Christian Peacemaking

From Heritage to Hope

Daniel L. Buttry

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To

Saboi Jum

"Blessed are the peacemakers
for they will be called children of God."

(Matthew 5:9)

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Foreword

Dan Buttry's *Christian Peacemaking* is an important book for the church at the end of the most violent century in human history. In his work as a denominational and an individual peacemaker, Dan Buttry has shown a remarkable understanding of the things that make for peace. He knows, and has shown here, that it often takes only one person's courage and determination to bring about phenomenal change. In this book he nourishes us with stories—lots of extraordinary but true stories—of peacemakers, both those who are our contemporaries and those among the cloud of witnesses who have gone before us.

Obviously, every author and theologian has his or her own special angle of vision. Although mine is not identical with Dan's, I believe he successfully covers a vast area of space and time in a skillful, illuminating fashion.

What makes this book unique is the way Dan has woven together the scriptural foundation for peacemaking with a focus on action—the transformation of real conflicts in the real world. He recounts powerful examples of faith expressed in action, often at great risk, that prove how peacemaking can flow out of the depths of Christian faith.

Dan clearly has a high view of Scripture and challenges others to get more involved in peacemaking efforts and to follow through on the Bible's teachings about peace and justice. I commend his challenge to us to make a dramatic, active, and positive contribution to shaping human life and society on this planet as we face the future.

Ronald J. Sider
President,
Evangelicals for Social Action

Acknowledgments

How long does it take to write a book? One answer regarding this book would be three months; another would be a lifetime. My own peacemaking has grown out of Christian convictions shaped as a child and nurtured through the influence of many people. From my parents who modeled and taught the gospel to me and gave me the strength to hold my convictions, to teachers whose questions stretched my mind and who opened to me the treasures of history and philosophy, to activists who taught me by example and story, my life has been filled with a rich heritage upon which I have drawn in writing this book. I give thanks to those upon whose shoulders I humbly stand.

I also give thanks to my companions along the way who have shared the peacemaking journey with me and often challenged me to fuller expression of my faith in action. First and foremost is my wife, Sharon, who has prayed, marched, dreamed, worried, cried, and rejoiced with me throughout this journey. She has always called me to my fullest humanity rooted in God. My children, Christopher, Jonathan, and Janelle, have also been my teachers. Sometimes they have shown the childlike faith of which Jesus spoke; at other times they have revealed my own growing edges in letting Christ's peace rule in my heart. Friends at the Dorchester Temple Baptist Church in Boston and in the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America have been my community of nurture and faith as we have sought to enflesh the gospel in a variety of settings, and especially to build justice and peace.

More specifically in the production of this book, thanks must go to National Ministries of the American Baptist Churches for providing the time and funding for writing through granting me a professional development leave. Aidsand Wright-Riggins and Thelma Mitchell have been special sources of encouragement. My colleagues in the Division of Social Ministries have covered my responsibilities there as well as provided the intellectual and spiritual stimulation to refine my ideas. Marge Jones, my secretary, has been invaluable in her work, managing the office while I was on leave and overseeing the production of the text. Thanks also go to the staff of NM's Word

Management Center for their production assistance, particularly Dorothy Carew and Victoria Goff. The staff of Judson Press, most notably Kristy Pullen and Harold Rast, have provided direction and been midwives in the delivery of this baby.

In doing the research for many of the stories in this book I have depended on others with more direct access either to the events themselves or to the materials I needed. Alice Findlay, Fred Downs, Bob and Helen Delano told me the story of the Nagaland peace initiative. Beverly Carlson of the American Baptist Historical Society and Jim Stutzman and Carolyn Schrock-Shenk of the Mennonite Central Committee's Conciliation Service helped provide historical and academic material. Roger Dewey and Rich Thompson aided my memory about events in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Saboi Jum, Amparo de Palacios and John Paul Lederach all gave insight into their experiences in peacemaking and helped to correct some of my misperceptions. The United Nations Forces in Cyprus gave me an inside look at their work and challenges.

Collecting the photographs for this book has been a new challenge and an enjoyable experience. I thank all the people and organizations who allowed me to use their photographs in this book. Special thanks must go to Sherry Nelson for her efforts digging through the *Sojourners*' archives, to Sally Savage at the Fellowship of Reconciliation, to Fred Clark at the International Ministries Library for the American Baptist Churches, and to Paula Womack at the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. Their work in securing these photos has greatly enhanced the presentation of the stories told here.

Before the publisher received the manuscript a number of friends read the text and provided helpful critiques, from grammar to substantive ideas. I owe them all a great debt: my wife, Sharon Buttry, my mother, Harriet Buttry, Ken Sehested and Paul Dekar of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, George Lakey, nonviolence activist and trainer, and Larry Pullen, my predecessor at the Peace Program Office. Whatever is in this book has been refined and improved by their input, though any shortcomings can only be laid at my door.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the people of many countries who walked with me through this project, those who have suffered from war and have committed themselves to struggle for a just community. I have carried them in my heart in demonstrations, at peace conferences, and while writing at my computer. I have seen the face of Jesus in them, which has given me the perseverance to maintain the course in the peacemaking journey.

Introduction

A torrent of alien stimuli bombarded my senses as I stood, nervous and impatient outside the hotel on Nathan Road. Kowloon's bustle and ever-pressing human throng cascaded around me. I took in the double-decker buses with their gaudy advertisements, the splashes of color in the signs I could not comprehend, the lights of the alleys packed with merchants in their stalls and the constant cacophony of the traffic.

I had never been to Hong Kong before or even dreamed of it until a week earlier, when I was asked to come to meet with Brang Seng, the chairman of the Kachin Independence Organization and one of the leading figures in the ethnic insurgency in Burma.[1] The Kachins were fighting against the military dictatorship in a war almost three decades old which had often become a struggle for survival against genocidal policies. Many ethnic groups, such as the Karens, Shans, Mons, Arakans, and a host of others, had taken up arms since Burma achieved independence from the British in 1948. A year earlier I had begun working with Rev. Saboi Jum, a Kachin Baptist leader, in an effort to open negotiations between the military regime and the armed opposition. Months went by with no response; then, in January 1990 the first hopeful sign came from the government. After initial contacts with the insurgents, we were now waiting to meet with some of their leaders to discuss the prospects for negotiation and a response to the military's proposals.

My nervousness had not been eased by watching Gene Hackman in *The Package* on the flight across the Pacific. With my mind full of spy films and thriller novels, I waited for our secret rendezvous with "The Chairman." Suddenly a man armed with a cellular phone emerged from the crowd to greet us. He led us to a car that wound through the streets of the Kowloon District and brought us to a Chinese restaurant. When we were ushered in, we saw Brang Seng, a man of average build with a wide and gracious smile, who was waiting for us at a large round table. He played the host role with a gregarious charm, like the elder of a clan. And so began my baptism into a convoluted mediation process beyond my wildest imagination.

The process to bring about negotiations in Burma is no success story, at least not yet. It may never be. The deeper I got into the effort to bring peace to Burma, the more complex the solutions seemed to grow. The historical animosities and the political implications of any action or statement were tangled like a Gordian knot, leading many to despair and others to violence. Saboi Jum believed with an unflagging hope and passion that there was a way to bring peace, and that he as a church leader had a responsibility to labor for that peace. He had come to my office, where I direct the Peace Program for National Ministries of the American Baptist Churches, asking for assistance in the quest for peace. It seemed like an invitation to play Pancho to this Asian Don Quixote, but the more we talked, the more I knew we needed to do whatever we could. Even if we fell short we would achieve more than if we never tried. Saboi was my introduction to the world of courageous doers who put action to their words of peace, a far more populous world than I had known, of people both famous and unheralded.

The world in which peacemakers labor is going through a period of transition. The new centers of power are not yet clearly defined in the wake of the Cold War. Wars and social turmoil are being generated as old power centers collapse and new ones emerge. Though the nuclear standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union is over and treaties for substantial disarmament have been signed, the safety of nuclear arms cannot be take for granted. Nuclear proliferation is still a danger, as seen in the development of the Iraqi and North Korean nuclear programs. Pakistan and India may have nuclear weapons, and with their disputes over Kashmir the Indian subcontinent is one of the most dangerous flashpoints in the world.

A host of ethnic conflicts are exploding around the world during this period of transition, especially in the wake of the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Hatreds suppressed by Communist power are now wreaking havoc in former Yugoslavia and some former Soviet republics. Tribal rivalries in Africa are heightened by the artificial boundaries drawn by colonial powers, triggering long and grinding wars in already impoverished countries. The struggle of indigenous people in the Americas continues five hundred years after the arrival of Europeans, frequently flaring into insurgencies and military repression. Racism in North America and Europe is rampant, whether directed against the descendants of slaves from Africa or the immigrants from poorer countries coming to the industrialized nations for jobs. The gap between rich and poor is growing larger, accentuating the desperation of the

dispossessed and the fear of those who cling to their dominant status. The new wars, then, are not so much conflicts over ideologies—with the background threat of nuclear holocaust—as they are conflicts over ethnic and economic issues. The fighting is close and face-to-face, rather than distant and technological. Civilians, especially the poor, women and children, are the main victims.

So what should Christians do to bear witness to the God of peace in this period of transition and turmoil? In this book we will examine two major forms of peacemaking: nonviolent action and conflict resolution. If we are to make effective use of these approaches to forging peace, we will need to understand their governing assumptions and dynamics. Before we can go forward, we need to look back. We need to learn about our heritage of nonviolent action and conflict resolution so we can use them effectively in the future. Western history is often presented in ways that give little attention to how peace is built, focusing instead on names of political leaders, battles and borders, technological breakthroughs, and cultural highlights. But peacemaking is often achieved through the work of lesser-known people who, with great courage and commitment, mobilize movements at the grassroots that shift the ground upon which political leaders stand. Mediators do their work behind the scenes and are seldom noted by any except the serious students of history. We need to recover and learn from the history of peacemaking so we can take a broader wealth of understanding and communal experience into our contemporary moments of challenge and decision.

This book undertakes that task by first examining biblical teaching on nonviolence and conflict resolution. Although Christians claim to draw their values from the Bible, they often have little understanding of the breadth of biblical teaching on peacemaking. A biblical grounding can help the Christian peacemaker draw upon the deep wells of spirituality that provide energy and guidance for facing contemporary challenges.

The history of the development of nonviolent action and conflict resolution will then be surveyed, with special attention given to the work of Christian people. These are stories not often told, so the lessons and inspiration of this part of history will be lost unless we intentionally recover and learn them. Often Christian peacemakers are isolated, not realizing that sisters and brothers in other contexts are grappling with similar concerns and conflicts. Gaining a sense of the global sweep of peacemaking can encourage us in our particular work for justice and peace; we sense we are part of a larger drama that gives our work greater significance.

Equipped with a biblical perspective and drawing upon the wisdom gained from the experiences of both distant and recent history, we can then face the questions of where to exert our energies in our own day. As we stand at the edge of a new century, can we give the gift of wise and hopeful action to the world? As the news bombards us with continually shifting crises, the temptation is to let our attention flit from one place to another, always reacting to immediate stimuli and never affecting more than the superficial layers of social experience. By gaining reference points that cover a wide span of time and space, we can move into the future with the strength that comes from having broad horizons. Armed with long-range vision, a large database of human and cultural experience, refined theoretical analysis and clarity about God's values for justice and peace, Christians can be shapers of a more humane and just way of being. The final chapter thus draws upon these resources to set forth an agenda for intentional Christian peacemaking that can take us into the next century.

Prior to plunging into the biblical and historical material, we need to be clear about the basic concepts of conflict, nonviolence, and conflict resolution covered in this book. Conflict is an integral part of human life and society. It is universally experienced as human beings or groups find their goals clashing with other people or groups. Though universal, conflict takes different forms in different cultures. Some forms of conflict are constructive, as people work through their differing needs and perspectives to create solutions that meet those needs. Other conflicts degenerate into destructive cycles of attack, defense, and retaliation which may ultimately be expressed in violence.

The variety of images used for conflict can reveal an individual's or a culture's attitude toward conflict. The word comes from the Latin *confligere* which literally means "to strike together." Images of sparks and heat are expressed in this more Western view of conflict. Many Eastern cultures have the understanding of conflict expressed in its Chinese symbol, which is made of the characters for danger and opportunity, thus focusing more on the challenge of conflict than on a collision of goals and interests.[2] Conflict itself is not evil, though many evils are born in conflict situations. Sometimes the absence of visible conflict can mask gross injustice and repression. Stimulating open conflict may be necessary to overcome such evils, as one lances a boil to drain its poison. The goal for Christians and other people of good will is to achieve a just peace whether between two individuals or between nations. How we approach conflict will determine to a great degree whether the goal of a just peace will be achieved.

One way people engage in conflict is through nonviolent action. "Nonviolence" is a negative and somewhat misleading term. It can suggest a passive refusal to engage in violent activity, but that is not what is in view in this book. Here nonviolence will be the term used to designate actions taken to engage in conflict and struggle without doing violence to persons or, in most cases, property. Gene Sharp defines nonviolent action as "a technique used to control, combat and destroy the opponent's power by nonviolent means of wielding power."[3] In Latin America the phrase *firmeza permanente*—"relentless persistence"— is used to overcome the passive connotation of "nonviolence."[4] It emphasizes keeping faith and holding on through the long struggle.

Some people engage in nonviolent action based upon a philosophy of nonviolence. That philosophy may emerge out of many different religious and ethical traditions, but philosophical nonviolence has at its core a value system that upholds the inviolability of the integrity of the human person. One must be willing to suffer violence rather than commit violence against another. That willingness to suffer can be a powerful tool against unjust, oppressive, and even violent expressions of power. This book is written from the basis of commitment to a philosophy of nonviolence, but it also tells the stories of people who may not have that same philosophy, yet who acted through nonviolent means. Nonviolent action can be a wise choice of tactics even for those who give an ethical place to violence.

Conflict resolution differs from nonviolence in its goal. Nonviolence is a means for engaging in conflict, whereas conflict resolution, as the very term implies, seeks to find a satisfactory end to the dispute. This resolution is not the destruction or domination of one side by the other. Defeating the opponent may end a phase of the conflict, but the bitterness and hatred are bound to resurface as circumstances change. History is replete with peoples and nations who experienced severe oppression and defeat only to become viciously oppressive when they came to power. Conflict resolution refers to a process, usually involving negotiation, whereby the parties to a conflict reach a mutually satisfying agreement that ends the dispute. The conflict is not displaced to another time or relationship, but is addressed at a point deep enough for all parties to accept the resolution. Conflict resolution is more than just managing the conflict to keep it within boundaries that can maintain creative tension, a popular concept in the business field. Rather, it seeks to bring a solution to the particular issue and restore the relationships, though probably in an altered form.

Nonviolence and conflict resolution have been practiced for centuries, but it is only in the twentieth century that they have become global movements for peaceful change with disciplined analysis and a broad exchange of ideas and experiences. This book will examine these two related and complementary movements, exploring their development and telling stories of the struggles, tragedies, and triumphs of the past few years. From this base of experience and analysis I will look ahead to the challenges that must be faced if we are to keep pressing on with hope toward peace in the twenty-first century.

I live and write as a Christian, particularly as a Baptist. Most of my experiences and stories come from within that framework. There will be an over-representation of Baptists appearing these pages, though not because we are more diligent in our peacemaking than other people of faith—to some, in fact, "Baptist peacemakers" is an oxymoron because of the many Baptists who have been shameless militarists. Rather, most of my companions on the peacemaking journey have been Baptists, and I know their stories best. The stories told here could also be told about Lutherans, Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Catholics. Likewise, many Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus have been courageous peacemakers out of their religious traditions. There are even people with no religious faith but with a wealth of courage and creativity who have played key roles in struggles for justice, peace, and freedom. Though this book is primarily about Christian peacemaking, non-Christians have contributed richly to the heritage of nonviolence and conflict resolutions, and I will share some of their stories here as well. For me, however, my Christian faith is the primary motivation for involvement in peacemaking, so I will lay the biblical foundation for nonviolence and conflict resolution in the hope that this will strengthen my Christian sisters and brothers in their struggle for justice and peace alongside those of other faiths.

Chapter 1

The Biblical Roots of Nonviolence

"But what did Jesus say?" Christie persisted. She was sitting across from me in the college dining hall. We were arguing about the war in Vietnam. I was making the case, and making it quite well, that the Christian position is that of allowing just wars. Furthermore, Vietnam was a just war for the United States. I had argued that point on my high school debate team, so I was well armed with statistics, historical data, and brilliant quotes. Christie didn't have a chance, except for that one question: What did Jesus say? Having grown up in a military family, many of my dreams and ideals were shaped by the images of glory won on the battlefield or in dogfights in the skies. Christie's question threatened not only my debating points but the entire construct of values on which my political opinions were based.

What did Jesus say? I had recently made a decision to become a Christian, to follow Jesus as Lord. Christie was in the small Bible study group in which I was participating, and she kept bringing me back to that commitment. "If you really are serious about following Jesus," she said, "what does he say about our involvement in war?" Shaken, I went back to my dorm room and read the Gospels with new eyes and fresh questions. That night I had a second conversion experience, turning from values that glorified participation in war to following the path of this one called the Prince of Peace. I had no idea where that path might lead, but I had a guiding light in that simple question: What did Jesus say?

The answer is not as simple as the question. The Bible is full of violence, beginning with the story of Cain's murder of his brother, Abel. The story of Israel's conquest of the Promised Land drips with blood, most notably in the divinely sanctioned genocide of the Canaanite peoples. David, the hero-king, slays Goliath in single combat and brings Israel to its pinnacle of power through military conquests. Such stories have inspired Christian soldiers marching to war, whether under the banners of the Crusades or buttressed by the justifications of just war theory. I could have supported my debating

position with many biblical passages of holy warfare. Amid all the violence in the Bible, how does one build or even find an ethic of nonviolence?

The starting point for Christian ethics is Jesus Christ, both in his person and his teaching. The book of Hebrews begins, "Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2). Jesus is the climax of biblical revelation, so rather than accepting the violence in the Old Testament as an ethical given and then trying to squeeze Jesus' teaching into that framework, we must begin with an understanding of what Jesus was saying and work our way into the rest of the Bible with a Christ-centered conceptual framework. The ancient Christian confession of faith was "Jesus is Lord" (1 Corinthians 12:3), but many theological and hermeneutical approaches have undercut the lordship of Christ by subsuming Jesus' ethical teaching under a framework which minimizes or limits the scope of its impact. The attempt is made, often with great theological sophistication, to sanitize Jesus, to make him "safe" so that the status quo will not be upset by his disturbing standards of righteousness and love. However, advocates of nonviolence and peacemaking, from the earliest days of the church to the present, find their own ethical core emerging from the core of Jesus' teaching. As a result, they have tended not to be wedded to those in power but have been voices of prophetic witness to their world and agents of social transformation.

The Sermon on the Mount is the key cluster of ethical teachings recorded in Matthew's Gospel, with parallels found throughout the other Gospels. For many people, however, the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount seem an impractical ideal at best and dangerously naïve at worst. Loving one's enemies doesn't make practical sense in a world of Adolf Hitlers, Joseph Stalins, Pol Pots, and Idi Amins. Turning the other cheek sounds to those who have been oppressed like another fetter for their bondage. Praying for your persecutors doesn't remove their guns, electric prods, or missiles. So is the centerpiece of Jesus' teaching fatally flawed with a trite passivity that is worthless in the world of power plays and law-of-the-jungle violence?

Jesus was a realist. He lived in an occupied country where the reality of violence was evident in the crosses that occasionally lined the roads to show Roman superiority. Acts of liberationist terror would flare up with regularity, and general criminality was known enough that you didn't travel in certain areas, such as the Jericho road, if you could avoid them. In the midst of a society well acquainted with the ways of violence, Jesus was familiar with the options

available, and he explicitly taught an alternative to those options. He knew what he was doing and what he was calling others to do. But before we look at his alternative, what were the approaches to violence chosen by those around him?

Violence and Responses to Violence

The culture of violence begins with the violence of oppressive power. Someone or some group achieves dominance over others by force or the threat of force. A relationship is established and maintained by one side being able to coerce the other into complying with its demands. In Jesus' day that oppressive power was the Roman Empire. In 63 B.C.E. the legions of Pompey, the Roman commander in the eastern Mediterranean, conquered Jerusalem and incorporated the independent Jewish Hasmonean kingdom into the Roman Empire. Roman military might established the empire and enforced the *Pax Romana*, a peace on Roman terms and under Roman law. Those who resisted could be dealt with by means of crucifixion, carried out by the Roman legal system.

Roman might is no more, but new superpowers keep rising and falling, including the United States. When the U.S. imposes its will upon nations in the Caribbean, Central America, or the Middle East by the use or threat of military force, that force is often perceived by those on the other end of it as an oppressive exercise of power. And the violence of oppressive power can exist at every level of a social structure. In a family, the physical dominance of males can lead to patriarchal oppression and abuse of wives and children. Even when the threat of violence is never carried out physically, there remains the subtle but viciously oppressive violence of the threat, the sword of Damocles hanging over one's head not by a thread but by the will of the one in control. The ultimate expression of this violence of the threat of oppressive power is the doctrine of nuclear deterrence. Nuclear violence has not been unleashed since the end of World War II, but the threat of complete annihilation and even the extinction of humanity is both credible and the source of power for much political bullying in the global community.

A range of options is available in response to the violence of oppressive power. Counterviolence is a response using violent means, including self-defense, insurgency, revolution, and terror. The Zealots chose the option of counterviolence in Jesus' time. They saw themselves as the "freedom fighters" of the Palestinian Jews, though the Romans considered them terrorists—the labels given to acts of violence usually are colored by one's political position. The Zealots were

political activists who engaged in acts of sporadic violence, including an uprising in Galilee during Jesus' childhood to which Rome responded by crucifying two thousand Galileans along the local roads. The Zealots were able to ignite a national insurrection which collapsed when Titus recaptured Jerusalem and destroyed its Temple in A.D. 70. Almost a thousand Zealots later committed suicide at Masada rather than surrender to the Romans.

Counterviolence is seen in nations today in insurgencies for liberation and freedom by whatever definition, by terrorist groups seeking political ends, and by defensive military actions by countries invaded by outside powers. On the domestic level, counterviolence can be seen in the battered woman who kills her sleeping husband or the abused children who kill their abusive parent, cases in which juries have often found the killer innocent because they appreciate the cause of the oppressive violence to which the killer was responding. This counterviolence is understandable to us and often called just.

Yet the response of counterviolence begins with violence and leads to more violence. Dom Helder Camara, the Archbishop of Recife and Olinda in Brazil, describes a "spiral of violence" that begins with what he calls "violence number one," the institutionalized violence in society that is willingly wielded by those in power. The violence number one breeds anger among the oppressed that can break out into the violence of despair, "violence number two." Then this violence becomes the excuse for those in power to commit "violence number three," the violence of repression in the name of "law and order." The spiral of violence seems inescapable as each side provokes the violence of the other.[1]

For the vast majority of people, the violence of oppressive power is used against them rather than by them, and they must find a way to adjust to the reality of life as defined by those in the dominant position. Accommodation is thus another option of response to oppressive violence, one usually hated by those who choose otherwise. Some within the oppressed group will choose to align themselves with the oppressive power, to make a deal to provide their services to the regime in order to maximize their own benefit. The Sadducees and the Herodian kings played out the accommodation option in Jesus' time. They were of the conquered Jewish people, but they worked within the Roman system to gain power. The Sadducees found their accommodating power niche in religious affairs, while Herod the Great and his sons joined the elites in the political arena. At the lower levels were the tax collectors, the main functionaries of Roman power who became symbols that focused the hatred of the conquered masses.

They became willing partners in the oppressive system and were both victims and victimizers. Perhaps their accommodation came from a drive to survive, but their survival was bought at the price of crushing others.

Dictators and wealthy elites in poor countries today also take the accommodation option. Rather than challenge the international structures that impoverish their countries, they serve as functionaries to those structures, adding to their own wealth and power in the process. The Somozas in Nicaragua, the Duvaliers in Haiti, Mobutu in Zaire, and a host of others have become fabulously wealthy while adding to the oppression of their own people. Accommodation is seen in a family in the dynamics of codependency, where other family members join in a protective conspiracy to avoid challenging the abusive power of the dominant family member. A mother may know her daughter is a victim of incest with her father, but the mother chooses to sacrifice her daughter to maintain her own marriage and hopes of security, thus becoming a party to the incest. Accommodation may feel like the best option for oneself since the oppressive system seems so impossible to change. It is a decision of social triage where I choose for myself at another's expense. Then the corruption of the choice tends to make the one who accommodates even more hated by the oppressed than the ultimate dominant power. Those who sell out their own people are deeply despised, and the names of tax collectors, Uncle Toms, and Quislings[2] are spat out when spoken.

Withdrawal is yet another choice many make in response to oppressive violence. As they look at the system that locks them into an inferior role, they choose to narrow their focus and shrink their world to a manageable scope. They may withdraw from society completely, either physically or psychologically. The Essenes were contemporaries of Jesus who chose to withdraw to the desert and live in isolated communities. They stayed clear of the struggle between Roman power and nationalist fervor. In the early church age, Greek mystery religions offered psychic escape from the physical world where politics and injustice were part of the evil their adherents fled.

Withdrawal or escape continues to be an attractive option today. In the face of possible nuclear holocaust many Americans followed the example of the ostrich. One mother I knew, when asked to support the nuclear freeze campaign, refused by saying it was too awful to think about. Drugs and alcohol became an epidemic problem among American youth as they struggled with their expectation of not living long because of inevitable nuclear war. If one is going to be incinerated in the holocaust, what is so bad about drugs? The multibillion dollar

entertainment industry shows the heavy value we place on withdrawal. Rather than talk politics, we talk sports, movies, and music. These need not be bad expressions of human culture, but they can become ways of avoiding life rather than reflecting creatively upon it.

There is also a religious option among the responses to oppressive violence, one closely related to withdrawal, that bears special attention. As we have seen, the Essenes and mystery cults responded by withdrawing: the former withdrawing physically from the dominate society, the latter withdrawing through philosophical disconnection. The Pharisees, however, were contemporaries of Jesus who didn't withdraw from the society. They were a lay movement in the synagogues that focused on careful and exact piety. The problem Jesus had with them was that their elaborate religiosity didn't engage with the suffering and struggles of those around them. They tithed in minute detail but did not work for justice (Matthew 23:23), and they established theological contrivances to avoid caring for the elderly (Mark 7:9-13). The Pharisees practiced unengaged piety, a superspirituality that had nothing to do with the pains of a world crushed under Rome's oppressive power or the host of other human injustices and sorrows. A few decades later the Pharisees were radicalized politically and joined the Zealots in the insurrection at Jerusalem, but during Jesus' ministry their disengagement exhibited another type of response to oppression: withdrawal cloaked in an aura of self-righteous religiosity.

Pharisaism has had its Christian versions; movements of intense personal spirituality with a disdain of social concerns have been a repeated theme in church history. Much of American fundamentalism and evangelicalism has had these tendencies, though the recent politicizing of the Christian Right has shown a new fervor for political engagement among these traditions. At the personal level, such unengaged piety is seen in avid churchgoers whose spirituality masks domestic violence, perhaps even buttressing such abuse with biblical justification about wives submitting to husbands or statements like "spare the rod, spoil the child." Rather than faith providing the insight and inner strength to confront and overcome the violence in one's life, that faith becomes a stumbling block to finding the way to peace.

Jesus lived in a world of violence with all these options for response. He knew the violence of oppressive power. He knew the choices many made for counterviolence, accommodation, withdrawal, and unengaged piety. His band of disciples contained both former Zealots and

tax collectors. Perhaps he, and most certainly his cousin John the Baptist, had extensive contact with the Essenes. His temptations included accommodating to the devil's oppressive power (Matthew 4:8-9), and a revolt could have been ignited a number of times (John 6:15; Luke 19:37ff.; Luke 22:49ff.). But Jesus resisted all the calls to such options. He taught and lived out his own alternative, clear about the context in which he was calling his followers to make the same choice.

Glen Stassen, in his book *Just Peacemaking*,[3] calls Jesus' actions in response to violence "transforming initiatives," and this is the best label I have come across for Jesus' alternative. Jesus called for initiatives. In the context of violence all the initiative rests with the oppressive power, and others must simply choose how to respond to the violence. Jesus, however, calls upon his followers—who are perceived as powerless by the world's standards—to take the initiative themselves. They are not to respond to the oppressive situation by following a script acceptable and understandable to the dominant power. They are to act, to initiate a new set of events to which the dominant one must respond. The initiatives are transforming because the relationships and the context are jolted out of the expected patterns where victim and victimizer know their roles and act them out without much thought of what they are doing or why they are doing it. The transformed relationship and context open up new possibilities in which repentance, reconciliation, justice, and peace can take place.

With this understanding of the context in which Jesus taught and the alternative response to violence he offered, we can now turn to the Sermon on the Mount to see what exactly he did say and how it applied in practical terms.

Transforming Initiatives and the Sermon on the Mount

The key passage for Jesus' teaching on nonviolence is Matthew 5:38-41:

> *You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile.*

Many people, pacifists and nonpacifists alike, have interpreted this passage as calling for nonretaliation and passivity in the face of violence or repression. Some see these teachings as posing an impos-

sible ideal in order to bring the hearers to a dependence upon God's grace. At least one commentator holds that they are intentionally absurd and not be taken literally: they are just making the point that we are not to avenge ourselves for personal wrongs.[4] But others would argue that in the context of Jesus' culture these teachings made sense and presented creative alternatives to passive submission or violent resistance. Jesus *did* mean to be taken literally and seriously, not in a wooden legalistic way, but with the kind of creative thinking that can come up with transforming initiatives in any repressive situation.

In contrast to the *lex talionis* of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21), Jesus says, "Do not resist an evildoer." The Greek verb is *anthistemi*, which is usually taken to mean "to set oneself against, oppose, resist, or withstand." Walter Wink notes that the noun form of the root word of *anthistemi* is *stasis,* which means "violent rebellion, armed revolt, sharp dissension."[5] The more accurate translation would not signify a passivity in the face of evil, which went against so much of Jesus' teaching and life, but rather a refusal to respond in kind to evil actions. The *Good News Bible* translates the verse, "Do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you." The understanding is parallel to what Paul says in Romans 12:19-21: "Never avenge yourselves.... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Wink suggests that the translators of the King James Version intentionally chose the passive terminology so that the teachings of Jesus would not be construed as encouraging action against the king and his authority. That passive construction of the text has dominated our thinking ever since.

Clarence Jordan, the Georgia Baptist farmer with a Ph.D. in New Testament Greek who founded the radical Christian community, Koinonia Farm, came to the same conclusion from a different grammatical point. The word for "evil" in the Greek is *ponero*, which is translated in the NRSV "an evildoer." The Greek form is identical for three cases—the locative, the dative, and the instrumental—and only the context can tell us which case in intended. The NRSV has chosen the dative case, but Jordan argues that Jesus surely resisted evil people and preached against what they did. The locative would mean, "Do not resist when you find yourself in the presence of evil." Yet such passivity clearly is absent in Jesus' life and teaching. The instrumental case, however, does reflect the full scope of Jesus' ministry and ethical challenge: "Do not resist *with* evil."[6] Here evil is not to be the instrument of one's resistance, which is precisely what Paul said in his parallel ethical teaching in Romans 12.

This interpretation of Matthew 5:39 is also consistent with its context in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is calling his followers not to respond in kind to the acts of injustice and dehumanization directed against them, but rather to respond with transforming initiatives. Wink describes this approach as Jesus' Third Way, one that stands in contrast to the "flight or fight" responses so deeply conditioned in human beings. Jesus then gives three specific examples that relate directly to the concrete experiences of his hearers. He addressed not those in power but those who were perceived, and who perhaps perceived themselves, as powerless.

"If anyone strikes you on the right cheek," Jesus begins. To strike on the right cheek requires that one use a backhand smack, assuming that the blow comes from the right hand. In ancient Jewish culture this was not so much an act of violence as an insult. It was an act done by a superior to an inferior—a Roman to a Jew, a master to a slave, a man to a woman—to "put them in their place." If the slap was done by a person of equal status, the offended person could sue in court and win severe damages (Mishnah, Baba Qamma 8:6). Wink compares the various fines listed in the Mishnah for blows: A four *zuz* fine for a blow to a peer with a fist, four hundred *zuz* for a backhand, but to an underling no penalty whatsoever.[7] Robert Guelich contends that Matthew is telling Christians to forego their right to legal action,[8] but the two following examples are of people with no legal leverage in the system, and for the person with inferior social status there was no legal recourse. Jesus' challenge to turn the other cheek is not advice to forego one's legal rights. Rather, he is calling on the powerless person to take an initiative that asserts one's own humanity and transforms the nature of the relationship.

When the humiliating backhand blow is struck on the right cheek and the struck person turns the other cheek, a number of messages are sent. First, the response says that the person is not cowed by the insult and has not assumed the inferior place the striker had in mind. The person refuses to be humiliated and claims his or her full humanity. Second, in turning the other cheek the person forces the striker to view him or herself as an equal. There is no possibility of another backhand blow; the striker would have to resort to some other form of violence, such as punching with a fist. But to commit such an assault would be to lose the assumed superior/inferior relationship. Thus the striker is forced to recognize the humanity of the one he or she has been oppressing. With the simple action of turning the cheek, the supposedly powerless person has redefined the relationship and forced the oppressor into a moral choice: Will the oppressor now

escalate the violence and deepen the evil, or will the revelation of the humanity of the other call forth a response of repentance and even reconciliation?

Jesus' own experience of being beaten, while in a very different setting, shows the power of self-identity in the face of those who wish to humiliate. Though beaten, tortured, taunted, and then crucified, Jesus was so clearly aware of his own human dignity that those in power expressed frustration at his refusal to cower at their authority over him (Mark 15:4-5; John 19:10-11). Caiaphas and Herod raged and ridiculed ineffectively, Pilate shirked his responsibility, and the centurion confessed Jesus' innocence (Luke 23:47). Jesus, though seemingly in a position of powerlessness, took the initiative and forced all others to make moral choices in response to who he was.

The second example of Jesus' alternative response to oppression in the Sermon on the Mount involves a court scene: "If anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well." The legal background to the passage is found in Exodus 22:26 and Deuteronomy 24:12, where a poor person is allowed to give his or her cloak as collateral for a loan, but it must be returned at night so that the person's suffering will not be aggravated by the evening chill. Amos condemned the system of exploitation of the poor whereby garments taken in pledge were piling up and being retained (Amos 2:7-8). In Jesus' day the Romans were taxing people to maintain their empire. The wealthy were investing in large estates worked by poor tenant farmers. The peasant landowners had been forced to give up their ancestral lands because of debt and were then kept tied to the land by the unjust debt system. Many of Jesus' parables and teachings reflect these practices (cf. Matthew 18:23-35; 21:33-41; Luke 7:41-42). The deep animosity toward this system was such that when the Zealot insurrection erupted in A.D. 66, their first act was to burn the Temple treasury where the debt records were kept.

In Jesus' example, the person who is being dragged into court is a poor debtor. He must face the power of a wealthy landowner who is supported by a legal system that will force the poor person to give up his garment as surety for his outstanding debt. This person seemingly has no power, but Jesus tells the debtor to give up not just his coat, but his cloak as well—perhaps even all his clothes. The debtor is to strip naked in court![9] This surprising action exposes not the nakedness of the debtor but the moral bankruptcy of the system that was oppressing the poor. The shame of nakedness in Jewish society rested not primarily in the naked person, but in the one who caused the nakedness and in those who witnessed it (thus the strange curse on

Ham in Genesis 9:20-27 for witnessing Noah's nakedness while he was in a drunken stupor). By stripping naked, the "powerless" debtor is holding up a moral mirror to the wealthy landowner and the court itself, indicting them over the systemic oppression that caused people to be deprived of their fundamental needs. Wink refers to the action as "clowning," a burlesque that unmasks the essential cruelty of the system and its pretensions to justice, law, and order.[10] The case is made not by assaulting anyone's humanity, but by symbolically stripping away the veil of legality and "business as usual," and thus presenting both the landowner and the judge with a moral choice. Will they break out of the system which they have now seen in its moral shamefulness, or will they harden their hearts and become morally culpable for profound intentional sin?

The third example from the Sermon on the Mount comes from the Roman law that civilians could be impressed to carry a soldier's baggage for one mile (literally *milion*, one thousand paces). The roads were marked at every mile, so it was an easy distance to judge. The law was intended to keep the armies mobile but not to create too much resentment among the populace. Resentment among the Jews was very deep, however, over this act of the occupier's domination.

Jesus turns the situation around from one where the Roman exercises his oppressive power to one of helping out someone in need: "If anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile." As long as the soldier can force another to do his will, then he gets the expansive feeling of having power. But when the civilian offers to carry the pack another mile, the tables are turned. What was demanded is now freely offered, and the soldier is put into a delicate situation for which he has not been prepared. It is against the law to force someone to carry his pack two miles. Wink presents the kind of off-balance questions that would go through the soldier's mind: "What are you up to?... Is this a provocation? Are you insulting my strength? Being kind? Trying to get me disciplined for seeming to make you go farther than you should? Are you planning to file a complaint? Create trouble?"[11] The ego-gratification of oppressing another is taken away, and the soldier is put in a quandary.

In all three of these situations the "powerless" person has the power to act outside the accepted scripts of the oppressive relationships. By taking a transforming initiative, the person claims his or her own humanity, while at the same time not denying the humanity of the other. A moral mirror can be held up which exposes the evil of the system, or at least refuses to accept the definitions under which the oppressor operates. This response results in the oppressor being

forced to make a moral choice, for the option is given for acting on the basis of the newly revealed truth, to move toward justice and reconciliation. Of course, the choice can be made to fight to maintain the dominant position and the system that supports it, but even so the lies defining superiority and inferiority are exposed along with the self-justification that oppressive systems require.

Jesus presented these three examples as concrete illustrations in his own cultural setting of taking transforming initiatives. They are not new laws to be woodenly applied in other cultural settings. Turning the other cheek is not a directive for a battered woman meekly to submit to further beatings; the context that gives the action of turning the other cheek its power doesn't exist there. Instead, the woman will need to think how she can assert her own humanity, perhaps with the help of a support system of other battered women. If I were to strip naked in court, I would probably be held thirty days for observation in a mental hospital. Imagine, however, a farm family at an auction of all their property, stripping naked before their community and adding their clothing to the sale. The power of that act would make it very difficult for a banker or sheriff to go through with the auction, knowing he or she had to continue to live and do business in that community. In Burma, where army soldiers forcibly compel civilians to carry their packs in the jungles with no rations until they drop, going the second mile is nonsensical. The context gives the power and meaning for the action. The challenge in application is not to reproduce the specific action in a different context, but within one's own context to take the transforming initiative that claims both one's own humanity and the other's, that exposes the evil of the situation, and that opens the door of possibility for constructive change, repentance, justice, and reconciliation.

Transforming Initiatives Throughout the Bible

Transforming initiatives are taught and illustrated in other parts of the Bible as well as in the Sermon on the Mount. In chapter 12 of Paul's letter to the Romans we find a strong echo of Jesus' ethical teachings. Verses 9-21 are a string of short, concise exhortations as to how to live a life that is "holy and acceptable to God" (Romans 12:1), many of which have to do with a life of peace. Verse 14, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them," brings to mind Jesus' words, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). Jesus' saying, "Do not resist with evil" (Matthew 5:39), is picked up in verse 17: "Do not repay anyone evil for evil." "If it is possible, so far as it depends on you," Paul urges the Christians

in Rome, "live peaceably with all" (Romans 12:18).

The climax of Romans 12 comes in a brief discussion of how to overcome evil:

> *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (Romans 12:19-21).*

Evil is to be resisted, even to be overcome, so passivity is not in view at all. But taking vengeance into human hands is expressly forbidden. Vengeance is the prerogative of the sovereign God alone. Instead, Paul sees Christians called to adopt a different approach than the "eye for an eye" vengeance cycle. He calls, as did Jesus, for transforming initiatives, illustrating his point by quoting from Proverbs 25:21-22. Feeding the hungry enemy and giving drink to the thirsty enemy certainly goes against the normal script of hostile relationships! When the enemy is expecting an attack, an offensive of love is launched, thus responding to the genuine needs of the enemy. The result is that "burning coals" will be heaped on their heads. For many years I assumed this was a "wimp's vision of vengeance": those unable to strike back could look ahead with gleeful anticipation to God's fiery wrath pouring down on their enemies. Such delayed, vengeful gratification was expressed frequently in the Psalms (for example, 54:4-5; 137:7-9). But the burning coals are not the fires of hell; rather, they indicate the burning of shame and remorse. The acts of love in the midst of the conflict break the cycle of retaliation and shatter the image and expectations about the one perceived as the enemy. Burning coals may also refer to the custom of many Middle Eastern cultures, including that of the Hebrews, of showing remorse by putting ashes on one's head. The enemy therefore repents, which is genuinely overcoming evil as it is transformed through loving action.

This very strategy was employed in a striking story from the life of the prophet Elisha in 2 Kings 6:8-23. The Arameans, also known as Syrians, were engaging in a series of raids against their southern neighbor, Israel. Elisha kept sending word to the Israelite king of the Aramean plans, thus foiling their raiding parties. When the Aramean king learned of Elisha's role, he sent an army to Dothan, where the Hebrew prophet lived. When Elisha's servant saw the army surrounding the city, he panicked. Elisha calmly prayed for God to open the servant's eyes. The man then saw that "the mountain was full of

horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (2 Kings 6:17). When the Arameans began to attack, Elisha prayed for God to strike the army with blindness, and they were suddenly blinded. The prophet went out to meet the suddenly helpless army and led them to Samaria, the capital city of Israel. What a sight that must have been—long files of soldiers, each with his hand on the shoulder of the man in front, following the prophet along the dusty roads of Israel! When they were inside the fortified city of their enemy, the eyes of the Arameans were opened. Now it was time for the massacre, and the Israelite king was ready to strike. Elisha, however, had a different plan. He said, "No! Did you capture with your sword and your bow those whom you want to kill? Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink; and let them go to their master" (2 Kings 6:22). So a great feast was prepared for the enemy army, and after they had eaten and drunk their fill they returned to Aram. The concluding verse says, "And the Arameans no longer came raiding into the land of Israel" (2 Kings 6:23). Feeding the enemy, with the help of divine intervention, proved to be a more effective and less bloody defense policy than a retaliation-provoking slaughter would have been. As a postscript, the next story begins with King Benhadad of Aram mustering his army for an attack on Samaria, so obviously the political situation later deteriorated. The sequence of these stories, however, must not be allowed to overshadow the successful conclusion of Elisha's transforming initiative, which must have affected the two countries for a significant amount of time.

The most profound example of a transforming initiative lies at the very heart of the Christian gospel. In response to human sin, God took flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. Instead of divine judgment, as portrayed in the story of Noah and the flood, Jesus reflects the promise of mercy seen in the rainbow. Jesus did no evil, yet was crucified under the judgment of the religious and political authorities. Many of the Old Testament Scriptures reflected the desire for vengeance; Jesus' mockers at the cross threw the dream of divine retribution in his face. Even as he was arrested Jesus said, "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:53). Vengeance was an option that was expressed in the helpless bitter cursing of one of the thieves crucified alongside him and that could have been expressed in miraculous intervention. But Jesus was following a different script to which he had submitted in the Garden of Gethsemane when he prayed, "Yet not what I want but what you want" (Matthew 26:39).

In the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus, God engaged in a

transforming initiative whereby human violence and evil was turned into God's life-redeeming action and loving invitation. Whereas Jesus' death on the cross was an expression of the human tendency to victimize others, looking for the easy way out in the face of moral challenges and protecting one's power base at the cost of ethical integrity, as well as our propensity toward violence as a solution to our conflicts, God turned the cross into an expression of self-giving love, a sign of bearing the wrongs of others and a witness to the power of nonviolence and self-sacrifice in the face of human evil. The Resurrection resoundingly announced the breaking of the grip of death upon humanity, a hold broken not by forceful assault but by willing and determined submission and endurance.

In announcing God's transforming initiative in his sermon on Pentecost, the apostle Peter contrasted the two scripts—humanity's brutal tragedy and God's divine, liberating comedy whereby God laughed at the plans of the nations:

> *This man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power (Acts 2:23-24).*

As God's loving initiative prompted remorse and repentance in those who had placed themselves as enemies to God, the gifts of God's grace could then be received. Peter concluded his sermon with the invitation to join in the bounty of mercy: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). In Jesus Christ we have the ultimate example of evil being overcome by good.

Other Forms of Nonviolence in the Bible

Besides the kinds of transforming initiatives about which Jesus, Paul, and Peter taught, there are examples in the Bible of other forms of nonviolent action used to address people in power in conflict situations. Sometimes the nonviolent action was used to create an open conflict in a context where injustice was being masked by repressive power.

The Hebrew prophets often employed nonviolent actions in presenting their messages to kings, the religious hierarchy, and the public. The spoken word was the most common form of nonviolent action. Amos, the farmer driven by divine inspiration, stormed into the sanctuary of the two golden calves in Bethel, the religious center

for the Northern Kingdom of Israel. He roundly denounced the nation for its injustices and idolatries, much to the consternation of the priest, Amaziah, who tried to throw him out (Amos 7:7-17). When King Ahab arranged the execution of the farmer Naboth in order to seize his vineyard, Elijah went directly to the king to denounce the injustice and pronounce God's judgment upon his dynasty because of his evil actions (1 Kings 21:1-24). Shortly afterward, the prophet Micaiah taunted the prophetic "yes men" who blessed Ahab's war plans, called them all liars and predicted disaster while standing in the king's throne room. His boldness and minority opinion, though it proved to be correct, earned him a trip to the dungeon (1 Kings 22:13-28). For these and many other prophets, speaking boldly against those in power or against their policies has been one of the major components of their nonviolent action.

Often prophets added symbolic actions to their words of protest or judgment. Hosea gave names to his children illustrating God's rejection and later gracious forgiveness of Israel (Hosea 1:2-8; 2:21-23). Isaiah walked throughout Jerusalem naked for three years to protest Judah's policy of pursuing military alliance with Egypt and Ethiopia (Isaiah 20:1-6). Ezekiel was famous for dramatizing his messages. He once made a model city to act out the consequences he foresaw for Judah's policies (Ezekiel 4). Another time he used a pre-punk bizarre haircut to foretell disaster, using a sword to cut his hair and beard into three sections (Ezekiel 5:1-4). When his wife died, Ezekiel turned the occasion into a public protest calling people to mourn their unfaithful actions rather than their personal losses, which were about to increase dramatically (Ezekiel 24:15-27). Jeremiah engaged in a struggle over symbols with Hananiah. Jeremiah wore a yoke for oxen to symbolize the yoke coming upon Judah through the rising Babylonian empire. Jeremiah particularly criticized the prophets, priests, and counselors who urged King Zedekiah to follow a strategy of militant resistance. Hananiah attacked the symbol, breaking the yoke bars from around Jeremiah's neck, reaffirming the policies of Zedekiah and predicting the rapid demise of Babylon. Jeremiah responded that the wooden yoke would be replaced by a yoke of iron (Jeremiah 27–28).

In the book of Esther two pivotal nonviolent actions were taken. The Jewish exile Mordecai refused to bow in obeisance to Haman, the arrogant, self-serving counselor to King Ahasuerus of Persia (Esther 3:1-6). This civil disobedience enraged Haman, who then began a plot which eventually led to his own downfall. When Haman began to plan to exterminate Jews in retaliation for Mordecai's civil disobedience,

Mordecai convinced Esther to engage in civil disobedience herself. As a queen in the harem of Ahasuerus, Esther had access to the king, but she would have to break the law by going unannounced into his presence. The punishment was death, unless the king chose to show mercy. Esther took the risk, and through her courage was able to change the king's policy (Esther 4:11; 5:1-2).[12]

In another exile community civil disobedience was used to protest an issue of religious liberty. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow before the idolatrous image of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The penalty for refusing to honor the king as a god was to be put into a fiery furnace. When they were dragged before the king with a last chance for mercy, the three Jewish young men continued their calm defiance, asserting:

> *O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defense to you in this matter. If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up (Daniel 3:16-18).*

A similar stand was taken by the apostles Peter and John following their arrest for preaching about Jesus on the Temple grounds. They were brought before the Sanhedrin, the ruling council, and given a gag order. They refused to be bound by it, committing civil disobedience in obedience to a higher authority: "Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). When they were released from prison, they went back to their illegal activities of proclaiming the gospel. Again they were arrested and told to cease and desist. They responded quite bluntly, "We must obey God rather than any human authority" (Acts 5:29). Then the famous rabbi Gamaliel, who sat on the Sanhedrin, urged that they be released. If they were just a passing movement it would be better to let them wither away on their own, he counseled, but if these followers of Jesus were a movement born of God, no repression would stop them (Acts 5:35-39). Gamaliel's wisdom has seldom been followed in history, as repression is all too frequently viewed as the best means to retain power.

The most controversial nonviolent actions were taken by Jesus himself in the last week of his life. The first was the triumphal entry (Mark 11:1-10; Matthew 21:1-9; Luke 19:28-38; John 12:12-19). Jesus entered Jerusalem at a time when messianic fervor was high. Earlier there had been an attempt to ignite a popular revolt with Jesus as

the leader, but Jesus had turned his back on the eager crowd (John 6:15). As pilgrims were streaming into the Holy City for the celebration of the Passover, Jesus planned and carried out a provocative symbolic action that hooked into the messianic expectations. He rode into Jerusalem on the first day of Passover week on a young donkey, deliberately fulfilling the messianic prophecy of Zechariah: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9). Jesus' action triggered a spontaneous demonstration that carried into the Temple itself, with people laying palm fronds and cloaks in front of him and shouting praises, to the consternation of the authorities.

The second action took place the next day when Jesus "cleansed" and occupied the Temple (Mark 11:15-19; Matthew 21:10-17; Luke 19:45-48; John 2:13-22). The Court of the Gentiles was the outer courtyard, the only area in which Gentiles were allowed to enter. Two Temple businesses operated in the Court of the Gentiles: one sold animals for sacrifice, the other exchanged currency. Only a special Temple currency could be used to purchase the sacrificial animals, so all the other currencies brought by pilgrims from various lands had to be exchanged into the Temple coinage, usually at a tidy profit for the concession. Jesus entered the Court of the Gentiles and without warning began turning over the moneychangers' tables, scattering coins everywhere. He loosed the animals and drove them out. John 2:15 says Jesus made a whip to help clear the Temple.[13] His presence was so commanding that nobody could stop him. The Temple merchants scrambled out the Temple gates for safety. Jesus roared, "It is written 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers" (Matthew 21:13).

The one place where Gentiles were allowed to worship had been turned into a marketplace, so Jesus reclaimed it for its holy purpose. He occupied the area with his followers and all those who came to be healed. He blocked off all access through the area for trade, and instead made it his special place for teaching (Mark 11:16). The occupation continued in the following days while the chief priests and other allies debated and strategized about how to get rid of this one who had so blatantly challenged their authority and thrown their commercial enterprises into disarray.

Some may question whether this action was nonviolent. Force was definitely used—force of character and force in overturning the tables and driving out the animals. No violence was directed at people, but the exploitative structures were directly assaulted. The Temple

cleansing was a nonviolent action as a definite exercise of power, and the response which came a few days later was with the full force of legally sanctioned government violence.

To argue more fully the issue of whether violence can ever be used by a Christian is beyond the scope of this study. It is clear that Jesus' life and ethical teaching were nonviolent, while directly challenging human sin and evil at its very core. The transforming initiatives which he taught and exemplified provide the guiding light for Christian action to bring justice and peace out of the conflicts that rage in our contemporary world.

Chapter 2

The Bible and Conflict Resolution

I could see the explosion beginning to erupt and felt as helpless as if I had been at ground zero when the bomb went off. We were in the church basement, all seated around tables. The church executive board had earlier denied the request of the youth group to hold a sleep-over in the church on Good Friday night. The youth had been upset, not knowing why their request, which seemed reasonable to them, had been denied. Each side kept talking to the other through me, and I had finally gotten tired of being the one in the middle. So I called a special meeting for the board and the youth group to get together and discuss the issue face-to-face. It sounded like a simple enough idea.

A complicating factor, and probably a major contributing factor to many of the participants, was the racial composition of the conflicting groups. The board was composed of older members, all of whom were white except one black man who mostly socialized with older white people. The youth group was entirely black, led by a dynamic and sometimes fiery mother of one of the teens in the group. The church was located in a racially mixed neighborhood that had experienced population shifts a few years earlier, but was now fairly stable. Most of the younger whites had moved to the suburbs, leaving their parents back in the old neighborhood, still serving as pillars in their local church. Now, however, most of the kids who came to the church, sometimes with their parents, were black. An earlier, white youth group in the church had held a sleep-over in the church that turned out to be a disaster: a girl was sexually assaulted in the back of the church. Though the incident was not directly connected to the church activity, it had been forever linked to the sleep-over in the minds of the older white members. As they now looked at the black youths whom they did not know and to whom they were not related, the white members were not about to assume that these black teens would behave better than the teens of white families. The result was that the already difficult generation gap was compounded by a racial gap

of suspicion and fear which could barely be masked by Christian good will.

I had planned the meeting very carefully so that our communication process would be fair and so we could resolve the dispute in a rational manner. I intended to help each group hear the concerns of the other, to build some trust through direct communication, and to develop a plan that would satisfy everyone's concerns and desires. I began by trying to set out the ground rules for the discussion, but before completing one sentence, an older women on the board began to lecture the youth in a very hostile tone. She was so domineering that I, as a young and timid pastor, was at a loss as to what I should do. The longer she spoke out of feelings that were coming from somewhere beyond this particular issue, the more emotional damage she inflicted. The youths and their leader were incensed and responded with angry accusations about the lack of caring by the older members. A loud argument ensued, and only concluded when the board's moderator excused the teens. The board voted again on the youth group's request, and again turned it down, 4 to 3.

From this attempt to resolve a small disagreement by the biblical admonition to "be reconciled to your brother or sister" (Matthew 5:24), the church was torn by a deep generational and racial schism. The congregation was divided by deeper hostility and suspicion. As a recent seminary graduate in my first year of pastoring, I was devastated. The church eventually experienced renewal and became a vibrant multicultural congregation, but that is another story.[1] As I surveyed the relational ruins in our congregation at the time, I knew there must be a better way to handle conflict than what we had just experienced.

A Biblical Perspective on Conflict Resolution

As a record of human life, the Bible is full of conflict. The story of Adam and Eve begins with a conflict about who was responsible for eating the forbidden fruit. Adam began the war between the sexes by blaming Eve rather than taking responsibility for his own actions. He also blamed God for providing the woman as a companion. Eve did no better, shifting the blame to the serpent. Neither owned their own feelings or actions, and so the distorted ways of handling conflict were born.

The next recorded conflict is between Cain and Abel. Rather than dealing with his own issues Cain projected his wrong onto Abel, then killed this enemy created out of his misdirected rage. God warned Cain to look inside himself, but the heat of his anger swept him into

alienation and murder. His inner conflict became relational and then social and environmental, as divisions erupted between himself and other humans and between himself and the land itself.

Most of the conflicts in the Bible end as tragically as Cain's. Unresolved or poorly resolved conflicts fill the biblical pages from Lamech, the father of all escalations—"If Cain is avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold" (Genesis 4:24)—to the early church's missionary team of Paul and Barnabas, split over a dispute concerning John Mark (Acts 15:36-41). Trade wars, ethnic cleansings, divorce rates, and arms sales show that humanity is still living out these old stories. As with nonviolence, a Christian examination of conflict resolution needs to begin with Jesus Christ. At his birth the heavenly announcement of peace on earth was made (Luke 2:14). That peace began to take shape as people who had been excluded from the community of God's people were drawn into the community of Christ's followers. Outcasts such as women, children, Samaritans, laborers, tax collectors, lepers, the mentally ill, and "sinners" were invited into the new community, the kingdom of God, the reign of God. Jesus told parables of such ones being reconciled with great joy (Luke 14:15-24; 15). He worked the reconciliation of people like Zaccheaus with God, whom he then guided to the practical reconciliation of making restitution with those whom Zaccheaus had abused and defrauded (Luke 19:1-10).

As the early church reflected on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, reconciliation was at the center of its reflections. The apostle Paul wrote that "in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). Human sin had created alienation between us and God, but "while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (Romans 5:10). By Christ's death the barriers between humanity and God are overcome, and the kind of reconciling grace exhibited in Jesus' relationships with the outcasts is forever extended to all who wish to receive it.

The reconciliation between humanity and God has an immediate and intimate horizontal impact. Humans who were alienated to each other are now reconciled in Christ, at least theologically. Ephesians 2 describes the reconciliation between humans and God in the first ten verses, then immediately moves into the reconciliation between alienated groups of people in the following section. Christ is called "our peace," and "in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us" (v. 14). This intra-human reconciliation is forged by the cross:

He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances,

that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it (Ephesians 2:15-16).

Because we are reconciled to God through the cross, all of us from whatever human identity group are brought into a new oneness. "There is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave nor free, there is no longer male nor female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). "There is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all, and in all!" (Colossians 3:11).

The challenge to the early church was how to live out that theological reality of reconciliation and oneness amidst the personal and social baggage of the old order. Paul faced a conflict over who can eat with whom in Antioch and attacked the divisions at dinner by an analysis of what it means to die with Christ (Galatians 2:11-21). After speaking eloquently of the self-giving love of Christ and the unity he brings, Paul asks for two women leaders in the church at Philippi, Euodia and Syntyche, to resolve their disputes, even asking for church members to assist in mediation (Philippians 4:2-3). Theological reconciliation must be worked out at the real places of division among us. The teachings of the early church in the New Testament were always related to the pragmatic concerns of living as a reconciled people.

Jesus said, "Be at peace with one another" (Mark 9:50). One of the basic transforming initiatives he presented in the Sermon on the Mount was to go and be reconciled (Matthew 5:24). When a relationship is broken, our own anger can lead to words and actions that deepen the division. Or we can simply resign ourselves to the alienated state of affairs, which leaves the unresolved conflict as the defining element of the relationship. Jesus calls for his followers simply to break out of the communication deadlock and go and talk to the other person (Matthew 18:15-17). Without communication there can be no conflict resolution. It doesn't matter who is at fault, which is usually a complex matter anyway. In Matthew 5 the one who is to go is the offender; in Matthew 18 the offender is the other person. In both cases it is the hearer of Jesus who is given the responsibility to act. Conflict resolution begins with me; it is my responsibility, just as Paul told the Christians in Rome: "If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all" (Romans 12:18). Taking responsibility to initiate the communication is the starting point.

We also have to deal with our feelings. Cain could not examine his

feelings as they raged out of control, in spite of God's warning that sin was "lurking at the door" (Genesis 4:7). God told Cain that he must master his anger if he was to avoid disaster. Jesus also warned of the self-destruction which comes from anger as the prelude to his challenge to go and talk to the other party in the dispute. Ephesians presents a helpful distinction: "Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27). One's feelings are neither good nor bad; anger is not evil in and of itself, for both Jesus and God are portrayed as being angry at times (Mark 3:5; Isaiah 5:25). The issue is what we do with our anger. Ephesians warns us not to sin or give an opportunity to the devil. Instead, we are to deal quickly with the matter that stirs up the anger, before the sun goes down. Anger recognizes that there is something wrong, that conflict exists, but through communication and conflict resolution a way can be found to resolution and reconciliation.

Paul gave specific instruction about trying to understand the other person's position and needs. In the context of talking about unity he exhorted, "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4). In his discussion of not being a stumbling block to others he urged, "Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor" (Romans 15:2). Glen Stassen also speaks of the need to affirm the enemy's valid interests as he develops the paradigm of transforming initiatives in *Just Peacemaking.*[2] Jesus calls his disciples to love their enemies (Matthew 5:44); affirming their valid interests is a concrete way to do so no matter how much emotion is generated by the conflict. Affirming those interests and acknowledging the needs of others is fundamental to a comprehensive and satisfying resolution of conflict.

But is it accurate to say that Jesus sought to resolve all conflicts? It seems he aggravated a number of situations, engaging in provocative actions such as the triumphal entry and the cleansing of the Temple. He also said, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law" (Matthew 10:34-35). This sounds hardly like conflict resolution but rather like conflict escalation!

Sometimes conflict resolution must begin by heightening the conflict. Often one of the parties, usually the one who benefits from an unfair advantage, doesn't see any problem. The conflict is there, but the pain is disproportionately felt by one side. Before reconciliation

can take place there must be an exposure of the problem, which can be experienced as an increase in conflict. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his *Letter from Birmingham Jail,* responded to his white clergy critics by showing the healing necessity of bringing conflict into the open:

> *Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out in the open, where it can be seen and dealt with. Like a boil that can never be cured so long as it is covered up but must be opened with all its ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must be exposed, with all the tension its exposure creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.*[3]

To be genuine, conflict resolution has to be built upon a foundation of truth. A resolution to the conflict that buries one party's experience of injustice or pain is merely a continuation of the oppressive system, perhaps under a new guise. The conflict is postponed rather than resolved; it will simmer on until a time comes for it to emerge again, probably with increased intensity and destructiveness. The prophet Zechariah challenged the people to "love truth and peace" (Zechariah 8:19). There is no peace unless truth is a part of its fabric. The exposure of falsehood and injustice is a necessary part of the resolution process, even if for a while it seems that the conflict is getting worse.

This is where nonviolent action and conflict resolution complement each other. Nonviolence exposes the injustices at the root of a conflict, but in a way that opens the possibility for resolution and restoration of the relationship. Conflict resolution needs to have the issues brought to the surface and acknowledged by both sides if there is to be a genuine reconciliation process. Jesus taught and lived out both aspects of the quest for peace.

Mediation in the Bible

Mediation is given a central place in the Bible in the person of Jesus Christ. First Timothy 2:5-6 speaks of the identity of Christ as the mediator between humanity and God: "For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all." In the conflict between human beings and God, human sinfulness had created a severely polarized situation. The prophet Isaiah expressed God's perspective of the divine/human separation in this way: "When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood"

(Isaiah 1:15). Yet in this context of alienation, God takes the initiative in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Driven by divine love, Jesus becomes the one in the middle. Christ is God's Word become flesh and addressed in mercy to humankind. Christ stands in humanity's place as the righteous atoning sacrifice.

The mediator also presents a peace accord, known in the Scriptures as the "new covenant." This covenant is presented extensively in the letter to the Hebrews, contrasting the new covenant through Christ with the old covenant mediated through Moses. The first covenant resulted in death, because none could keep its requirements. The Christ-mediated covenant brings forgiveness and thus life: "For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant" (Hebrews 9:15). The price of the new peace accord is the sacrifice of the mediator, and so those who now wish to enter into this new relationship with God must come "to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel" (Hebrews 12:24). Christ's work becomes the ultimate example of mediation as well as a model of mediation for those who seek to carry out God's work in the world. Paul speaks of this work in 2 Corinthians 5:19-20:

> *In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

Mediation of human conflicts is frequently seen in the Old Testament as well. This mediation follows the patterns of traditional mediation in which the mediator is part of the community, usually a trusted and respected leader, rather than the outside professional we are accustomed to seeing in Western cultures today.[4] The most famous example is the case brought to Solomon involving two women arguing over a child (1 Kings 3:16-28). The two women and their babies lived in the same house, and one of their babies died during the night. Each claimed the surviving child, so the case was brought to Solomon to decide. He asked for a sword to divide the child in two so each mother could have one part. The true mother surrendered her claim rather than risk the life of the child, so Solomon awarded the child to her.

Moses had served as the communal mediator during the early days of the Exodus, but had been rapidly worn down by the caseload. Guided by the wise advice of his father-in-law, Jethro, Moses had the

community select judges who were "able men among all the people, men who fear God, are trustworthy, and hate dishonest gain" (Exodus 18:21). These judges acted less as interpreters of law and more as mediators and arbitrators. This traditional mediating role was carried on in the earlier stages of Israel's political development by the judges, charismatic figures who both led in battle and settled disputes among the people. Samuel rode a circuit, visiting regional centers on a regular basis to judge the people (1 Samuel 7:15-17). Deborah had a site under a palm tree to hear the disputes people would bring (Judges 4:4-5).

The judges had a mixed record of performance, for some became corrupt and abusive. They were generally chosen by a communal recognition of divine call and giftedness. When individuals tried to seize the leading role out of their own lust for power, the community suffered. Instead of mediating justice, these judges enriched themselves and created conflicts which were often horrifying in their brutality.[5] The court system developed from these roots of judges called from within the community, and the process for obtaining justice eventually became formalized, as in the code in Deuteronomy 16:18-20 and 17:8-13.

During the New Testament era, the Roman legal system was highly developed, but the apostle Paul urged members of the Christian community not to use the courts to settle their own disputes. Within the society of the church, he said, mediation built on relationships and the wisdom of trusted leaders should be the norm. Paul called upon Christians, who one day "will judge the world," to bring their disputes to be handled by people within the church; if they don't receive satisfaction, it is better to suffer wrong than to go to law in a Roman court against another Christian. He asked the Corinthians, "Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to decide between one believer and another, but a believer goes to court against a believer—and before unbelievers at that?" (1 Corinthians 6:5-6). Clearly, mediation within the context of the Christian community was viewed as the preferred manner of handling disputes if the parties could not reconcile on their own.

Biblical Case Studies

There are a number of positive examples of conflict resolution in the biblical text. One of the earliest is found in Joshua 22:10-34. Following the conquest of Canaan, the Hebrew tribes were divided geographically. Two and a half of the tribes had chosen to settle on the eastern side of the Jordan River. The other tribes settled in

Canaan proper. When the easterners built an altar, the westerners mobilized for war. Before fighting, however, they decided to talk; a delegation was sent, led by the priest Phinehas, to negotiate the issue of the altar. It was a good thing the sides talked first, for this was a classic case of each side projecting their own fears onto the other.

The westerners approached the situation with the history of the wilderness wanderings, the forty years of purifying the people of God from their idolatrous ways. A whole generation had died short of the Promised Land because they gave in to the influences of paganism. As the westerners saw the altar being constructed, they envisioned yet another deviation from the faith given to them through such struggle and anguish. To keep God's judgment from falling on the entire community, they had to purge the offenders. So they set forth their case. The rhetoric was inflammatory, laced with accusatory language such as "treachery" and "rebellion." But they did state their case clearly, including the framework for their understanding, referring to the early incident with Achan where God's judgment affected the whole community until the one offender was eliminated (Joshua 7). They also made an invitation and space for a change of mind. It was not a great start for a conflict resolution process, but the westerners did communicate their concerns and open themselves to listen to the other side.

The easterners were stunned by how far off the westerners' perception of their actions was. They protested that turning from God was not their intention. Far from an interest in breaking from the covenant community of God's people, their concern was that because of the geographical separation caused by the river, their descendants would be victims of an exclusionary prejudice from their western compatriots. The altar for them was a sign of inclusion and union, not rebellion; it was a sign of their faithfulness to God. The easterners were clear in stating their own fears, motives, and concerns so that the other side could make their own judgments with all the facts at hand.

The westerners, to their credit, were open-minded and had come to listen as well as speak. Phinehas accepted the easterners' line of reasoning and even applauded their clarity of communication in saving the people of Israel from a disastrous civil war. The conflict was resolved, and the altar was named "Witness" to stand as a witness to all the people that "Yahweh is God."

In this case study of conflict we can see some key elements to successful conflict resolution. Each side needs to state its own perspective, hopes, needs, and fears clearly enough to be understood by

the other. It is best to use "I" or "we" statements, so that the other side can get an accurate understanding of where your concerns lie and what your experience is in the matter. Though the westerners in our case study were harsh and accusatory in their rhetoric, the "we" statements of the easterners helped tone down the intensity of the conflict so that a reasonable resolution could be achieved. The less threatening response allowed the two sides to become joint problem-solvers of a misunderstanding, rather than remain as adversaries. Both sides, in spite of the deep feelings generated by the conflict, were willing to listen. Their conversation was not a mere exchange of ultimatums prior to war so each side could justify itself later. Rather, there was sincere and honest effort to communicate before the blood-letting would begin. The relief and joy that resulted from achieving a successful resolution was evidence of the good faith both sides brought to the conflict.

The early church had a number of conflicts at pivotal stages of its development. Acts 6:1-7 tells of the institution of the office of deacon. The diaconate was a solution to a conflict. In the confusion of the earliest days of the Christian community, thousands of people were being incorporated into their network. Many of the people were Greek-speaking Jews who had traveled to Jerusalem for the religious festival of Pentecost. These Jews were called Hellenists, for they had settled in various parts of the Roman Empire as a result of political upheavals in past centuries. They maintained their Jewish faith, but they had adopted some Greek habits and culture which alienated them from the more traditional Hebrew Jews living in Palestine. It was an ethnic difference which then led to a racist situation. The poorest Greek-speaking widows were being neglected in the daily food distribution set up on an *ad hoc* basis to take care of the needy. The dominant Hebrews may not have intentionally discriminated, but their ethnic bias was harming the most vulnerable in the community. The Hellenists complained, and the conflict began to grow.

The twelve apostles were at that time acting as the leadership group for the church. They took a proactive approach once the issue came to their attention, calling a gathering of the Christian community to face the issue directly. They established a division of labor, instituting a new leadership team to handle the feeding of the poor. The key to their solution, however, was the selection of the new deacons. The decision was given to the community as a whole, and they chose seven people, all from the discriminated group, the Hellenists. The solution was ratified by a time of prayer and laying on hands. The result of their successful resolution of this conflict was

that the community grew as "the word of God continued to spread."

In selecting seven Hellenists to be the ones responsible for the food distribution, the church chose to give power to those who had been powerless. Injustice was dealt with by establishing a more just system. The brief account Luke gives us of this conflict does not reflect any negotiation. How was the complaint raised to the apostles? Did the apostles come out with their own solution and hand it down from on high, or was there a process of discussion and negotiation to shape the proposal? How did the community arrive at the decision about who should be deacons? None of these questions can be answered from the text, so we cannot see the process as clearly as we might like. But the deliberate choice to tackle the issue in a forthright manner stands out, as does the dramatic justice of empowering the dispossessed members of the community. The conclusion to the passage also shows that conflict resolution is a means of growth. Any group of people will experience conflict. If conflict is resolved through careful and sincere efforts, all parties will grow as persons and will find mutually beneficial ways to live and work together.

New conflicts emerged in the early church as it continued to expand, again with ethnic overtones. As Gentiles became Christians, a theological and cultural conflict erupted over what their inclusion meant and how it was to be carried out. The conflict fills many pages of the New Testament, as questions of the nature of salvation, the identity of Israel and the church, the practicalities of love, and a host of other issues were hammered out.

Acts 15 tells of the Jerusalem Council, which was one of the key milestones in the debate over how to include Gentiles in the church. The conflict had come to a head in Antioch, where the first genuinely multicultural congregation had been established. Paul and Barnabas were leading figures there and had entered into "no small dissension and debate" with some Jewish Christian teachers who had come up from Judea asserting that circumcision was necessary for salvation. A delegation had been formed, led by Paul and Barnabas, to take the conflict to the highest levels of church leadership. Acts 15 tells of the council called to debate the issue from the grounds of theology, experience, and Scripture. Eventually James made a proposal, which was accepted (though a case could also be made that James made an authoritative decision on the basis of the debate). I believe that more of a consensus process took place, as indicated by the "decided unanimously" description in Acts 15:25, with James gathering the basis of the consensus and concretizing it into a plan of action. In any case, agreement was reached on a position and a plan of action. A

letter was sent to Antioch informing the Christians there that circumcision was not necessary for Christian faith, but calling for them to maintain some of the dietary laws, to abstain from idolatry, violence, and unchastity, and according to Paul's version in Galatians 2:10, to remember the poor. The process seems to have been a good and orderly one that allowed all the viewpoints to be expressed, thoroughly examined, and critiqued. A consensus was achieved, at least to some degree. Space was given in the discussion for people such as Peter and Paul to relate their own experiences, which evidently had a significant impact on the direction of the council.

At some point, when consensus is beginning to emerge, someone needs to crystallize the forming resolution into a proposal that can then be refined. It is interesting to note that one of the major concerns left in the final agreement was abstaining from eating strangled meat;[6] this concern seems to have quietly faded from view as incorporation of Gentiles into the church gathered momentum. Even agreements produced out of intense conflict and hard negotiations may have some fluidity to them as the parties then live out the terms of the agreement in their own settings. Dietary laws were recognized as a cultural concern as the church refined what it meant to be Christian, while the moral concerns of abstaining from violence and unchastity and caring for the poor proved to be basic ethical issues transcending cultural particularities. Idolatry also remained central, but how that related to eating meat that had been butchered on temple premises still was a debatable issue (see Romans 14–15 and 1 Corinthians 8-10). Major issues of personal, communal, or international life have to be resolved many times as they evolve and take new shapes amidst the twists and turns of our histories. A resolution of a conflict does not mean the parties will never have to visit the issue again at the negotiating table.

Chapter 3

The Development of Nonviolence

Our family sat around the dinner table with five unlit candles in the center. We were about to begin our family tradition of celebrating All Saints' Day in a uniquely Buttry Baptist style. Each member of the family tells of one person who taught us about God or how to live for God. Some of the people we name are family members who have died. Others are people in history whose stories have shaped our values and commitments. After naming our saint and telling why we chose that individual to remember, we light a candle. Through this tradition we seek to make our history as people of faith a resource for ourselves and our children as we face the challenges before our own generations.

One year among our list of saints were two teachers of nonviolence. We lit a candle for Martin Luther King, Jr., and recalled his *Letter from Birmingham Jail*. Our family was planning to attend a Baptist Peace Fellowship conference the next summer in Birmingham to observe the thirtieth anniversary of the pivotal year of the Birmingham movement. Remembering Dr. King was a part of our journey of preparation for that event. We also lit a candle for Mary Dyer, whose statue stands on the Boston Common, where our children once played. She was a Quaker woman who was hanged in Puritan New England for her nonviolent witness to religious liberty and the freedom of conviction. She was offered clemency if she would recant, but responded, "What is life compared to the witness for Truth?"[1] The clarity of her words and the courage of her death inspired the abolition of the death penalty in Massachusetts as a means to control the Quakers. Her witness began as a child when she walked out of church following the banning of a Quaker from her congregation. After lighting the candles for our saints, we composed a poem together in their honor that would hang on the kitchen until the next All Saints' Day:

Dr. King made the law more fair;
He went to jail and wrote his famous letter there.
His letter was about justice and peace;
His dream for right will never cease.

Mary Dyer was very brave;
She kept her faith right to the grave.
Mary Dyer walked out of church.
Then she sat down under the birch.
She thought til she could think no more;
She stood up for what was right 24 years more.
There is a statue of Mary Dyer,
She fought and spoke for her heart's desire.

The stories of the "saints" of nonviolence and the development of thinking and action in this area is part of a rich heritage of peacemaking that has seldom been told.[2] The war-makers are well known to us, but those who have waged peace are often unsung heroes, even if their witness and work led to significant social change. Great figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., have rightly become beacons of truth and courage for people around the world, but there are many other stories to be told as well of people and movements that have helped to shape the understanding and practice of nonviolence that has emerged with such revolutionary power in the later years of the twentieth century.

Early Roots

In the Americas and Europe, nonviolence has its roots in the pacifism of the early Quakers, Anabaptists, and other religious nonconformists. Quakers such as Mary Dyer, Robert Barclay, William Penn, and John Woolman bore witness to the call of Christ to peace and refused to defend themselves other than by speaking the truth as they understood it. Their peacemaking efforts consisted primarily of their verbal witness and an effort to be consistent with their principles as regards their actions. During the French and Indian War, John Woolman led a number of Quakers to resist paying taxes that paid for the war, writing, "We therefore think that as we cannot be concerned in wars and fighting, so neither ought we to contribute thereto by paying the tax directed by the said Act, though suffering be the consequence of our refusal, which we hope to be enabled to bear with patience."[3] For the most part, these religious pacifists did not try to change society through political means but faithfully proclaimed and modeled a life of nonviolence and sought individual conversion to their convictions.

Nonviolent actions were also widely used in the resistance against British colonial domination, and played a key part in the American—and later in the Indian—independence struggles. In colonial America these actions were taken not so much out of a political or religious philosophy as from a pragmatic basis of how best to resist British policies. Nonviolent resistance was so effective that by 1776 nine out of the thirteen colonies had already achieved *de facto* independence.[4] The greatest period of unity during the independence struggle was during the nonviolent resistance to the Stamp Act, a unity that was seriously strained when the conflict became a military one.[5]

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, peace societies were formed to advance pacifist philosophies, often from a humanist perspective. Henry David Thoreau's essay "On Civil Disobedience" had a major impact internationally. The essay grew out of his experience in tax resistance. When he refused to pay the poll tax from 1842–1846 in protest of the government's support of slavery, he was arrested and jailed briefly until a relative paid the tax. Thoreau was angered over this thwarting of his attempt to force a test case in the courts, so he turned to writing and lecturing in order to present his position. He asserted that conscience was a higher authority than governmental law, and when the law was immoral the individual had a duty to engage in civil disobedience. Through such action and the resulting punishment, the moral cause of the legal martyr would arouse the citizenry to bring about change. Thoreau's ideas would have a profound influence on Gandhi, resisters to the Nazis, and others who employed civil disobedience on the basis of conscience in the twentieth century.

The nineteenth-century abolitionist movement marked the first organized effort to change national policy in the United States through nonviolent means. Adin Ballou and William Lloyd Garrison formed the New England Non-Resistance Society which organized bold direct actions to free slaves and fight racial segregation of the railways. Boycotts of slave-made products and walk-alongs, in which a black person and white person would walk in the streets arm-in-arm, were common tactics in their struggle. Black abolitionist organizations developed to support the freedom movement. The oratory of Frederick Douglass stirred anger at the injustice of slavery, while the Underground Railroad, an extensive network of thousands of blacks and whites opposed to slavery, provided a way to freedom for tens of thousands of slaves, in direct violation of federal law. Many of those who went into the South to assist the escaped slaves were captured and imprisoned, and even killed.

Harriet Tubman was one of the bravest and most creative of the "conductors" on the Underground Railroad. Though suffering physically from abuse received as a slave, she made nineteen trips to "Pharaoh's Land" to bring out at least three hundred slaves, earning the name "Moses" on the wanted posters because nobody believed a woman could accomplish the feats she did. Though slave owners offered rewards of $40,000 for her capture and pledged torture and death for her, Tubman's profound trust in God enabled her to return again and again into the heart of danger. She spoke of Saint John having seen four gates in Paradise, on facing South: "I recon if they kill me down there, I'll get into one of them gates, don't you?"[6] Harriet Tubman was also known for her great capacity to forgive, and expressed hope that even Confederate President Jefferson Davis would find peace after the Civil War.

Though the abolitionist movement confronted the evil of slavery and to some degree that of racism, sexism was a serious beam in the movement's eye. Women abolitionists worked on two fronts and had to form their own abolitionist societies because they were excluded from the societies by men who thought women should never speak in public to men or to mixed groups. Through the efforts of women such as Sojourner Truth, Angelina and Sarah Grimke, and Lucretia Mott, emancipation of both blacks and women was brought into national consciousness. The Philadelphia Female Antislavery Society was the first national, politically active organization for women; it wove nonviolence and feminism into the abolitionist cause. During the Women's Rights Convention held in New York City in 1853, Lucretia Mott nonviolently transformed a hostile confrontation. The Rynder gang, a group of politicized thugs, had decided to break up the meeting, but Mott refused to call for police protection. She persuaded all the women to leave the hall with an escort. When asked who would escort her, she took Captain Rynder's arm and said "This man will see me through." The stunned thug courteously complied.[7] In the ongoing struggle for women's suffrage, nonviolent actions such as lobbying, silent vigils, mass demonstrations, and hunger strikes were effectively employed.

Early Movements for Peace

On the eve of World War I, religious leaders gathered in Germany for the first "World Conference of Churches for Peace." Germany had already declared war on Russia, and the conference had to be suspended and the conference participants evacuated through the German and French lines as the European powers plunged into the war

that would devastate their continent. Earlier, on a train platform, the British Quaker Dr. Henry Hodgkin and the German pastor Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze had pledged, "Whatever happens, nothing is changed between us. We are one in Christ and can never be at war."[8] Their commitment to peace was the beginning of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR).

Peace organizations grew in various European countries and the United States, witnessing to Christian pacifism and engaging in relief efforts among war victims. Dr. Henrietta Thomas undertook a reconciliation visit to Germany in 1915, where she visited peace groups and provided words of encouragement. Siegmund-Schultze was arrested and sentenced to death by a military court, but direct intervention from the Kaiser led to his release. Over six hundred Fellowship of Reconciliation members were imprisoned in England for their conscientious objection. Following the war, fifty men and women from ten countries met in Holland to establish formally the IFOR from all their national fellowships. What began as an ecumenical Christian anti-war organization has since become an interfaith network with affiliates on every continent advocating nonviolent direct action for justice and peace.

Another Fellowship of Reconciliation member, Muriel Lester, was raised in a wealthy family but was moved by her faith to take a vow of voluntary poverty and to give her life working among the poor for justice and peace. She became a social worker and founded Kingsley Hall in the Bow section of London's East End. Her deep spirituality and daily discipline of prayer provided the roots to withstand the stress of the struggles in which she was engaged. She was invited to spend time in India with Mahatma Gandhi, which led to a life-long friendship; when Gandhi came to England in 1931, he stayed at Kingsley Hall with Lester. She traveled around the world protesting war and serving as IFOR's traveling secretary. Following the Japanese invasion of China, she picked up a piece of shrapnel beside a dead Chinese boy. When she was next in the United States, she placed it on the desk of a scrap metal dealer in Seattle to confront him with the evil his business partnership with the Japanese war machine was producing.

During World War II in the United States, Clarence Jordan led a group of pacifists in starting Koinonia Farm in southern Georgia as a witness for what Jordan called the "God Movement." From the beginning it was an interracial undertaking to model justice and reconciliation, but it became a target for violence from the racist white community. The farm, in response to a boycott by neighbors, began a

mail order business to stay afloat. When they were firebombed and shot at, they responded with a nonviolent witness. Ora Browne courageously took the night watch, standing unarmed under the light on the road. Jordan always presented Jesus Christ as the center of his witness and challenged the conservative religious Southerners to take their Lord seriously, using a gentle but blunt earthy wit. When one proud woman said, "I want you to know that my grandfather fought in the Civil War, and I'll never believe a word you say," he responded, "Ma'am, your choice seems quite clear. It is whether you will follow your granddaddy or Jesus Christ."[9] Jordan's "Cotton Patch" translations of the New Testament brought the teachings of Jesus regarding justice and peace into the racial conflicts of the South with ringing clarity.

Nonviolence and the Labor Movement

In addition to the religious pacifists and advocates of nonviolence, the labor movement provided another stream of nonviolent action in the early twentieth century. Strikes, picketing, and boycotts were used extensively in worker struggles. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or "Wobblies") was the most radical of the labor movements, seeking to organize workers without division by race, sex, or skills. Though they were branded as violent by the press, they used mainly nonviolent means of struggle, except when attacked by police. The Wobblies campaigned for free speech in many western states in the early 1900s, challenging the ordinances that were enacted to curtail union organizing. Thousands would march, defying gag orders by local courts. The arrested Wobblies filled the jails, but continued to make speeches and sing songs from behind bars. In Fresno, California, in 1911, the fire department turned their fire hoses point-blank on the singing prisoners in their jail cells. They were silenced only when the icy water was knee-high in the prison, but then thousands more IWW supporters joined in the Fresno demonstrations, forcing the city officials to lift their ban on street speaking.[10]

Usually there was not much involvement of the churches in the labor struggles, though occasionally people spanned both the religious and the workers' movements. During the 1919 textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, for example, A. J. Muste joined the strike's Boston Defense Committee. Even though he was pastoring a Quaker church, because of his charismatic leadership he became executive secretary of the strike committee itself. Facing provocations to violence and police brutality, the strike succeeded, the first victory by a coalition of nonviolent workers aided by members of the religious

community and the radical Left. Muste later left the pastorate and became a full-time labor leader. For a while he adopted revolutionary Marxist-Leninist thought and became a follower of Leon Trotsky, but just prior to World War II Muste returned to his Christian roots. After conferring with the Russian revolutionary, Muste rejected Bolshevism and embraced "revolutionary nonviolence." He called for an activist form of pacifism that would make common cause with the oppressed in their struggles for justice, whether industrial workers, sharecroppers, or American blacks. Following World War II, as executive secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, A. J. Muste would become a key link between the earlier labor and anti-war struggles and the emerging civil rights and anti-war movements during the Vietnam era.

In the Vietnam era the labor and religious movements came together again under the leadership of a young Mexican American named Cesar Chavez. Chavez organized the migrant workers in California, founding the National Farm Workers Association in 1962. Because of their nomadic life and often illegal status in the U.S., migrants were especially vulnerable to exploitation. Chavez and the UFW organized national consumer boycotts of lettuce, grapes, and wines. He campaigned for better working conditions and against the use of pesticides that endangered the health of the field workers. Chavez was deeply committed to nonviolence, coming out of an intense Catholic spirituality. He frequently said, "to be human is to suffer for others,"[11] and Chavez used fasting as a spiritual method for nonviolent struggle, including a thirty-six-day fast at the age of sixty-one to protest hazardous pesticide use. One long fast in 1968 ended when he was joined by Senator Robert Kennedy in taking Holy Communion. His own spirituality, as well as the justice of *la causa*, the struggle, drew many Christians and other people of faith into solidarity with the farm workers.

Before turning to other nonviolence movements of the 1960s in the United States, we must first consider the nonviolent struggle for independence from colonial rule of another country, India. It was there that the roots of the philosophy of nonviolence were developed in the early twentieth century in a way that would later influence the civil rights movement in America through its leader, Martin Luther King, Jr.

Gandhi and the Movement for India's Independence

Mahatma Gandhi deepened the conceptualization of the philosophy of nonviolence and refined its practice in what he called "experi-

ments with truth" in the struggles for justice in South Africa and independence in India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He began his career as a lawyer in South Africa, leading resistance in the Indian community against the rising repressiveness of the white power structure. In the context of this struggle he developed a method of resistance he called *satyagraha*, which he translated "soul-force" or "truth-force." *Satyagraha* was a method of civil disobedience in which the *satyagrahi*, the resister, would disobey unjust laws with willing self-sacrifice to the forces of repression. The power of truth and conscience and self-discipline thus revealed would be greater than the power of violence and injustice.

Gandhi's first major campaign was against the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907, which required every Indian in South Africa to register with the Registrar of Asiatics and to take out a certificate that had to be produced any time a police officer demanded it. The campaigners refused to take out certificates and picketed all registration offices. The police began to arrest the campaign leaders, including Gandhi, but the resistance spread. Some two thousand certificates that had been taken out were voluntarily offered to be burned at a public demonstration. The repression escalated until at one point, of the thirteen thousand Indians in the Transvaal, twenty-five hundred were in jail!

For years the struggle twisted and turned, with Gandhi always counseling and modeling a gracious but firm attitude toward those in power. Finally, in 1914 the Indians Relief Bill was passed, overturning the key repressive legislation. When Gandhi departed for India, he gave a gift to General Jan Christian Smuts, his main protagonist in the struggle: sandals he had made while in prison. As a testimony to the force of truth and love that was the foundation for Gandhi's resistance, Smuts later remarked, "I have worn these sandals for many a summer...even though I may feel that I am not worthy to stand in the shoes of so great a man. It was my fate to be the antagonist of a man for whom even then I had the highest respect."[12]

On his return to India, Gandhi became a leader in the effort to expel the British colonial government and attain independence. His first political act was to call for a nationwide strike in 1918. Distressed over the violence that erupted following his arrest, he called off the strike, but in Amritsar nonviolent public meetings continued until General Dyer sealed off the walled park where the meetings were held and ordered his troops to open fire. Over fifteen hundred casualties, including 379 dead, resulted from the firing of 1,650 rounds of ammunition, a later inquiry into the massacre learned. Britain had

showed itself willing to employ severe violence to maintain its colonial system. But the nonviolence movement for independence in India had just begun.

A campaign for economic independence began as Gandhi encouraged Indians to boycott British textiles and produce their own homespun clothing. He worked daily at the spinning wheel, and encouraged all Indians to do the same. Then Gandhi challenged the British monopoly on salt production. Salt was a necessity for every Indian in the tropical climate, and the British salt tax was the second leading source of income from India for the empire. Resistance to the salt tax struck a blow at colonial tyranny in such a way that any Indian could participate and that was immediately understandable to all. Gandhi led a march to the sea where he dried his own salt, igniting a nationwide illegal industry of salt-making. Over one hundred thousand arrests of the protesters, including Gandhi and other *satyagraha* leaders, were made as the British tried in vain to stop the movement.

In the North-West Frontier Province along the border with Afghanistan, an astounding nonviolence movement developed among the Pathan people. The Pathans were noted for their violence, engaging in endless rounds of blood feuds and upholding a code of honor that valued killing for revenge and dying in battle. British military expeditions into the frontier had often suffered high casualties and responded with brutalities unparalleled in the British Empire. But Badshah Khan transformed Pathan society through the teachings of Islam and Gandhi.[13] He began as an educator, establishing schools in spite of British opposition and the resistance of the conservative mullahs. He taught the Islamic values of *amal*, *yakeen*, and *muhabat*—selfless service, faith, and love. In the struggle for independence from colonial rule he raised a volunteer army of Pathans committed to nonviolence. They combined service to humanity and love with the courage and fearlessness of their warrior culture. Thousands of Pathans joined the Khudai Khidmatgar, "Servants of God," as the army was called. The Khudai Khidmatgar wore red tunics, practiced military drills, had officers and a drum and bagpipe corp, but they also swore an oath—a life and death matter for a Pathan—to refrain from violence and taking revenge, and to live a simple life of service.[14]

When Gandhi ignited the salt protests, the Pathans rapidly picked up the action. Badshah Khan spoke to mass meetings, encouraging his followers to join the resistance. The British promptly arrested him, but thousands of Pathans demonstrated around his jail, and in

the city of Peshawar a general strike was called. The British sealed off the entire province and began a massive campaign of repression. Troops were sent to Peshawar to confront nonviolent demonstrators at the Kissa Khani Bazaar.[15] Arrests were made, with demonstrators peacefully being hauled off to jail. Then two armored cars drove into the crowd, killing a number of people. The crowd maintained the nonviolent discipline Badshah Khan had taught them and quietly collected the dead and wounded, but refused to disperse unless the soldiers and armored cars also left. The troops were then ordered to fire on the demonstrators. When those in front fell, more Pathans stepped forward, sometimes with chests bared, and the demonstrators stood their ground without panicking. From 11 o'clock until 5 o'clock, demonstrators peacefully yet defiantly presented themselves before the firing British soldiers. When the corpses filled the streets, the government ambulances hauled them away to be burned. Two to three hundred people were killed that day, with thousands wounded. One crack regiment, the 2/18th Royal Garhwal Rifles, refused to fire on the unarmed civilians. Their courage in disobeying orders moved all of India, but they were sentenced to long prison terms for their disobedience.[16] The British then abandoned the city for ten days until reinforcements could arrive.

The British soldiers began a reign of terror throughout the province, burning villages, beating "Red Shirts" of the Khudai Khidmatgar, killing livestock, destroying harvests, and jailing thousands. But no matter what provocation the British tried, the Pathans maintained their courageous nonviolent discipline. In one town when all the Red Shirts had been beaten unconscious, the British officer yelled, "Any more Red Shirts?" An old villager, Abbas Khan, covered a shirt with red fluid and presented himself smartly before the officer. Badshah Kahn later wrote, "The British feared a nonviolent Pathan more than a violent one."[17]

In addition to the struggle for freedom from British rule, Gandhi also turned *satyagraha* upon two internal issues of the Indian people: Hindu/Muslim strife and untouchability. He employed fasting as a means to raise the seriousness and immediacy of these issues, though he refused to use fasting against the British because he believed it was a tactic to be used only against one's nearest and dearest. During his fast against untouchability, Indian society was shaken from top to bottom by his moral courage and demands. Though that three-thousand-year-old system of segregation did not end, Gandhi had destroyed the public belief in untouchability. What had once had religious sanction was now viewed as morally illegitimate.

By 1946, a war-weakened Britain realized it could not stand against the power of the nonviolent movement for Indian independence, and the British colonial government withdrew. India's birth as an independent nation immediately became tragic, as violence erupted between Hindus and Muslims. Hundreds of thousands were killed in the social earthquake as India split into two nations, which brought profound grief to Gandhi, who had given so much of his efforts to the cause of peace and unity. And the strife between Hindu and Muslim would cost Gandhi his life: a Hindu radical who viewed Gandhi as too accommodating to Muslims assassinated the apostle of nonviolence after receiving Gandhi's blessing. Likewise, his close Muslim associate, Badshah Khan, was jailed in the newly formed Pakistan by his own Muslim leaders because he sought unity with Indian Hindus. Thus, the two great heroes of Indian independence both suffered from the violent and bloody schism between the Hindu and Islamic people of India following independence.

The drama of the struggle for India's independence and the scope of Gandhi's writings had a global impact. His definition of *satyagraha*, "truth-force" or "soul-force," broke the conceptual bonds of negativity of terms like "passive resistance." Nonviolence was more clearly understood as a force that could dramatically affect the course of human affairs, not just a quaint philosophy for a few social radicals on the fringe. Gandhi had led a movement that set free the world's largest colony from the most powerful colonizing empire, and people around the world took notice.

Gandhi's teachings about nonviolence emphasized the religious core of nonviolence as a life philosophy. God's truth expressed in love was the foundation. Love could not be particularized, but must be expressed to all people, including one's adversaries. The practical manifestation of this love was a respectful yet firm statement of one's position, seeking to connect to the moral roots of the adversary. Gandhi wrote, "Our motto must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and heart. We must therefore be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us."[18]

The relationship between means and ends is essential for understanding the philosophy of nonviolence. The end one pursues can only be attained by means consistent with the desired end. Gandhi saw the failures of violence in light of this understanding: "Experience convinces me that permanent good can never be the outcome of untruth and violence.... I object to violence because, when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary, the evil it does is permanent."[19]

To achieve a unified India with the inner strength for independence and self-government, Gandhi focused on the nonviolent method of action, which builds inner strength and interdependence among all the people engaged in the struggle and even among their adversaries. He argued, "They say 'means are after all just means.' I would say 'means are after all everything.' As the means so the end.... If we take care of the means we are bound to reach the end sooner or later."[20] The means were something that Gandhi and his followers could control, whereas the end was to a significant degree beyond their control. If, however, they gave in to the lure of violence, they would lose control over both the means and their ability to shape the end.

Satyagraha requires more courage than participating in violence, for the advocate of nonviolence cannot hide behind a weapon but must first stand before the truth and master the oppressions and evils within. "Non-violence cannot be taught to a person who fears to die and has no power of resistance."[21] Self-purification, therefore, is viewed as the beginning point for nonviolent action. Violence of heart, thought, and word has to be truthfully confronted and mastered before engaging in acts of struggle. Gandhi rejoiced in his times in jail (of which he spent 2,089 days in India and 249 in South Africa) as a time to face his inner issues. He wrote: "Self-purification is the main consideration in seeking the prison. Embarrassment of the Government is a secondary consideration."[22] Through the process of growth in nonviolence, truth, and love, sacrifice was transfigured by joy: "No sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy."[23]

Gandhi's major contribution to the political underpinnings of nonviolence was an understanding of the role of the consent of the oppressed in their oppression. Every government depends for its power upon the consent of the governed, whether that assent is willingly given by agreement to a constitutional system or coerced by violence and terror, since "all exploitation is based on the cooperation, willing or forced, of the exploited."[24] Gandhi believed that even the most despotic government could not stand except by the consent of those whom they govern, even though that consent was often obtained through force. Yet when "the subject ceases to fear the despotic force, the power is gone."[25] Gene Sharp makes this understanding of power and consent the foundation of his analysis of nonviolence:

> *A ruler's power is dependent upon the availability of its several sources. This availability is determined by the degree of obedience and cooperation given by the subjects. Such obedience and cooperation are, however, not inevitable, and despite inducements, pressures, and even sanctions, obedience remains essentially voluntary. Therefore, all government is based upon consent.*[26]

Centuries earlier, the French philosopher Etienne de la Boetie exposed the vulnerability of tyrants to the withdrawal of consent:

> *But if not one thing is yielded to them, if without any violence they are simply not obeyed, they become naked and undone and as nothing, just as, when the root receives no nourishment, the branch withers and dies.... Resolve to serve no more, and you are at once freed. I do not ask that you place hands upon the tyrant to topple him over, but simply that you support him no longer; then you will behold him, like a great Colossus whose pedestal has been pulled away, fall of his own weight and break into pieces.*[27]

Though this concept is difficult for oppressed people crushed by the suffering inflicted upon them to bear, Gandhi made it the foundation for his application of nonviolence. A nonviolence movement has a potent tool in the withdrawal of the consent of the governed. Gandhi blamed Indian cooperation more than British guns for their subjugation, then turned to self-improvement and self-reliance as pivotal fronts on which to wage the struggle:

> *The outward freedom... that we shall attain, will be only in exact proportion to the inward freedom to which we may have grown at a given moment.... The responsibility is more ours than that of the English for the present state of things. The English will be powerless to do evil if we will but be good. Hence my incessant emphasis on reform from within.*[28]

Those who are viewed as powerless have the critical power to say yes or no, and a willingness to suffer while refusing to give assent to repression arms the proponent of nonviolence with a weapon more powerful than guns, tanks, court injunctions, or prisons. A government or tyrant unable to gain consent will of necessity collapse.

Through his numerous campaigns of civil disobedience, Gandhi also developed a pragmatic wisdom with deep roots in the nonviolent philosophy. Trust was essential to the success of a mass movement. Leaders could not expect to have people follow unless they had earned the people's trust over a period of time through their continuous and consistent efforts. The preparation of the people for the days of intense struggle depended upon the leaders being known and trusted, so Gandhi was careful in judging the timing of his efforts and the building of the community of trust. He also advocated trust toward the adversaries, requiring openness about the plans for the movement:

> *The best and the quickest way of getting rid of the corroding and degrading Secret Service is for us to make a final effort to think everything aloud, have no privileged conversation with any soul on earth and cease to fear the spy. We must ignore his presence and treat everyone as a friend entitled to know all our thoughts and plans. I know I have achieved most satisfactory results from evolving the boldest of my plans in broad daylight....Many have apologized for having to shadow me.*[29]

At times Gandhi would even write the leading authority involved about his plans, using his courteous manner with disarming forthrightness.

Gandhi also encouraged each campaign to have a particular focus, thus maintaining the energy for the campaign and giving a clear sense of accomplishment when the goal was achieved. Each campaign was a particular step along the longer road to justice, independence, or unity. He wrote, "Civil Disobedience can never be directed for a general cause, such as for Independence. The issue must be definite and capable of being clearly understood and within the power of the opponent to yield."[30] When the South African government gave in on the laws the Indians were protesting, some wanted Gandhi to press for more demands, but he refused on the ground that to do so would not be true to what they had stated in their campaign.

Gandhi viewed the nonviolence movement in India as his country's gift to the world. As he talked with American blacks about their own oppressive situation, he saw them as carrying a similar hope. After his death, with the growth of the civil rights movement and the rise of a similar leader in the person of Martin Luther King, Jr., Gandhi's prediction came true. These two leaders and the movements which they helped direct and shape became the great beacons of inspiration for those seeking justice and freedom in nations all across the globe.

Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement

The nonviolence movement in the struggle for civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s had deep roots in the earlier black American struggles for justice and freedom. Abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth provided models from the earlier freedom struggles, and leaders such as Marcus Garvey had stirred black pride, especially in the growing urban centers. The flowering of black literature in the 1920s and 1930s and the intellectual stature and fire of W. E. B. DuBois gave sharp expression to the passion for justice. When black soldiers returned to the entrenched racism of the segregated South after fighting in a war to make the

world "safe for democracy," the social climate was ripe for upheaval.

At the same time, the organizational infrastructure that would support the civil rights movement was growing in the early 1900s. The black churches were the major base, for they were independent from white institutions and thus provided a sphere for black leadership to flourish as well as a deep wellspring of spirituality to energize and provide expression for the struggle. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), formed in 1909, had mainly pursued justice through the court system. In addition to their legal victories, the NAACP laid a foundation for the civil rights movement through its extensive development of regional chapters and local leadership. As the mass movements began to organize across the South, NAACP chapters and youth councils furnished key portions of the leadership for the emerging local organizations.

The Highlander Folk School, founded by Miles Horton in Knoxville, Tennessee, played an important role in leadership development in the formative stages of the civil rights struggle. Working on the assumptions that education through experience can be a powerful force for social change and that the oppressed can find the solutions to their problems through their own experiences, Highlander sought out potential leaders in black communities as well as from poor white communities and labor groups. They developed education programs to equip students for action in their communities upon return. Furthermore, in the midst of a brutally segregated society, the Highlander School provided a successful model of an integrated community. The list of people attending Highlander workshops reads like a "Who's Who" of the civil rights movement.[31]

In the early 1940s some small nonviolent actions and education events were undertaken by the Fellowship of Reconciliation. James Farmer, FOR's Race Relations Secretary, provided leadership for the events, along with A. J. Muste, George Houser, Bayard Rustin, and John Swomley. They held "Race Relations Institutes" in several northern cities, which involved discussions between blacks and whites followed by actions to integrate segregated public facilities through the use of "sit-ins" before that term was coined. In 1947, white and black pacifists took a bus trip throughout the South called the "Journey of Reconciliation" in the first attempt to desegregate interstate buses. Many of the riders were severely beaten, and the bus was burned by a white mob. Three riders spent thirty days sentenced to prison chain gangs, separated from each other in the segregated system.[32] The Congress of Racial Equality, a civil rights organization eventually headed by Farmer, also utilized the tactics

of sit-ins and freedom rides in nonviolent campaigns throughout the South.

The first mass movement occurred in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1953. After months of trying to integrate the buses through a change in city ordinances and facing a strike by white bus drivers when a mild ordinance was passed, the black community initiated a boycott. For ten days in June no blacks rode the buses, causing the transportation companies to lose $1,600 a day. A free "car lift" was organized to provide service to blacks going to work or shopping, following the bus routes but charging no fares. The expenses were paid by the United Defense Leagues set up by the churches to direct the boycott, drawing upon funds donated by individuals and churches at mass meetings held each night. A compromise agreement with the white power structure gave a partial victory to the black community and brought an end to the boycott. Though segregation of the buses was not completely overturned, the Baton Rouge boycott stirred the southern black churches as word spread through the ministers' networks that direct action against white power structures could work through massive mobilization of the black community, especially with the churches as the organizational base.

When Rosa Parks sparked the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955–1956 by her refusal to give up her seat, it was not a spontaneous act inspired by fatigue but rather a protest by a courageous woman who had prepared herself for struggle. Four months prior to her famous action she had attended a training session at the Highlander Folk School.[33] Mrs. Parks was the branch secretary for the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP and had several times refused to comply with segregationist laws on the buses. She said, "My resistance to being mistreated on the buses and anywhere else was just a regular thing with me and not just that day."[34] In a meeting held the night after Rosa Parks was arrested, Jo Ann Robinson, president of the Montgomery (Black) Women's Political Council, suggested a bus boycott. She and other women stayed up all night mimeographing flyers to inform the black community of the boycott. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, under the leadership of E. D. Nixon, planned the strategy for the boycott, and in looking for an articulate leader prompted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the new pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, to become the movement's spokesperson.

King had been refining his thinking on a Christian philosophy of nonviolence growing out of the social gospel teachings of Walter Rauschenbusch and the Christian realism of Reinhold Niebuhr. When King learned of Gandhi in seminary, he discovered the tactical vehicle

for Christian love to bring about transformation on a social scale. The bus boycott in Montgomery provided King his first opportunity to put his ideas into action. After a year of blacks boycotting the buses, walking or using their own taxi system for shopping or getting to work, the public transit system was integrated. Terror tactics of racist whites, including the bombing of King's home, were countered with a consistent and persistent witness of love toward those filled with hate. King proclaimed from his pulpit:

> *We shall match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering. We shall meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will, and we will continue to love you. We cannot in all good conscience obey your unjust laws, because non-cooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is co-operation with good. Throw us in jail, and we shall still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our community at the midnight hour and beat us and leave us half dead, and we shall still love you. But be ye assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. One day we shall win freedom, but not only for ourselves. We shall so appeal to your heart and conscience that we shall win you in the process, and our victory will be a double victory.*[35]

Following the Montgomery boycott, Dr. King and other black leaders organized the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The SCLC was an "organization of organizations," serving as a decentralized political arm for the churches.[36] The civil rights movement was not a centrally controlled uprising, but one of dozens and later hundreds of local organizations that took on particular aspects of the injustice oppressing African Americans. The SCLC provided a connection between these various groups to encourage and strengthen them through the knowledge that they were a part of a larger movement. The SCLC also helped strengthen the internal workings of the local organizations by providing guidance and counsel and the unifying vision of outside figures who had won stature through successful struggle. Perhaps the most significant contribution of the SCLC was the shaping of the mindset necessary for nonviolent struggle. The SCLC trained local people in the politics of agitation, drawing upon black religion by refocusing it from inner piety to outward action for freedom. The importance of the role of preachers like King, Ralph Abernathy, Fred Shuttlesworth, and James Lawson in shaping the driving power of the black church cannot be underestimated.

In 1963, the freedom movement's efforts came to a creative climax. The black community in Birmingham, Alabama, led by Rev. Fred

Shuttlesworth, invited SCLC and Dr. King to come to Birmingham to help with a campaign against the downtown businesses and their segregationist policies. Careful protest actions were planned, beginning on a small scale and building each day. Daily demonstrations and sit-ins were met by arrests by the police, followed each night by rallies at local churches to instruct people on the philosophy and practice of nonviolence and to call for more volunteers for the nonviolent army. When a court injunction was issued against the demonstrators, King and his close associate Ralph Abernathy led the next march and were arrested. While he was incarcerated, King wrote his *Letter from Birmingham Jail,* in which he articulated his basic philosophy and provided an answer to the critique from white church leaders who chided him for being "unwise and untimely." Later in the campaign a decision was made to let the children join in the march, since their freedom was also at stake. The children and local college students faced the fire hoses and the dogs, filling up the jails until there was no space. One young child, no more than eight years old, who marched with her mother was confronted by a policeman who mocked her with the question, "What do you want?" With a fearless bluntness and the courage born of moral clarity and conviction, the girl answered simply, "Freedom."

A key breakthrough in Birmingham occurred during a march led by Rev. Charles Billups. As the marchers approached the police line, Bull Connor, the Commissioner of Public Safety, ordered them to turn back. When they refused, Connor ordered his men to turn the fire hoses on. Many of the marchers were on their knees, prayerfully awaiting the powerful blasts that might injure them. They stared unafraid at the police and firemen, who did not move. Slowly the marchers stood up and began to advance. Connor's men fell back with their limp fire hoses, and several hundred marchers continued on as planned. The days that followed saw more violence against the nonviolent demonstrators, but the business leaders of Birmingham began to negotiate on the issues presented by the black community. When it became apparent that the movement would not go away, that the jails were full and the number of marchers was still growing, and that the nation was filled with revulsion over the police violence against praying and singing people, the business community gave in and opened their lunch counters and employment opportunities to blacks.

Birmingham was the national focal point of the black revolution of nonviolence that summer, but a hundred other communities were engaged in similar struggles. Religious people—black and white,

Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish—joined in the struggle that arose from the depths of the black communities across the country. Many people were killed by racist violence, from Medgar Evers, who was shot in front of his home by a sniper, to four girls killed in their Sunday school class by a bomb attack of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham. Martin Luther King was the most visible and articulate spokesperson of the movement and stood at the organizational hub of the SCLC network, but he did not control the movement. The civil rights movement was broad-based, with leaders arising from every community and from many different sectors of society. The spirit of nonviolent suffering came out of centuries of oppression and resistance refined by a faith that kept hope alive in the harshest days. It was this faith that provided the love ethic empowering the movement. As Fannie Lou Hamer, who led the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in their bid to unseat the fraudulently elected all-white delegation to the Democratic National Convention, said, "Ain't no such thing as I can hate anybody and hope to see God's face."[37]

There were many types of nonviolent actions undertaken throughout the fifties and sixties: freedom rides on buses throughout the South, sit-ins at lunch counters, economic boycotts, voter registration drives, and countless marches, including the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom which drew over two hundred thousand people, making it the largest demonstration at the nation's capital at that time. Eventually the national preoccupation with the war in Vietnam, the explosion of riots in northern cities, the "benign neglect" of the Nixon administration, and, in a more positive way, the growing involvement of blacks in local politics resulting from civil rights gains changed the nature of the ongoing struggle for racial justice in the United States. Dr. King's assassination deprived black America and the world of a valiant leader, but from this struggle a generation of leaders was developed in both black and white communities who had refined both the practical understanding of nonviolent action and the philosophy behind it. They would provide the basis for the ongoing justice and anti-war organization in American cities and in rural communities, and Dr. King's writings and actions would instruct and inspire activists in the nonviolence movements that emerged in every continent in the 1980s. Though the prophet is dead, he continues to speak.

One of King's greatest gifts was that of vision: he was a dreamer who opened up the imaginations of many to envision a new way of living together. He dreamed of the "beloved community,"in which "sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able

to sit down together at the table of brotherhood." King had a dream "that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."[38] Nonviolence was not just a tactic to achieve political, civil, or economic goals; it was a means in line with the explicit end of a human community marked by friendship, understanding, and justice. But King was also a dreamer rooted in the pains and injustices suffered by the black community. King refused simply to endure the tension, but rather through nonviolent means brought the tension into the open and created a crisis in order to address the root issues of society's fracturing of the beloved community. As he wrote from the jail in Birmingham:

> *Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored.... I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension which is necessary for growth. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, so must we see the need for nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood.*[39]

Through the combination of direct nonviolent action and spirituality forged together in the churches and the nightly rallies during the campaigns, King made love and struggle one:

> *With every ounce of our energy we must continue to rid this nation of the incubus of segregation. But we shall not in the process relinquish our privilege and our obligation to love. While abhorring segregation, we shall love the segregationist. This is the only way to create the beloved community.*[40]

Martin Luther King, Jr., also spoke of the broad interrelationship between the oppressions of racism, poverty, and war. When critics tried to undercut his standing to speak out against the war in Vietnam, he refused to have his moral concern segregated. "Justice is indivisible," he stated. In the war he saw not simply funds for anti-poverty programs being drained away for the military build-up, blacks and whites fighting and dying together who could not sit together in schools back home, poor Americans of all colors fighting against poor Asians, but rather a "far deeper malady within the American spirit."[41] He spoke against "the giant triplets of racism,

materialism, and militarism" that left victims across America and across the globe.[42] For King, nonviolence as a Christian required that he act with and on behalf of the victims of these structural injustices in a comprehensive way. He proclaimed he was "increasingly compelled to see the war [in Vietnam] as an enemy of the poor and to attack it as such."[43] There could be no split between peace and justice or between civil rights and disarmament.

King provided some clear guidelines for nonviolence campaigns as he and the SCLC staff worked in struggles in over a hundred cities in the United States. In his *Letter from Birmingham Jail* he listed four basic steps for a campaign: "Collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; self-purification; and direct action."[44] It was important to select a particular focus, since segregation was such a vast issue. Actions to integrate the bus system in Montgomery or the downtown businesses in Birmingham provided clear, realizable goals that could be articulated to both the oppressive powers and the community of resistance. Negotiation was the preferred approach; it was offered before direct action, and then picked up again later in the struggle to help work out a just resolution.

Key to the transforming power of nonviolence in the oppressed community was the breadth of involvement by people in the struggle. Unlike war, where only a limited segment of the community can directly engage in action, in the nonviolent struggle everyone can be involved, as illustrated by the children of Birmingham. King summed up the qualifications for participation clearly when he wrote:

> *In the nonviolent army, there is room for everyone who wants to join up. There is no color distinction. There is no examination, no pledge, except that, as a soldier in the armies of violence is expected to inspect his carbine and keep it clean, nonviolent soldiers are called upon to examine and burnish their greatest weapons—their heart, their conscience, their courage and their sense of justice.*[45]

However, King did require training in nonviolence for those who would be engaging in direct action. After the training, usually held at one of the local churches, the volunteer would be required to sign a "Commitment Card" that included a pledge to practice nonviolence through the spiritual disciplines of prayer and meditation, courtesy, and self-sacrifice; to refrain from violence of fist, tongue, or heart; and to follow the directions of the captain of the demonstration. With the careful planning that went into campaign strategy and the training of the volunteer demonstrators, the civil rights movement presented a model of discipline and organization which was able to maximize

the movement's impact.

Vietnam and the Anti-War Movement

As the Vietnam war slowly grew in scope for the American government in the 1960s, an anti-war movement also grew, eventually playing a major role in the ending of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. The movement started with small protests—a few hundred people marching in Washington in 1965, black students distributing leaflets to their classmates about not going to fight in Vietnam when blacks were not yet freed in Mississippi, and a few hundred men refusing to be inducted by the draft. Within a few years, the protests were staggering in scope—two million people demonstrating across the country on October 15, 1969, almost thirty-four thousand men refusing induction, and over 60 percent of the country in favor of U.S. withdrawal.[46] In 1971, twenty thousand people blocked traffic around the Pentagon and throughout Washington, and over fourteen thousand were arrested in the largest mass arrest in U.S. history.[47] Some of the soldiers in Vietnam refused to carry out orders or wore black armbands in protest. Vietnam Veterans Against the War was formed by many soldiers when they returned, and in one demonstration more than a thousand veterans threw their medals over the White House fence and, one by one, made statements against the war.[48]

Students played leading roles in the anti-war movement. Nationwide student strikes briefly shut down many campuses, underground papers proliferated, and graduations turned into protest events. When Henry Kissinger spoke at Brown University's 1969 commencement, two-thirds of the graduating class turned their backs to him. Following the invasion of Cambodia ordered by President Nixon in 1970, protests erupted on a number of campuses. Unarmed demonstrators were killed by National Guardsmen at Jackson State and Kent State Universities. Draft card burning was a vivid symbol of defiance. Many draft-age men went to prison, some for as long as four years, while others fled to sanctuary in Canada. When one eighteen-year old deserter sought sanctuary at Boston University Chapel, a thousand students stood vigil for five days and nights to protect him until, on a Sunday morning, federal agents stormed the chapel, smashing doors and charging through students to take the young man away.

Civil rights leaders made direct connections between the war in Vietnam and the poverty and racism at home. In 1966, six leaders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee were sentenced to several years in prison after nonviolently invading an induction

center in Atlanta. Martin Luther King, Jr., proclaimed from the pulpit at Riverside Church in New York: "I speak as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam and the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home and death and corruption in Vietnam.... The great initiative in this war is ours. The initiative to stop it must be ours."[49]

Within the churches, grassroots activists participated in the anti-war movement, while, for the most part, the hierarchies either supported the war or were silent. Radical Catholic priests and nuns whose consciences had been awakened by the civil rights movement or by experiences with the poor in Latin America were often on the leading edge of the protests. Father Philip Berrigan and three friends went into a draft board office in Baltimore and drenched the records with blood. While out on bail, Berrigan, his brother Daniel, who was also a priest, and seven other people removed the records from the Catonsville, Maryland, draft office and burned them in an adjacent parking lot. For four months Daniel Berrigan evaded the FBI, popping up to speak at churches or rallies and then disappearing again, until an informer let the FBI know where he was hiding.

New religious peace organizations sprang up to join long-standing organizations such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the American Friends Service Committee. Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC),[50] a broad-based ecumenical movement, was one of the first groups intentionally to move beyond being merely anti-war to working to establish justice as the basis of peace. CALC dealt with their own institutional dynamics that hampered racial inclusiveness, and worked to be as just internally as they were in their prophetic proclamations. The Sojourners Community grew from the desire of several Chicago-area seminary students to live a radical witness for justice and nonviolence. Their magazine, first called *The Post-American* and then changed to *Sojourners,* became the major communication link between widely disparate parts of Christian tradition that had found common ground in their search for justice and peace. Many denominational peace fellowships were established, some with direct ties to church structures and others initiated from the grassroots.

When the Vietnam war ended, the massive demonstrations faded away, protest music evolved into pop, and the nation turned toward self-indulgence to drown out political shame and military defeat. But there remained a generation of people in the churches who had been socially awakened. In Christian traditions—from evangelical to liberal, from Catholic to black—there were people with roots from the witness of an earlier generation who had experience from the front

lines of the civil rights and anti-war struggles. These people supported organizations that had gone through the various traumas of development as well as journals and magazines that expressed and refined their thinking and gave focus to their actions. These Christians were ready to play an increasingly central role in the struggle for justice and peace within the United States. They had also developed a global awareness that would lead them into solidarity with the struggles which were about to erupt in the 1980s and 1990s to a degree unprecedented in world history.

Chapter 4

The People Power Explosion

In August of 1988 I was in Riga, Latvia, in what was then the Soviet Union with a group from the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. The new policies of *perestroika*[1] tolerated the expression of Latvian independence sentiment: the colors of the free Latvian flag could be displayed, and a few weeks earlier the first demonstration for independence had taken place peacefully. As we headed from our hotel to a church service, we noticed about thirty or forty Latvians with the red and black flags in front of the statue of Lenin. After a brief ceremony, the group began to march down the avenue toward the Freedom Monument erected to commemorate Lenin's act to grant the Baltics independence. Lenin had said they would be "free forever," a promise Stalin soon broke. As the small band continued toward the Freedom Monument, I saw crowds coming down all the side streets, swelling the demonstration by the hundreds.

We had to go on to the church service, but there we met some of the Baptist young adults who later took us to the demonstration. The formal rally had ended, but thousands were still milling around, talking excitedly and waving flags. We had some pamphlets of the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., which we shared with the Latvian Baptist demonstrators, and we talked into the night about nonviolence and their hunger for independence. Having stood with those friends at the demonstration for freedom that night, I felt a special joy when I watched the people of Latvia celebrate their independence at the Freedom Monument a few years later, an independence won in a nonviolent struggle against one of the greatest empires in history.

The 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a transformation of the way people engage in struggles for freedom, justice, peace, and human rights. Wars, insurgencies, ethnic violence, and acts of terrorism still occur with horrifying frequency and tragic consequences, but for the first time in human history a global phenomenon of nonviolent movements shook up political powers, redrew national boundaries, and brought hope to millions of people ground down by oppression

and poverty. The struggle in the Philippines to overcome the Marcos dictatorship took a name that is also appropriate for the global movement: People Power. Through nonviolent action, ordinary people who had often been locked out of political decision-making processes became agents shaping their own destinies.

As part of this global movement, the teachings and works of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., spread around the world. Chinese students in Tiananmen Square quoted King. The movie *Gandhi* played in Lithuania in 1987 just as the Sajudis independence movement was beginning. People from all around the world began linking together formally and informally to exchange ideas and practical information about nonviolence, even as the Baptist Peace Fellowship group had done with the Latvian Baptists. The International Fellowship of Reconciliation provided nonviolence training in Brazil, the Philippines, South Africa, Burma, Korea, and a host of other countries. Hildegard and Jean Goss-Mayr of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to disseminate nonviolence through their workshops. Adolfo Pérez Esquivel from Argentina received the Nobel Prize in 1980 for his work in linking together nonviolent movements as diverse as the Mothers of the Plaza in Argentina protesting the disappearance of their relatives, cement workers in Brazil striking for better working conditions, and Indians in Ecuador struggling for land reform. Pérez Esquivel founded Service for Peace and Justice in Latin America (SERPAJ), a Christian human rights organization with branches in most Latin American countries, to share strategies and information and to provide solidarity among the various groups engaged in their protracted struggles. The theory and history of nonviolence has received more intellectual attention by people such as Gene Sharp, whose three-volume work, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action,* has become a classic in the field. These connections have helped to break down the walls of isolation that have aided repression and have provided new insights, creative examples, and moral solidarity for people in a wide range of contexts as they struggle to better their lives and shape their destiny.

This chapter will provide a survey of the global eruption of people power movements. Obviously, much will be missed in such a short span. The religious movements or movements with Christians playing key roles will be highlighted, not because Christians are better at the life of nonviolence than others but because these stories relate more intimately to this effort to refine and expand an understanding of the history and theology of Christian peacemaking.

Latin America

The nonviolence movements in Latin America can be traced to the Medellin conference of Latin American Catholic bishops in 1968, where they called the church to take the "preferential option for the poor." The Roman Catholic Church, clearly one of the institutions of power and wealth in Latin America, began to get involved in efforts to organize people in poor communities and to address the issues of poverty which they faced. The Medellin Declaration stated:

> *It is necessary that small basic communities be developed in order to establish a balance with minority groups, which are the groups in power.... The Church—the People of God—will lend its support to the downtrodden of every social class so that they might come to know their rights and how to make use of them.*

The bishops committed the church to active pursuit of organizing in poor communities for the sake of building justice:

> *Justice, and therefore peace, conquer by means of a dynamic action of awakening (conscientization) and organization of the popular sectors, which are capable of pressing public officials who are often impotent in their social projects without popular support.*[2]

In a follow-up conference held in Puebla, Mexico, in 1979, in spite of rising conservative reaction to liberation theology the bishops reaffirmed their historical break with the traditional Latin American power structures to work alongside the poor:

> *Because we believe that a re-examination of the religious and moral behavior of men and women ought to be reflected in the political and economic processes of our countries, we invite all, without distinction of class, to accept and take up the cause of the poor, as if they were accepting and taking up their own cause, the very cause of Jesus Christ.*[3]

Liberation theology began to spread in Protestant churches as well as Catholic, describing God's saving work in terms of the historical experiences of oppression, often by following the paradigm of the Exodus of the Hebrew people from Egypt. Christ was envisioned among the suffering poor, or, as Adolfo Pérez Esquivel portrayed him, "Christ in a poncho." Base communities were organized where people studied the Bible and applied its teachings to their own contexts, developing profound grassroots theological-political analysis. Eighty to one hundred thousand base communities were developed in Brazil alone, sparked by the prophetic leadership of Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns and Archbishop Dom Helder Camera. These groups became

communities of action seeking justice on specific issues of concern to them, including wages, control of land, sanitation, and police repression.

El Salvador

Those in positions of power in Latin America and their backers in the United States responded to these actions with repression, often targeting church leaders and the base communities. One of the early prophetic voices in El Salvador was Father Rutillo Grande. This priest organized Christian peasants to examine their living conditions in the light of the Bible and then to organize unions in order to press for more just living conditions. While leading a peasant march in 1977 he said, "Remember that we are not here because of hatred. We did not come with machetes. We even love those Cains, for the Christian does not have enemies. What we have is a moral force, the Word of God...which unites us and brings us together even if they beat us with sticks."[4] A month later, Rutillo Grande was assassinated. Over one hundred thousand Salvadorans defied the government's state of siege to attend his funeral at the San Salvador cathedral.

In El Salvador more church people were assassinated in the 1980s than in any other country in the world, while the United States provided military assistance and massive funding for their assassins.[5] Salvadoran death squads published the slogan "Be a patriot; kill a priest."[6] Many of the people in the base communities joined armed resistance revolutions in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and other Central American countries. Others maintained nonviolence in their actions but struggled through demonstrations and community development for the same goals of economic and political justice. Military leaders saw them all as a threat, as did the United States government. The Santa Fe Document, produced by advisers to Ronald Reagan, identified liberation theology and the base communities as threats to U.S. interests. The church in Latin America became a church of martyrs not because they were defending the church's rights, but because they were defending the rights of the poor against the wealthy and powerful.

Archbishop Oscar Romero was elected to lead the Salvadoran Catholic Church because of his conservatism, but within a month the archbishop had a radical change of position under the influence of the life and death of Rutillio Grande. As the reign of terror grew under the Salvadoran military, Romero began to speak out boldly. He saw himself as the pastor of those who were being oppressed: "As a pastor, I cannot cease to accompany my people; the people give me strength and encourage me considerably to accept with them the risks of the

moment."[7] In his weekly homilies Romero denounced the government's repression and called for justice for the poor. Each service was closed with a litany of the dead, reading the names and circumstances of the killing of the military's victims that week. The popular organizations Romero supported called a general strike on March 15, 1980, that saw over two hundred thousand people participating in the protests. The military responded with more killings. In his homily on March 23, Romero appealed directly to the soldiers and police:

> *Brothers, you belong to our own people. You kill your own brother peasants; and in the face of an order to kill that is given by a man, the law of God should prevail that says: Do not kill! No soldier is obliged to obey an order counter to the law of God. No one has to comply with an immoral law. It is time now that you recover your conscience and obey its dictates rather than the command of sin. The Church, defender of the rights of God, of the law of God, of the dignity of the human person, cannot remain silent before so much abomination.*[8]

The military government could not tolerate such a direct prophetic assault on the foundations of its repressive power, and the next day Romero was assassinated while saying the Mass. When over one hundred thousand mourners attended his funeral, the violence continued as bombs and guns were fired into the crowds, adding again to the rolls of martyrs.

Throughout the 1980s, about seventy-five thousand Salvadorans disappeared or were killed, a staggering death toll for a country numbering only five million. The vast number of casualties other than insurgents and soldiers killed in the fighting were civilians killed or wounded by death squads, army sweeps of rural areas, and a systematic aerial bombing campaign. In spite of the murders of leaders in the churches, the unions, the human rights organizations, and community groups, new people would step forward in a profoundly deep and broad-based commitment to seeking a just resolution to the conflict. One among many organizations persevering through intense repression was COMADRES (Committee of the Mothers and Relatives of the Disappeared, Political Prisoners, and Assassinated of El Salvador), which worked to publicize killings and disappearances and pressed for an end to human rights abuses. Many of the leaders of COMADRES were themselves killed, imprisoned, tortured, or disappeared, yet new leaders continued to step forward, knowing they too would become likely targets for the death squads.

In 1988, a coalition was formed of over eighty labor and farmworker federations, cooperatives, churches, and professional, university, and

business associations called the National Debate for Peace in El Salvador. The National Debate organized a march for peace that drew twenty thousand people. Father Ignacio Ellacuría, rector of the Central American University, addressed the marchers:

> *We need to work for peace from the perspective of the suffering of the orphans and widows, and the tragedy of the assassinated and disappeared. We must keep our eyes on the God of Jesus Christ, the God of life, the God of the poor, and not on the idols or the gods of death that devour everything.*[9]

Father Ellacuría was assassinated in November 1989, along with five other Jesuits, their housekeeper, and her daughter in a massacre that finally jarred the sensibilities of the United States Congress, which had been numb to the tens of thousands of deaths of lesser known Salvadorans.

During the 1980s about a million Salvadorans became refugees, some finding their way to the United States, some internally uprooted, and many fleeing to Honduras or Mexico. A creative nonviolence movement began in 1987, when refugees decided to go home. Over four thousand refugees in the Mesa Grande camp in Honduras crossed back into El Salvador to return to their home villages, many of which had been destroyed. Thousands more returned in later "Going Home" repatriations. North Americans accompanied them to provide some international solidarity and to act as a barrier to the Salvadoran Army, which resisted the repopulation efforts. The army harassed the returning refugees, torturing and killing many, but the refugees were determined to reclaim their homes. They rebuilt their villages and remained in spite of the efforts to push them back into exile.

Argentina

The types of grassroots nonviolent resistance witnessed in El Salvador developed at the same time in many other parts of Latin America, where poverty and military repression were the major realities of life. One of the earliest and most poignant nonviolent campaigns was carried out by the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina. When the Argentine military seized power in 1976, they began a "dirty war" against leftist guerrillas, but a far broader segment of society was victimized as the military seized tens of thousands of people, often without telling anyone what happened to them. About thirty thousand people disappeared, most of them under the age of thirty and not involved in leftist politics. The mothers, wives, and sisters of the disappeared met in the lines formed at

government offices seeking information for their loved ones, and when they received no help from the government they turned to each other for support.

After a petition calling for redress was refused, the women began a silent, illegal protest. Every Thursday they would walk one by one in a circle in front of the government offices on the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires. Each one would wear a white handkerchief embroidered with the names of missing children or spouses or would carry a picture of one who had disappeared. Each carried a nail, explaining, "This is to remember the sacrifice of Christ nailed to the cross.... We each have our own Christ too, and we relive the sorrow of Mary."[10] These protesters were terrorized by the military; death threats were made against the women and their children still at home. Some of the women also disappeared, and others lost their jobs. Forty of the mothers were arrested and put in the same cell with a dead young man, recalling with horrifying directness the pain of wondering about their lost children. The women were called *las locas,* "the crazy ones," by neighbors who did not want to believe so many people were being killed. Even friends and family sometimes distanced themselves from the women.

In the early years the Catholic Church was not supportive of the Mothers of the Plaza. Only two of eighty bishops gave them any support; few would say masses for the disappeared. In 1980, though, the church began to get involved in the call for human rights, prodded by the prophetic witness and moral clarity of the mothers. Adolfo Pérez Esquivel often marched with them on Thursdays and considered his 1980 Nobel Peace Prize to be an award for the Mothers of the Plaza as well. When Argentina's defeat in the Falklands war and the declining economy weakened the military junta, it was the Mothers of the Plaza who provided the skills necessary to hold the largest of the strikes and demonstrations. As mass graves began to be uncovered and dismembered bodies found in lakes and rivers, the vindicated Mothers of the Plaza became one of the pillars of integrity for the rebuilding of Argentine society following the demise of the junta.

Chile

When General Augusto Pinochet deposed Chilean President Salvador Allende in a bloody coup in 1973, Chile entered a long period of repression under military dictatorship. The Chilean Bishops Conference publicly criticized the Pinochet regime and established a human rights organization to provide relief and counsel to victims of government-sponsored torture. Sit-ins at known torture centers,

courts, and other institutions for political repression were used to highlight human rights concerns. Sometimes "lightning" demonstrations were held at busy shopping centers, informing the populace about what was going on, but disappearing before police could arrive on the scene.[11] The church's identification with the poor made it a target for paramilitary violence; priests and lay leaders were killed and church buildings bombed. Protest movements would erupt periodically, led by workers or students or the religious community, and Pinochet would respond with further repression. Eventually the political discontent grew to the point that Pinochet thought he should gain an electoral mandate to stay in power in order to defuse the protests. But the campaign to say "No" to Pinochet was dramatically mobilized by that one word, and in October 1988 the Chileans voted against Pinochet continuing in office. The strength of the nonviolent movement was such that Pinochet had to follow through with the mandate of the vote, and the army surrendered power to a civilian government.

Bolivia

In 1977 and 1978, four women in Bolivia demonstrated what the power of nonviolent courage and creativity could accomplish when their actions ignited a social movement that had a dramatic impact in that country. The women were wives of tin miners who had been fired for union activities and then imprisoned by the repressive military regime of General Hugo Banzer. They had no financial resources, little education, and were supported in their efforts only by their children and a small circle of other wives of imprisoned miners. But they had a deep faith and were politically astute.[12]

The tin miners worked in dangerous and unhealthy conditions for wages that locked their families into grinding poverty. When miners had attempted to unionize in order to better their conditions, leaders were imprisoned, beaten, or exiled. After many attempts to negotiate with authorities, Nellie Paniagua, Angélica Flores, Aurora Lora, and Luzmila Pementel began a hunger strike on Christmas Day, 1977. They demanded an amnesty for political exiles and refugees, restoration of jobs to fired workers, removal of the army from the mines, and freedom for union organizing. Archbishop Jorge Manrique allowed the women to hold the hunger strike in his own residence, which provided both security and a central stage for the political drama, since his residence was only two hundred yards from the presidential palace. The women read from the Beatitudes in Matthew's Gospel and recalled the influence the Sermon on the Mount had had on

Martin Luther King, Jr., and the civil rights movement in the United States.

On December 28, the Feast of Holy Innocents, when the children who were slaughtered by Herod are remembered, the children of the four women joined in the hunger strike. When people protested the involvement of the children, the women announced that the children would be released from the strike when adults would take their places. Quickly the strike grew, with hundreds of men and women joining the fast until almost fourteen hundred people were involved. As the days passed, the tension in Bolivia grew. Fear of army reprisals brought intense international involvement by human rights advocates. Meanwhile, the health of the women was deteriorating. Negotiations had been intensely pursued by church representatives, government officials, and a spokesperson for the women. When the negotiations broke down and some strikers and human rights observers were arrested, the four women announced they would also abstain from water until a settlement was reached.

Finally, the government acceded to the strikers demands in full, providing amnesty for nineteen thousand political prisoners and exiles, reinstating jobs for union activists with full seniority, and giving freedom for all arrested during the strike as well as freedom to organize unions in the future. Though the strike was only one step in an ongoing struggle for justice and freedom in Bolivia, it showed that the weak could employ the weapons of nonviolent action in a way that could bring even a military dictatorship into accountability to the people.

Guatemala

The Guatemalan Indians, though a majority in the country, have been targets of a genocidal war that has now killed over one hundred thousand people. Santiago Atitlán is a Tzutuhil Indian town that used nonviolence to establish itself as the country's first military-free zone. In December 1990, drunken soldiers harassed the townspeople and attempted to drag a peasant from his home. The townspeople tried to prevent them, and the soldiers fired on the crowd, wounding one citizen before retreating to their barracks. The townspeople decided they had enough, so six thousand of them marched to the army compound outside of town. The army fired on the unarmed marchers, killing thirteen and wounding twenty-three. The citizens then gathered thirty thousand signatures calling for the withdrawal of the military from Santiago Atitlán, and presented their petition to outgoing President Vincio Cerezo. He granted their request, and the

army units were moved and forbidden to return. At the massacre site thirteen wooden crosses were erected where the people had died. Across the road, the military compound has been dismantled and turned into a cornfield. Thus amidst the brutality of repressive violence, Santiago Atitlán has become a symbol of hope and courage.

On May 25, 1993, Guatemala's new president, Jorge Serrano Elias, attempted to seize power in violation of the nation's constitution. He disbanded the Congress, the Supreme Court, the Attorney General's office, and other parts of the government, hoping to pull off the sort of coup engineered by President Alberto Fujimori in Peru. But the people of Guatemala responded with an immediate and widespread rejection of Serrano's seizure of power. Nearly every sector of society refused to recognize what Serrano had done, and the broad resistance made the army hesitate in supporting the president. The Guatemalan Ambassador to the United States joined the resistance, taking down Serrano's picture and claiming the embassy for the democratic forces.[13] The nonviolent forces of labor, indigenous people, business, and even the government establishment forced Serrano out of power and brought into the presidency a human rights advocate, Ramiro de León Carpio. Guatemala's situation remains very volatile, and killings and disappearances continue. But, with the growth of nonviolence movements and the leadership of people like Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu, hope is getting stronger that peace and justice will have a chance.

Ecuador

Indians in Ecuador have been struggling for years, seeking land and the recognition of their cultural and political rights. During a number of nonviolent protests in 1991, the Indians were met with violence from government soldiers who fired on crowds and from oil companies whose employees drove trucks into demonstrators who were blockading roads. Then, in April 1992, thousands of indigenous people marched 225 miles from the Amazon region to the capital city, Quito. Many tribal groups joined together, as well as non-indigenous Ecuadoreans. In response to this nonviolence movement, the government partially conceded, giving the Indians surface land rights to two million acres of land they had claimed.[14] Though the concession provided for only half of the land claimed and did not deal with the volatile issue of oil, the nonviolence movement for indigenous rights is a broad and long-term struggle that will shape the life of Ecuador for many years to come.

Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union

In 1989 sweeping revolutions took place in the countries of Eastern Europe, as communism collapsed in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. All these revolutions were accomplished nonviolently, except that of Romania. The popular saying is that it required ten years of struggle to bring change to Poland, ten weeks in Germany, ten days in Czechoslovakia, and ten hours in Romania. Though not entirely accurate, this saying captures the snowballing effect of the freedom movements that swept the region. The policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* ("openness" and "restructuring") initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev certainly allowed more political space for expressions for freedom to arise, but the earlier development of the Solidarity movement in Poland and the severe internal repressions under Honecker in East Germany and Ceausescu in Romania show that the changes cannot be fully attributed to Gorbachev. He was struggling to salvage a system in serious disrepair, and in his efforts he opened the way for movements that wanted to go much farther than he did. Grassroots people took advantage of the political opportunities history presented them, and in many cases created their own opportunities by taking actions to which those in power were forced to respond, usually in inadequate ways.

Poland

Poland's revolution was born in the labor movement amidst workers who were not experiencing the Marxist paradise. The workers were overwhelmingly Christian, and though the church hierarchy initially was cautious in response to the labor movement, the workers were unabashed in their expressions of spirituality in their struggle. On August 14, 1980, a strike began at the shipyard in Gdansk. Daily masses were held and pictures of the Pope were displayed, along with a huge cross. The cross became the symbol for the workers that their struggle must be free of hatred. Under the leadership of Lech Walesa, nonviolence and liberation through truth were set forth as the foundation stones for the struggle. Solidarity, the first independent trade union in a Communist country, was born. Though founded to be a trade union, it quickly grew to be an umbrella organization for a broader democracy movement that included many other sectors of society. Even when a military coup took place to try to crack down on the movement and over ten thousand arrests were made, the people continued their struggle. The leaders of Solidarity sought to live as if Poland was a free country, acting openly and setting up their own extensive network of institutions and channels of communication.

The Catholic Church served both a conservative role of providing stability and a more progressive role of being one place where Poles could speak and act autonomously in their totalitarian setting.

Father Jerzy Popieluszko, a leading figure in the campaign, often preached on Romans 12:21: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." His parish church, St. Stanizlaw Kostka, seated thousands, but crowds as large as ten thousand would gather outside for special masses led by the outspoken priest. A key issue in developing a nonviolence movement is overcoming fear of the repressive powers, and Popieluszko addressed this fear:

> *We have to fight our way out of the fear that paralyzes and enslaves reason and the human heart.... Our only fear should be the fear that we might ever betray Christ for a few pieces of silver. We have a duty to bear witness to the truth of what happened in August of 1980. We have a duty to demand that the hopes of the nation begin, at last, to be realized.*[15]

Popieluszko was murdered by the secret police in 1984. Half a million Poles gathered for his funeral, and his martyrdom became one of the rallying points for the ongoing struggle.

Though there was no single climactic moment in the struggle, the persistence of the Polish people, the strength of the Solidarity movement even when its leaders were in prison, and the profound faith of the common people brought about a new reality that the Communist government was finally forced to accept. When martial law was ended in 1989 and elections were held, the Communist candidates were unanimously rejected. Instead, the leaders of the nonviolent movement for democracy became leaders of the state.

East Germany

In East Germany, the Christian churches were the one institution independent of the Communist state, and in the 1980s they became the dissenting voice on issues of peace, human rights, and the environment. Small groups met in the churches to study the nation's moral situation; as the groups assessed the need for peace—which was encouraged by the government—they recognized there could be no genuine peace without democracy and freedom for people to express themselves. The churches then became the training ground for democracy and the small groups became the centers for the resistance. Though they were not as deeply wedded to Christian spirituality as the people of Poland, the church's teaching did have an ethical and moral impact in the shaping of their ideas. It was through the churches and interaction with Western peace movements

that nonviolence became a major component of their struggle. Glen Stassen was in East Germany in November of 1989, and commented on the impact of the church on the nonviolent discipline of the demonstrators: "They preached nonviolence, prayed for nonviolence, urged nonviolence on the authorities, and strategized nonviolent action without pause."[16]

Prayer services for peace were begun in churches in 1980 to protest the deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe. People would gather at night in one church to begin their worship and then walk to another church, holding candles. These actions symbolized their ecumenical unity as Protestant, Catholic, and Free Churches, but they also squeezed out the right to demonstrate nonviolently. When they were questioned by police, the demonstrators could respond, "We are going to worship; why is that illegal?"[17] In 1989, when thousands of East Germans responded to the lifting of travel restrictions by fleeing the country, the night prayer services in the churches resumed, and were again followed by candlelight marches. But by then the revolutionary fervor had increased, and thousands joined the marches as they spread to other cities, even though they were sometimes met with water cannons, tear gas, and beatings. Hundreds of arrests were made. By the fall of 1989, millions were involved in these protests all across East Germany. When it became clear that police violence could not stem the rising tide, the Communists began to retreat, first by holding discussions with the demonstrators and finally by resigning the government. The "Revolution of Light" had triumphed.

The churches provided much of the leadership for the new transitional government, since church vocations had been the only sector of society where people could refine their ideas by free discussion and could practice democratic decision-making. Many members of the transitional government and parliament were ordained pastors. In fact, the intense political activity of some pastors created problems for the churches in reconciling the roles of pastor and political leader.[18] Immediately following the collapse of communism, these church leaders also played a mediating and stabilizing role among the various political forces at work in the chaotic situation.

Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia had experienced the power of nonviolence earlier than other Eastern European countries, during the 1968 invasion by the Warsaw Pact countries led by the Soviet Union. The Soviets expected to have the situation under control within three days, but

prolonged and broad-based nonviolent resistance proved far more difficult for the Soviet military to suppress than a violent revolt. It took eight months for the Soviet puppet regime to be firmly installed. Though the nonviolent resistance failed, it put up a far longer and less bloody struggle than anyone thought possible. Memories of that resistance were the seeds for the "Velvet Revolution" of 1989.

The 1989 Czechoslovakian revolution brought together Christians and humanists in a nonviolent expression of moral power. Vaclav Havel, the playwright who became president, was the leading moral voice for the resistance. He had written an open letter in 1975 proclaiming the "spiritual and moral crisis" underneath the supposedly tranquil society, marked by the erosion of moral standards, repression of dissent and artistic freedom, and order without life. His letter had been widely distributed underground and ignited the gathering of small communities of conscience. Two years later, these groups had brought about the formation of Charter 77, the human rights group that provided the initial impetus for the 1989 revolution. The church as an institution did not play as prominent a role as in the Polish and East German revolutions, but the deep commitment of Czech Christians to express their faith in their lifestyle and a willingness to suffer brought the Christian community into the thick of the struggle. Christian social ethics and humanist morality laid the foundation for a rigorous commitment to nonviolence and a demand that the truth be spoken. "Truth will prevail" became the slogan of Civic Forum, a nonviolent group that was organized in the middle of the revolution and became the main organizational vehicle for the movement.

The revolution was ignited on November 17, when students marched to commemorate a Czech student killed in the Nazi occupation fifty years earlier. With banners calling for the release of political prisoners and freedom, the current regime was clearly being addressed. The marches moved toward Wenceslas Square, singing "We Shall Overcome" and attempting to give flowers to the police. They were attacked by club-wielding police in what was later termed "the massacre," although no one was killed. Two days later two hundred thousand demonstrators gathered in a new demonstration. One soldier told of being ordered to go with his unit to Prague to crush this "counterrevolution." The soldiers talked together and decided to support Havel. "We would not go to shoot our own people. So we just went home. We disobeyed orders."[19] When the Communists shuffled the faces at the top, the protesters came out in even greater force. A general strike was called and within days the government collapsed.

A new government with a majority of non-Communists was sworn in. Not a single person had died in the revolution. When Dr. Jan Carnogursky, deputy prime minister in the new government, was asked about the peaceful nature of the revolution, he listed among its causes "the moral influence of religion and the church."[20]

Romania

The Romanian regime of Nicolai Ceausescu was notorious as being the most Stalinist government in Eastern Europe. Ceausescu was dead within ten days of the first demonstration. Hundreds if not thousands of people died in the violent repression and ensuing chaos before Ion Iliescu seized power and short-circuited the developing revolution. The spark that ignited the uprising, however, was a nonviolent protest by a pastor and his parishioners.

László Tökés was pastor of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Timisoara, located in Transylvania. Hungarians living in Romania had been victims of brutal persecution by Ceausescu, including depopulation of villages in Hungarian areas and enforced hunger. Tökés raised his voice in protest in a smuggled out interview broadcast on Hungarian television, a broadcast heard by people throughout Transylvania. The bishop of the Reformed Church in that area ordered Tökés to pastoral exile in a remote village. Tökés refused to leave and barricaded himself in the manse, protected by his parishioners. Armed men broke in and stabbed Tökés, the church building was vandalized, and a church member was murdered by security police.

The struggle came to a climax December 15–17, 1989. A moving truck came to forcibly evict Tökés, but members from Timisoara churches—Reformed, Baptist, Catholic, and Orthodox, both Romanian and Hungarian—surrounded the church to protect the man whom they viewed as the one person speaking the truth in their repressed society. On the night of the 15th police broke through the human barricade and arrested Tökés as he stood in ministerial robes at the Communion table. More demonstrators gathered, and then the police fired upon them, using machine guns fired indiscriminately from helicopters. The next day, as demonstrators cried "Give us back our dead," the police killed more civilians. The massacres triggered violence across Romania, culminating in battles between the army, which switched to the protesters' side, and the security police. Ceausescu and his wife were seized and executed. The televised view of their bloody bodies brought an end to the fighting as the police force collapsed.

However, the opposition was too fragmented and small to respond quickly to the changing events, and rather than a revolution on the scale of those shaking their northern neighbors, the Romanians watched some of the old incumbent Communists shift around and maintain power, minus the Ceausescu personality cult. The Romanian revolution was missing key ingredients for success that were evident in other Eastern European countries. The Romanians lacked the developed ideology and the time frame for maturation of the movement that the Poles had. They did not have the extensive small group experience of the East Germans. The skills in nonviolent action the Czechs had developed in their resistance to the 1968 Russian invasion were completely absent in Romania. Though the split of the army from Ceausescu was pivotal, the lack of an idea base, small groups, and nonviolent action skills limited the ability of the democracy forces to shape the flow and outcome of events.

The Soviet Union

The break-up of the Soviet Union was accompanied by both events of striking violence and ethnic strife, such as between Armenia and Azerbiajan and in Georgia, and by creative movements of nonviolence, such as in the Baltic states and the response to the attempted coup in Russia in 1991. Mikhail Gorbachev's democratization policies provided new openings for a freedom of expression, such as showing the flags of the independent Baltic states, open selection of legislative representatives, and televising the debates of the Party Congress. But the presence of the Soviet army and the occasional employment of that army in violent actions, as happened in Georgia, did not guarantee that the republics seeking independence would be able to exercise true self-determination.

Lithuania took the lead in the independence movement, where a struggle for independence had been waged against Czarist and Soviet domination for years, frequently employing guerilla tactics. By the end of 1952, over fifty thousand lives had been lost in the fighting and over four hundred thousand Lithuanians had been deported to Siberian camps. The Lithuanians then turned to nonviolent struggle, which entered a dramatic new phase with the formation of Sajudis, the Lithuanian national front, in response to the open door of opportunity presented by Gorbachev's reforms. On August 23, 1988, two hundred thousand people gathered in Vilnius to condemn the Hitler-Stalin pact that destroyed their independence. In 1989 an 800-kilometer human chain was formed throughout the Baltic states by people linking hands, sometimes in ranks three deep.

When the Lithuanians declared their independence in 1990, the Soviets imposed an economic embargo and sent in troops and tanks in a show of force. But the Lithuanians neither gave in nor resorted to violence. One Lithuanian activist said, "Our whole nation has seen that weapons could do nothing in our situation, and only trust in God could help us."[21] The Catholic Church played a key role, both in providing leadership for the movement and in teaching people about remaining nonviolent in the face of all the provocations. Under the barrels of the Soviet tanks and circling helicopters, Vytautas Landsbergis arranged for the Lithuanian Symphony to perform Beethoven's Ninth Symphony as part of a public celebration of independence. The Lithuanians lived under their own definition of political reality and nonviolently refused to accept the authority the Soviets sought to impose upon them. Finally, the Soviets had to accede to the strength of the independence movement and recognize all the Baltic states as free nations.

In Russia, nonviolence played a key role in the downfall of communism. When a coup was attempted against Gorbachev, Russian people refused to follow the instructions of the new self-proclaimed ruling group. Instead, thousands of people put their own bodies between the army and the recognized representatives of the people led by Boris Yeltsin. This struggle was brief and spontaneously organized, but a more extensive citizens' campaign was organized in Kazakhstan by people near the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing site. The Nevada-Semipalatinsk Movement (NSM) was established to bring an end to Soviet nuclear testing. Demonstrations were held in Kazakhstan and in Moscow, and NSM leaders were elected to the Congress of Peoples' Deputies to argue for a test ban. The closing of the test site was another victory for people power against seemingly overwhelming war machines.

Asia

The Philippines

In February 1986, the Filipino people stunned the world by nonviolently toppling the regime of Ferdinand Marcos, who had seemed in firm control of power only days before. Marcos had called a snap election to deflect rising criticism of his rule, but was surprised by the rapid coalescing of opposition sentiment around Corazon Aquino, the widow of Marcos' chief political adversary, Benigno Aquino, who had been assassinated in 1983. Through an election riddled with fraud and abuse, Marcos declared himself to have received the public's mandate for his rule, but the Filipinos knew better and refused to

submit.

On February 22, Generals Enrile and Ramos broke from the army with three hundred troops, declaring themselves loyal to the will of the people. Jaime Cardinal Sin of the Roman Catholic Church broadcast a call for the faithful to show solidarity and support by holding a vigil at the rebel barracks. By the end of the second day, forty thousand unarmed people had gathered along the Avenue of the Epiphany of the Saints, including seven thousand nuns and five thousand priests and seminarians. The people brought food for the soldiers, including those troops loyal to Marcos who were sent to crush the revolt. The people greeted Marcos' soldiers with hugs and flowers and tied yellow ribbons (the sign of the opposition movement) around their gun barrels. When tanks were brought in, the civilians blocked the way, kneeling in prayer. "We're sitting ducks," one of the officers said. "They're psyching our troops, and we're all falling down without a shot being fired."[22] With his troops refusing to fire on the protesters, Marcos lost his ability to govern, and fled the country. The dictatorship had collapsed in a seventy-seven-hour nonviolent struggle.

But the roots for the struggle went far deeper. Inspired by the nonviolent stance of Benigno Aquino, the Roman Catholic Church in 1984 had invited Hildegard and Jean Goss-Mayr and Richard Deats of IFOR to conduct extensive training sessions on the principles and techniques of nonviolent action. Out of these seminars a new organization was formed, AKKAPKA, an acronym for Action for Justice and Peace in the language of the Tagalog people. AKKAPKA held seminars throughout the Philippines and developed grassroots groups that provided trained poll watchers and other participants in the opposition movement. When the historical moment came, the people did not react spontaneously, but out of an extensive and intentional development of nonviolent thinking and strategy.

The call for the nonviolent uprising came from the churches. Seven days after the election, the Protestant National Council of Churches issued a statement rejecting the election results, declaring, "In times like these to be patriotic means to direct our loyalty to the people and not to party or to person." Three days later the Catholic Bishops' Conference released a bolder statement, making a clear call to revolution: "A government that assumes or retains power by fraudulent means has no moral basis" and therefore "cannot command the allegiance of the citizenry." The churches thus called for nonviolence as the means for the revolution: "The way indicated to us now is the way of nonviolent struggle for justice. This means active resistance of evil by peaceful means—in the manner of Christ."[23]

The active leadership of church people played the decisive role in shaping the nonviolent character of the revolution in the Philippines. Father Jose Blanco, leader of AKKAPKA, expressed the heart of the philosophy that drove the people power movement:

> *Violence addresses the aggressor and the animal instinct in the enemy or oppressor. Nonviolence searches out and addresses the humanity in the enemy or oppressor. When that common humanity is touched, then the other is helped to recognize the human person within and ceases to be inhuman, unjust and violent....Every single human being has been created as an image of God. To recognize that image and to respect it in an absolute way is to live the Gospel radically and in a nonviolent way.*[24]

When the military split, it was the civilians, armed only with the faith and songs, who stood between the military factions, thus preventing the outbreak of civil war and bringing about a peaceful transfer of power.

Burma

Economic hardship and arbitrary actions by the military dictator, Ne Win, sparked student protests in Burma in March 1988. The protests were met with severe brutality by the army and police. Over seven days the students protested, while hundreds died from army bullets, suffocation in police vans, or torture at the infamous Insein Jail. The student protests collapsed, but the anger against the repression smoldered and spread. When Ne Win formally stepped down as head of state, retaining real power behind the scenes, he appointed Sein Lwin as president. Known as "The Butcher," Sein Lwin had directed the repression of the students in March. The outrage of the students and public at large erupted in August, culminating in a general strike on August 8. Demonstrations sprang up all across the country, calling for an end to the dictatorship. The military responded again with extensive violence, gunning down hundreds of unarmed people, including many Buddhist monks who had joined the movement. When doctors and nurses at Rangoon City Hospital joined in a demonstration to try to stem the flow of dead and wounded being brought in, the army fired into the crowd, killing scores more. Yet in spite of the rising level of violence from the army, the number and size of protests and strikes continued to grow.

On August 24 the army appeared to back off. Martial law was lifted and the soldiers returned to their barracks. Demonstrators began organizing grassroots democratic structures to manage everyday affairs in the cities. Pro-democracy papers and magazines sprang up.

Many government functionaries and even some military personnel joined the democracy movement. Democracy forces organized for direct political action as hope grew among the populace. In early September they called for the government to resign, an interim government to be installed, and elections to be scheduled. Instead, on September 18 the army emerged from their barracks in a systematic attack against the population, massacring thousands, arresting students and other demonstration leaders in house-by-house sweeps, and causing thousands of students to flee to the jungle areas under the control of ethnic minority insurgents.[25]

The new ruling junta, with the Orwellian name SLORC—State Law and Order Restoration Council—called for an election. Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of the leader of the Burmese independence movement, had risen to the fore in the democracy movement, and she became the leading political figure for the opposition, calling for a persistent campaign of nonviolence to restore democracy and human rights to her country. Suu Kyi's politics emerged from a deep Buddhist spirituality of nonviolence. Suu Kyi spoke particularly about freedom from fear:

> *Fearlessness may be a gift but perhaps more precious is the courage acquired through endeavor, courage that comes from cultivating the habit of refusing to let fear dictate one's actions, courage that could be described as "grace under pressure"—grace which is renewed repeatedly in the face of harsh, unremitting pressure.*[26]

Suu Kyi demonstrated her grace under pressure during her campaign tours around Burma, which violated SLORC's decree against political meetings of more than four people. While marching with some of her supporters, they were stopped by an army captain who threatened to fire if they advanced. Suu Kyi told her companions to turn aside while she walked down the road alone, insisting that only one life be put at risk. At the very last moment a major intervened and countermanded the order to shoot. Suu Kyi and her companions went on with their march and rally.[27]

When the crowds continued to grow at Suu Kyi's rallies, SLORC moved to decimate the National League for Democracy, Suu Kyi's party. Suu Kyi and thousands of other NLD leaders were arrested in July of 1989. Though under house arrest, Suu Kyi continued her nonviolent witness by refusing exile. When the election was held in May 1990, the NLD won over eighty percent of the votes, even in army districts with their repressive restrictions on the campaign. Nevertheless, SLORC refused to turn over power to the elected legislature and stepped up their repressions. When Aung San Suu Kyi was

awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, however, international attention was focused on Burma and pressure for change began to mount.

Many Christians were involved in the democracy movement in Burma, including some who spoke at rallies in Rangoon and other cities, though as a country with a Buddhist majority, Buddhists played a larger role in the protests. Many monks were in the forefront of demonstrations and were among those gunned down by the troops. Months after the crackdown some monks refused to receive alms from soldiers, thus denying soldiers one of the ways Buddhists can earn spiritual merit. The military responded by raiding many monasteries and finally coercing a reluctant submission from the Buddhist leadership. However, the organization, numbers, and spirituality of the monks will probably again rise as a factor in future resistance movements.

China

The Chinese students began their dramatic nonviolent vigil for democracy in Tiananmen Square in May 1989. Political space for less restricted freedom of expression had been opened by the liberal wing of the Chinese Communist party, which had permitted large character posters to be put up on what was called the "Democracy Wall." In the spring of 1989 students began to organize and demonstrate against corruption and for educational reform; when they were ignored by Communist Party leaders, the protests expanded and the issues they raised became more fundamental. Students gathered at Tiananmen Square, where thousands began total fasts. Within days the entire country was electrified by the student protests, as over two thousand dehydrated students were rushed to hospitals, their places at the protest being taken by new students. Strategy was developed through *ad hoc* committees that established links via fax machines to Chinese organizations around the world. The global media attention and a previously scheduled visit to the Chinese government by Mikhail Gorbachev in the midst of the protests increased the sense of drama and the political tension around the demonstrations. Thousands of workers joined the students in Beijing, Shanghai, and other cities.

The government ordered the army into Beijing to restore order. The students, many of whom had been in the army for their mandatory service, made direct links to the soldiers, saying the peoples' army could never attack the people. The soldiers were given food along with political instruction by the students, and the army sent to quell the demonstrations was immobilized nonviolently. Then, on June 3 and

4 another army, drawn from rural provinces and isolated from the news of the student activities over the past weeks, moved into the city. Shooting erupted along the approaches to Tiananmen Square. Changan Avenue became a shooting gallery as the advancing tanks and soldiers sprayed machine gun fire into crowds of students, workers, and other civilians, many of whom responded by throwing stones and bottles. Some demonstrators turned over armored personnel carriers and beat and hanged some soldiers, but most of the carnage was directed by the army at unarmed protesters. The confrontation was most vividly captured on video when a single unarmed man stood in front of a column of tanks, moving to block their way as they tried to go around him. His courage and determination against such superior might symbolized the moral superiority of nonviolence, even as the army regained control of Tiananmen Square and its bloodied side streets. Nobody knows how many people were killed in the crackdown, through estimates range between two and four thousand. Thousands of other students, workers, and intellectuals were arrested, some to be executed and most imprisoned. Many leaders of the democracy movement fled the country and are continuing their efforts abroad to bring democracy to China.[28]

Though the nonviolence movement in China, as in Burma, did not triumph, the story is not finished. The struggle for freedom and justice continues, and through nonviolence both of these movements have shaken powerful regimes that could very easily have dispatched any violent resistance. As the efforts to overcome repression in Poland took many years, activists in Burma and China are prepared for a long struggle in their quest for freedom.

Indonesia

The Indonesian invasion of East Timor has received little attention in Western media, but at least two hundred thousand people—one third of East Timor's population—have died in a campaign that can only be called genocidal. After years of guerrilla resistance, a nonviolence movement has sprung up. Protest banners are displayed. Activists have smuggled documents to Amnesty International detailing human rights violations, even though their actions can lead to imprisonment, torture, and death. In November 1991, the Indonesian government launched a campaign against students, including the raiding of churches that had provided sanctuary for activists. When a rally was held to commemorate one of the men killed by soldiers, the army opened fire on the assembly, killing over a hundred people, while many others "disappeared." Rally organizers have been impris-

oned for long terms, though they proclaimed their commitment to the principles of nonviolence and peace.

Thailand

In Thailand, the military—a perennial force in Thai politics—seized power from the parliamentary government in February 1991. As the military tried to reconstruct the government with its own people in key positions, people who were notorious for corruption and abuse, a nonviolent campaign began, heavily influenced by the Fellowship of Engaged Buddhists. The Fellowship had been begun by Sulak Sivaraksa, a Buddhist layman, and through it the core leaders of the demonstrators had received training from Quakers and Mennonites over the previous fifteen years. Though Sulak had been exiled because of his public criticism of the coup, a disciplined cadre of nonviolence leaders remained and was in place to carry on the resistance.

The nonviolence demonstrations for democracy began in the spring of 1992, and included prayer, fasting, and meditation over a period of seven weeks. In May the demonstrations grew, and the military brought in the tanks. Scores if not hundreds of people were killed, and the revulsion of the country toward the military violence was so swift and thorough that the military had to step back and restore the democratic government. The demonstrations strengthened the power of the nonviolence movement, and the people of Thailand continue to seek a government that is responsive to the concerns of the populace and not just the interests of business.

Africa

South Africa

The struggle of blacks in South Africa against the system of apartheid has been a major focal point for world attention. For Christians apartheid represents a shameful legacy, for it began as an explicit doctrine around the Communion table in the mid-nineteenth century.[29] It then became the political platform of the National Party and was buttressed by the Dutch Reformed Church's theology. The leading opposition group against apartheid, the African National Congress (ANC), began as a nonviolent organization, with its leader, Chief Albert Luthuli, receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1960. But following the Sharpesville Massacre that same year, where over sixty unarmed protesters were gunned down by police, the ANC initiated a campaign of armed struggle. ANC violence, however, never approached the massive and systematic violence inflicted daily by the

white police upon black civilians.

The churches either sanctioned the violence of the government or piously and passively pleaded for an end to the violence without engaging directly in the struggle for justice. Only a few courageous prophetic voices were heard from the church, including those of Desmond Tutu, Alan Boesak, and Beyers Naude. Under the leadership of Archbishop Tutu, the South African Council of Churches began a ministry of seeking justice for the oppressed, which brought it more and more into conflict with the government. Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, yet apartheid was no closer to being dismantled than when Luthuli had received the award twenty-four years earlier.

In February 1988 a major change took place in the struggle against apartheid. The government banned seventeen organizations, including the United Democratic Front, and restricted the largest labor federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, from political activity. That effectively left the churches as the only sector of society in a position openly to press the protests. They responded days later with an unprecedented "Parliament March," led by twenty-five church leaders from various denominations and five hundred clergy and laity, who carried a petition demanding the restoration of the right for peaceful protest. They were met with water cannons and police violence, and the church leaders were arrested.

The response of the South African Council of Churches, under their new executive secretary, Rev. Frank Chikane, was to invite IFOR staff for extensive training in nonviolence. They devised a campaign called "Standing for the Truth." The churches were known for their statements against the "heresy of apartheid," but now the time had come to make a stand, even if the church would be martyred. Chikane said, "I've talked about honest and dishonest nonviolent disciples. Dishonest nonviolent disciples raise nonviolence to stop people from resisting the system. But honest nonviolent disciples want to see nonviolent protest working."[30] It was time for the churches to become honest disciples of nonviolence. Their first action began with a church service where young people stood bound and gagged at the altar, symbolizing the plight of the country. Archbishop Tutu went to each one, removed the bonds and gags, and led them in a procession, carrying a huge cross. They then marched to the police station to demand the release of a church steward who had been seized by police during the service. Similar actions were undertaken all across South Africa, maintaining the nonviolent discipline that had been missing in the 1985 protests. In every event, church leaders were in front,

dressed in robes and cassocks, along with crowds of parishioners from every walk of life.

The Standing for the Truth campaign was a major factor in changing the political climate in South Africa, bringing about the political pressure that released Nelson Mandela, the leader of the ANC, from prison. With Mandela's release and the lifting of the ban against the ANC, the prospect of a nonracial form of government became a realizable goal, though the white power structure continued to resist the demands of the majority every step of the way. With the formation of a new constitution in 1993, the end of racist apartheid regime was in sight. Nonviolence and the willingness of church leaders to join the people in their struggle broke the logjam of confrontation and repression that allowed apartheid to remain in place.

Other African Nations

Many other African countries have seen nonviolent movements develop, though in very different contexts from that of South Africa. Nations that had achieved independence from colonial powers in the fifties and sixties became one-party states that often slipped into corruption and brutality. African people in many nations began to rise up and demand human rights and participation in the political process. Democracy movements developed in Tanzania, Kenya, Zaire, Cameroon, Mali, Togo and Zambia, Mauritania and the Ivory Coast. Old heroes who had become new tyrants have been forced by a younger generation to allow multiparty elections. Sometimes protests have been nonviolent, even when met by military violence; at other times rioting has broken out. Political pressures have been building in Africa due to the declining economies of many nations and the inspiration of the democracy movements that swept across Eastern Europe.

Liberia's brutal civil war brought the traumas of that country to the world's attention, but prior to that war becoming a news story, nonviolent protests against the oppression and corruption of the government of Samuel Doe had been led by church officials. Methodist Bishop Arthur Kulah led two major peace demonstrations, including one of more than fifteen thousand people who marched in the capital Monrovia to call for Doe's resignation. Pentecostal Bishop Dixon, head of the Liberian Council of Churches, also played a leading role. When the government soldiers met the demonstrators, Bishops Kulah and Dixon knelt in prayer. The soldiers then allowed the demonstrators to pass, and violence was avoided.

Church people in Zaire were active in the efforts to replace the

brutal and exploitative rule of Mobutu Sese Seko with a democratic form of government. In September of 1991, unpaid soldiers rioted in Kinshasa and social order collapsed, while Mobutu stayed securely protected in his armored yacht on the Zaire River. Efforts were undertaken to negotiate some form of constitutional rule through the establishment of the National Conference on Democratization, but Mobutu kept undercutting the attempts to establish any government which would limit his power. In February 1992 the frustrated religious community held worship services throughout Kinshasa, then marched on the central square from their various churches. The marchers were met by gunfire and bayonets. Scores died, hundreds were injured. Church leaders have played a key role in presenting the philosophy of nonviolence, including forming a political party with nonviolence as one of its foundational principles. Church leaders have also served in pivotal positions on the National Conference, most notably its chair, Monsignor Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, Archbishop of Kinsangani. It remains to be seen what the shape of the new Zaire will be, arising from the misery of decades of colonial and dictatorial exploitation.

In Zambia, nonviolent movements brought about the peaceful transition of power from Kenneth Kaunda to opposition candidate Frederick Chiluba. Kaunda was the leader of the independence struggle against the British when the colony was known as Northern Rhodesia. Under Kaunda, Zambia became a one-party authoritarian state. Strengthened by a vibrant labor movement, opposition forces were able to pressure Kaunda to legalize political activity in late 1990 and hold multiparty elections the following year. Even in losing power, however, Kaunda boosted his reputation in history by not only bringing his country independence but also agreeing to multiparty democracy, sparing Zambia the degeneration witnessed in countries like Zaire.

Kenya's Daniel Arap Moi, following the electoral defeat of Kaunda in Zambia, vowed he would crush Kenyan demonstrators "like rats."[31] But Moi's defiance did not stem the rising tide of political activism in Kenya. Protestant and Catholic church leaders led the way in the nonviolent protests, for the church was the only institution that remained in Kenya with the capacity to speak and to challenge the abuses of Moi's dictatorship. They began speaking out against corruption and human rights abuses. Though Moi, a churchgoer himself, accused the churches of being agents of foreign powers, the church leaders made the initial calls for a multiparty system. One of the leading critics of Moi, Rev. Alexander Muge, was killed in a suspicious

car accident. In December 1992, multiparty elections were finally held, which Moi won due to the splintering of the opposition. However, it is evident that the political awakening of Kenya will continue, with the church playing a strong prophetic and advocacy role.

The Middle East

The Middle East is one of the most volatile regions of the world, with the Israeli/Palestinian conflict at the heart. Numerous wars have been fought and countless acts of terrorism have been committed. Late in 1987, the Palestinian Intifada began, a new form of struggle by Palestinians in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza. "Intifada" literally means "shaking off," to signify for Palestinians the shaking off of their own fears and then the shaking off of the Israeli occupation. Jean Zaru, a Palestinian Quaker, stated:

> *We started by affirming one another. All of us felt empowered. We had a sense of our own inner power and worth, young and old, men and women, rich and poor. This affirmation and morale building helped us to think clearly and gave us the confidence to take creative action.*[32]

The Intifada has continued since 1987 and has been a major factor in opening up what opportunities there were for peace in the midst of a protracted and bitter conflict.

Most media presentations about the Intifada have focused on the stone-throwing of the Palestinian youths, but the vast bulk of activities are nonviolent and intentionally so.[33] Palestinians have engaged in strikes, store closings, boycotts, tax resistance, marches, sit-ins, passing out leaflets, fasts, flag displays, and other nonviolent forms of protest. They instituted their own daylight savings time one month before or one month after the Israelis did. Israelis responded by checking watches, breaking them if they were on Palestinian time, making youths stand against a wall for the hour, but the Palestinians continued on their own time. The most significant aspect of the Intifada was rejecting the imposed institutions of the occupation and establishing Palestinian institutions. When the Israelis closed the schools, the Palestinians responded by setting up their own illegal tutoring system in people's homes. The Palestinians began to live in line with the future dream of an independent state, which was more threatening to the Israeli government than the earlier acts of terrorism.

Mubarak Awad is a Palestinian Christian who established the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence in Jerusalem. He was a leading organizer of the Intifada until the Israelis exiled him. Ironically, when the Israelis threw him out of the country, nonviolence

was given a boost in Palestinian eyes: if it made the Israelis that upset, there must be something to it! Palestinians prefer to talk of "civil disobedience" or "civilian struggle" rather than "nonviolence." The passivity in "nonviolence" is accentuated in Arabic, whereas the Intifada is an activist movement to make the physical and moral costs of governing the occupied territories unsustainable.

Beit Sahour, a middle-class, predominantly Christian town in the West Bank, played a leading role in the Palestinians' extensive campaign of tax resistance. In a published statement the townspeople said, "We will not finance the bullets that kill our children, the growing number of prisons, the expenses of the occupying army. We want no more than what you have: freedom and our own representatives to pay taxes to."[34] The people of Beit Sahour redirected their resources into helping families hurt by the boycotts and demonstrations, setting up anti-crime programs and an alternative education system. The Israelis sealed off the town from September 22 to October 31, 1989. Phone lines were cut, property confiscated, businesses and homes destroyed, and tax resisters jailed. One woman pleaded for the army to leave her refrigerator as everything was being taken from her house, saying, "I have small children, and the milk will rot outside." The army officer offered to leave the refrigerator if she would pay 50 shekels (about $20). She refused to bargain, appealing instead to the officer's humanity. When the officer negotiated down to one shekel, tempting the mother to give up her part in the resistance, she defiantly said, "Take the refrigerator!"[35] When the soldiers left on November 1, the residents celebrated, proud of their steadfast resistance. The townspeople have also welcomed Israeli peace activists into their homes and churches for dialogues and joint peace demonstrations.

Among the Israelis there have also been nonviolent movements to oppose the occupation or military service in the occupied territories. Hundreds of Israeli women conduct weekly vigils; these "Women in Black" vigils periodically swell into the thousands and sometimes unite with Palestinian women also demonstrating for peace. When one march of five thousand Israelis and Palestinians was going through Jerusalem, a Palestinian flag was unfurled. Police then attacked the demonstrators with tear gas and clubs. The next day twenty-five thousand protesters forming a human chain were again met by police violence. Though the Palestinians were accustomed to such treatment, it set off a debate among the Israelis about the brutality of their police forces.

Soldiers by the hundreds refused to serve in the occupied territo-

ries, sometimes going to prison. *Yesh Gvul* is an organization of resisters from the Israeli military that began in protest of Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and has continued to organize against the repressions in the occupied territories. Rabbis for Human Rights was organized in response to the Intifada and currently has a membership of about eighty rabbis. They have worked to gather information about human rights abuses and to uphold the principles of freedom, justice, and peace for all the inhabitants of the area. When the Israeli government expelled 415 Palestinians in December 1992, the rabbis organized a food convoy to the Lebanon border for the exiles in their makeshift tent village. The Israeli soldiers blocked their convoy, so the rabbis joined Palestinians in a protest in front of the Knesset building, living in tents for a couple months. Palestinians see the nonviolence of the Intifada as a way to help Israelis as well as themselves. Zoughbi Elias Zoughbi said, "Through nonviolence we not only seek the liberation of our nation, but also seek the liberation of our enemy by alleviating Israeli fears of an inevitable Palestinian state."[36] The hopeful prospects of the Israeli-PLO peace accord are a fruit of what Zoughbi envisions.

Over a thousand Palestinians have died in the Intifada, many shot by soldiers or settlers; many more have suffered the effects of tear gas, including hundreds of miscarriages. Tens of thousands have been hospitalized and more tens of thousands arrested. Some Israelis have been killed by scattered acts of violence, but the systemic violence has been directed at mostly unarmed Palestinians. Many Palestinian youths have thrown stones. Some people argue that the stone-throwing harms the Palestinian cause because it gives the Israelis justification for their repression as well as fueling their memories of the Holocaust. Others see the stone-throwing as an emotional outlet which is nonlethal and has helped maintain a low level of violence in the uprising, since the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) issued orders restricting and prohibiting the use of guns in the Intifada. The rise of violent Palestinian organizations such as Hamas have been fueled by Israeli intransigence and violence, but the majority of Palestinians in the occupied territories continue to support nonviolence and the peace process.

The Intifada draws broad support among the Palestinians and has changed the political landscape in the Middle East. In 1987 the Palestinians had been pushed to the sidelines, with the Palestine Liberation Organization battered from the war in Lebanon and the focus in the Middle East moving to the Iran-Iraq war. The forgotten people of the occupied territories seized the leadership, both in tactics

and in stating how a way could be found to bring about peace with Israel. The PLO, with some mediation assistance from Jewish peace groups and the Swedish government, made a statement that renounced terrorism and recognized the right of Israel to exist, thus pursing a peaceful settlement to the conflict along the lines of United Nations resolutions 242 and 338. This statement cleared the way for the opening of contacts between the United States and the PLO. The Israeli government also felt domestic pressure from the Intifada, which brought about the collapse of the governing coalition and forced new elections. The Middle East peace talks that began in 1992 resulted in part from the growing strength of the Palestinian community coming from the uprising. At that time Zoughbi said,

> *"Whenever I become frustrated and think that the uprising is not gaining any ground, I remind myself that nothing in Israel's forty-year history has stopped it for two years as the Intifada has done. Had the Palestinians used real violence against the Israelis, the Intifada would have been over in a short time."* [37]

The Palestinian willingness to endure suffering rather than commit acts of terrorism cracked open a door of hope in that troubled region.

North America and Western Europe

Europeans and North Americans were engaged in the 1980s in massive efforts to halt the nuclear arms race. Two major focal points emerged: a nuclear weapons freeze and the deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe. At the beginning of the decade, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) II was dying in the face of Congressional opposition in the U.S. The Soviet Union had invaded Afghanistan, and Ronald Reagan came to the White House intent on a massive build-up of U.S. military forces. The planned deployment of Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Europe was threatening to destabilize an already tense superpower standoff in Europe. Fears of nuclear war, aided by loose rhetoric by U.S. officials, swept the U.S. and Europe.

The European peace movements took the lead, mobilizing demonstrations of hundreds of thousands of people against the "Euromissiles." The Dutch Interchurch Peace Council (IKV) had formed in the 1960s as an ecumenical project to address issues of human rights, development, and peace. IKV provided the educational and organizational base for the protest movement against deployment of the Pershing II's and Cruise missiles. They mobilized an international campaign to hold protests in European capitals, the largest of which

was four hundred thousand people coming to Amsterdam. Every bus in the country was used to bring demonstrators to the city, and twenty extra trains had to be scheduled. One Dutch activist said, "That is what this movement is all about—ordinary people rediscovering the power to make peace a reality."[38] The Dutch people not only wanted to keep the missiles out of their own country, they wanted to bring an end to nuclear armaments altogether, so in their drive for peace they spread throughout the continent, spurring the formation of other anti-nuclear protests.

The rejection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella by the people of the Netherlands prompted the U.S. Defense Secretary to coin the word "Hollanditis" as the disease of nuclear pacifism. Evidently the disease was highly contagious, as the protests escalated. Women in Great Britain began an encampment at the gate of Greenham Common Air Force Base, where some of the missiles were scheduled to be deployed. In spite of harassment and arrests, the women maintained their encampment over the years until the missiles were finally removed under the provisions of the INF (Intermediate Nuclear Forces) Treaty. The women of Greenham Common inspired similar women's peace encampments at other bases in Great Britain and Europe, as well as an encampment at the Seneca Army Depot in New York, where the U.S. maintained its missile stockpile for eventual shipment to Europe. The encampments maintained a continual witness against nuclear weapons and were the organizing point for demonstrations and civil disobedience actions. Public protests played an important role in shaping the negotiating positions which eventually resulted in the INF Treaty.[39]

In the United States, the idea of halting the arms race was crystallized in a simple idea that captured the imagination of the frustrated public. Why not just stop? Senator Mark Hatfield introduced an amendment to the SALT II Treaty calling for a bilateral moratorium on nuclear weapons production in 1979. The proposal for a mutual, verifiable nuclear weapons freeze as a first step toward disarmament sparked public imagination in western Massachusetts and was presented at town meetings in New England, where American democracy is experienced in its most fundamental and direct form. The freeze campaign spread across the country at the grassroots level through petition drives, lobbying efforts, and demonstrations. During the United Nations' Second Special Session on Disarmament in 1982, almost a million people marched through the streets of New York calling for an end to the arms race.

Organizations proliferated in occupational groups, churches, and