. It leads directly to the expansion of institutionalized political violence and of State power, which can be applied to bring about dictatorship, genocide, war, and social oppression. That doctrine, when acted upon in politics, intrinsically leads to establishment of an elite in

* See Appendix C, "Skinner and Gandhi on Defeating Violence."

command of the institutionalized capacity for political violence. For all of the beautiful phrases about "the people" which sometimes accompany that doctrine, the nature of violent political sanctions, when institutionalized as required for effectiveness, actually excludes the general populace from actively exercising power.

By selecting the doctrine that power derives from violence, the so-called revolutionaries have chosen the distillation of the worst characteristics of the social system they denounced as inhuman, and which they wished to destroy, to be the foundation on which to build their new order. It need not, therefore, be wondered that the resulting political system resembles the old one so closely, only in more extreme forms. It is a shattering, but usually unnoticed, fact that in every country in which an avowed social revolution has occurred by means of violent struggle or political dictatorship, there exists a military establishment and system, and a police and prison system, which are more powerful absolutely in weaponry, combat strength, and in surveillance and control abilities, than were those of the *ancien régime*. The new institutionalized capacity for political violence is also relatively more powerful in comparison to the civil institutions of the society and other branches of the political system than was the case under the old order. That produces a society very like the old one, only more so.

In any society institutionalized political violence is intrinsically dangerous to free institutions and democracy. At the very minimum, extreme care must be taken with it. If one wishes to create a society in which people really do rule, and in which oppression is impossible, then one ought to explore alternative ways to meet the society's basic need for sanctions.

Pointing the finger at violence as a main culprit in the genesis of our serious problems is not a naive individualist approach derived from ignorance about politics and from romanticism. Quite the opposite: it puts the finger on a key to an explanation of why our society is the way it is despite our ideals, and may provide the key to discovery of how it can be changed to implement our ideals more adequately.

REQUIREMENTS OF LASTING LIBERATION

"[V]iolence may destroy one or more bad rulers," Gandhi wrote, "but ... others will pop up in their places, for the root lies elsewhere."[14] Real and lasting liberation requires changes in the internal power relationships within the society. These cannot be produced by violence, which will actually impede them. Exponents of liberation who ignore the likely long-term effects of their technique of struggle upon the society they seek to free can only be regarded as shortsighted and irresponsible.

It is also exceptionally important to be clear about whose task it is to liberate people from oppression, of whatever type. So long as the old regime or system is changed or abolished, we often assume that the means make relatively little difference. However, important differences in results tend to follow from alternative answers to that question. Without the direct participation of the population itself in the effort to change, no real changes in the relative power positions between the population and whoever occupies the position of ruler are likely to occur. At most, a new group will replace the old one as ruler. The new one mayor may not behave with greater restraint and concern about the welfare and liberties of the people at its *own discretion*. The liberation of oppressed people must, therefore, if it is to happen, be essentially self-liberation by means which are compatible with a lasting capacity of people to govern themselves and to shape their own society. Otherwise they face the likelihood of a new, even more, oppressive ruler waving a different flag.

The great Indian Gandhian socialist Rammanohar Lohia once wrote that he was tired of hearing only of the need to change the hearts of the oppressors. That was fine, but far more important was the effort to change the hearts of the oppressed, so that they would become unwilling to continue accepting their oppression, and become determined to build a better society. It is weakness in people's determination and ability to act which makes possible their continued oppression and submission. Change that, and they can never again be oppressed. Such self-liberation can only be done through the strengthening of the subordinates by their own efforts.*

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* In contrast to Lenin's confidence in the small elite Party of "professional revolutionaries," Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht argued: "Social revolution and reconstruction cannot be undertaken and realized except by the masses themselves .... The proletarian masses are called on to build Socialism stone by stone by their own efforts. Free, self-government [can only be achieved by] ... the work of the toilers themselves, not by the acts of despair of a minority." (Quoted by Barthelemy de Ligt, the Conquest of Violence [New York: E. P. Dutton, 1938, and London: Geo. Routledge & Sons, 1937, and New York: Garland Publishing, 1972])

According to our understanding of the nature of all political power, people have immense *power potential* because ultimately their attitudes, behavior, and cooperation supply the sources of power to all rulers and hierarchical systems. Power potential is not always, however, transformed into *effective power*. What is required for this to happen? Once the subordinates wish to make changes, and once they are willing to act to do so, they require some type of sanctions. They then need a technique of action through which they can maintain and strengthen their existing independent institutions, create and defend new ones, -and, very importantly, resist, confront, and undermine the power of the ruler. Such a technique should preferably also be one which will in the long run, with repetition, give the subjects a lasting capacity to control any ruler or usurper, and to defend their capacity to rule themselves. The choice of the ultimate sanction to maintain and to change a society is highly important in shaping the resulting society. In contrast to the centralizing effects of violent sanctions, which in the long run disempower the populace, nonviolent sanctions tend strongly to diffuse and devolve power in the society, and particularly help to empower the oppressed and powerless. Let us, therefore, examine some of the structural consequences of nonviolent sanctions.

UNCERTAIN SOURCES OF POWER

An understanding of the nature of nonviolent sanctions is required at this point, although it cannot be repeated here.* These sanctions have major impacts on the distribution of effective power in political societies because of two major factors: (I) the nature of the power of all hierarchical systems and rulers which makes them vulnerable to nonviolent sanctions, and (2) the impact of nonviolent struggle, especially when successful, on the capacities of persons and groups which have waged it. The combined effect of these two factors on the distribution of effective power establishes without question the interrelationships between political power and nonviolent sanctions.

* See the brief discussions of the technique of nonviolent action in Chapter Nine, " 'The Political Equivalent of War' - Civilian-based Defense," and Chapter Eleven, "The Societal Imperative," and the extensive examination in my previous work The Politics of Nonviolent Action (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1973)

The power which rulers wield, their capacity to act, do great or terrible deeds, implement policies and punish, conquer and plunder, serve, dominate, and oppress, is not their power. It does not come from their persons. Nor does the ruler's power come from guns. Rather, it comes from sources in the society which can be located. They include: authority, human resources, skills and knowledge, intangible factors, material resources, and sanctions. These sources are all rooted in the society itself, in its institutions, and ultimately in its people. People must accept the legitimacy of the power-wielder, and cooperate in providing the needed sources of power. They must also submit to orders and even to repression intended to intimidate the populace into obedience if the ruler is to maintain his or her control.

The sources of the ruler's power are derived from people who believe that they should submit because they are morally bound to do so, or because they believe themselves to be too weak to resist, from the people who provide economic resources, pay their taxes, and become the experts, administrators and aids, as well as from the people who staff the armies, courts, and prisons. All these people, and many others, provide the sources of power of all rulers, both beneficent and malevolent.

Hence, the most crucial problem for all rulers: people do not always do what they are told or are expected to do. If people reject the ruler's legitimacy, his or her authority is gone. If people withdraw their cooperation by disobedience, economic noncooperation, denial of needed knowledge and expertise, refusal to operate the bureaucracy, and to cooperate with the administration, then all those sources of power are weakened or removed.

If people are willing to defy both threats and the infliction of repression as the price of change, if police and soldiers become disturbed at their own deeds in repression and come to doubt the legitimacy of the regime already weakened by massive defiance, and, finally, if they then refuse further orders to punish or kill the defiant populace, then the regime is at its end. The people must continue to persist and defy, even in face of repression, until the sources of power are dried up, and therefore the regime is fatally weakened and disintegrated.

Without bestowed authority and ideological legitimacy, without aides and henchmen, without administrators, bureaucrats and a

myriad of helpers, without wealth and economic resources, without institutional backing and administration, without police, prisons, and armies, without obedient subjects, even the most autocratic ruler or ruthless tyrant becomes politically impotent.

Such a dissolution of the ruler's power by withdrawal of its sources demonstrates that the power of rulers, dominating elites, and oppressing classes is not theirs, but rather comes from the very people they would control. The power of rulers is therefore intrinsically fragile. This insight alone opens the way for a conscious choice by people whether to obey and cooperate, and awareness of such a choice prepares the way for a drastic change in power relationships. All the sources of political power are thereby directly vulnerable to nonviolent sanctions.

DECENTRALIZING EFFECTS OF NONVIOLENT SANCTIONS

Nonviolent sanctions often use the refusal by people to do their usual jobs and to behave in the expected ways, and their insistence on behaving in forbidden and unexpected ways, as weapons. These means of action frequently use people's usual roles and positions in society as power bases, and their accustomed functions as power levers. This type of weaponry can, under appropriate conditions, be far more effective than guns because it strikes directly at the sources of power of institutions and rulers. Nonviolent struggle is therefore primarily a power-wielding technique and set of sanctions, capable both of controlling the political power of others and of wielding power in its own right. Oppressors and tyrants fear the spread of this insight into the nature of all political power.

Nonviolent sanctions have several characteristics which contribute actively to decentralization and the diffusion of effective power capacity in the society. These characteristics are related to five main factors:

- the nature of leadership in applications of nonviolent sanctions;
- the qualities of specific nonviolent methods or "weapons";
- changes in the self-perception and attitudes of members of the nonviolent struggle group;

- increased self-reliance of those who wield nonviolent sanctions; and
- the growth of the non-State institutions of the society.

As compared to leadership in violent conflicts, leaders in movements applying nonviolent sanctions generally are less likely to have used violence to control their own group, if such means were available and otherwise acceptable. This factor is not only likely to influence the current conflict, but may also carryover into the poststruggle society because of its association with greater genuine commitment to humanitarian goals and principles. Also such leaders are less likely later to use violent sanctions autocratically to maintain and extend their power position, even if they then hold positions in the State apparatus. Some earlier nonviolent leaders - such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Kwame Nkrumah and Kenneth Kaunda - have accepted positions as prime minister or president and used violent sanctions, while others - such as Mohandas K. Gandhi and Jayaprakash Narayan - have refused or not sought such positions.

In nonviolent struggle movements the leadership is intrinsically unstable, and tends to diffuse downward hierarchically, moving among increasing numbers of people. This occurs because under most such conditions the leadership is deliberately placed "in the front lines" in the struggle and is seized by arrest and imprisonment, or other repressive means. As this occurs, and as communications and transportation may be restricted, new layers of leaders are required, and more leaders are needed since they must operate more locally. This both produces new personnel in leadership positions and multiplies their numbers. Where the struggle movement is strong and repression is severe, as these larger numbers of leaders are seized, the diffusion of leadership may extend to such a degree that the movement becomes effectively "leaderless." This experience may have important long-term consequences for the society, increasing decentralized self-reliance and reducing the perception that centralized leadership is always necessary. (This factor is not present, of course, in cases where the nonviolent sanctions are both initiated and applied by central State decision and orders, such as in international economic embargoes.)

In contrast to that which often occurs in the application of violent sanctions in both civil and international wars, the sanctions which the nonviolent leadership may apply against the members of

their own group to maintain solidarity and to discourage defection to the opponent should be, and are more likely to be, nonviolent ones. Also, since violent sanctions are not used in the struggle against the opponent, no additional capacity to apply them will be developed to be carried over into the postconflict period for possible use for other objectives. For both of these reasons, even the nonviolent leaders who step into, or continue to hold, positions of State authority will not have at their disposal an *increased* capacity to apply violent sanctions which has accrued during the conflict. They may still use the regularly available State capacity for violent sanctions; that will, however, be more limited than it would have been following a violent struggle. That limitation will set certain restraints on internal repression.

Following violent struggles the new regime may aim to prevent unwanted challenges by taking possession of weapons and controlling the supply of weapons and ammunition. In these circumstances, with the population's faith placed in the efficacy of violent sanctions, even the most severe excesses of the regime are likely to go unchallenged by action of types which cannot be ignored. In the case of nonviolent sanctions, however, the weapons are not physical ones which can be seized, controlled by regulation of supply, or made inoperative by restriction of ammunition. Knowledge of various nonviolent weapons - nearly two hundred at least exist - once gained is not as easily controlled as physical weapons and ammunition. Previous experience in their application also operates as "training in battle." This will contribute significantly both to their actual ability to conduct such struggles in the future, and to their confidence in their ability to do so. Both of these may be very important in determining the distribution of effective power following that particular conflict. People who have, and know that they have, the capacity for independent effective struggle are more likely to be treated with some respect by governing elites than people who are in crises politically impotent. Experience in the application of nonviolent sanctions, especially when successful, arms the population with an ability to do so again should the need arise, as when the new ruler alienates the support of the majority of the subjects on matters of extreme importance.

When nonviolent sanctions are applied successfully, the people using them are likely to experience an enhanced perception of their

own qualities and capacities which reflect actual changes in them. Before subordinates in the relationship can begin to use nonviolent sanctions they must change their prior attitudes of submissiveness and acceptance of inferiority. The group very probably has previously been passive and believed itself to be helpless in face of perceived wrongs. When they then begin to act to correct their grievance they are likely to experience a liberation from that sense of powerlessness. This change is likely to grow as their movement continues and gains strength. At the beginning of the conflict, the actionists may need consciously to control their fear of the opponent's sanctions, but later they may discover that they are no longer afraid. This change is not only important for individuals; it is important politically, for it undermines hierarchical systems which have depended on fear of violent punishments to keep the subordinates "in place." Their own willingness to act and to persist in the face of dangers, and the recognition by the opponent and others of their new power are likely to contribute to an increase of the group's self-esteem. The group will see their qualities and capabilities to be more significant than they previously perceived. Knowledge that they possess genuine strength even vis-à-vis the power of the State is likely to nurture a new spirit and arouse a new hope that they can help shape their own future.

Somewhat less certainly, the nonviolent actionists may become more respectful of the life and person of others, even their opponents in extreme conflicts. The actionists may also become more able to think through problems for themselves, reach their own decisions, and adhere to them even in difficult circumstances. While these are highly personal qualities, to the degree that they develop they will in the long run indirectly affect the distribution of effective power in the society.

Effective nonviolent sanctions are likely to strengthen the group using them, both absolutely and in comparison to the opponent group. Internal group solidarity and ability to work together are likely to grow. Increased internal cooperation is both a requirement in many cases for effective use of nonviolent sanctions, and also the result of such action. Internal cooperation is needed to apply the nonviolent sanctions effectively, and also to provide those needs formerly met by the opponent with whom cooperation has been withdrawn. The latter may include alternative ways to maintain social order even in the midst of conflict, as well as various social,

economic, and political needs. To provide these, members of the group will need to increase their self-reliance and self-help, which will contribute further to self-empowerment. Existing institutions may be strengthened, they may be modified to meet needs more adequately, or changed in their internal operation. New institutions may also be created. These are constructive counterparts of noncooperation with the opponent. They can help to change existing power relations very quickly during an on-going conflict. The result could be lasting structural changes.

Sometimes this balance of noncooperation with cooperation is consciously planned and organized, while at other times it happens spontaneously and rapidly without plans or preparations. When the institutional changes are only temporary, they will contribute to changes in the power relationships between the contending groups while the struggle continues. When the institutional changes survive beyond the immediate conflict, they can have profound structural consequences contributing to the diffusion of effective power in both its institutional and its sanction forms.

One further factor may indirectly have long-term consequences for the power distribution of the society. The use of nonviolent sanctions will reduce the tendency for the struggle group to become themselves brutalized as a consequence of the struggle itself. Violent sanctions in a liberation struggle, revolution, or continuing defense effort mean a constantly increasing round of brutalities, retaliation, and counter-retaliation. The human personality becomes coarsened and hardened, until finally the human sensitivity and ability to react to human suffering wither, and all but die. The person who once struggled against inhumanities now pursues with ardent zeal the methods which when used by the opponent were once deplored, toward a goal the heart of which has been forgotten. This development is unlikely to occur in nonviolent struggles, which provide other sanctions which require abstinence from acts of violence and brutalities. This difference may have very important effects on the nature of the poststruggle society and political order.

Associated with this brutalization is one other factor important to the future society but probably not very consequential for the distribution of politically-significant power. Espousal of some type of political violence as the ultimate sanction of the society, and demonstrations of its practice in the legitimated forms of police shootings,

executions, and war, are likely to instruct individual members of the society, including antisocial and emotionally unstable ones, that violence is indeed the ultimate sanction. It is highly doubtful that our efforts to restrict its use to certain institutions of the State - and then only for designated purposes, and when authorized by established procedures - can be effective as long as certain people, rightly or wrongly, feel that their own objective is valid and can also only be gained by violence. Legitimated acts of violence on behalf of the system may therefore unintentionally contribute to non legitimated acts of violence by individuals and groups with their own problems and objectives. The use of nonviolent sanctions on behalf of the system would not have that effect; it might instead contribute to the use of nonviolent sanctions by individuals and groups acting on their own, even against the standards and principles of the rest of the society. That might not be ideal, but it would be a considerable improvement over the multiplication of individual and group violence.

As a consequence of the effects of nonviolent struggle on the opponent's own power capacity and also on the power capacity of the group applying nonviolent sanctions, a fundamental alteration in power relationships will occur under appropriate conditions. This differs fundamentally from the power situation following the institution of changes by other peaceful means, including conciliation, legislation, court decision, or executive decree. In those cases, unless power changes have been made independently by other forces, the relative distribution of power after the specific change will remain approximately the same as it was before. Nothing will have occurred to change it, and people will not have gained increased abilities to restrict the power of their opponent, nor to wield sanctions themselves. Even when a major limited demand or objective has been thus granted, the people themselves would still be no more capable of achieving their will against the opponent or ruler who is unwilling to grant their wishes. Similarly, the immediate item which has been granted may, when the occasion suits, be as easily withdrawn. That which is given, and not earned, can as easily as it was received be taken away. That which is earned by work and struggle has durability, and is capable of both defense and further development by the people who have become empowered during its achievement.

SHAPING A SOCIETY'S "POLITICAL CONDITION"

The structural influences of violent and nonviolent sanctions playa significant role in determining the political condition of the society as a whole. The "political condition" of a society can be defined as the configuration of three main factors: (1) the way in which the political system operates; (2) what it does; and (3) what it cannot do. A political condition includes such specific elements as: the degree of concentration or diffusion of effective power; the society's ideals and goals; the system's humane characteristics and accomplishments; its capacity to impose a dictatorship, commit genocide, wage wars, and impose or support social oppression, and the likelihood' of its doing any of these; conversely, its capacity to nurture and support freedom, democracy, social justice, and peaceful relationships internally and externally; the degree to which the society serves human beings or stultifies and harms them; and the extent to which it meets (or allows to be met) the diverse human needs outlined earlier in this chapter. Political conditions clearly differ widely, both within a single society from one time to another, and also between different societies.

These factors are not isolated and unrelated specific characteristics, but are interrelated in a variety of ways. On the basis of analyses in this and earlier chapters, it appears that the political condition of a society is closely associated with: (1) the actual distribution of effective power in the society (as distinct from the legal or constitutional allocation of decision-making authority); and (2) the type of ultimate sanction relied upon by the society and the extent to which it is developed into institutionalized capacities. Further attention is needed to the interrelationships between these two factors.

In Chapter Two, "Social Power and Political Freedom," it was argued that different types of institutional distribution of effective decision-making power, associated with the number and strength of the *loci* of power, supersede in importance the formal constitutional allocation of authority. The actual distribution of power in the political society and the actual practices of that society may differ from, or even be incongruous to, the formal constitution or the espoused ideals and doctrines of the society. Both of those are important, but are clearly secondary to the ways the society actually oper-

ates. Strong *loci* of power may impose actual limits on even a theoretically omnipotent autocrat. Conversely, weak or negligible *loci* of power will permit the ruler of a State with a formal democratic constitution to rule autocratically, or even to scrap the constitution, essentially at will.

In Chapter Eleven, "The Societal Imperative," it was also argued that the institutionalized capacity for political violence, once established for any purpose, can be shifted to other purposes not originally intended, and that this shift can be made essentially at the will of the persons in command of those institutions (unless other forces intervene). Hence, dictatorship, genocide, war, and systems of social oppression were viewed as closely interrelated, for they were four applications of institutionalized political violence; without that capacity they could not occur. Institutionalized political violence was seen to be the necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the development of those four phenomena. The absence of such institutionalized capacity, on the other hand, should allow more positive conditions to develop. In addition, the decentralizing and empowering effects of nonviolent sanctions, as discussed in this chapter, will tend to produce new conditions and characteristics of the political society which will exceed those which we have termed freedom, respect for life, peace, and social justice.

Both institutions and sanctions are, therefore, seen to be highly important in shaping the political condition of a given society at all times, and they are interrelated. For example, in a society with strong *loci* of power people will be more able to use nonviolent sanctions effectively as they will have organizational bases for group struggle. These *loci* are likely to be especially important when they control sources of political power. On the other hand, the *loci* of power are likely to be strengthened and people's capacity to organize is likely to increase during significant nonviolent struggles, especially when they are strong enough to succeed.

In the following discussion we are primarily concerned with influences of the distribution of effective power and sanctions on the political condition of the society. As a key element in any power capacity, sanctions will be discussed as a separate phenomenon, and we will narrow the remainder of the elements of effective power down to "institutional distribution of effective decision-making capacity."

A SOCIETAL FORMULA

The basic hypothesis to be explored here is that the interaction between the institutional distribution of effective decision-making capacity and the society's sanctions - including their type, capacity, and practice - are the central factors which over time will tend to produce the society's "political condition." As the two factors will vary from time to time, and on occasion change significantly, so as a result the political condition will also change. We are referring to the situation of both factors in the political society as a whole - including the general populace, the independent organizations and institutions (the *loci* of power), and the governmental bodies (including the State). While it is most difficult or impossible to measure each factor with precision, that is not necessary for our purposes; we are dealing with the major characteristics of the distribution of decision-making and the sanctions used. It may help to express this relationship as a formula:

Institutional distribution of effective decision-making capacity	interacting with	Sanctions: type, capacity, and practice	over time produces	The political condition

In the long run, the political condition is created and modified by the interaction of the relative institutional distribution of effective decision-making capacity and the type of sanctions relied upon, including their capacity and practice. Other factors may also operate on the political condition, but these two are seen to be dominant.

The operation of this formula may be illustrated by showing the influence of particular combinations of institutional distributions of decision-making and sanctions, in cases in which these are relatively clear. We will present this for five different conditions which, although analytical models, approximate actual political conditions.

Condition One: In this type of situation, the *loci* of power are extremely weak, or have been systematically undermined and destroyed. Effective decision-making has been very highly centralized in the hands of a very small elite in command of the State apparatus,

which also controls any other significant institutions which are present. The sanctions of the political society are overwhelmingly violent ones. A highly developed institutionalized capacity for such violent sanctions has been developed in both police and military forms. Violent sanctions are widely applied by threat or practice for internal control and in international relations.

When that combination of types of decision-making and sanctions exists in the political society the resulting political condition will be a type of dictatorship capable of oppressing society, waging war, and inflicting genocide if the ruler of the system wishes to do so. This would be true even if the ideals espoused and the ultimate goals of the system were humane, and even if a written constitution still nominally in force established very different procedures and practices. In the latter case, the ruler could easily abolish the formal constitution and bring the official structure in line with the actual political system. Condition One can be illustrated by this diagram:

Highly centralized decision-making	interacting with	Strong violent sanctions	over time produces	Dictatorship capable of extreme action

Condition Two: In this type of situation the *loci* of power are very strong in comparison to the State structure and are capable of independent decision-making even in opposition to the ruler in command of the State apparatus. The sanctions of the State are violent ones, and the sanctions of the *loci* of power include nonviolent sanctions in their internal operations and most relationships with each other. However, the loci of power for extreme crises also rely upon violent sanctions. The resulting political condition will tend to be unstable.

The unstable political condition will include a high degree of freedom and democracy, an absence of systematic social oppression, and the like. However, should a crisis of serious proportions arise, it would result in major expansion of the capacity and practice of violent sanctions. The centralizing effects of such violent sanctions would tend to have institutional effects. As the military requirements

for effectiveness necessitate, and as the institutionalized capacity for political violence in the hands of the State is expanded and applied, the relative strength of the *loci* of power in comparison to the State is likely to decline. This is likely even if the violent struggle, as against an invader, is initially waged by guerrilla war; in major struggles the early decentralist stages of guerrilla warfare are in later stages supplanted by increasing centralization and transition to conventional military forces and combat.

On the other hand, given the initial unstable situation, if in a major crisis nonviolent sanctions are relied upon instead to combat the danger, with a resulting expansion of their capacity and practice, the effects on the political condition are likely to differ significantly from those following violent sanctions. Instead, assuming success, the decentralist institutional characteristics of the society are likely not only to be preserved but even to be expanded, thereby avoiding various consequences of violent sanctions and introducing those of nonviolent sanctions which we have discussed. These situations of Condition Two can be diagramed:

Basic situation

Decentralized decision-making among *loci*	interacting with	Violent State sanctions, limited nonviolent but mainly violent sanctions by *loci*	over time produces	Unstable condition

Alternative A

Unstable condition	affected by	Major expansion of violent sanctions	over time produces	Weakening of *loci* and expansion of State

Major expansion of violent sanctions

Alternative B

Unstable condition	affected by	Major expansion of nonviolent sanctions	over time produces	*Loci* strengthened and differing consequences of nonviolent sanctions

Condition Three: In this type of situation the institutional structure of the society is highly centralized, with *loci* of power few or weak, and decision-making concentrated in a small elite in command of the State apparatus. The State has in the past relied upon institutionalized violent sanctions, but this has ceased to be the case and nonviolent sanctions have become more important due to particular circumstances and responses. This situation is unstable.

The probable outcome of this unstable condition will vary with a number of factors, including the reasons for the shift to nonviolent sanctions and the thoroughness and permanence of the change. The shift might have resulted from a major policy change by those in command of the State apparatus because of the perception that against an impending attack by an overwhelmingly militarily superior enemy, military resistance was suicidal. Or, the shift might have occurred because of a successful nonviolent revolution against the previous system. In the former case, rapid planned or unplanned devolution of decision-making from the centralized State would be necessary for effective resilient nonviolent struggle against the attacker. In the latter case, the devolution of decision-making is likely already to have occurred; either existing independent institutions have become democratized and assumed for themselves significant decision-making authority, or new *loci* of power with decision-making capacity have been created prior to or during the revolution.

The longer-term effects of the shift to nonviolent sanctions on the political condition are then likely to be determined by the degree to which the changes are lasting. If the changes are temporary, and violent sanctions are reinstituted and again become the overwhelmingly predominant ultimate sanctions of the society, then the centralized structure dominated by a small elite is again likely to emerge. On the other hand, if the change to nonviolent sanctions is lasting, and

they become the predominant sanctions of the political society instead of violent sanctions, then the resulting political condition is likely to be one of enhanced popular empowerment, more adequately meeting human needs, and avoidance of the consequences of institutionalized political violence. These situations of Condition Three can be diagramed:

Basic Situation

Highly centralized decision-making in State structure	interacting with	Major shift from violent to nonviolent sanctions	over time produces	Unstable situation

Alternative A

Unstable condition	affected by	Reinstitution of violent sanctions	over time produces	Creation of new centralized elite-dominated structure and institutionalized political violence

Alternative B

Unstable condition	affected by	Expansion and institutional-ization of nonviolent sanctions	over time produces	Popular empowerment and decentralized society

Condition Four: In this type of situation the decision-making capacity is highly diffused among strong *loci* of power with the central State apparatus weak. Nonviolent sanctions have been systematically adopted and institutionalized in place of violent sanctions, and are highly developed with strong capacity to function when needed as reserve or applied sanctions. The resulting political condition is likely to be relatively stable, with high popular empowerment, without the dangers of institutionalized political violence, and with strong contributions to freedom, democracy, respect for life, domestic and international peace, and social justice. The situation of Condition Four may be diagramed:

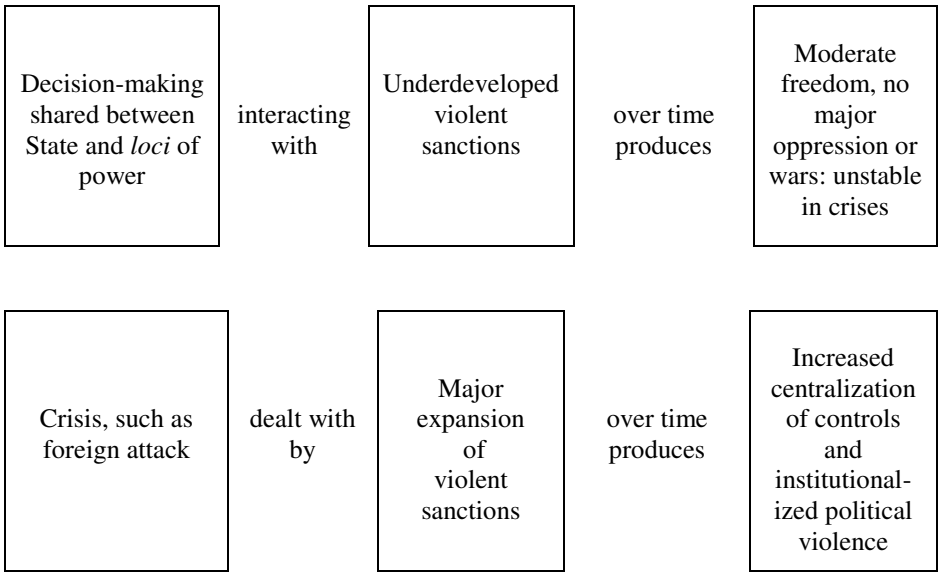
Diffused decision-making structure	interacting with	Strong nonviolent sanctions	over time produces	Popular empowerment and positive social conditions

Unless completely new factors are introduced, the above Conditions One and Four are relatively stable, so that when one knows the distribution of decision-making and the type of sanctions one can predict fairly accurately their consequent political conditions. On the other hand, Conditions Two and Three are highly unstable. In those cases until the type of distribution of effective decision-making and the choice and development of ultimate sanctions are both settled, it is impossible to predict with any accuracy the ensuing political conditions.

Condition Five: The above four conditions involve either the strong reliance on one of the types of sanctions or a period of uncertainty in which the society hovers between reliance on one type or the other. In a fifth condition effective institutional decision-making is shared, in various possible proportions, between the State and the *loci* of power. The development and use of nonviolent sanctions are extremely limited or negligible; at the same time, however, the violent ones, although accepted as the society's ultimate sanction, are weak and relatively undeveloped. This can occur when perceived dangers and threats requiring strong sanctions of any kind are absent or weak. The resulting political condition is likely to be one of a moderate but significant degree of freedom, respect for life, without extreme social oppression, and few major violent conflicts and wars, if any. Pressures to decentralize and devolve power which come from nonviolent sanctions will be absent, although such pres-

sures could come from other sources, such as beliefs, philosophies, and institutional needs.

This political condition is likely to remain stable only so long as no crises arise which produce a major need for sanctions. If such crises occur, the capacity for violent sanctions is likely to be expanded quickly. Their development and large-scale use will exert pressures toward increased centralization of decision-making and institutional controls, and toward other consequences of large-scale institutionalized political violence. This condition can be diagramed:



Critical examination of this theory about the roles of the types of distribution of decision-making and of sanctions in shaping the political condition of a society is required. If the theory is valid, however, it will have fundamental ramifications for development of new grand strategies of social change which are more adequate than those of the past.

DEVELOPING STRATEGIES OF EMPOWERMENT

Many people readily accept that it is possible to change our political institutions to a significant degree by conscious choice. The capacity to make these choices to reshape our political societies also applies to the selection of the type of sanctions relied upon by our

society and to a decision as to whether our political systems are to be highly centralized or instead possess a diffused decision-making system. Analyses in earlier chapters have suggested that the existing ways to meet necessary functions of a society are not the only possible ones. If effective alternative ways can be found or developed they can replace the present ways as functional substitutes.* This insight, Robert K. Merton wrote, "unfreezes the identity of the existent and the inevitable."[15] With this emphasis on the possibility of functional substitutes that type of analysis becomes a key to basic change, rather than a status quo approach as some persons have charged. This approach then becomes an intellectual tool which makes it possible to develop ways to achieve fundamental change, including the resolution of the complex problem of political violence, which has not only not been resolved but has rarely been faced in its fullness.

RECOGNITION OF ALTERNATIVES AS A KEY TO BASIC CHANGE

Our failure to resolve the problems of institutionalized political violence, and various sub-problems such as war, has been largely rooted in our failure to perceive that violent sanctions are not the only possible ones, and that we can explore the potential of alternative nonviolent sanctions. This failure has been one of perception of both persons who strongly support Western liberal democracy and capitalism and also those who oppose them and support instead one of the socialist systems.

This type of analysis, however, points the way to examination of functional alternatives, or functional substitutes, which, if instrumentally effective, might do the needed jobs instead of the way they are presently done. This may be the key to basic change in our political sanctions. As we have seen in this and earlier chapters, nonviolent sanctions have been used in place of violent sanctions in many situations in the past in highly diverse societies. Alternative nonviolent sanctions therefore do exist. This opens the way for basic change to the extent that they are substituted for violent sanctions. If they are or can be made effective, and if they are adopted in a series of

* See Chapter Nine, " 'The Political Equivalent of War' -- Civilian-based Defense," and Chapter Ten, "Seeking a Solution to the Problem of War."

specific substitutions as discussed in the previous chapter, then the violent sanctions can be abandoned as unneeded. A series of such substitutions would contribute to systemic change involving increasing popular empowerment and institutional democratization.

This analysis of substitute ways to meet societal needs is not limited in its application only to sanctions, however. It can be applied also to our centralized large-scale institutions with their elitist decision-making processes and their disempowerment of the people affected or controlled by those institutions. These include both large-scale economic institutions and the State apparatus. To the degree that we can, step by step, vitalize, expand, and even create important substitute non-State institutions and lower levels of participatory government to meet the social, economic, and political needs of the society, we can reverse the extraordinary gravitation of effective power to the large corporations and the central State apparatus.

As we contemplate the problems of our society and the growth of centralized State power, we need to do more than to conserve those aspects of our society which originated in the past which remain valid and important today, and more than to make changes to right particular wrongs. We must deliberately act in ways which strengthen the non-State institutions of our society, and consciously refrain from increasing the concentration of effective power in the State.

Simple denunciation of the dangers of strong central government, the insensitivity of bureaucracies, or the high tax rates can produce no lasting solution· to the problem of elite control, centralization of power, and constant expansion of the size and prerogatives of massive corporations and the State apparatus. Institutional change is required. One way to do this is to develop alternative institutions to meet those desirable and necessary functions now provided by the large centralized institutions.

Some tasks now carried out by the central State apparatus are not really needed, or are even inappropriate to a society which speaks so often of freedom and democracy. Those functions, and those parts of the State apparatus which are involved in them could simply be abolished to the advantage and welfare of the society. However, most general functions which are (or are supposed to be) carried out by the central State apparatus, and many proposed additional ones, are seen by most people to be desirable and necessary. The State's involvement in meeting those needs will not be drastically reduced or terminated until and unless those functions are being otherwise successfully performed by other bodies. Consequently, if one wishes to halt further expansion of the central State apparatus, one needs to develop alternative ways to meet neglected genuine social, economic, and political needs which reformers propose can be remedied by State action. Expansion of the State into the society and economy cannot be blocked by abdication of social responsibility or by neglect. Nor can it be done by leaving everything to the huge centralized national and multinational corporations. Unless alternative institutions and solutions are developed, progressive expansion of the State apparatus still further into the society is inevitable.

In order to reduce progressively the size of the existing central State apparatus, and thereby its dangers, it will be necessary to create or strengthen smaller-scale institutions (*loci* of power) with decentralized decision-making to provide genuine needs, and then gradually to shift to them tasks now carried out by the State. We need to aim toward a much larger number of institutions, each individually operating on a smaller scale with high democratic participation, cooperating where needed with others on projects of regional and national concern.

None of this is meant to imply that small-scale organizations, institutions, and lower levels of government are always idyllic cases of humanity and participatory democracy. But, at their worst, smaller institutions can do less harm than large ones. With smaller bodies it is easier for their participants and constituents, acting directly, to correct problems. Smaller institutions make possible greater participation and control by those directly concerned than do large ones.

On the governmental level, despite or even because of the developments in politics during the past century, we need to consider carefully various ways to increase democratic control and participation. Hannah Arendt's ideas, discussed in Chapter Six, "Freedom and Revolution," merit particular consideration. Where organs of direct democracy have survived even in mangled forms - such as the New England town meetings or Midwestern farmers' organizations - we need to explore how to preserve them and bring new vitality and responsibilities to them. Where they do not exist, we may need to explore how to initiate responsible experiments in introducing them to deal, initially, with limited but significant matters.

The combination of the gradual development and adoption of

both substitute nonviolent sanctions, and of independent smaller-scale institutions in a stage-by-stage program of responsible change, would help to develop a political condition which implements to a far higher degree than at present the ideals which our society espouses.

NONVIOLENT LIBERATION STRUGGLES

The long-term structural consequences of both violent sanctions and nonviolent sanctions have strong implications for liberation struggles against various types of oppression. Two points are clear:

1. Liberation must be primarily self-liberation; and
2. Only liberation by means which strengthen the subordinate group can contribute to long-term changes in power relationships, and thereby prevent future oppression.

These are not comforting prospects. It would be much easier if one could find some "liberator" who would overthrow the oppression single-handed, without effort or costs being required from the oppressed. Although belief in that prospect is widespread, it is dangerous. That belief is based upon a failure to distinguish between a particular oppressor and a general condition of oppression. In that condition the populace is constantly vulnerable, because of weakness, to whoever might gain the position of ruler and use it to oppress them. In that condition, one oppressor may simply be replaced by another. "Liberation" which is given by the oppressor in a fit of magnanimity or for ulterior motives, or "liberation" which is delivered to the oppressed without major effort on their part by a third party which has intervened and defeated the old oppressor, does not strengthen the subordinates and their institutions, and can be taken away as easily as it was received. On the other hand, liberation which is won by the oppressed themselves, as a result of self-strengthening efforts and the waging of noncooperation and defiance, replaces the condition of oppression with a condition of self-reliant societal strength and therefore cannot easily be taken away. This latter condition will have far more beneficial and lasting long-term consequences.

As long as people are able to think for themselves and maintain their self-respect, they will struggle to achieve, preserve, and extend their freedom. Yet it happens that in many countries and under various systems the power of the ruler and the economic elite is so extensive and uncontrolled that the condition suffered by the general population can only be described as oppression. The particular type of system may vary. It may be the remnants of colonial rule, foreign occupation, economic exploitation, social domination (as of women and untouchables), racist systems, internal dictatorship, or have some other name. When people seek to throw off oppression, to establish popular control over political power, over social domination, and over elites of various kinds, they are struggling for liberation.

The problem of liberation has, therefore, not disappeared simply because most of the old European colonial regimes have been replaced by indigenous regimes. Freedom - in a wide social, economic, and political sense - still remains a goal imperfectly achieved at best, and in many cases blatantly violated in extreme ways under various systems and flags.

The important questions therefore become *how* the oppressed shall wage their struggle and achieve the change, whether they will succeed, what the costs will be, and whether a substantially better society will result in the long run, one which approximates freedom.

The question of how to struggle is often answered by the emotions derived from the pain of past oppression. Struggles for liberation of any kind always contain emotional and highly subjective elements. In any revolutionary situation something intangible is present which is difficult to analyze objectively. It is even more difficult to produce this intangible element by careful analysis and rational decision.

It is a spirit of a people rising against conditions which they can no longer tolerate and at the same time remain true to themselves, their beliefs, and their dreams of the future. It is the willingness at a given moment to stake all against odds which cannot be calculated, lest the intellect decree against the heart which is fundamentally the creator of revolutions. It is the courage to strike the first blow for freedom while others stand waiting for a sign. It is the willingness to go on, knowing, if one counts the odds, that one cannot win. It is a person willing to die for a future that only others will see.

While the emotional element is therefore strong in all types of social change movements, the avowed goal is not simple satisfaction of one's personal psychological needs but to produce change. Espe-

cially in major liberation and revolutionary movements, if one allows oneself to be guided solely by emotions, one may make serious errors in the choice of instruments - both sanctions and institutions - for achieving one's objectives. If one has a sense of responsibility for the results actually achieved, which will affect many people now living as well as future generations, one needs to consider carefully how to achieve one's goals instrumentally, as well as how to meet one's personal emotional needs.

This choice is not simply between the ways which appear easy and difficult. Often ease and difficulty in means are hard to predict, and if one is seeking basic change, there often is no easy way. Nor can one calculate solely on the basis of anticipated differences in suffering between the use of violent sanctions and nonviolent sanctions. Those differences must be considered, and it appears that nonviolent sanctions produce far less suffering and far fewer casualties than do violent sanctions. That is important, but cannot be the single factor considered. Whether one chooses to struggle or to do nothing, the victims of oppression will suffer.

In all cases of oppression, the most important single problem of liberation movements is how to act by means which will change the situation, end the unjust conditions, and establish lasting control by people over their own lives and society. The extent of the change required, whether minor or fundamental, will strongly affect the type and extremity of such action. In revolutionary situations, the problem is simply more severe, but it is essentially the same problem.* The problem is strategic: how to act so as to achieve maximum effectiveness to end the immediate oppression and to establish an alternative system with greater justice, popular control, and freedom. This problem requires the attention of all who would combat oppression and build a better society.

* Barthelemy de Ligt wrote: "The great problem of revolutionary action by the masses lies in this: how to find the methods of struggle which are worthy of men and which at the same time even the most heavily armed of reactionary powers will be unable to withstand." (Barthelemy de Ligt, The Conquest of Violence: An Essay on War and Revolution [New York: E. P. Dutton, 1938, and London: Geo. Routledge & Sons, 1937, and New York: Garland Publishing, 1972], p. 163.)

KEY FACTORS IN NONVIOLENT LIBERATION

These are a few of the significant factors which must be considered by persons and groups which wish to achieve liberation by nonviolent struggle:

1. They will need to understand as fully as possible the nature of the opponent and system, and of the wider situation in which both the opponent and the group which is struggling will operate. Lack of understanding, or errors in perception, may lead to serious strategic or tactical mistakes. Accurate and fuller understanding of the opponent and society may make possible the choice of the most effective courses of action.

2. The type of sanctions - the technique of action - to be used in the struggle needs to be consciously chosen with consideration of both short-term and long-term consequences, the strengths and weaknesses of the struggle group and of the opponent, and the wider context in which the conflict occurs. This choice should not be left to chance, the decision of small groups, the fruits of bitterness, or unexamined assumptions about power.

In the past, very often the type of sanctions has not been chosen consciously, and too often the rebels have relied upon political violence which their opponent was better equipped to use. That choice has often been immediately disadvantageous, and has contributed in the long run to a different type of society than desired, as discussed above.

3. Nonviolent sanctions - the methods of the technique of nonviolent action - need to be thoroughly understood. This includes the technique's theory of power, methods, dynamics, and mechanisms of change, requirements, conditions for effectiveness, principles of strategy, responses to repression, and alternative means of concluding individual conflicts.

4. Broad knowledge of the grand strategy of struggle and of the nature and requirements of nonviolent sanctions needs to be spread widely in the society. That will enable the general population to act in harmony with them, whatever may be the points of their action and level of participation.

5. Individual strategies, with supporting tactics, are needed for

each particular situation, to be developed with the background of the above, and additional, factors.

6. As large a group of people as possible needs to be developed with a dedication to the cause of liberation, a thorough understanding of nonviolent sanctions, and a willingness to use them in a disciplined manner.

7. Constant attention to the condition of the struggle movement in the constantly changing conflict situation will be required. Efforts will be needed to remedy its weaknesses. Particular campaigns will need to be evaluated for lessons.

8. Where a struggle has broken out spontaneously, it may be strengthened by intuitive and intellectual understanding of the technique which is already being used, and also by initiatives developed during the struggle by persons with greater understanding of this type of sanctions.

9. In a major struggle, to the degree that it is compatible with nonviolent discipline, militant initiatives and strategies of conflict are required, along with accurate perceptions that the nonviolent sanctions are being instrumentally effective. If these do not happen, demoralization or a shift to violence may develop, with harmful consequences.

10. Assuming sufficient strength, the nonviolent struggle movement must persist in the face of repression and intimidation, and refuse to submit. Leaders must set an example in this for all participants: they must not allow the opponent to make it appear that they have accepted reduced punishment in return for reduced resistance. Such behavior contributes to demoralization or to a shift to political violence; it can only be corrected by rejection of those leaders and by launching more militant nonviolent initiatives.

11. Unless the populace and *loci* of power are extraordinarily strong in comparison to the State apparatus, liberation cannot usually be achieved by a single brief struggle. Instead, it is likely to occur in phases. During these phases the subjects' strength increases, their ability to apply nonviolent sanctions grows, their social groups and institutions (loci of power) develop and strengthen, while the opponent's sources of power are restricted or severed, and while third parties have time to shift their loyalties and support. At certain points, dissension and weaknesses may appear within the opponent group. On the other hand, the nonviolent struggle group may

increase its effective power capacity to achieve its objectives.

12. It is essential to remember that this type of liberation struggle is one of constant development and change, with nothing remaining static permanently. At times rapid changes may occur.

13. The forms of final victory also vary, from a graceful negotiated agreement to a complete collapse of the opponent's position and power as the extreme possibilities.

Attention to such factors as these will ensure that attention is paid both to institutions and to sanctions in the course of the conflict in order that the type of society they will tend to produce is compatible with the ideals espoused by those who sought change in the first place.

NONVIOLENT SANCTIONS FOR "UNJUST" PURPOSES?

Nonviolent sanctions have been used for purposes which many people would call unjust, and on occasion nonviolent challenges to the established elite have been met with counter nonviolent sanctions or with other responses that did not involve violent repression. These developments have disturbed some people, especially persons who hold that only people who believe in an ethical or religious system enjoining moral nonviolence should or can use nonviolent action. Demonstrably, others *can* and have used nonviolent sanctions, often with initial effectiveness. Whether persons pursuing "unjust" causes, or persons and groups seeking to defeat a challenge by nonviolent action, *should* use nonviolent sanctions to that end is a more complicated question than might first appear. Our answers to these questions will affect the proposal made in this book to develop systematic substitutions of nonviolent sanctions for violent ones.

The first preference of the group engaged in nonviolent struggle would, of course, be that groups pursuing "unjust" causes, or seeking to defeat a nonviolent struggle movement, should adopt the aims espoused by the nonviolent group. Those types of nonviolent action which seek to convert the individual members of the opponent group, as distinct from those which seek settlements by accommodation or nonviolent coercion, are intended to achieve that end. However, not all people using nonviolent action can or should pursue change solely by the conversion mechanism. In any case, it is naive to expect that

every group which is challenged by nonviolent means will easily abandon their long-standing beliefs, practices, and goals. At times, it is even undesirable that they should do so. For example, the nonviolent group may be in the eyes of many on the "wrong" side of the issue; after all, at a certain point the Nazis organized economic boycotts of Jews, and advocates of integration in the Deep South were at times subjected to social and economic boycotts by segregationists. Even when the nonviolent group is on the "right" side, something more may be required than quick changes in the opponent's beliefs. Changes in power relationships may be required, for example, and these take time and effort to achieve.

It is a fact that persons, groups, powerful elites, and classes are going to continue to hold beliefs, persist in practices, and pursue goals which many of us would reject as "unjust," regardless of their being challenged by nonviolent sanctions. It is also a fact that when these bodies are challenged by nonviolent means those groups will usually refuse to capitulate and will react with application of sanctions. That is a basic "given" factor of the conflict situation which cannot be wished away by those who would prefer it to be otherwise.

It is in this context that the question of such groups using nonviolent sanctions must be viewed. Given their beliefs and situation, they will use sanctions of some type: the only question is *which* type. Does one prefer that such groups use violence? Since ultimate sanctions are of two types, violent sanctions and nonviolent sanctions, one or the other will be used. No third option is available. Therefore, within the constraints of the situation, one must ask whether it is "better" - by whatever standards of measurement - that the sanctions used are violent or are nonviolent.

When the groups and institutions which are backing "unjust" causes abandon violent sanctions to achieve their ends and substitute nonviolent sanctions, those bodies will still be "a problem." It would be far better, for example, if their outlooks, such as racism, which motivate their actions could be replaced by views and beliefs which recognize the human dignity of all people. When that does not happen, however, it is much to be preferred for the society as a whole, and for the group against which they vent their hostility, that the groups shift from violent sanctions to nonviolent sanctions to pursue their objectives. For example, if a "white" racist group is willing, in support of its beliefs, to march under strict nonviolent discipline

under all conditions during that organized demonstration and in the future, that can be a major advance in humanizing the way in which extreme conflicts are fought out in a racist society. That event must be compared not only with the ideal in which racism is abolished, but also with the earlier methods of racist groups, including lynchings, beatings, bombings, and other acts of physical violence to harm, kill, and intimidate people.

Occasionally when people realize for the first time the possibility that nonviolent sanctions not only can be powerful but can be adopted by racist and other groups whose outlooks and policies they detest, they ask: "What if Hitler had used nonviolent action to achieve his goals?" Had Adolph Hitler and his Nazi cohorts shifted from violent means to only nonviolent ones, they would still have been a serious threat but the whole nature of Nazism would have been changed. Racism, anti-Semitism, and elitism would still have been present and would have required vigorous countermeasures from those people and groups who rejected them and who wished to remove their influence. However, without violence the Nazis could never have established concentration camps, tortured and executed political opponents, exterminated Gypsies, Jews, Eastern Europeans, and others, or invaded or bombed other countries. Had the Nazis restricted themselves only to economic boycotts, marches, and hunger strikes, for example, they could in the atmosphere of that time still have done much harm, but there would have been no Holocaust and no war. The issues of racism, anti-Semitism, elitism, and the leadership principle could have been the direct objects of attack by the opponents of Nazism - in contrast to what actually happened during the Second World War. The adoption of nonviolent sanctions and abandonment of violent sanctions by groups whose views and objectives we regard as unjust is a change to be welcomed as a very limited but significant step toward the needed more fundamental changes.

It is far better that nonviolent sanctions be used for "unjust" causes, and that they be applied against a movement for change which is itself using nonviolent action than that those same groups Use violent sanctions for the same purposes. This is because the individual and societal consequences of even this use of nonviolent sanctions are preferable to those of violent sanctions.

CONSEQUENCES OF NONVOLENT SANCTIONS

Nonviolent sanctions, as compared to violent ones, will tend to:

- result in significantly less physical suffering, injury, and death;
- be psychologically far less injurious to the participants (Franz Fanon documented psychological damage to users of violence for revolutionary purposes,[16] and such injuries among United States soldiers in Vietnam are well known);
- affect profoundly the course of the conflict, reducing escalating physical and social destruction, and introduce very different dynamics with less harmful and even beneficial results;
- help to maintain the focus on the issues at stake in the conflict, rather than shifting it to other matters, thereby opening the way for a lasting resolution of those issues;
- contribute to major shifts in power relationships toward diffusion of power and popular empowerment; and
- contribute to the development of a new stage in the application of sanctions in political societies in which unresolved acute conflicts are fought out by use of nonviolent sanctions on both sides, instead of by violence and counterviolence.

This last factor is likely to lead to refinement of nonviolent sanctions in a variety of ways. These will include increased consideration of the factors contributing to success, of human factors involved in the conflict, and of the need for improved mutual understanding. Perhaps most importantly, the uses of nonviolent sanctions for "unjust" purposes and as countersanctions to challenges by nonviolent struggle will contribute to the break from the old pattern of violent sanctions against violent sanctions with its consequent centralization of effective power, great concentrations of institutionalized political violence, and potential for grave consequences.

REVERSING DIRECTION

Present policies intended to deal with our major problems give few grounds for encouragement, and are not easy or free of risks. If something new does not begin to reverse our present direction, the path toward our future is dim. The tools at the disposal of modern States for operating dictatorships, conducting genocide, waging war,

and supporting social oppression continue to be refined and continue to grow. It is our societal imperative that we reverse that direction.

We need not only ways to topple a particular dictatorship. We need to develop the capacity to prevent the development of any dictatorship. We need not merely bewail past genocide. The greatest honor to the victims of the Holocaust, the dead Armenians, and many others, would be to learn how to prevent genocide from ever occurring again. Our need is not only for policies which will enable us to survive or limit a war. We need to prevent wars by adopting a different means of combat and developing a capacity to deny future attackers their objectives. We do not need the types of opposition to social oppression or those programs for liberation which result in continuing powerlessness of people, or, worse, a new system of political enslavement in the name of the people. Instead, we need to restructure human institutions and facilitate self-empowerment so that no one can ever oppress us again.

The analyses in this volume have pointed toward a broad framework for changes to deal with these problems and to meet human needs more adequately, requiring both changes in institutions and in the type of sanctions on which we rely. We need now to develop these as key components of a comprehensive program for acceptable change:

1. A constructive program[17] to build new institutions and renovate and revitalize existing ones to meet human needs more adequately; and

2. Development of capacitites to apply nonviolent sanctions in place of violent ones for meeting particular needs in a progressive series of substitutions.

These main components of a grand political strategy of work, resolution, and renovation rely upon means which intrinsically diffuse, rather than centralize, decision-making and effective power, strengthen the independent institutions of the society, and stimulate self-reliance. Since empowerment of people is an essential part of ending oppression, these means are likely to be, in the long run, more effective to that end than either open political violence or reliance on central State action, whether by legislation, executive orders, or judicial decision. Experience in both types of activities is also likely to increase people's ability to tackle for themselves other problems which beset them and to resolve self-reliantly the difficulties of the future.

A CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAM

A constructive program consists of a variety of activities to remedy social problems and meet human needs more adequately. It does this by changing attitudes, social practices, and institutions by means of voluntary organized action, including the building of new institutions and sometimes the renovation of existing ones. The constructive program has been described as the scaffolding upon which the structure of the new society will be built. The various aspects of a constructive program are conceived as an intermeshed program of social reconstruction, in which the autonomous activities of a variety of organizations and groups contribute to an integrated, but flexible, program for constructive development and change.

Examination of the potential of this possible contribution to change is merited, as an alternative to both existing situations and to continued expansion of State action to remedy social ills and meet human needs. The development of an encompassing constructive program requires major efforts of a variety of people and groups with diverse experiences, analytical abilities, expertise, and skills. Appropriate broad fields of work would include social, cultural, educational, political, economic, and environmental problems, issues, and alternatives. Specific areas of work and tasks to implement them need to be selected under such broad fields, depending on the needs of the individual society. These tasks would then be implemented by a combination of individual, group, and institutional action, independent of both massive corporations and the State apparatus, in order both to deal with the specific need and simultaneously to strengthen the society as a whole.

EXPLORING NONVIOLENT ALTERNATIVES

The second key component of a comprehensive program of acceptable change is development of capacities to substitute nonviolent sanctions for violent ones to meet a wide range of social and political needs for sanctions. This includes serious exploration of the potential of nonviolent sanctions, and, where they are or can be made to be feasible, development and implementation of plans to substitute them to meet particular needs for which people have generally relied

upon violent sanctions. This component will at times precede the constructive program and at times operate parallel to it. The exploration and adoption of nonviolent sanctions need not, and ought not, wait until institutional change is at an advanced stage.

Our responsibilities here include three tasks: (l) to survey the resources upon which we can draw, that is, to learn more about the nature, effectiveness, and potential of nonviolent sanctions; (2) to determine what at any given point are the extent and means by which they can be substituted for violent sanctions; and (3) to take those steps as part of a series of specific substitutions. In each of these tasks the active involvement of many people is needed in the investigation, education, thought, planning, work, and action. There is, therefore, a task and a responsibility for each of us.

The first of these tasks includes, among other parts, education about the nature of nonviolent alternative sanctions and noncentralist institutions. This education includes both that offered within our formal educational institutions and that which in more diffused and less institutionalized ways is offered to members of the general public. Let us discuss each of these.

Educational institutions must never become vehicles of indoctrination or distortion by a biased selection of subject matter. However, it is not only legitimate but imperative to correct the selective biases of the past in the choice of subject matter. These biases may have derived from the preconceptions people have held and from the views of special groups. Various topics and fields have been belittled, slanted, or excluded in the fields of study. These biases need to be corrected by the inclusion of important additional subject matter and knowledge. For example, a series of additions to our history courses and texts is required. The field of history is especially important, for on the basis of our understanding of what has happened in the past, we shape our perception of what can happen now and what are the options among which we can choose for shaping our society in the future. Consequently, the primary focus of so many of our text books and courses on wars and the actions of powerful kings, emperors, and presidents, to the neglect or deprecation of major nonviolent struggles, of popular self-government, non-State forms of government, and small political units, of the movements of people to correct the social evils of their day and to build a better society, is extremely serious and indeed politically dangerous. A whole series of additions

to our histories is required to balance the record. Comparable additions are required in courses in other fields.

There will also often be a need far special courses. These include ones which help students to learn haw to make group decisions, haw to develop the skills far effective group participation, haw to resolve conflicts, haw to analyze and resolve problems, and others. Courses specifically on nonviolent action are urgently required in our educational institutions an all levels from primary schools through graduate studies in universities.*

The general public remains largely ignorant of haw this nonviolent technique operates, its history, its requirements, haw to apply it to achieve maximum effectiveness, and its consequences. It is possible to correct past neglect, and to bring to nonviolent sanctions a variety of tools to increase our knowledge of them. This knowledge and various viewpoints about nonviolent alternatives can then be offered to the public through several means, including adult education courses, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and books. These means can also be used to encourage critical discussion and evaluation of these options. This spread of knowledge of nonviolent sanctions will enable people to consider them intelligently. Ta the degree that people find merit and potential in these options, they are likely to become more sympathetic to serious exploration and adoption of nonviolent sanctions in place of violent ones. This would be a necessity, for example, prior to and during any serious consideration of the potential of a civilian-based defense policy, or any other official shift to substitute nonviolent sanctions.

With or without the opportunity for public and official consideration of the possible merits of shifting to nonviolent sanctions, increased public knowledge of them is likely to have significant effects on the distribution of effective power in the political society. 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 mare likely apply alternative nonviolent sanctions. This will bath help them to deal with the serious and genuine conflicts of our age by their actions, and simultaneously avoid the destructiveness and pitfalls of political violence.

* See Appendix E, "Twenty Steps in the Development and Evaluation of Nonviolent Sanctions."

Knowledge of how to act, how to organize, and how skillfully to transform one's power potential into effective power in nonviolent struggle enables even otherwise disfranchised people, to whom the doors of participation in the institutions which affect their lives have been shut or never opened, to wield effective power and to participate in the determination of their awn lives and society, When blockages are placed in development and operation of parts of the constructive program, people will be able to act peacefully to remove them in order to resume work to resolve present problems and build democratic institutions.

SUBSTITUTING NONVIOLENT SANCTIONS

Effectiveness in this type of sanctions is not the result simply of spirit or the will to change. In addition to emotional components, an almost technical element exists in how to apply nonviolent sanctions with maximum effectiveness. This includes such questions as organization, strategy and tactics, choice of specific leverages, group discipline, and responses to the sanctions of the opponent. In these and other aspects we can learn haw to utilize them more skillfully. We can develop resources, make preparations, and develop training programs far the efficient application of nonviolent sanctions for diverse purposes in place of violent ones. These various steps are important in the substitution of nonviolent for violent sanctions.

As discussed earlier, nonviolent sanctions have already been substituted for violent sanctions in many situations. These substitutions are therefore, in principle, possible.* With the foundation of the recommended research, policy studies, training, and preparations, further deliberate substitutions should be possible. These include both those which are noninstitutionalized initially (as struggles for changes in the society and political system), and those which are from the beginning institutionalized (as deliberate shifts to nonviolent sanctions to operate and maintain the system). These substitutions may begin slowly and with considered deliberation in same situations. They may develop rapidly in other cases.

* See Chapter Nine, " 'The Political Equivalent of War' - Civilian-based Defense," and Chapter Eleven, "The Societal Imperative." For fuller treatment, see Sharp, The Politics 0f Nonviolent Action.

With the emergence of effective substitute nonviolent sanctions a new path for the resolution of the problem of political violence would open. People would not then have to choose between use of political violence and acceptance of political irrelevancy. They will have the option of effective nonviolent sanctions. These alternative sanctions would break the cycle of presumed necessity that each side in a conflict use violence against the violence of the opponent. It would no longer be necessary to postpone removal of violence from politics until the arrival of some distant condition of political nirvana, or vainly to attempt to gain massive numbers of converts to moral doctrines prohibiting all violence. It would become possible to begin specific important changes in this highly imperfect and dangerous world by developing and substituting nonviolent sanctions for violent ones.

Some of the general needs for which substitute nonviolent sanctions might replace violent sanctions are:

- enforcement of minimal standards of acceptable social behavior;
- conducting conflicts in which both sides believe they cannot compromise without violating their principles;
- righting wrongs against particular groups;
- defense of basic liberties;
- liberation and revolution against oppression;
- defense of the constitutional system against internal usurpations (as coup d'état); and
- national defense against foreign invasions and occupations.

Several of these are discussed in earlier chapters.

Two important questions arise from this: Could nonviolent sanctions be effective for meeting these specific needs for sanctions in each particular situation? Could the substitutions be successfully achieved, and if so how? Those questions will require major attention in each instance in which a substitution is contemplated.

The change in sanctions therefore would *not* be a sweeping adoption of a new way of life by the whole population, nor a sudden sweeping transformation of the whole society. It would instead be a phased comprehensive attempt over some years or decades to develop and substitute nonviolent sanctions for violent ones, moving from one particular substitution to another, for those functions for which our society legitimately requires effective sanctions and today

relies upon political violence. At times more than one such changeover might take place simultaneously. As these specific changes proceeded, a demonstrated viability of the substitute nonviolent sanctions for one purpose could facilitate consideration of similar substitutions for other purposes. However, specific adaptations and preparations would be required for each specific changeover where the shift was to be institutionalized in the system. There by, the changes would by stages reduce the overall reliance on institutionalized political violence and on noninstitutionalized political violence for all purposes. The consequences of this, as discussed in the previous chapter, would be profound.

POPULAR EMPOWERMENT

The substitution of nonviolent sanctions for violent ones on a major scale will likely have far-reaching and fundamental ramifications for the society. These will extend beyond meeting the particular need for sanctions and beyond short-term effectiveness for the nonviolent sanctions on the particular issue and occasion. The decentralizing effects on the structure of the political society have already been discussed earlier in this chapter. Nonviolent sanctions will also contribute significantly to the more equitable distribution of power by empowering the people as a whole who learn how to apply them. The combination of these two consequences of nonviolent sanctions can have profound results. This offers an important "handle" for getting a hold on the problem of how to move our society closer to the ideals which it espouses.

People "armed" both with the ability to organize and work together to achieve positive goals in aspects of the constructive program and also with the ability to apply the technique of nonviolent action will not need to seek "someone" to save them - "the government," "the Party," or the most recent political "leader." They will instead be capable of saving themselves, even in extreme situations. Richard Gregg pointed to this consequence of nonviolent action in the 1930s when he wrote:

> Reforms will come to stay only if the masses acquire and retain the ability to make a firm veto by mass nonviolent resistance.... Hence, reformers would be wise to lay less stress upon advo-

cacy of their special changes and concentrate on the teaching of nonviolent resistance. Once that tool is mastered, we can make all sorts of permanent reforms.[18]

Popular empowerment will enable people to revitalize freedom, to make it more durable and genuine. It will make it possible for them to end social oppression by direct popular efforts which turn helpless victims into masters of their own destinies. This capacity can also empower potential victims of genocide and others to resist successfully any future attempts at extermination. Popular empowerment will also help people to cast off, and remain free from, internal and foreign elite domination, by defeating attempted internal take-overs and international aggression by civilian modes of struggle. Because these sanctions build on the basic nature of all social and political power, when bolstered by training and preparations, they provide the capacity to make quickly major acceptable changes in political societies which people have commonly thought would not be possible except in the very distant future.

This type of social change cannot be implemented *for* the people, by whatever means, no matter who makes the attempt - "good people," "true conservatives," "the Party," "real liberals," or "genuine radicals." Instead, this exercise in rethinking politics points toward a process which the general population, consisting of people of diverse talents working through many institutions, may initiate and implement on a long-term basis. It is a process in which people are acting to shape the present, and simultaneously are increasing their ability to act to determine their future.

The conception of acceptable change as presented in this volume can offer no panaceas, no easy path, no guaranteed safety, no assurances of success in every respect and on each occasion. However, the possibility exists that we can deliberately contribute to the development of a new stage of human history. We can resolve the acute problems with which we have been confronted for so long. We can be on the verge of a new departure of human capacities, which we can develop if we wish, in order that people can regain, or perhaps for many achieve for the first time, the capacity to control their own destinies.

NOTES

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[3] See Gene Sharp, The Politics of Nonviolent Action (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1973), pp. 10-11.
[4] Karl Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction: Studies in Modern Social Structure (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), p. 48
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid. Italics are Mannheim's
[7] Karl Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time: Wartime Essays of a Sociologist (London: Routledge, 1966 [1943]), p. 10. For earlier discussions of the difficulties of violent liberation struggles under modern conditions, see also Aldous Huxley, Ends and Means: An Inquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for their Realization (London: Chatto & Windus, 1938), and Barthelemy de Ligt, The Conquest of Violence: An Essay on War and Revolution (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1938, and London: Geo. Routledge & Sons, 1937, and New York: Garland Publishing, 1972), pp. 70-85.
[8] Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 49, n. 2.
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[11] Mao Tse-tung, "On Protracted War," in Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung, p. 246. See also pp. 210-217 and p. 247.
[12] Aldous Huxley, "Introduction" to Barthelemy de Ligt, The Conquest of Violence, p. x.
[13] See Quincy Wright, A Study of War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), vol. I, pp. 232-242, 302, and esp. 311; Bronislaw Malinowski, "An Anthropological Analysis of War," American Journal of Sociology, vol. XLVI, no.

4, esp. p. 545; and B. Malinowski, Freedom and Civilization (New York: Roy Publishers, 1944), esp. pp. 265 and 305.

[14] Harijan, 21 September 1934, p. 250; quoted in Gopi Nath Dhawan, The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi (Third rev. ed.; Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1962 (1957]), p. 276.

[15] Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949), p. 52.

[16] Franz Fanon, Wretched of the Earth (trans. by Constance Farrington; New York: Grove Press, Evergreen Black Cat Edition, 1968), "Colonial War and Menntal Disorders," pp. 249-310.

[17] On the theory and components of Gandhi's constructive program, see Gene Sharp, Gandhi as a Political Strategist, with Essays on Ethics and Politics (Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1979), Chapter Five, "The Theory of Gandhi's Constructive Program," pp. 77-86.

[18] Richard Gregg, The Power of Non-violence (Second rev. ed.; New York: Schocken, 1966, and London: James Clarke, 1960), p. 146.