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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) | [Next entry](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_national_conference_on_religion_and_race) | |
| In line with his belief in [**nonviolence**](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_nonviolent_resistance/), Martin Luther King worked closely with the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), often sponsoring the organization’s statements. He told a journalist in 1961, ‘‘I am a strong believer in disarmament and suspension of nuclear tests’’ (King, 29 October 1961).  SANE grew out of a meeting of pacifists and anti-nuclear activists in April 1957. Initially conceived as a liberal ad hoc committee to stimulate debate on the hazards of nuclear testing, SANE soon became a leader in the struggle for disarmament. On 15 November 1957, SANE ran a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* warning Americans: ‘‘We are facing a danger unlike any danger that has ever existed.’’ Inspired by the enthusiastic response to its Times advertisement, SANE redefined itself as a mass membership organization, gaining 130 chapters and 25,000 members by the following summer.  King became involved with SANE in March 1958, when he joined several other notables in sponsoring the organization’s second public advertisement. Over the following years, he sponsored and signed dozens of letters, petitions, brochures, and advertisements for the organization. In 1961 King said, ‘‘I don’t think the choice is any longer between violence and nonviolence in a day when guided ballistic missiles are carving highways of death through the stratosphere. I think now it is a choice between nonviolence and nonexistence’’ (King, 29 October 1961).  As the war in [**Vietnam**](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_the_vietnam_war_1961_1975/) escalated, SANE became more active in the anti-war movement. In 1965, before King’s first major speech on Vietnam, [**Coretta Scott King**](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_king_coretta_scott_1927_2006/) joined with SANE spokesman [**Benjamin Spock**](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_spock_benjamin_1903_1998/) to rally against the war in New York and Washington, D.C. Two years later, King, Jr., and Spock co-chaired the spring Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam. Many in SANE’s liberal leadership were hesitant to align with the more radical anti-war organizations, however, others like Spock, thought it was essential to collaborate effectively with other peace organizations. Although the organization faltered in late 1967, it reinvented itself while campaigning for Senator Eugene McCarthy’s presidential race.  After King’s death, Coretta Scott King continued to work on behalf of SANE. SANE membership peaked during Ronald Reagan’s presidency, and Coretta Scott King was invited to sit on the organization’s advisory council. In 1983, commemorating the organization’s historic link with the civil rights movement, SANE held a reception for Mrs. King on the 20th anniversary of the [**March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom**](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_march_on_washington_for_jobs_and_freedom/).  In 1987 SANE merged with the grassroots-based Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, and SANE/FREEZE changed its name to Peace Action in 1993. As the largest grassroots peace network in the U.S., Peace Action remains engaged in activism and policy advocacy today.  **References**  Katz, *Ban the Bomb*, 1986.  King, Interview by John Freedom on ‘‘Face to Face,’’ 29 October 1961, MLKJP-GAMK.  SANE, ‘‘We Are Facing a Danger Unlike Any Danger That Has Ever Existed,’’ *New York Times*, 15 November 1957. |