BULLETIN OF THE PEACE STUDIES INSTITUTE 2006

Manchester College

Mary King

Waging Peace, Achieving Justice: Understanding Nonviolent Struggle

Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies, University for Peace of the UN, political scientist and author Mary King is an expert on nonviolent strategic action in acute political conflicts. King is Distinguished Scholar at the American University Center for Global Peace in Washington, D.C., and visiting fellow, University of Oxford, Rothermere American Institute. During the Carter administration, King had global responsibility for the Peace Corps. She holds a Ph.D. in international politics from the University of Wales at Aberystwyth. Her latest book is *A Quiet Revolution: The First Palestinian Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance* (New York: Nation Books, 2007).

In the 1960s civil rights movement, I worked for the student wing, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, pronounced *snick*). Most of us, whether white (like me) or black (most participants), were in our early twenties. We learned the theories and methods of nonviolent struggle from individuals who had traveled to India, some of them meeting with Gandhi, before the emergence of Martin Luther King Jr. Indeed, the same individuals taught us who had educated Martin Luther King (no relation). Bayard Rustin and James Lawson were two of the teachers of nonviolent resistance for Dr King, and for us in SNCC, and we in turn trained communities throughout the South, as did King's organization. Little was improvisational about our movement. A better way to look at it is as a story of the transmittal of knowledge.

A movement of movements, every community had its own distinct mobilization. Freedom songs varied from one area to another, and through nightly mass meetings local people would learn theories and methods of nonviolent struggle. Mass meetings were not for worship – although they often began with an hour of spirituals, hymns, and freedom songs – but were, rather, training sessions involving highly practical role playing: SNCC staff would show local people how to roll up in a fetal position, arms crossed over the backs of necks, so that if bludgeoned, one's vital organs could be protected. Everyone involved, tens of thousands, learned how to withstand verbal epithets of hatred. More deeply, we were learning that all systems rely on popular cooperation. The why, when, and how of people withdrawing cooperation was the stuff of such training.

Assigned in SNCC to work with Julian Bond on "communications," the two of us shared a small office in Atlanta, each with a manual typewriter and telephone. (Bond now chairs the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or NAACP.) We worked long hours to get out the news. Atrocities against black people were not considered newsworthy, and were not reported, especially by white-owned southern news outlets. Other than a handful of – often white southern – journalists working for the *New York Times* and *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, most editors were not interested in reporting what was happening to black persons in the South during the early 1960s. Thus a church bombing, people beaten for trying to register to vote, or nightriders (vigilantes shooting rifles into homes) were not covered. So Bond and I contrived an elaborate system to push unreported stories into print. It relied on our contacting northern news outlets about volunteers from northern cities, asking that they query wire services for an account. If asked by a subscribing newspaper, the southern bureaus of the AP and UPI were obliged to send a "stringer" to report an incident of terror against unarmed black people. For four years, I wrote press releases, took sworn affidavits, and prepared special reports, as we created our own alternative media and forced unreported stories into publication.

The sit-ins, however, had made television news, which is how I first became involved. Watching the evening news in my dormitory at Ohio Wesleyan University in 1960, I saw the first sit-in occur, as four black students at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University in Greensboro went downtown on Feb. 1, 1960, ordered something at a racially segregated lunch counter, and stayed when ordered to leave. They did not know the word *sit-in*, but had figured out a core principle of nonviolent struggle – the refusal to cooperate.

Reports flashed across the country. I observed them sitting politely, quietly, proudly, well dressed and going limp when arrested. At that moment I made the decision to go to work for the civil rights movement, although it would take me two years to find my way.

Communications had another purpose as well, to save lives. Often the only way we could intervene was to get a reporter with pen and pad to a jail, asking about incarcerated civil rights workers. This let the law, which was on the other side, know that it was under scrutiny. Law enforcement was daily implicated in the atrocities occurring against black people. The chief law officers carried out the murder of three of my fellow SNCC workers in 1964, in Neshoba County, Miss.: James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner. In Birmingham in 1963, I recall sixty unsolved bombings. Sixty lethal blasts in an industrial city that a large police corps could not solve?

While working very late to break stories, part of what we were putting across to black communities was the technique of fighting for social justice known as nonviolent struggle. By 1964, we had our own offset printing press and a dozen photographers across the southland. Later, I realized that in communications I was performing a function that Gandhi had carried out for the Indian independence struggles: writing, explaining, describing and advocating.

The local people with whom we lived and worked often had guns, needed for hog-killing time, to put a horse out of its misery, or to shoot a raccoon or squirrel for stew. They would put the guns away, they said, to "please the freedom riders." They called us *freedom riders* whether or not we had been participants on the 1961 Freedom Rides; it was the term in black communities for SNCC workers.

Lessons that I learned have stayed with me: the importance of working for something bigger than yourself; my assumption that the U.S. government does *not* necessarily know what is best; an insight that fighting without violence is not intuitive and must be learned; and the realization that a small group can bring huge change if unified, prepared and committed. The concepts and methods of nonviolent struggle must be coherently explained as a system of principles and applications that otherwise appear to be inscrutable, cryptic, mysterious or weak. One must practice to accept the consequences of unarmed action methods that can lead to reprisals of pain, injury or even death – and here we come to the core specificity of militant nonviolence – *without violent retaliation*. It is at this moment that one has the ability to pierce psychologically the defenses of the opponent and undermine the political pillars of its support.

In joining the movement, anyone who was white gave up whatever privileges came with whiteness – one became, in effect, black, meaning one's vulnerability. While working in Jackson, Miss., in 1964, I drew up ten separate routes for driving home to the village of Tougaloo from the main office on Lynch Street (of all names). Each night, I would use a different route, so as not to make it easy for any armed vigilantes lying in wait for me.

Yet we white civil rights workers also experienced the warm, shielding envelopment of the black community, once in its clasp. In Danville, Va., the road into the black community crossed a deep ravine that plunged on either side. Police would not follow our donated cars into the black community across the chasm, because they knew that sniper shots might be fired from some in the black community who did not subscribe to the discipline of nonviolent resistance.

Martin Luther King first heard about this kind of power when he was 15 years old. He had enrolled early in Morehouse College in 1944, in wartime. The college president, Dr. Benjamin Mays, had traveled to India and met with Gandhi in 1936. In Tuesday morning lectures, Dr. Mays often talked about lessons from India and its independence struggles. At Morehouse, King read Henry David Thoreau's *On Civil Disobedience*. King was fascinated by the idea of refusing to cooperate with an evil system. Deeply moved, he re-read the essay several times. King's encounter with Thoreau was his first intellectual foray into the theories of nonviolent resistance. Especially intriguing was Thoreau's argument that a minority of one could inspire a moral revolution.

Gandhi was assassinated in the same year that King was graduated from Morehouse, 1948. Now 19, King entered Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Penn. One Sunday afternoon he heard the president of Howard University, Dr. Mordecai Wyatt Johnson, preach. For twenty years, Johnson had been speaking about the life and thinking of Gandhi. King wrote that Johnson's message was "so profound and electrifying that I left the meeting and went out and bought half a dozen books on Gandhi's life and works."[1] Johnson told African Americans during those years that they should study Gandhi, not communism, because of the kinship between the situation in the United States for blacks and the struggle of the Indian people against the British. Being black, the

Hindu caste system was analogous for those who lived in a similar classification that determines status at birth in the United States.

What did the president of a university first developed for freed slaves in the 19th century, in Washington, D.C., know of India? In 1949, Mordecai Wyatt Johnson spent 40 days in India with individuals who had worked with Gandhi. His position as a renowned orator offered him platforms from which he could reach large numbers of African Americans, and for more than 20 years he provided a crucial link between the U.S. black community and the Gandhian campaigns. He was not alone. For decades, as historian Sudarshan Kapur has shown in *Raising up a Prophet*, such leaders had been traveling to India. In addition to Johnson and Mays, Dr. Howard Thurman, dean of the Rankin Chapel at Howard University, made the journey. Thurman introduced James Farmer, who became head of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), to the thinking of Gandhi. CORE, with Farmer as its first national director, carried out the Journey of Reconciliation in 1947, in collaboration with the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) – the precise forerunner for the 1961 Freedom Rides. Some of the travelers to India, having systematically studied Gandhi's strategies, became advisors to King. The Reverend James Lawson spent three years in India and became King's premier teacher on nonviolent resistance. Bayard Rustin had in 1942 presciently written an essay arguing that nonviolent struggle was the only choice that could end Jim Crow, and he traveled to India in 1948. Although Martin Luther King would become the individual most responsible for popularizing Gandhi's ideas in the United States and for persuading black Americans to employ his theories and methods, King was but one of many who brought this knowledge from India.

When King finally studied Gandhi in depth, he was fascinated by the 1930 Salt March. The British Salt Laws penalized the poorest Indians, by placing a government monopoly on a natural resource essential for life. They made it illegal to prepare salt from sea water, so as not to deny revenues to the British colonial government. Gandhi chose the objective of removing these laws as the basis for a national civil disobedience movement not only because of the fundamental injustice they represented, but also because the Salt Laws stood as an emblem of an unpopular foreign government.

On March 12, 1930, Gandhi and 79 adherents, following arduous months of training and preparation, set out walking for 24 days to reach Dandi, 241 miles away on the coast. By the time they reached the sea, their numbers had swelled to tens of thousands. Gandhi strode, hand on a wooden staff, leading with a serene but fearless expression. On April 6, he stepped forward on the beach and broke the law by evaporating sea water to obtain salt crystals. He called upon the entire nation to violate the Salt Laws. One point of great interest to King was the large number of journalists from around the world who accompanied the marchers and observed as Gandhi stooped, gathered sea water, and boiled it to make salt. They remained to report on the 60,000 Indians who would be jailed in the nationwide civil-disobedience movement that followed.

Gandhi did not like to use the words *compel* or *compulsion*, but the Salt March was a supreme example of nonviolent pressure, without a spirit of vengeance or revenge. Reading about the event 20 years later, King was enthralled, seeing that no government or system could persist if people ceased to obey it. The idea implanted itself in King's mind: one can refuse to submit to any government, laws or customs that treat a group as inferior. The more that King read Gandhi, the less he doubted the validity of his own philosophy based on Love, or the Christian doctrine of *agape*, meaning understanding, or redeeming good will for all persons. Gandhi helped King to overcome his ambiguity about being involved in political action and to reconcile the Christian ministry with work for social change. King wrote, "As I delved deeper into the philosophy of Gandhi my skepticism concerning the power of love gradually diminished, and I came to see for the first time its potency in the area of social reform."[2]

On April 14,1954, Martin Luther King accepted the invitation of a church in Montgomery, Ala., to become their pastor. (Three days later, the United States Supreme Court handed down *Brown v. Board of Education*, the first of its five landmark decisions ruling segregation of public schools to be unconstitutional.) King applied to the county sheriff for pistol permits. He allowed his watchmen to carry pistols and shotguns, as his church trustees had insisted that his guards be armed.

Once the Montgomery bus boycott began in 1955, Bayard Rustin, a black socialist and conscientious objector who had spent 28 months in prison during World War II, called at King's parsonage. He saw the round-the-clock team of security guards at the parsonage carrying shotguns. Rustin was among a group of seasoned, professional organizers – socialists, pacifists, communists, radical Christians, some of them black like Rustin – exhilarated by the young

pastor King, and who thought he could take the fight for justice to a new order of magnitude unlike anything the United States had seen since the abolition of slavery. Rustin had worked for both the War Resisters League and FOR at different times, and he began meeting with King nightly, plying him with books, dissecting readings with him, and giving him an ongoing tutorial in nonviolent struggle. Rustin was concerned that this rising exemplar of militant nonviolence could stumble without greater knowledge. Eventually Rustin would say to King that it was inappropriate for a Gandhian leader to carry a gun. Like each of us, Martin Luther King had to *study* how to fight in a way that assails the power of the adversary, rather than attacking the well-being or life of the opponent.

Gandhi was militantly committed to opposing evil, yet accepted the fact that many of those around him had tactically adopted nonviolence. He was also acutely aware of nonviolent campaigns elsewhere. The Russian Revolution of 1905 was an overwhelmingly nonviolent struggle, and Gandhi writes about it contemporaneously several times in *Indian Opinion*.[3] The Boston scholar Gene Sharp asserts

> the Indian campaigns in South Africa, and Gandhi's own conception of appropriate means of struggle, were inspired or influenced by other recent cases of nonviolent resistance and revolution, including events in China, Russia, India and South Africa. It is also clear that by 1905 Gandhi had already grasped the essentials of the theory of power, which views all governments as constantly dependent upon the obedience and cooperation of the ruled ... The evidence, however, shows overwhelmingly that Gandhi knew both of such cases and of this view of power well before [his first active engagement in South Africa].[4]

Gandhi's story, too, can be understood as a tale of the transmittal of knowledge. His 1909 booklet *Hind Swaraj* (Indian Home Rule) lays out a prescription for the 21 years that he would spend in South Africa, and, amazingly, for his entire life. The scale of his accomplishments is extraordinary. Richard Gregg in 1960 writes:

> In the Indian struggle for independence, though I know of no accurate statistic, hundreds of thousands of Indians went to jail, probably no more than 500 received permanent physical injuries, and probably not over 8,000 were killed immediately or died later from wounds. No British, I believe, were killed or wounded. Considering the importance and size of the conflict and the many years it lasted, these numbers are much smaller than they would have been if the Indians had used violence against the British.[5]

This represents relatively small loss of life in a multi-decade struggle in a country of 700,000 villages, against an imperial power. What would have resulted had guns been used?

The fact that Gandhi and King were men of deep religious faith has led to interpretations that nonviolent action requires religious or spiritual belief. The commitment to foreswear violence may be a matter of religion, but not necessarily. What makes a movement nonviolent are not the beliefs of the participants, but their behavior. Movements are composed of persons of all persuasions.

Regarding the spreading use of nonviolent struggle in acute political conflicts and how the technique has traveled the world, the signature anthem of the civil rights movement, "We Shall Overcome," provides one clue. During the 1980s, journalists reported from Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, and other prodemocracy movements in Latin America that activists (who were in great danger, as tens of thousands of mostly young people were "disappeared" by military dictatorships) were singing "We Shall Overcome." In Eastern Europe, as one nonviolent movement after another helped to end Soviet dominance, King's "Letter from Birmingham City Jail" was translated. Before the Berlin Wall came down, nonviolent activists sang "We Shall Overcome." Thousands of Palestinians in the first intifada (1987-1990) sang "We Shall Overcome" on hunger strikes in Israeli jails. In almost every part of the world, this hymn – originally from the repertoire of black nineteenth-century Methodist and Baptist churches – has been part of the exertion.

Still, the transmission of knowledge goes deeper. Eight decades of changing tactics and strategies in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa had shifted almost exclusively by the 1980s towards nonviolent struggle. A policy of armed struggle was never completely repudiated, but noncooperation became emphasized. While some spoke of armed struggle, the United Democratic Front (UDF), launched in 1983, reallocated energies into nonviolent strategies, described by sociologist Kurt Schock in *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*. The UDF initially coordinated 565 organizations, religious organizations, professional associations, student organizations, trade unions, and

women's groups and youth groups. At its peak 700 affiliates were under its umbrella. Decentralized structures used by the UDF to build autonomous institutions were intentionally difficult for the state to repress, as the front tried to harness violent upheaval by enraged youths into collective nonviolent action.

In 1986, a South Africa-wide state of emergency was imposed, limiting the simple, but visible, methods of protest and persuasion (vigils, marches or parades). Mass demonstrations disappeared, although funerals offered occasions for processional mourning in the thousands. Meanwhile, the UDF-affiliated networks of neighborhood organizations employed the less perceptible methods of noncooperation and nonviolent intervention (consumer and rent boycotts, and tax resistance). Activists believed the anti-apartheid movement had a moral right to assume arms in a "just war," but they also understood that they could be more effective in mobilizing against the state through mass action, and that employment of violence would only undermine their organizations and make them vulnerable. The ubiquitous noncooperation attracted the world community's sympathies for the anti-apartheid movement, and international third-party sanctions were enacted.

Specifically *preemptive* nonviolent struggle occurred in the Baltic states, where civilian-based defense preparations culminated in independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Defense ministers of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – working with Gene Sharp – organized in conjunction with quasi-governmental and civil society organizations. Defense ministries of the three countries published extensive guidelines on how to withdraw cooperation (noncooperation) and disseminated them widely. Soviet tanks had already rolled into Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, when Lithuania became the first to declare its independence, followed by Estonia and Latvia. By then, the entire societies of the three nations had been trained on how to withhold cooperation from the Soviet occupiers. Eventually, the Soviet military backed down. Only 21 deaths occurred in the three countries, far fewer than if violence had been used.

Such movements have not always been successful. In Burma, the leader of the prodemocracy movement, Aung San Suu Kyi, is still under house arrest. In Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China, in 1989, the government employed tanks and troops to crush the student nonviolent prodemocracy challengers. Kosovo might be classified as unsuccessful, yet its decade-long nonviolent mobilization begs for study.

Between 1988 and 1998, as Howard *Clark's Civil Resistance in Kosovo* shows, one of the most extensive employments of nonviolent resistance of recent times took place in Kosovo, the southernmost province of Serbia, formed out of the remnants of the old Yugoslavia in the Balkans. Some 90 percent or more of the people in the province that they call "Kosova" were ethnic Albanians. The 1974 Tito constitution disappointed them, because it did not grant independence; Serbs in the capital city of Belgrade were also dissatisfied, because it gave Kosovo autonomy. Yet, from 1974 to 1989, the Kosovars had relative autonomy, thus for 15 years the Albanians in Kosovo had room for social action. A nonviolent struggle must either find or create the political space for collective action.

In 1989, Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic amended the constitution to reduce Kosovo's autonomy, a controversial decision with both Serbs and Albanians, who had long harbored animosities. He imposed a "Serbianization" policy, accompanied by widespread human rights violations and repression. Some 127,000 Kosovars were fired from their jobs. Secret police files were set up on 120,000 Kosovar men. (Milosevic would be indicted in May 1999, during the Kosovo War, by the U.N.'s International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for crimes against humanity in Kosovo, and would die in prison at The Hague.)

The Kosovars drew inspiration from Poland's 1980s Solidarity union and the events of 1989 in Eastern Europe, brought about by the East German Pastors' Movement, the Czech and Slovaks' "velvet revolution," and other nonviolent mobilizations. The Albanians concluded that nonviolent struggle would be the best way to seek international third-party support. With the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, who was strongly committed to fighting for the independence of Kosovo without violence, a policy was adopted modeled on a program that Gandhi called "constructive work," or the "constructive program" – an advanced method of nonviolent intervention known as alternative, or parallel, institutions. Gandhi saw it as a way of accomplishing major institutional changes, in which, while still living in the midst of the old order, one can begin living as if in the new. Rugova, having studied the writings of Gandhi and King, led the training programs.

The Kosovars carried out their plans with remarkable precision. Miners went on a five-day march. Twelve hundred later went on hunger strikes for nine days pursuing promised reinstatement, a promise not kept. The whole society

in Kosovo was engaged in one form or another of nonviolent resistance, most often by participation in alternative institutions. Eleven fractious political parties set aside chronic disagreement to form the Democratic League of Kosovo (DLK). The DLK operated by consensus, and within months, 700,000 persons – nearly the entire voting-age population of Kosovar Albanians – had joined. The fired teachers set up 440 primary schools, which, although interrupted and harassed, were able to continue functioning. The sacked doctors and nurses organized 90 "Mother Theresa" clinics, named for the Albanian humanitarian. Meanwhile, the tax collectors thrown onto the streets set up a system of revenue collection. Voluntary taxation was soon financing these unprecedented systems of health care, education, and political referendum. For the better part of a decade, the Kosovar Albanians engaged in a massive program of noncooperation with Belgrade, while creating their own de facto institutions of governance and self-rule.

Ultimately they failed. From outside came diasporan Kosovar Albanians who had emigrated elsewhere. They returned, formed the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), armed themselves and took up violence against the Serbs. These guerrilla fighters had not been part of the rigorous preparations for the parallel institutions policy. Flooding into Kosovo to "help" through the hastily set up KLA, they followed a pattern not unfamiliar in nonviolent mobilizations, as those who have not been involved in the exacting processes of study, planning, and preparation that go into a successful nonviolent challenge try to "assist" with guns, thereby immediately triggering harsh repression. The Kosovar Albanians were greatly outnumbered by the Serbs and did not control the army or security apparatus. Any utilization of arms or violence would alter the conflict from an asymmetrical one of nonviolent against violent weaponry, in which the unarmed challengers would have the advantage, to a symmetrical affray in which both sides are using violent weapons, thus granting pretexts and gains to the better-equipped attackers. With massive repression of the nonviolent movement, the gains of the alternative-institution policy were soon eroded and destroyed, as the KLA negated a decade of disciplined nonviolent resistance.

Yet in May 1992, the result of political noncooperation and a boycott of Yugoslav and Serbian elections, separate elections were held in Kosovo, overwhelmingly electing Rugova as the first president of Kosovo and of the DLK. Despite this development, the Kosovars faced serious problems, among which was the failure of the international community to grasp the significance of the largely unified population's strict adherence to nonviolent resistance. As is often the case, it was assumed that people should fight with nonviolent collective action, without recognizing the enormity of the process of winning massive popular commitment for mounting a solely nonviolent challenge. When the Kosovars were not invited to the 1995 Dayton Accords, it was the final blow. The accords ended the Bosnian War, but were disastrous for the Kosovars excluded from the peace table, irreparably weakening Rugova's position. The agreement failed to mention Kosovo, and the international community turned its back on resolving the province's predicament. The KLA soon triggered retaliation of an enormity not seen before, as radicals argued that armed uprising was the "only thing that would work," on the supposition that guerrilla warfare would force outside powers to intervene, and blaming the policy of nonviolent struggle for Kosovo's failure to achieve independence.

The first Palestinian intifada, from late 1987 to early 1990, was remarkable in its mass adherence to nonviolent methods, and throws light on how nonviolent struggle can equalize unarmed challengers when they face a hugely lopsided power relationship. It also suggests that standard conflict resolution strategies cannot work when the cause of distress is so profound or egregious that it requires shifts in the positions of the contenders in order to create an opening for consideration of settlements or solutions.

In 1968, Palestinians refugees and exiles from the 1948 Arab-Israeli war had established a policy of armed struggle. They were by then living elsewhere in the Arab world, and, in the next 20 years, Palestinian exiles would carry out atrocious acts of terrorism against Jews and Israelis in different parts of the world, including some of the 20th century's most notorious attacks on civilian and military targets.

My book, *A Quiet Revolution: The First Palestinian Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance*, concerns the activists and intellectuals who led the way toward seeking negotiations with Israel (meaning recognition of Israel) for their own, long-promised statehood.

Organizational changes affecting Palestinian civil society began to take place after the 1967 Israeli military occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip – the remaining lands allocated for the Palestinians in 1947 by the United Nations. Starting in 1969, and for two

decades, Palestinians in the occupied territories developed small nonmilitary movements similar to the UDF neighborhood organizations in South Africa and the alternative institutions of Kosovo. Perhaps 45,000 such nonmilitary groups were functioning just prior to the outbreak of the intifada in 1987, their members learning democratic procedures and self-governance.

In the early 1980s, a group of two dozen activist intellectuals had begun a long journey to overcome the emotional appeals of armed guerrilla commandos and to press with exquisitely argued rationales for the adoption of nonviolent resistance as the most practical way to fight for their rights. Forming joint Israeli-Palestinian committees, they marched and demonstrated together against the occupation; ran training workshops on the basics of nonviolent action; published in Arabic and English, and gave speeches in Hebrew learned in Israeli prisons; and they advocated through street materials, like the *samizdat* (Russian for *self-published*) covertly distributed by the Czech and Slovaks' velvet revolution, the abandonment of armed struggle.

Leading activist intellectuals maintained, "We can never win the way the Algerians won in 1962, by booting out the French colonists. How can we Palestinians return to the status quo and displace 3.5 million Israelis. Go home? They have no homes to which to return and were born here, in Israel/ Palestine, on the same land on which we were born. We must share the land. We don't want to throw anyone into the sea; we want to live side by side. Our struggle can only be political; we must press for independence through nonviolent means and be prepared to accept a two-state solution."

In the *intifada* (shaking off), which started in late 1987, and for more than two years, there was almost no violence against the Israelis, and no military operations from within the occupied territories.[6] Often working with their Israeli sympathizers, as large numbers of Israeli peace groups came into being to urge an end to military occupation, the activist intellectuals wanted "white revolution," meaning no bloodshed. They explained that the struggle was against the military occupation, not against the Israeli people. The entire society was involved in the organizing of alternative institutions through popular committees, often run by women; perhaps more than one million Palestinians were involved. Under heavy curfews, but with widespread popular adherence, the committees provided alternative food supply systems and health care, and helped the Palestinians to survive bitter Israeli reprisals. A clandestine Command, behind which stood the activist intellectuals, coordinated actions for an appearance of ubiquity. In leaflets similar to the *samizdat* of the coterminous velvet revolution, the way was prepared for adoption of a two-state solution. As the Palestinians in the intifada were for more than two years able to create new political space while under military occupation and achieve a more balanced power relationship with the state of Israel, the balance of forces between the state of Israel and the Palestinians altered.

Although the Palestinians exhibited monumental mass discipline, a minority threw stones and Molotov cocktails. As with the Kosovar Albanians, from outside the occupied territories came cross-border raids and armed sorties meant to "help" (or ruin) the intifada, and some factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which had not yet renounced its policy of armed struggle, disagreed with the nonviolent policy and sabotaged it. The result, predictably, was sterner reprisals than were already being administered against the popular committees and underground leadership. Ultimately the intifada collapsed because of Israel's failure to recognize that it faced civil resistance, not "unending war," and its repressive punishments; lack of support from the PLO, and a return to violence by factions that disputed the nonviolent policy; opposition from the Islamic revivalists; and an ineffectual response by the international community to the compromises exemplified in the uprising. Nonetheless, despite its flaws, the intifada stands as one instance in which popular nonviolent action accomplished what decades of a policy and actual adherence to armed struggle had not.

The achievements of the Palestinian intifada coincided with its most nonviolent phase, and brought about an international conference in Madrid in 1991 and the 1993 Oslo Accords. The accords would fail to please any group, in a story too complex to recount here. Suffice it to say the situation got worse rather than better, as Israel continued implanting settlements in what remained of the lands set aside for the Palestinians by the U.N. earlier in the 20th century, eventually leading to the 2000 start of a second, violent and anarchic intifada. Nonetheless, there remains among hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who participated in the restrained and disciplined early phases of the first intifada the knowledge of how to use nonviolent political tools, an asset for the future. The civil society that developed is the most ideologically committed to democracy in the Arab world.

Finally, serious challenges face those of us who are in the business of transmitting knowledge about nonviolent struggle. Word of mouth continues to be essential. The translation and distribution of materials will remain important – and will become more feasible. Groups and societies no longer need to remain passive when faced with persecution, because nonviolent sanctions are within their grasp. Still, governments are afraid of this knowledge and often seek to repress it.

The academic disciplines of history, political science, and other social sciences have been abysmally slow to recognize the validity of proper studies of this powerful technique for social and political change. Perhaps this is due to the dominance of the school of realism in international relations, which claims to deal only with the "real world." Yet the historic struggles noted here *are* the real world, as ordinary persons refuse to lie in supine acquiescence of injustice. The "realists" continue to throw up barriers against the emergence of studies of nonviolent struggle in the fields of international relations, history and political science. Nonviolent struggle rests on assumptions of human agency that are often incompatible with theories that nation-states guide social and political change.

Documentation and historiography of nonviolent struggles is, in parts of the world, nonexistent. In December 2002, President Carter invited me to accompany him to Oslo when he received the Nobel Peace Prize. There, I asked Geir Lundestad, an historian who heads the Norwegian Nobel Institute, "What is the best book written in English of how the Norwegians won their independence from Sweden in 1905 through nonviolent resistance?" He stood, staring into space, and finally said, "There is no book in English on the Norwegian accomplishment of independence through nonviolent struggle, and we must also give credit to the Swedes, who did not militarily crush us." Imagine my interest in seeing the *International Herald Tribune* report on June 7, 2005 about the 100th anniversary of Norway's nonviolent achievement of independence from Sweden. It quoted an Upsala University historian as saying not a single shot was fired.

Hundreds of formidably important nonviolent struggles across the world have gone undocumented. In countless societies, history is History as the military historians recount it, or a tale told in oral history, equally emphasizing war, warriors and weaponry. Often the sole nonviolent actions that journalists, reputed to write the first drafts of history, are able to recognize are civil disobedience or boycotts, among hundreds of methods. They cannot discern the others. Diplomats receive no training in the theories and methods of nonviolent struggle, hence they don't know how to recognize the technique, affecting their reports sent back to foreign ministries, or the U.S. department of state. Private philanthropic foundations are clueless as to the importance of research and preservation of archives and historical collections on this area of human endeavor. The military viewpoint about the meaning of "force" is pervasive.

Growing up in the United States, I had never learned that by 1775, one year prior to the war of independence, either nine or 10 of the original 13 colonies had achieved de facto independence from the British through the use of nonviolent methods. True, I had learned about the Boston Tea Party and Stamp Act resistance, but as opposition to the British Crown. Not until I began working with Gene Sharp did I find out that in the majority of the 13 colonies, the populace had ceased to obey the orders coming from London one full year before the war started. The American independence struggle is taught almost entirely through the lens of war. Since military historians often enjoy the greatest prestige in the field of history, and given that policy gets shaped from an understanding of the past, with such indifference what kinds of policies should we expect would be made? This is one of the most extraordinary blind spots in the history of the 20th century.

Even within the expanding field of peace and conflict studies – the fastest growing of the social studies worldwide – many of the deep insights that come from the still older field of nonviolent resistance are not acknowledged. One example is the necessity of separating the antagonism from the antagonist. Among the properties of nonviolent struggle is its potential for creating a solution that can benefit all of the parties, its ability to break cycles of intergenerational violence, a capacity to enhance the odds of negotiations, and its laying of the groundwork for reconciliation. Yet some peace and conflict studies degree programs do not include courses on nonviolent struggle. Although the scale of the struggles led by Gandhi is daunting, and many of the issues on which he was working are still current today, he comprehended in a way that some of today's "conflict resolutionaries" do not that human beings cannot get rid of conflict. I hear colleagues speak of eradication of conflict as if it were a contagious disease against which a vaccination will work. Gandhi knew that this was impossible, and that human beings must learn to manage conflict.

Understanding how to wage nonviolent struggle in order to achieve justice is more relevant today than it was in the era of European colonialism and before the collapse of the Soviet Union, yet major issues need serious research. Institutionalizing the alterations manifest by nonviolent struggles is of great concern. Specifically, how do we institutionalize changes wrought by nonviolent movements so as to prevent subsequent dictatorships from coming into being? How do we help groups plan struggles for protracted periods, for 10 years or more?

An unexplored argument in favor of nonviolent struggle has to do with the consequences of authoritarian and coercive structures within armed movements. Nonviolent movements, in contrast, tend to be predictors of democracy, I believe due to the arduous process of groups deciding strategy, and as individuals make the personal decision to take the risks and suffer the penalties that accompany nonviolent struggle, something no one can coerce. When I joined the civil rights movement at age 22, my first decision was whether I was willing to die for my beliefs. No one could have ordered me to undertake such contemplation. This is not a matter of ideology; nonviolent movements *tend* to favor democratic results, and the leaders that emerge are predisposed to be democrats.

The demarcation between so-called principled nonviolence and so-called practical applications of nonviolent struggle needs revamping. Gene Sharp noted in 1979 that Gandhi's view of the relationship between ethical action and practical action, when fully understood, sees the two types of action as in the long run identical. Rigid differentiations should be abandoned. SNCC contained within it both principled and practical schools of thought, producing robust discussion. By 1963, we realized that our strategies could be both principled and practical.

Entitlements now considered to be universal human rights had first to be fought for through nonviolent struggles, such as the abolition of slavery, and voter enfranchisement, including the transnational fight for women's suffrage. Yet in my experience, instructors in human rights do not explain that movements of nonviolent resistance have been critically necessary for various rights to become enshrined in law. Nor do they clarify that it may sometimes be necessary to fight for justice in an extra-legal or extra-parliamentary framework, because the laws themselves shelter injustice. Laws written by democratically elected legislators may deny or infringe on basic human rights, particularly relating to minorities.

Human rights monitoring organizations, and advocates for human rights legal services, have for 20 years lobbied private philanthropic foundations on the importance of giving grants for human rights. This may be one reason that major philanthropies give funds for human rights, with none for research on nonviolent struggle. Yet experienced archivists are needed in Ukraine and Georgia immediately to work with local archivists and historians to collect materials from the orange and rose revolutions. The same is true in Iran and Zimbabwe.

We must ask ourselves what concrete steps can be taken to improve the historiography of nonviolent resistance. In its Africa Programme, the University for Peace in 2006 published selected accounts of nonviolent struggle in Africa, back to the 19th century – one of four monographs on nonviolent transformation of conflict. Nonviolent struggles have occurred across the continent, including several African countries that achieved independence this way, yet where are the studies?

Lastly, let us ask if it is possible to use nonviolent struggle not only in the sense of refusal to cooperate, but also as a lure, an attraction for desired changes of behavior? Can we apply it to elicit positive conduct from "the other,"opponents, or target groups? We know a great deal about resistance, struggle, and punitive nonviolent sanctions. We have not thought as much about how to use nonviolent action to bring forth necessary alterations.

Since nonviolent resistance is based on an understanding of power more profound than is military force, the dogs of war are less likely to be unleashed as more societies learn, and with greater accuracy, of the power of nonviolent action. If serious about socializing young people to reject violence as problem solving, we cannot do it by saying "no violence." This will have no impact against impassioned arguments that "what is taken from us by violence must be retrieved by violence." To persuade the young to reject violence as a means of resolving grievances, we must become far more effective in teaching a way of fighting for justice that uses nonviolent sanctions. If one is seeking justice, transformation or reconciliation, it is unlikely that the road to reach such states will lead through violence. As social philosopher Hannah Arendt said, "the practice of violence, like all action, changes the world, but the most probable change is to a more violent world."[7]

[1] Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1958), p. 96.
[2] Ibid.
[3] See Mohandas K. Gandhi, vol. 4 and 5, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, 100 vols., ed. K. Swaminathan (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1958-1984).
[4] Gene Sharp, "Origins of Gandhi's Use of Nonviolent Struggle: A Review-Essay on Erik Erikson's *Gandhi's Truth*," in *Gandhi as a Political Strategist* (Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1979), p. 26.
[5] Richard Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 2nd ed., rev. (London: James Clarke and Company, 1960), p. 100.
[6] Israel Defense Forces sources officially reported the following: Four Israeli soldiers killed in the West Bank and none in Gaza in 1988; two soldiers killed in the West Bank and two in Gaza in 1989; two soldiers killed in the West Bank and one in Gaza in 1990; and one soldier killed in the West Bank and none in Gaza in 1991. Against the 12 Israeli soldiers killed during this four-year period, the IDF spokesperson said, Israelis killed 706 Palestinian civilians. Lieutenant Colonel Yehuda Weinraub, IDF spokesperson and head of information, Tel Aviv, records pursuant to a telephone request of 18 March 1997, trans. Reuven Gal, as cited in Mary King, *A Quiet Revolution: The First Palestinian Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance* (New York: Nation Books, 2007).
[7] Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1970), p. 80.

© Mary Elizabeth King

Peace Studies Activities 2005-2006

Tim and Kathryn McElwee at NYC protest

Participants at the Plowshares Faculty Academy

Stanley Hauerwas addresses the Plowshares Academy

Colleen Hamilton with spring break New Orleans crew