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## The Politics of Nonviolent Action

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Organized in 14 chapters, the book is divided into an introduction and 4 parts. Part One describes regional trends, with contributions on Japan from Morton H. Halperin, Western Europe by John Newhouse, East Asia by Ralph N. Clough, Latin America by Peter T. Knight and John N. Plank, Soviet relations by Zbigniew Brzezinski, China by Doak Barnett (and the Middle East selection already mentioned).

Part Two looks at "functional areas": foreign economic policy (Edward R. Fried), general purpose forces (Leslie H. Gelb and Arnold M. Kuzmack), and strategic armaments (Jerome H. Kahan). Part Three, "the wider focus," begins with Gelb's article on domestic change and moves to "new forces in world politics" (Seyom Brown). Part Four is the "summing up."

The book should prove highly useful for those who are looking for a perspective in this time of rapid change. Although the authors retained individual responsibility for their remarks, it is interesting to note a pronounced consensus—as Henry Owen points out in his conclusion.

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Sharp, Gene. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973. 928p.

Whatever may be your convictions about the viability of nonviolent politics, Gene Sharp's extraordinary book will unquestionably challenge them. This landmark study, certain to become a classic, has assembled and interpreted a vast amount of historical data regarding the employment of nonviolent activities. With this data, Professor Sharp illustrates 198 specific methods of nonviolent action and adroitly explains *how*, *when*, and *why* it succeeds or fails. The result of this pioneering effort is a coolly reasoned, well documented case for nonviolence as a prac-

tical alternative to domestic violence and war which demands the most serious consideration of any individual who would be a student of political behavior.

The impetus for nonviolent action is simple: some conflicts, because of the fundamental principles or issues involved, do not yield to compromise and can be resolved only through struggle. Most people believe that, in such cases, only two choices are available: submission or violence, and that victory requires violence. Professor Sharp argues that this rigid dichotomy is nonsense: "Throughout history, under a variety of political systems, people in every part of the world have waged conflict and wielded undeniable power by using a very different technique of struggle—one which does not kill and destroy. That technique is nonviolent action." (p. 4)

It is a sure bet that this book will surprise both the convinced and the skeptical. Sharp's outspoken, incisively written analysis will disturb, even dismay, starry-eyed moralists and hard-headed critics alike. And this challenge *most assuredly* extends to military officers who may believe that nonviolent politics need not involve them. (He argues, not unconvincingly, that the American Revolutionary War might well have been unnecessary.) Those pacifists who have long viewed nonviolence only in a moral context, which stressed the brotherhood of man, will be annoyed with Sharp's nonmoralistic definition of nonviolent politics. They will be outraged by this intruder who argues that "moral injunctions against violence and exhortations in favor of love and nonviolence have made little or no contribution to ending war and major political violence." (pp. v-vi) But it is unlikely that they will be able to disprove his basic contention. While Sharp agrees that nonviolent politics probably functions better in a situation where hatred is absent, he emphasizes that it is frequently very difficult to love one's

oppressor. Consequently, he argues that the inability to overcome one's hatred of his opponent is not (and, historically, has not) deterred the successful employment of nonviolent political action.

Likewise, the no-nonsense political realists who think that they can dismiss this manual for nonviolent action as more of the same old day-dreaming utopian politics are in for a rude shock. Sharp's basic assumptions rest upon traditional premises regarding the fundamental nature of politics. He begins with the rather conventional idea "that governments depend on people, that power is pluralistic, and that political power is fragile because it depends upon many groups for reinforcement of its power sources." (p. 8) At the foundation of this also fragile power structure, whether democratic or dictatorial, is obedience and cooperation (popular consent) which is essentially voluntary. Nonviolent politics is the withdrawal of this consent—disobedience. To attempt to stem this nonviolent withdrawal of popular consent by "relying on destructive violence to control political power is . . . just as irrational as attempting to use a lid to control steam from a caldron, while allowing the fire under it to blaze uncontrolled." (p. 10)

Military officers may be surprised to discover that the armed forces figure prominently in this study. Frequently military men, as agents charged with the responsibility to maintain the state, find themselves assuming unusual, and often difficult, roles in nonviolent struggles: they may initiate nonviolent action or they may be called upon to counter it. Not long ago, in January 1967, Chinese troops along the Russian border engaged in a mild form of nonviolent protest (what Sharp labels as Method No. 30, "rude gestures") and were dismayed with the Russian's successful counterploy.

. . . each morning an entire platoon of Chinese soldiers would march out on the ice and lowering

their trousers train their buttocks towards the Soviet side, the ultimate in Chinese insults. This exercise continued until one morning just as the Chinese assumed their positions the Russians set up large portraits of Mao facing in their direction. The Chinese hastily covered themselves and retired in confusion. There were no repetitions. (p. 145)

Most officers in the midst of nonviolent action have found themselves in far more serious situations than the Sino-Soviet example; they have been caught between the nonviolent activists and resisting authorities. In such circumstances the military sometimes have employed violence, by no means always successfully, in an effort to suppress nonviolent action. On some of these occasions officers discovered that attempting to employ violence against the nonviolent led to a serious erosion of the discipline and morale of their commands. Such transpired during the Russian revolution, in February 1917, when Czarist troops mutinied after firing on demonstrators; it happened during the Garhwali mutiny (1930) when Indian troops refused to shoot unarmed brethren; and it occurred during the East German uprising in 1953 when Polish tanks refused to fire on civilian protesters.

Occasionally, military officers find themselves employing nonviolent methods of protest against their superiors. Two examples of this occurred during World War Two when German officers prevented Hitler from establishing a program of executing downed Allied flyers and when some officers refused to implement a hostage system as a deterrent against underground activities. Unquestionably, there have been in the past many more, if less dramatic, examples.

Repression, even if tactically successful, can strengthen a protest movement. It may legitimize the very resistance it

seeks to remove and, certainly, in the TV era, it will almost surely publicize and dramatize the protest. Professor Sharp devotes considerable space to developing the reverse effect of violent repression—what he calls “the *jiu-jitsu* effect.”

American military officers have not always been unsuccessful in dealing with nonviolent activists. As Sharp notes, Air Force MP's in 1966 dealt effectively with a group of some 200 protesters (mostly children) who sought to block a base entrance. Air Force officers rejected violent tactics in favor of inviting the demonstrators in for a free bus tour of the base—a counteraction that the Associated Press called “one of the coolest bits of public relations in military history.” (p. 693)

It is impossible in such a brief review to even touch on all the basic insights offered by this study. I have pointed out a few themes and examples that Professor Sharp has developed that pertain to the military, but his book contains scores of other themes and examples equally enlightening to the military professional. This book is *not* an antimilitary diatribe; it is instead a very carefully written study of non-violence.

In my opinion, *The Politics of Non-violent Action* is an instant “classic” on its subject. As such it ranks, in importance, equally with Quincy Wright's *A Study of War* and Alfred Mahan's *The Influence of Seapower*.

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Stogdill, Ralph M. *Handbook of Leadership; a Survey of Theory and Research*. New York: Free Press, 1974. 612p.

Leadership is a subject area in which there are few true experts, yet one

meets them every day. Discussion of leadership can be initiated at a moment's notice, especially by those whose responsibility it is to practice it daily, and each person will adhere strongly to his or her viewpoint of what is the “right” or “wrong” approach.

As professor of management sciences and psychology at the Ohio State University and associate director of the Ohio State Leadership Studies from 1946 to 1955, Ralph M. Stogdill has probably read more about leadership than anyone else on earth. In 1966 the Smith Richardson Foundation suggested that the author undertake a systematic analysis and review of the literature on leadership, and since that time Professor Stogdill has abstracted more than 3,000 books and articles, representing four decades of leadership research, and has summarized his findings in this single volume.

The author defined his task as one of summarizing all the published evidence on the given topic. The result has been a sourcebook of experimental findings and one which, by the author's own description “is not intended to entertain, inspire, or offer simple recipes for solutions of leadership problems.” The book is intended for the serious reader who wishes to review accumulated evidence by subject and author and to determine what conclusions have been drawn. A cover-to-cover reading is not recommended for anyone with a passing or relatively narrow interest in the topical area of leadership studies. Any reader, however, regardless of depth of investigation, should be prepared to have popular myths and pet theories laid to rest by the evidence of hard fact.

In preparing the foundation for this book, Professor Stogdill and his assistants prepared many thousands of abstracts and break the literature digested into seven areas: leadership theory, leader personality and behavior, leadership stability and change, emergence of the leadership role, leadership and social