

HOW TO **RESIST EXTREMISM!**



A POCKET GUIDE
TO THE PRACTICE OF
RELENTLESS NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE

BY
MEL WHITE
CO-FOUNDER SOULFORCE, INC.

DEDICATED TO



**THE LAWSON BROTHERS, JIM AND PHIL
APOSTLES OF NONVIOLENCE
HEROES, MENTORS, FRIENDS**



THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH US!

AND TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ELDERS

EMAIL: INFO@NATIONALCOUNCILOFELDERS.COM



**20TH CENTURY ACTIVISTS
SHARING THE TORCH OF RELENTLESS NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE
WITH ACTIVISTS OF THE 21ST CENTURY**



TO OUR SOULFORCE FRIENDS (AND THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF YOU)
 THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH US IN OUR EFFORTS TO END RELIGION BASED BIGOTRY.
 YOUR SACRIFICE HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF SO MANY PEOPLE
 OUR COUNTRY HAS CHANGED AND YOU WERE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THAT CHANGE.
 WE THANK GOD EVERY TIME WE THINK OF YOU!
 MEL AND GARY



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Police Arresting Soulforce Protestors Cleveland Ohio

THE GATHERING STORM



"I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!"ⁱⁱⁱ

Howard Beale in "Network"

Millions of us are angry and no wonder. There is a very dark cloud on our nation's horizon. A powerful storm is upon us. Fundamentalist Christians, billionaire capitalists and Tea-party loyalists are mobilizing their forces. At this moment, ultra conservative Republicans control majorities in the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, twenty-nine state governors and literally thousands of state legislators. The television and radio spokesmen and women for the extremists have convinced a rather sizeable segment of our society that the only way to save our country is to destroy it. Lies drown out truth. Fear mongering undermines the foundations on which our free society is built. The ancient call to Justice and Mercy is forgotten. Already, extremist Republicans are...

- ... **disenfranchising millions of minority voters;**
- ... **gerrymandering precincts to eliminate progressive incumbents and candidates;**
- ... **denying 11,000,000 immigrants a reasonable path to citizenship;**
- ... **eliminating a woman's right to choose and closing the health clinics they depend on;**
- ... **building higher walls, hiring more border guards, deporting and dividing families;**
- ... **advocating a Constitutional Amendment denying LGBTQ Americans their civil rights;**
- ... **demeaning trans* men and women by refusing to acknowledge their sacred humanity;**
- ... **cutting programs that feed, house and educate underprivileged children;**
- ... **closing down agencies that protect the environment;**
- ... **abolishing administrations that regulate the production of food and pharmaceuticals;**
- ... **deregulating banks and rewarding incompetent bankers;**
- ... **empowering corporations with absolute political influence;**
- ... **increasing the power and privilege of the one percent;**
- ... **decreasing the rights and protections of the ninety-nine**

"Americans are now engaged in a New Civil war, testing whether this nation, conceived and dedicated as we are, will endure.iv

NORTH CAROLINA

“...a grim recital of the current reactionary takeover of state government.”

- Hodding Carter



To North Carolina’s Governor Pat McCrory and to the extremist majority of the State Legislature almost anyone who isn’t a rich white man is the enemy. The war against drugs has given these men an excuse for using physical force against African Americans and other men of color. However, political and economic forces have become as effective as the police, the courts and the prisons at controlling the rest of the people of North Carolina. Consider what the extremists have already accomplished there:

- ...900,000 North Carolinians have lost their hard earned-income tax credit;**
- ...500,000 North Carolinians have lost their Medicaid coverage;**
- ...170,000 North Carolinians have lost their unemployment benefits;**
- ...30,000 North Carolinian children have lost their pre-K programs;**
- ...North Carolinian women are victims of “the most draconian anti-choice” laws;**
- ...North Carolinian voters are victims of the nation’s worst voter suppression law;**
- ...North Carolinian voters must show strict voter IDs;**
- ...North Carolinian voters have lost same-day registration and early voting;**
- ...North Carolinian public schools saw \$90 million switched to voucher schools:**
- ...Public financing of judicial races has been axed;**
- ...Death row inmates cannot contest racially discriminatory verdicts.**
- ...Taxes have been lowered for the one percent (1%);**
- ...Taxes have been raised for the ninety-nine percent (99%).^{vi}**

Fortunately, various justice organizations in North Carolina have united under the Moral Monday Movement banner to confront the extremists in their state. Unfortunately, extremists in every state are hard at work finding ways to set back the clock on civil rights and all too few concerned Americans are concerned enough to protest.

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON...



WOMEN'S RIGHTS



IMMIGRATION RIGHTS



AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN



VOTING RIGHTS



THE ENVIRONMENT



PRISON REFORM



SENIORS



MEDICARE



LGBTQ RIGHTS



HIV/AIDS PREVENTION



PUBLIC SCHOOLS



THE POOR



GUN REFORM



HEALTH CARE REFORM



CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM



THE 99%

NOTE: WHEN THIS HANDBOOK IS ON LINE, EACH OF THE ABOVE SQUARES WILL LINK TO EVIDENCE AND ILLUSTRATION OF THE PROBLEM (NOW INCLUDED AT THE END OF THIS HANDBOOK.) mw

THE CALL TO RESIST



"It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires in people's minds..." - Samuel Adams

To protest in a free society is not simply a right, it is an obligation. Our country was born and raised on protest. The protests of Samuel Adams against British tyranny led to the American Revolution and the birth of this nation. The protests of Abraham Lincoln against the Southern States seceding from the Union saved our "one nation, indivisible" and led to the end of slavery. The Protests of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. against segregation led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the historic Supreme Court decision that outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. If ever our generation was called to protest it is now.

Thankfully, a growing number of Americans in every state, concerned about the future of our democracy, are mobilizing. Nonviolent protests are making headlines: marches, sit-ins, sleep overs, equality rides, nuns in busses, Internet campaigns, flash mobs with a purpose, quilt-insvii and creative nonviolent protests of every kind on Wall Street, at the White House, the Congress and the Supreme Court, at Governor's offices and state legislatures, at corporate offices and pipeline construction sites, at national parks and wetlands, at Cathedrals, mega-churches and denominational conventions, even at borders that separate children and parents.

With so many Americans eager to take their stand against extremist Republicans and their allies, **it is a perfect time to remind ourselves that there are rules or guidelines for effective NONVIOLENT protest.** Those rules were developed and demonstrated in the early 20th century by M.K. Gandhi whose nonviolent protests freed his people from slavery in South Africa and India. Later in the 20th century Martin Luther King Jr. adapted and advanced Gandhi's principles of nonviolence to build a powerful protest movement that ended segregation in the U.S. What can we learn about the power of nonviolence from these two men about building a powerful nonviolent protest movement to help us end the hijacking of our democracy?

So, what is "nonviolent resistance?"

NONVIOLENCE RESISTANCE AND GANDHI



Recently, I was asked to teach NONVIOLENCE to a group of African American men who had been victims of violence or the threat of violence for their entire lives. Just the word “nonviolence” made them angry and defensive. And who could blame them? They assumed that “nonviolence” was just another white man’s trick to disarm them. They assumed, that “nonviolence” means putting down your weapons while your enemy is armed to the teeth. They assumed that “nonviolence” means surrendering your right to protect yourself from those who oppress you. They assumed that “nonviolence” means not fighting back. In fact “nonviolence” is the best and most powerful way of fighting back.

Nonviolent resistance is not a new idea. For centuries brave men and women used the proven tactics of passive resistance: protests, fasts, civil disobedience, sit-ins, pray-ins, boycotts and strikes. But Gandhi, the Indian lawyer who redefined “nonviolence” in the twentieth century, hated the term “passive resistance.” It was just too “passive.” He also realized that in the face of the mighty British Empire, it would take more than the tactics of “passive resistance” to send their oppressors back to England. Gandhi offered a prize to anyone who could contribute a new name that would identify his emerging nonviolence movement. A reader suggested SATYAGRAHA, freely translated as “insistence on truth.”

Immediately Gandhi saw the power in calling his nonviolent movement “The Force of Truth” but as he witnessed how practicing Satyagraha was changing the minds and hearts of his followers (Satyagrahi), he began to use the term “soul force” to identify NONVIOLENCE. Confronting the British nonviolently gave his people a new sense of dignity. Nonviolent Protest transformed the spirit of each individual protestor. After a nonviolent protest, after practicing “soul force,” the protestor’s lives were radically changed and we must not forget. Changing our lives and the lives of those who protest with us is a primary goal of nonviolence.

How have Gandhi’s principles of relentless nonviolent resistance effected the struggle for civil rights in the U.S?

NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was just twenty-five-years old when he was asked to lead a bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. He didn't know much about protest movements until suddenly he was asked to lead one. Fresh out of seminary, King knew that Jesus' call to "love our enemies" was at the heart of the Christian faith but how do you organize a protest movement based on loving the segregationists who ran Montgomery let alone the Ku Klux Klan with their burning crosses and midnight lynchings?

"When Jesus commanded us to love our enemy," Martin writes, "he was very serious. He wasn't playing... We can't dismiss this passage as an example of Oriental hyperbole... We have the Christian and moral responsibility to seek the meaning of His words, and to discover how we can live out this love."^x

In grad school the young Baptist preacher learned that M.K. Gandhi, a Hindu lawyer had taken seriously these words of Jesus. Gandhi believed that nonviolent resistance to injustice was exactly what Jesus meant when he instructed his disciples to love their enemies.

"The Sermon on the Mount went straight to my heart," Gandhi wrote. "The verses 'But I say unto you that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have thy cloak too,' delighted me beyond measure."^{xi}

Gandhi built his nonviolent protest movement on Jesus' very specific examples in the Sermon on the Mount. His nonviolence movements in South Africa and India conquered the British Empire. King began to wonder if a movement based on Jesus call to love our enemies could end segregation as well.

"As I read Gandhi," Dr. King remembers, "I became deeply fascinated by Gandhi's campaigns of nonviolent resistance. 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...Gandhi is probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale. Jesus furnished the end goal while Gandhi provided the method for reaching it."^{xii}

What does Dr. King mean by the "end goal" that Jesus "furnished?" Is that your ultimate goal for taking your stand against the extremists in the U.S?

CORETTA SCOTT KING ON GANDHI'S INFLUENCE ON HER HUSBAND



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Coretta Scott King on Gandhi and Martin

"By the time he was assassinated in 1968 my husband had fashioned a black movement powerful enough to shatter forever the practice of racial segregation.

What you may not have read about is where he got his method for resisting injustice without compromising his religious beliefs.

He adopted the strategy of nonviolence from a man of a different race, who lived in a distant country, and even practiced a different religion.

The man was Mahatma Gandhi, the great leader of India, who devoted his life to serving humanity in the spirit of love and non-violence.

It was in these principles that Martin discovered his method for social reform. More than anything else, those two principles were the key to his achievements."^{xiv}

A BRIEF (AND EASILY REMEMBERED) SUMMARY OF GANDHI'S PRINCIPLES OF RELENTLESS NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE



ONE PREMISE:

"...to see my adversary as a VICTIM OF UNTRUTH as I have been."

ONE TASK:

"...to bring TRUTH to my adversary and to hear her TRUTH as well."

ONE METHOD:

"...to be guided by LOVE (NONVIOLENCE) exclusively."

ONE SECRET:

"...to accept VOLUNTARY REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING without retaliation or complaint as a means of convincing my adversary of my sincerity."

ONE GOAL:

"...to seek RECONCILIATION with (not victory over) my adversary."

Martin Luther King, Jr. On WHY we protest...
RECONCILIATION AND THE BELOVED COMMUNITY



Gandhi with Lord Mountbatten the Last Viceroy of India
 Reconciled after 32 years of waging a nonviolent war against the British (1915-1947)

1956, Dr. King reminded the people of Montgomery, Alabama, that integrating the busses was not their primary goal. “The primary reason we protest the loss of our God given human rights is reconciliation,” he said. “The end is the creation of the beloved community.”^{xvii} In a Palm Sunday sermon on Gandhi in 1959, Dr. King described the beloved community as a “new relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor.” In a 1963 sermon he said the only way to create the beloved community is “while abhorring segregation, we shall love the segregationist.” In a 1966 magazine article he said the ultimate goal of activism is not gaining political or economic power but the creation of “a truly brotherly society, the creation of the beloved community.”

During those twelve historic years between his 1956 speech in Montgomery until his assassination in 1968, Dr. King referred many times to the “beloved community” but he never stopped long enough to describe the “beloved community” in a way we can point to as the absolute and ultimate definition. In fact, in *The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (edited by James M. Washington) the “beloved community” doesn’t even merit a listing in the thirteen page index of that 702 page collection. The best definition I’ve found is in one paragraph on the King Center webpage.

“Dr. King’s Beloved Community is a global vision, in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. In the Beloved Community, international disputes will be resolved by peaceful conflict-resolution and reconciliation of adversaries, instead of military power. Love and trust will triumph over fear and hatred. Peace with justice will prevail over war and military conflict.”^{xviii}

How would you describe the “beloved community?” How would you describe the ultimate goal of our nonviolent protests?

Martin Sheen on WHY we protest
Because our Creator asks us to protest
For the sake of the nation, for our sake and for the sake of others



Martin Sheen leads massive nonviolent protest at Ft. Benning, Georgia

On November 22, 1998, Martin Sheen, another Christian activist shaped by Gandhi's "soul force" led a march of 2,000 protestors to the locked gates of the Ft. Benning military base near Columbus, Georgia. We were there to protest the "School of the Americas," a U.S. Army training center at Ft. Benning for soldiers and policemen from Central and South America who use terror, torture, and death to keep corrupt Latin American regimes in power.^{xxi}

Sheen spoke briefly to the rows of military police blocking our way. *"Basic human rights,"* Sheen began, *"are not given by the hand of any state but flow abundantly from the hand of our loving Creator....I'm here to do what is asked by a loving God..."*

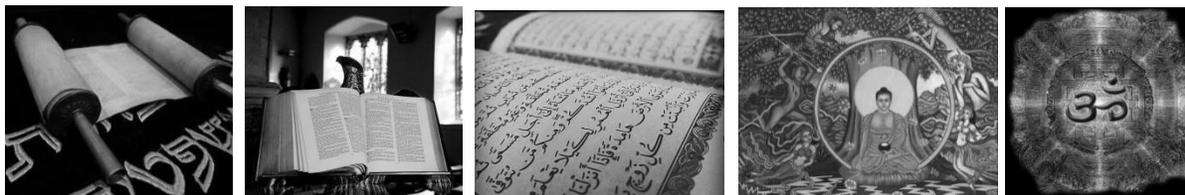
Sheen echoes our Declaration of Independence: "...that all are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." American colonists risked their lives to win those rights from British tyranny. Millions of Americans have died protecting those rights from tyrants through the centuries. Now right wing tyrants are threatening those rights again. God's will is freedom and justice for all. God's will for us is to join in the struggle to protect those rights for everyone.

Sheen ended his speech with these words: *"I come here in nonviolence not only to help end the suffering of our sisters and brothers in Central and South America but to win my own freedom as well."* Sheen reminds us that we protest for the good of others but we also protest for our own good. Even if Martin didn't accomplish his goal to close the School of the America he knew that his own life would be empowered and renewed just by trying. Dr. King writes:

"The nonviolent approach does not immediately change the heart of the oppressor. It first does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them new self-respect; it calls up resource of strength and courage that they did not know they had. Finally, it reaches the opponent and so stirs his conscience that reconciliation becomes a reality."^{xxii}

Are Martin Sheen's goals different from Dr. King's goals? How are they alike?

Every faith tradition agrees with Martin Sheen's
"I'm here to do what is asked by a loving God."



Judaism

The Jewish Prophet Amos: "I hate, I despise your feast days. Though you bring me offerings, I will not accept them. Shut up your noisy singing. I will not listen to the music of your orchestras and choirs. Instead, let justice run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream, (5:21-24)."

The Jewish Prophet Micah: "What kind of worship does God want from me? This is what the Lord requires: do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God, (6:8)."

Christianity

Jesus in Matthew: "Too bad for you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You know how to tithe the spices in your gardens, but you have neglected the weightier matters of the Law: Justice, Mercy, and Good faith,(23:23)."

Jesus in Mark: "Woe to you Pharisees for you tithe mint and rue and every herb and neglect justice and the love of God, (11:42)."

Islam

Believers! Be resolute in your allegiance to God, staunch witnesses for *justice*. On no account let hatred against any people cause you to be perverted from what is just. Deal justly. To do so is the nearest thing to the fear of God. (Surah 5.8-9)

Buddhism

- Four Noble Truths (pali *ariya sacca*) offering relief from the causes of human suffering;
- The moral precepts especially to refrain from harming living beings (*ahimsa*);
- The practice of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity (*brahmaviharas*);

Hinduism

Come together, talk together, Let our minds be in harmony, Common be our prayer, Common be our end, Common be our purpose, Common be our deliberations, Common be our desires, United be our hearts, United be our intentions, Perfect be the union among us. (Rgveda X.191.2-4)

Do those who practice your "faith tradition" encourage you to oppose extremism? If you have no "faith tradition," why are you willing to protest?

**BEFORE WE PROTEST (TO HELP CUT OFF THE SUFFERING AT ITS SOURCE)
GANDHI REQUIRES HIS MARCHERS TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP THOSE WHO SUFFER**



40 of 101 ways to help those who suffer in our town

1. Read up about hunger in the United States and then look for it where you live.
2. See your community with fresh eyes. Where are the needs? What do you see, hear, smell, touch?
3. Think of your kids' summer camp. Could you (and they) provide a way for a needy child to attend.
4. Does your church serve meals to the hungry? Have you considered volunteering to assist, provide food?
5. See if your local schools have the Food 4 Kids program sending food home with needy kids in backpacks..
6. Visit your local food bank. Ask what is needed. Volunteer to go help find, sort and bag food for them.
7. Buy fast food gift certificates to give out to people you see who need a meal.
8. Start a food bank or food pantry in your church, temple or synagogue. Offer used clothing there.
9. Fix sack lunches for needy kids in the summer or senior adults for the weekend.
10. Deliver meals on wheels to seniors. Get your friends to volunteer and divide up the days.
11. Join those who provide hot meals weekly for the needy in your town.
12. Join Habitat for Humanity and help build houses for needy families.
13. Volunteer to paint the home of a needy person (call DHS or a home health agency for a name).
14. Do yard work: rake leaves, trim limbs, clean up yard of a needy neighbor. "Who is your neighbor?"
15. Clean house or build a ramp or install smoke detectors for a needy person who is elderly or disabled.
16. Learn and then teach basic home repairs (fixing a leaky faucet, a toilet, a roof leak, etc.)
17. Call your local homeless or domestic abuse shelters and find out what kinds of programs they could use.
18. Call and find out what they need: washcloths, shower caps, shampoo, underwear, or other needs.
19. Provide funds so a needy kid can go on a school outing or a concert or game.
20. Provide a place for kids and youth to play basketball or soccer in a low income area.
21. Build a park, a meditation or memorial garden in a low income area.
22. Get permission from the school to eat lunch with kids who don't have a parent ever come.
23. Be a volunteer babysitter for a teen mom finishing school.
24. Donate infant and children's car seats to those who can't afford to buy them.
25. Donate band instruments to your school for low income kids.
26. Host a party at your local Head Start center.
27. Donate coats, gloves, lice shampoo and other needs to your local school.
28. Offer a free scholarship so a needy kid can take art, music or gymnastics classes.
29. Provide affordable, quality child care.
30. Sponsor a wholesome, fun movie night for kids in an apartment complex outside.
31. Be a big brother, big sister, a mentor for a kid.
32. Be a mentor to someone out of work.
33. Involve your friends and/or family in sending cards to nursing home residents.
34. Get floral shops to give you dated flowers and deliver to home bound seniors or nursing home residents.
35. Help seniors change light bulbs, take down their curtains to wash, etc.
36. Donate fans for the summer heat for needy seniors.
37. Volunteer to teach English as a second language in your home, community center, church or synagogue.
38. Start a free medical/dental clinic with the churches of your area.
39. Collect and distribute used medical equipment (walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs, etc.).
40. Volunteer as a teacher's assistant gather school supplies, prizes, flashcards, learning games for a tutoring.

See Diana Lewis and her Southern Baptist Missions Ministries Team* for 101 ideas.^{xxiv}

*You see. Gandhi was correct to say even our adversaries have something to contribute to our lives.

WHAT PRINCIPLES ARE AT THE CORE OF NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE?

A Brief Outline Summarizing the Core Principles of Nonviolent Protest
in Gandhi's Words and in the Words of His Close Associate, Gopi Nath Dwawan



1. See **YOURSELF** in a whole new way.

Satyagraha is based on the fundamental truths that the soul remains unconquered and unconquerable even by the mightiest physical force and that every human being, however degraded, has in him the divine spark, i.e., limitless potentiality for growth." Gandhi quoted by Gopi Nath Dwawan^{xxv}

2. See your **ADVERSARY** in a whole new way.

The Satyagrahi who is conscious of the working of soul-force and of his own spiritual kinship with the opponent, should treat the opponent as a member of his family. I must apply the same rules to the wrong-doer who is my enemy as I would to my wrong-doing father or son." Gandhi^{xxvi}

3. Bring **TRUTH** to your adversary.

*"The entire philosophy of Satyagraha is based on the fact that Truth alone can be victorious, for Truth is 'that which is' while untruth means 'non-existent.' If untruth does not so much as exist its victory is out of the question. And truth being that which is can never be destroyed."*Gandhi^{xxvii}

4. Bring truth to your adversary **NONVIOLENTLY**.

"Hatred ever kills, love never dies...What is obtained by love is retained for all time. What is obtained by hatred becomes a burden in reality, for it increases hatred." Gandhi^{xxviii}

5. Bring truth to your adversary **RELENTLESSLY**.

"The whole conception of Satyagraha rests on the psychological assumption that the innate goodness of the most brutal opponent can be around by the pure suffering of a truthful man...It is a difficult ideal requiring constant effort and ceaseless vigilance." Gandhi paraphrased by Gopi Nath Dwawan^{xxix}

6. Be willing to take on voluntary **REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING**

"Given a good cause, suffering for it advances it as nothing else has done...No country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering...The appeal of reason is to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering." Gandhi^{xxx}

7. **RECONCILE** with your adversary and **"HELP BRING IN THE BELOVED COMMUNITY."**

"Gandhi does not envisage the elimination of all conflicts, but aims at raising them from the destructive physical to the constructive moral plane where differences can be peacefully adjusted and antagonisms rather than antagonist liquidated." Gopi Nath Dwawan^{xxxi}

1. SEE YOURSELF IN A WHOLE NEW WAY!



A GANDHI VOW:

“I am a child of the Creator who loves me exactly as I am...”

Gandhi read Jesus’ command to “love your neighbor as yourself” and assumed by the arrangement of those five words that it was necessary to love yourself before loving your neighbor was even possible. Therefore he insisted that people who did not love themselves should not participate in a NONVIOLENCE campaign until they could see themselves in a whole new way.

For centuries, India’s “untouchables” had been seen as inferior, outcasts, and not quite human. They couldn’t join Gandhi in freeing India until they saw themselves in a whole new way. To help achieve that goal, Gandhi renamed the “untouchables” **Harijan**” or **“Children of God.”** It worked. During Gandhi’s lifetime the Harijan began to see themselves in a whole new way. Fifty years later, K.R. Narayanan, a Harijan, was elected President of India. A British High Commissioner wrote, *“Gandhi taught the Indian to straighten his back, to raise his eyes, to face circumstances with a steady gaze.”*^{xxxv}

For centuries, African-Americans had been seen as inferior, outcasts and not quite human. In a speech to the National Press Association, Dr. King explained that his people had to see themselves in a whole new way before they could rise up nonviolently against oppression.

“Once plagued with a tragic sense of inferiority resulting from the crippling effects of slavery and segregation, the Negro has now been driven to reevaluate himself. He has come to feel that he is somebody. With this new sense of somebodiness and self-respect, a new Negro has emerged with a new determination to achieve freedom and human dignity whatever the cost may be.”^{xxxvi}

For centuries church and state have seen LGBTQ people as inferior, outcasts and not quite human. Every time I repeat these words – “God created you and loves you exactly as you are” – LGBTQ people in the audience tear up and even applaud. Even atheists applaud! Like Gandhi’s Harijan and King’s “Negroes” LGBTQ people have been told by Christians repeatedly that God doesn’t love them as they are. No wonder they need to see themselves in a whole new way before they can reclaim their humanity and take their stand against homophobia and oppression.

Have you ever felt like an outcast? What/who made you feel that way? Are you still a victim of the lies or do you see yourself in a whole new way?

CREDO: SEEING OURSELVES IN A WHOLE NEW WAY



The following Credo is my attempt to combine and simplify one of Gandhi's requirements for nonviolent resistance. Improve on what I've written. Make this credo your own. **MW**

1. I am a child of the Creator.*

"The first and last shield and buckler of the non-violent person will be his (or her) unwavering faith in God." Gandhi^{xxxviii}

2. I am loved by my Creator exactly as I am.

"Every human being, however degraded, has in him (or her) the divine spark, i.e. limitless potentiality for growth and is capable of responding to kind, generous treatment" Gandhi.^{xxxix}

3. I am not an accident. I have a purpose. I was shaped by my Creator to help win justice for all who suffer injustice.

"Self-realization cannot be achieved unless you identify yourself with the whole of humankind and try to advance the greatest good of all." Gandhi^{xl}

4. I will not discover my purpose nor realize my power (my own soul force) until I join my Creator in doing justice (making things fair for all.)

"I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself." Gandhi^{xli}

5. When I join my Creator in doing justice, my life will be empowered and made more meaningful.

"The only weapon of the Satyagrahi is God, by whatsoever name one knows Him. Without him the Satyagrahi is devoid of strength before an opponent armed with monstrous weapons. But he who accepts Go as his only protector will remain unbent before the mightiest earthly power." Gandhi^{xlii} *Note: Neither Gandhi nor King required sectarian allegiance to any one statement of faith or religious practice.

6. In serving others it is as much more moral obligation to refuse to cooperate with evil as it is to cooperate with good.

"Without the co-operation, direct or indirect, of the wronged the wrong-doer cannot do the wrong intended by him." Gandhi^{xliii}

Which of the above beliefs do you find most difficult to accept? Do you need to see yourself in a whole new way? Do you believe you have a purpose? What is it? Do you believe in a "Creator?" Does that belief effect your activism?

2. SEEING YOUR ADVERSARY IN A WHOLE NEW WAY!



xliv



xlv

A GANDHI VOW:

“I believe that my adversary is also a child of the Creator a member of the same human family, a sister or a brother in need of reconciliation.”

Gandhi taught the people of India that it is natural to hate those who cause them suffering but he also warned them that hating the British would only increase that suffering. Gandhi believed the cure for hating their enemies is to see them in a whole new way. He taught them that their enemies are also children of the Creator. They are members of the same human family to which we belong. They are our sisters and brothers in need of reconciliation. They are victims of the same lies that they use to victimize us. Our task is not to kill them but to free them from those lies and to welcome them home.

Gandhi refused to hate the British soldiers who fired into crowds of nonviolent protestors and killed with impunity. Gandhi refused to hate the British Parliament who bound them with unjust laws and burdened them with unfair taxation. Gandhi refused to hate the judges [Indian and British] who enforced those laws or the revenue men who collected those taxes. Gandhi refused to hate the Viceroy appointed to rule over the Indian subcontinent and to keep India a part of the British Kingdom at any price. With all their power, the haters were defeated by those who did not hate them.

Martin Luther King, Jr. refused to hate Governor Wallace or Sheriff Bull Conner or the other corrupt politicians, judges, and police who falsely imprisoned, tortured and murdered his sisters and brothers. Martin Luther King Jr. refused to hate the Ku Klux Klan dressed in white, terrorizing, kidnapping, lynching and murdering African-Americans and their white allies. Martin Luther King Jr. even refused to hate Malcom X and other black leaders who condemned nonviolence and called King a “Religious Uncle Tom.” Once again the haters were defeated by those who refused to hate them.

When we see our enemies in this whole new way, it is easier not to hate them but to help free them from the lies that have victimize us as well and welcome them home.

Do you have any enemies? Do you hate them? How is that helping you? How is that changing them? Is it possible for you to see your enemies as your brother or sister who is a victim of untruth as you have been? Could you love your enemies?

CREDO: SEEING OUR ADVERSARY IN A WHOLE NEW WAY!

The following Credo is another of my attempts to combine and simplify one of Gandhi's requirements for effective nonviolent resistance. Improve on what I've written. Make this credo your own. **MW**

1. I believe that my adversary is also a child of the Creator a member of the same human family, sisters and brothers in need of reconciliation.

"For a non-violent person the whole world is one family."^{xvi} The Satyagrahi who is conscious of the working of soul-force and of his own spiritual kinship with the opponent, should treat the opponent as a member of his family."^{xvii} "I must apply the same rules to the wrong-doer who is my enemy as I would to my wrong-doing father or son."^{xviii}

2. I believe that my adversary is not my enemy but a victim of misinformation as I have been.

"I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow beings wears and am, therefore, as liable to err as any."^{xix} "Courage comes from the belief that God sits in the hearts of all. The knowledge of the omnipotence of God also means respect for the lives of even those who may be called opponents."¹

3. I believe that my only task is to bring my adversary truth in love (nonviolence) relentlessly.

"The silent and undemonstrative action of truth and love produces far more permanent and abiding results than speeches or such other showy performances."ⁱⁱ "Nothing is more impressive or works a more effective spell than truth."ⁱⁱⁱ

4. I believe that my adversary's motives are as pure as mine and have no relevance to our discussion.

"No one is wicked by nature. And if others are wicked, are we the less so? That attitude is inherent in Satyagraha."ⁱⁱⁱⁱ "My faith in the people [individuals] is boundless. Theirs is an amazingly responsive nature."^{iv}

5. I believe that even my worst adversary has an amazing potential for positive change.

"The soul is one in all. Its possibilities are the same for everyone."^{lv} "To do full justice to the adversary a Satyagrahi must try to keep his mind in a detached state, understand the adversary's point of view and, if needed revise his judgment."^{lvi}

6. I believe that my adversary may have an insight into truth that I do not have.

"The way to treat the opponent as a member of the family is to give him the same credit for honest of purpose which the satyagrahi claims for himself."^{lvii} "I am essentially a man of compromise because I am never sure that I am right."^{lviii}

7. I believe that one day my adversary and I will understand each other and that if we conduct our search for truth guided by the principles of love, we will find a new position to satisfy us both.

"The whole conception of satyagraha rests on the psychological assumption that the innate goodness of the most brutal opponent can be aroused by the pure suffering of a truthful man."^{lix} "The satyagrahi fights with a view to bilateral and not unilateral victory. He aims at the integration and not suppression of legitimate differences."^{lx}

8. I believe that there is no need to fear death even if my opponent kills me while I am attempting to bring him/her the truth.

"Let us fear God and we shall cease to fear man...Those who defy death are free from fear...All the fears revolve around the body as center and would disappear as soon as one got rid of attachment for the body...To develop non-attachment we must conquer our passions, the internal foes."^{lxi}

Which of the above beliefs are most difficult for you to accept? Why?

3. BRING TRUTH TO YOUR ADVERSARY!



Ixii



Ixiii



Ixiv

A GANDHI VOW:

“I promise to seek truth and confront untruth wherever I find it.”

The British Army had brute force, powerful weapons and the law. Gandhi had truth.
The British were defeated. Truth prevailed.

Segregationists had brute force, powerful weapons and the law. King had truth.
Segregationists were defeated. King’s truth prevailed.

M. K. Gandhi titled his autobiography, *My Experiment with Truth*. He asked his followers to make this simple vow: *“I promise to seek truth and confront untruth wherever I find it.”* For Gandhi, truth is source of power at the heart of nonviolent resistance. Once again Gandhi quotes Jesus: *“You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free, (John 8:32).”*

Some truth can be proven by science or logic. Other truths cannot be proven by logic or science. Instead they are writ large across the face of the universe. Thomas Jefferson said it this way, *“We hold these truths to be self-evident...”*

Gandhi’s truth was self-evident. A poor, outcast Indian child is created equal to a British child and though not born into wealth and privilege she, too, is endowed by her Creator with certain unalienable Rights. King’s truth was equally self-evident. A poor, outcast Negro child is created equal to a white child and though not born into wealth and privilege he, too, is endowed by his creator with certain unalienable Rights. This truth, too, is self-evident poor Trans child is created equal to an Indian, a Negro, or a white child and though perceived as an outcast she too is endowed by her Creator with certain unalienable rights.

“Unalienable rights” are rights that cannot be taken away or transferred to another. Those Creator-given rights are as basic to our humanity as are blood, bones and breath and that truth is more powerful than laws that discriminate or the powers that enforce them. Let truth prevail!

Are you sure your enemy is lying? Are you sure you have the truth? What have you done to research the lies of your enemy? What have you done to research you own truths to be certain they are trustworthy?

4. BRING TRUTH TO YOUR ADVERSARY NONVIOLENTLY!



lxv

A GANDHI VOW:

***“I promise to love my enemies, to reject violence (of heart, tongue or fist), and to use only the methods of nonviolence in my search for TRUTH and in my confrontation with UNTRUTH.*”**

The citation with the Presidential Medal of Freedom awarded Dr. King after his assassination reads: “Martin Luther King, Jr., the conscience of his generation, a southerner, a black man, he gazed on the great wall of segregation and saw that the power of love could bring it down.”lxvi

What kind of love has that kind of power? When Jesus instructed his disciples to love their enemies, he didn’t mean romance them (eros). He didn’t even mean befriend them (philia). He meant to love their enemies as God loves them (agape). But what is agape love? While reading the “Sermon on the Mount” Gandhi, a Hindu, discovered the secret a love powerful enough to end British tyranny.

Given the blood stained, war-torn history of Christianity, Jesus’ words have not been taken too seriously at least not very often. Gandhi took them seriously. In fact he built much of his entire nonviolent protest movement on those Sermon on the Mount passages including. “You have heard it said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say unto you resist not evil; Whoever forces you to go a mile, go two miles with him; Love your enemies; Bless them that curse you; Do good to them who hate you; Pray for them who persecute you.

For Gandhi that kind of love defines nonviolence or nonviolence defines that kind of love. If our enemy is also a child of the Creator, a member of our same human family, our brothers and sisters in need of reconciliation, doesn’t it make sense to respond in ways that de-escalate the hatred through that powerful agape love? Gandhi does not suggest we sit back and love our enemies from a distance. His agape love, his nonviolence has the courage to confront our enemies and their untruths by loving them. His agape love rejects physical, spiritual, and mental violence. Dr. King put it this way: “No violence of the fist, tongue or heart.” King studied carefully the principals of Gandhi’s nonviolent love and adapted those principles to our countries struggle for civil rights. Practical examples follow.

Is it possible for you to “love your enemy?” Can you confront the lies of your enemy with truth alone and without violence of the heart, tongue or fist?

5. BRING TRUTH TO YOUR ADVERSARY RELENTLESSLY



lxvii

A GANDHI VOW:

“I will confront my opponent's words/actions relentlessly, refusing to give up or to compromise my truth (or any portion of it) unless my opponent proves me wrong. In that case, I will admit my error gratefully, seek my opponent's forgiveness, and end the confrontation peacefully.”

The first and arguably the longest (most relentless) nonviolent direct action to end segregation in the U.S. began December 5, 1955 five days after Rosa Parks was arrested and ended 381 days later. It is an amazing example of the power of relentless resistance. That boycott was expected to last one day. A one day protest might feel good to the protestors but it would not have achieved the protestor's goal.

The black community of Montgomery had threatened but boycotts since 1949 when a group of black professional women began lobbying city officials to integrate the busses. In 1954, five years later, the president of that organization wrote a letter to the Mayor warning of a bus boycott that never happened. In 1955, a junior high student, Claudette Colvin refused to give up her seat to a white person on the still-segregated busses of Montgomery. She was arrested and mistreated by the police. The black community was enraged by her treatment and launched a spontaneous boycott that ended quickly with absolutely no effect on city officials. Two months later a teenaged maid was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white woman. This time there was no protest by the black community.

Montgomery officials had out-lasted boycotts and threats of boycotts for 16 years. They were certain that their busses would be segregated forever. A one-day boycott after Rosa Park's arrest would have been another in the list of failures to integrate Montgomery's busses. But at the end of that first day, civil rights history was changed forever. Martin Luther King, Jr. was elected chairman of the Montgomery Improvement Association. This 26-year-old pastor knew enough about Gandhi's relentless nonviolent resistance to decide that the bus boycott would continue until they reached their goal. For 381 days roughly 40,000 black citizens of Montgomery refused to ride the busses. Old and young alike suffered much but when they finally stopped walking, the whole nation had been changed.

How “relentless” is your determination to reach your goal? Once you start an action are you willing to continue it until your goal has been reached?

6. BE WILLING TO TAKE ON VOLUNTARY REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING



A GANDHI VOW:

“I will take on myself without complaint any suffering that comes from doing justice; and I will do what I can to help my adversary avoid any suffering from our confrontation.”

This “suffering without complaint” idea was not easily accepted by my LGBTQ friends and allies. “We’ve suffered long enough,” they would say. “We’re not about to take on more suffering let alone more suffering without complaint.” Gandhi’s call to *voluntary redemptive suffering* is widely misunderstood. Accepting suffering without retaliation or complaint does not mean we accept the *involuntary* suffering that comes from discrimination and intolerance. Gandhi calls us to suffer *voluntarily* on behalf of justice in order that *involuntary* suffering (injustice) might end.

In Gandhi’s India the British occupiers caused involuntary suffering with their demands on the Indian people. Then Gandhi appeared on the scene with his call to voluntary suffering without complaint as a powerful form of resistance to British demands. Gandhi and his followers did not complain when the British taxed Indian salt. But they didn’t cave in to British demands either. They refused to pay the tax and walked hundreds of miles to make salt. They walked bravely into police barricades guarding Indian salt mines. They were beaten, arrested and imprisoned and all without complaint. The Parliament and the people of England watched courageous Indians facing British brutality without complaining about their violent treatment let alone resorting to violent response. Eventually, the British were shamed into setting India free.

African Americans suffered involuntarily at the hands of Southern sheriffs and the KKK but it was their voluntary suffering on behalf of justice that helped end segregation. They proved their commitment to the cause by suffering without complaint physical violence, arrest and imprisonment. The minds and hearts of American people were changed as they watched African Americans accept suffering without complaint as a way to protest and eventually end segregation.

How do you feel about taking on suffering without complaint? How do you feel about helping your adversary avoid suffering?

7. RECONCILE WITH YOUR ADVERSARY AND IN KING'S WORDS "HELP BRING IN THE BELOVED COMMUNITY."

One way to define "beloved community" in our time is to study individuals and organizations most associated with the term. For example, in April, 2013, the people of North Carolina rose up nonviolently against the restrictive laws being passed by their Republican Governor and his extremist allies in the state legislature. Their Moral Monday Movement reflects Jesus' call to love our enemies and is demonstrating the power of nonviolence in Martin Sheen's words "at transforming society" or In Dr. King's words "creating the beloved community." Instead of using the "beloved community," The Rev. William Barber II, the primary spokesman for the Moral Monday Movement, describes his vision for North Carolina as the creation of "a fusion coalition."

"So in North Carolina," Barber writes, "We're black. We're white. We're Latino. We're Native American. We're Democrat[s]. We're Republican. We're Independent[s]. We're people of all faith. We're people not of faith who believe in a moral universe. We're natives. We're immigrants. We're business leaders and workers and unemployed. We're doctors and the uninsured. We're gay. We're straight. We're students and we're parents and we're retirees. And we all stand together to lift up and defend the most sacred moral principles of our faith, our constitutional values, and who we are. That's what a fusion coalition does."^{lx}

Barber's creation of the "fusion coalition" began officially on April 29, 2013, when he led a small group of clergy and other activists to the state legislative building in Raleigh. They sang "We Shall Overcome," read prophetic biblical verses, blocked the doors leading to the Senate chambers, were arrested, handcuffed and led away. On February 8, 2014, just ten months later, an estimated 100,000 North Carolinians joined the Moral Monday march, the largest civil rights rally since the Selma to Montgomery march in 1965. In their "14 Point People's Agenda for North Carolina"^{lxxi} Rev. Barber and his allies describe their goals for creating a more beloved community in North Carolina:

"A place where all children have the right to a high quality education; where low income people have livable wages and support; where health care is provided for all; where historic wrongs are made right and enemies are reconciled; where elections are financed by the public and voting rights are returned to the people; where Historically Black Colleges and Universities are "lifted up" to provide doctoral-level leadership for today's challenges; where state hiring includes minority contractors; where affordable housing is guaranteed and consumers are protected from abuse; where the environment is protected; where employee's bargaining rights are guaranteed and safe work places are regulated by law; where the rights of immigrants are protected; where civil rights are enforced and our troops are brought home from Iraq. North Carolina cannot address injustice at home while we wage unjust wars abroad."^{lxxii}

**Would you describe yourself as a member of the "beloved community?"
How are you seeking to build the "beloved community" through your work?**

A Check-List for Nonviolent Protest



1...Commit and recommit ourselves to the Soulforce principles of nonviolence;

Review Gandhi's vows: *Truth, Nonviolence, Voluntary Redemptive Suffering*. Print them. Review them. Make them your own. Nonviolence is not a tactic. It is a way of life. Live out those principles in your life long before a protest begins. Jesus commanded his followers to "love your enemies." Nonviolence in three short words. "*Where there is love,*" Gandhi says, "*there is life.*"

2...Research your adversary's untruth and develop your case for truth;

Untruth: What are the untruths your adversary promotes? Collect samples of the half-truth, hyperbole and lies that illustrate those untruths from your adversary's speeches, radio/TV appearances, books, articles, newspapers, interviews, fundraising letters. Don't even think of a protesting until you can state clearly your case against your adversary.

Truth: Be ready to respond to each of your adversary's untruths with truth. Be sure you can present your truth as clearly as you as you can present your adversary's untruth.

3...Negotiate with our adversary first: amicably, relentlessly, but if this fails;

Review the **TEN GUIDELINES TO NONVIOLENT NEGOTIATIONS**.

4...Educate the media, your allies, and the even the allies of your adversary;

Don't "go public" with your grievance until you've exhausted all possibilities for quiet, "face-saving" negotiations; however if your opponent refuses to negotiate seriously with you in private, then present your case to the media, to your allies and your potential allies. If your adversary continues to refuse your invitations to negotiate take the next step.

5...Confront your adversary with a direct action to move negotiations forward;

Before you and your allies plan and conduct a nonviolent direct action, become thoroughly familiar with the **TWELVE GUIDELINES TO NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION**. If possible involve an experienced nonviolence trainer to help you recruit, plan, train, and execute a nonviolent direct action. Learn all you can from those who have succeeded and those who have failed.

6...Negotiate a third position that will satisfy us both;

To assist these (hopefully final) negotiations, review again the **TEN SOUL-FORCE GUIDELINES TO NONVIOLENT NEGOTIATIONS**.

7...Reconcile with your adversary and help bring in "the beloved community" which is the ultimate goal of r

"We must learn to live together as brothers and sisters or perish together as fools." King

Ten Suggestions for Conducting **NONVIOLENT NEGOTIATIONS**



lxxiii

- 1. I will investigate my opponent's position carefully, trying to understand exactly what my opponent is saying or doing and why my opponent is saying or doing it;**
- 2. I will ask my opponent for an opportunity to present my case in a private, off-the-record meeting hoping to use that occasion to negotiate our differences and be reconciled.**
- 3. I will confront my opponent's words and/or actions that lead to suffering on the basis of truth alone (without resorting to half-truth, hyperbole, or lies of my own.)**
- 4. I will confront my opponent's words and/or actions politely without seeking to embarrass or coerce and without resorting to physical, spiritual, or psychological violence.**
- 5. I will confront my opponent's words/actions relentlessly, refusing to give up or to compromise my truth (or any portion of it) unless my opponent proves me wrong. In that case, I will admit my error gratefully, seek my opponent's forgiveness, and when all is resolved, end the confrontation in peace.**
- 6. I will work to earn my opponent's trust and friendship throughout our negotiations.**
- 7. I will refuse to break off our negotiations until we have reached a third position that is acceptable to us both.**
- 8. I will question the ideas that lead to suffering. I will not question the motive or the integrity of the person who holds those ideas.**
- 9. If my opponent and I cannot reach an acceptable third position, I will ask my opponent to choose with me a neutral, third party, respected by us both to arbitrate our differences.**
- 10. If my opponent breaks off negotiations, refuses to arbitrate, or maintains negotiations to stall or end our confrontation, I will have no other option but to take direct action against my opponent's untruth.**

Thirteen suggestions for conducting a
NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION



1. The goal of a nonviolent direct action is to get negotiations started when our adversary refuses to negotiate or to show unbending commitment when negotiations break down.
2. The ultimate goal of any direct action is reconciliation, not victory.
3. Any direct action must be planned and conducted to win the heart and mind of our opponent, not to terrorize, overwhelm, shame or force our opponent into submission.
4. A direct action is taken when we know no other way to end the impasse and to revive the discussion that will lead us to a third position we both can accept;
5. Although one individual alone may enter into a direct action, consider the greater good that comes by recruiting and training allies to stand with you;
6. Sometimes just in the act of recruiting/ training allies, the opponent is moved to reconciliation.
7. The primary principles of 'soul force' (truth, love, voluntary suffering) must guide our relationships with our allies as much as it guides our confrontation with the adversary;
8. Any direct action(s) we take must be as pure and as loving as the end we seek;
9. We refuse to participate in any direct action that involves physical violence;
10. We refuse to participate in any psychological or spiritual violence as well.
11. We will accept/absorb any suffering that results from our direct action without anger or retaliation;
12. We will do our best to take on ourselves any suffering that our direct action causes our opponent;
13. We will not fear (or seek) our own death but if death comes to us out of our quest for justice, we will accept it because we are confident "that death is not the end, but the beginning of life."

A FEW EXTRA TIPS
For Conducting More Effective Nonviolent Negotiation and Direct Actions



Be sure...that your Action is planned and executed carefully to *win minds and hearts not to alienate friends and/or adversaries alike.* Nonviolent Direct Actions have one goal: to prove to your subject that you are serious about getting him or her to negotiate with you. Your Direct Action must show that you are loving, sincere and determined not angry and revengeful.

Be sure...that your direct action will *win people's respect, not make them hate or fear you more.* If your adversary is a religious leader, would it help to march on the church, interrupt a service, spill the communion cup, or shout angry charges from the pulpit? **NOT!**

Be sure... that *your adversary as been notified of your action well in advance.* That news alone might cause your adversary to undertake serious negotiations. Be sure negotiations aren't used to delay justice. As Dr. King said, "Justice delayed is justice denied."

Be sure... that *the media* have been notified well in advance. It may also be wise to notify **the authorities**. Explain your case carefully and then respond honestly and frankly to the demands the police might make. Remember there were times Dr. King had to break good laws - trespassing, blocking an entrance, closing a street - as a part of his action against bad laws.

Remember...When negotiations begin, it is not what you "win or lose" that matters. Reconciliation is your goal. Not some kind of triumph over your adversary.

Remember...You will change the minds and hearts of your adversary by the relationships you establish while negotiating. As Gandhi said, "Be the change you want to see."

Remember...Your adversary may be afraid to meet with you the first time. You become the TRUTH. You are the case you bring. Facts will not change minds and hearts. The change comes in knowing you. Be sure you decrease, not increase, your adversary's fear.

Remember... Monitor your adversary's actions after the negotiations end. If the adversary follows through on your agreed solution, show your appreciation; but if the change is not adequate or even non-existent, restart negotiations even if another direct action is necessary.

BEFORE THE ACTION BEGINS: MAKE YOUR CASE

(Case: A brief statement explaining why you are conducting this vigil)

DISTRIBUTE YOUR CASE^{lxxv}

Before the Action

To leaders of the organization you are protesting;
To the media; To those in charge of the vigil's location; To local authorities.

During the Action

To those you protest, to Spectators, and to Possible Recruits for the Vigil.



A SAMPLE CASE

WHY WE VIGIL

December 2008

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Bi-Annual Meeting at the Capitol Hilton, Washington D.C.

We, the people of Soulforce, stand vigil today to profess our faith and to implore the Vatican through the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to sign the non-binding "*United Nations Statement on Human Rights, Orientation and Gender Identity.*" The Statement, put before the U.N. in December, 2008, condemns violence, harassment, discrimination, exclusion, stigmatization, and prejudice based on sexual orientation and gender identity. It also condemns killings, executions, torture, arbitrary arrest, and deprivation of economic, social, and cultural rights on those grounds. In 77 countries, homosexuality is illegal. In 7 countries it is punishable by death.

While proclaiming all life as sacred, the Vatican has failed to date to join the 54 countries who have welcomed this important document. Just weeks ago, President Obama indicated that the U.S. would rescind the vote of the Bush administration and sign on to the Statement. We are here today to remind the Vatican that recognition of the inalienable dignity of the human person is the only path toward justice and reconciliation.

For almost ten years now, Soulforce has challenged the Catholic Church to recognize that it is most catholic when it is inclusive and embracing, reflecting the gospel message of the all-inclusive Jesus. Unfortunately over these last ten years we have witnessed the Church becoming even more rigid in its statements and proactive in its anti-gay legislation, not just here, but throughout the world.

We gather to invite the Holy See to a new atmosphere of openness and dialogue, a dialogue which includes the lived experience of its many Catholic members. The arguments used by the Vatican to justify discrimination are based on stereotypes that have long since been renounced by psychological and sociological experts. These stereotypes cause psychic and spiritual damage to LGBTs everywhere.

We invite all justice-minded people to join with us today to invite the Vatican to repent its destructive rhetoric and begin to live out the Gospel of love. If you would like to join this VIGIL see Vigil Director to for instructions and for signing Nonviolence Pledge.

Soulforce, P.O. Box 1234, Lynchburg, VA. 24503

Vigil Contact: Kara Speltz, Soulforce Catholic Team Co-Chair Vigil cellphone: 562-123-4567

Office Phone: 562-123-4567 Office Email: Soulforce@aol.org Official Webpage:www.soulforce.org

BEFORE THE ACTION BEGINS: TAKE YOUR VOW



For “marchers” signing a nonviolence vow is a tradition that began with Gandhi. Late arriving, untrained volunteers should be taken aside, given a quick review of the basic principles of nonviolence and asked to sign a vow before being permitted to join the action.

Vows Taken by Marchers with Gandhi, 1939

1. He must have a living faith in God.
2. He must believe in truth and nonviolence as his creed and, therefore, have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he evokes by his truth and love expressed through suffering.
3. He must lead a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up life and goods.
4. He must be a habitual khadi-wearer and spinner (the plain usually homemade woven cloth).
5. He must be a teetotaler (complete alcohol abstinence) and be free from all intoxicants.
6. He must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid down.
7. He should carry out the jail rules unless they are especially devised to hurt his self-respect.^{lxxvii}

Vows Taken by Marchers with Dr. King, 1963^{lxxviii}

1. Meditate daily on the life and teachings of Jesus.
2. Remember that the nonviolent movement seeks justice and reconciliation - not victory.
3. Walk and talk in the manner of love; for God is love.
4. Pray daily to be used by God in order that all men and women might be free.
5. Sacrifice personal wishes that all might be free.
6. Observe with friend & foes the ordinary rules of courtesy.
7. Perform regular service for others and for the world.
8. Refrain from violence of fist, tongue, and heart.
9. Strive to be in good spiritual and bodily health.
10. Follow the directions of the Movement leaders and of the captains on demonstrations.^{lxxix}

Vows taken by Sulforce Marchers before New Orleans action

1. I will meditate on the life and teachings of Jesus, Gandhi, King or other truth seekers
2. I will remember that the nonviolent movement seeks justice and reconciliation—not victory.
3. I will walk and talk in the manner of love and nonviolence.
4. I will contemplate daily what I can do so that all can be free.
5. I will sacrifice my own personal wishes that all might be free.
6. I will observe with friend and foes the ordinary rules of courtesy.
7. I will perform regular service for others and for the world.
8. I will refrain from violence of fist, tongue, and heart.
9. I will strive to be in good spiritual and bodily health.
10. I will follow the directions of the squad leaders and other Sulforce leaders on our direct action.

Signature _____

Fifty Nonviolent Direct Actions to Consider

from Gene Sharp's

THE POLITICS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION



Soulforce Equality Riders took their Nonviolent Direct Actions across the U.S.

1. Formal Statements (letters, declarations of support, signed public statements, petitions)
2. Wider Communications (slogans, symbols, leaflets, pamphlets, press, radio, TV releases)
3. Advance Groups (behind the scene meetings, appointments, phone trees, letter writing)
4. Symbolic Public Acts (prayer, worship, symbols, banners, songs, chants, speeches)
5. Pressure on Individuals (vigils, fasts, phone trees, letter campaigns, networking friends)
6. Processions (marches, parades, rallies, pilgrimages, mock funerals, homage at burial sites)
7. Group Actions (sit-ins, stand-ins, pray-ins, non-violent occupations, non-violent obstructions)
8. Social Interventions (overloading facilities, guerrilla theater, stall-ins, speak-ins, filibusters)
9. Delegations (political, religious, scientific, medical authorities to present our case on our behalf)
10. Non-cooperation (boycotts, civil disobedience, arrests, refusing bail, trials, prison time)

Gene Sharp is a primary source for possible nonviolent direct actions. The above samples are in Sharp's *The Methods of Nonviolent Action* (from his 3 book series, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, published by Extending Horizons Books, Porter Sargent Publishers, 11 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108, 1973. [Available from Fellowship of Reconciliation Press by calling (914) 358-4601 or from Amazon.com]

PLANNING A NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION (Part 1) FOR EXAMPLE: A NONVIOLENT VIGIL



Introduction: The keys to planning and coordinating any event are legwork, follow-through and communications. An early and important decision that the group should make is what type of direct action would be most appropriate.

For example if you are planning a vigil, will it be a *silent vigil*, a *prayer vigil*, a *vigil with a few speakers*? Will you have a banner expressing your issue clearly and yet succinctly or individual signs for each person on the vigil line with a similar goal? Will you have a “Why We Vigil” case to distribute to spectators, the media, city officials, location authorities, etc.?

Finding and Visiting the Site:

1. The group should decide upon an appropriate site for the vigil. Make sure it's a site with sufficient traffic or passers-by.
2. The decision on the site should include discussions on the site's (1) symbolic value, (2) accessibility and (3) media appeal.
3. Notify the chief of police to let him/her know that you are planning a vigil for that site. Offer to meet at his/her convenience. (Sample letter follows).
4. Follow up with any permits and/or special permissions that may be required.
5. If the site is "off limits," choose another and follow the same steps; in no circumstances should you just "do it anyway;" however if the site is key to your action and it's worth risking an act of civil disobedience and arrest that requires extensive extra preparation (examples follow);
6. Make sure to coordinate with the police to properly "choreograph" the vigil. Be sure to make it clear to the police that you are NOT asking them to facilitate or even participate in what one of our critics called: “media driven street theater.”
7. You might be planning just such an action but the police must know that you are NOT asking them to assist or cooperate or participate in any way. You are notifying them only to allow them to prepare for maintaining public safety and whether you abide by the rules or not abide by them, your action will be NONVIOLENT from beginning to end.
8. After the site is chosen and permits obtained as necessary, brainstorm problems or challenges that the site may present.
9. Send a follow-up letter to the chief of police, thanking him/her for the meeting and promising to stay in touch if changes occur.
10. If the site chosen for the vigil is private (e.g., church) property and not public (e.g., park) property, follow the same steps to obtain appropriate permissions.

PLANNING A NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION (Part 2)



Choosing an action headquarters (operation center)

1. Locating a place for participants to meet before and after the vigil is optimal.
2. Welcoming churches or GLBT community centers may be willing to be "Soulforce central" before and after the event.
3. Make sure to obtain all appropriate permissions from the staff, including the permission to use the phone or other equipment or facilities.
4. Also make sure that the building is open at the proper times and that it is secured and in good shape when you leave.
5. Having participants meet together immediately before the action - and going to the site together - also is optimal. That way, last-minute changes can be communicated most easily and parking can be coordinated.

Being "upfront"

1. Let other municipal authorities as appropriate know of your plans. Call the mayor's office and offer to meet with mayoral staff.
2. Send a follow-up letter, thanking him/her for the meeting and promising to stay in touch if changes occur.

Recruiting participants

1. E-mail lists are probably the best way to recruit participants for a local action.
2. Also consider making a simple flyer announcing the vigil and posting it in the local GLBT bookstore or other GLBTQ-friendly establishments.
3. You may decide to ask potential participants to "register" their intent to participate so you can communicate with them regarding the plan as it develops.
4. Anytime you get together with potential participants, make sure to get their name, phone number and e-mail addresses.

Developing a theme

1. Create a theme that states your purpose clearly, succinctly without jargon (words or phrases outsiders might not understand)
2. If there are sister or similar organizations across the state or the nation asking for similar change you might consider using the common theme that has developed: "End the War on..." "Let the Dreamers Come Home," "Stop Spiritual Violence,"
3. Encourage participants to use the theme when describing the vigil to others, particularly the media; then, participants can provide examples from their own lives of what that theme means to them.

PLANNING A NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION (Part 3)



Promoting the Event

1. Choose a media coordinator for the vigil who will be responsible for drafting media releases and/or media alerts.
2. The media coordinator may act as the group's spokesperson, or he/she may find out the media's particular interest and locate an appropriate person for the media to interview.
3. Also, consider having a local person who is well-known be your media "hook" and/or your spokesperson.
4. A volunteers should be appointed well before the event to a.) collect all newspaper articles or other print mentions of your action; b.) to "tape" or download television media coverage; c.) to use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram (etc.) before, during and after the event to guarantee that your message reaches the largest possible audience well beyond the actual action site.

Developing "visuals"

1. Although the site your group has chosen may itself be symbolic, what else could the group show - or do - to dramatize its point?
2. If the group decides on a banner and/or hand-held signs, consider having them made at a "quick banner" company and then provide them to those on the vigil line; however handmade signs with personal messages can be just as powerful (or more) than signs made by professionals.
3. Make sure that the banner and signs are large enough with bold, readable lettering.
4. Having a large Soulforce banner (banner describing your organization with your logo and especially with your web address or contact information also can be effective.

Communicating at the vigil

1. It is helpful if the vigil coordinator and the media coordinator have cell phones at the vigil.
2. The vigil coordinator might have 2-3 capable, trustworthy individuals to be vigil "monitors" to can answer questions, make sure that participants know where to go, and the like.
3. Bring ribbons or special armbands for the vigil monitors to wear that distinguish them from a volunteer on the vigil line.
4. The vigil coordinator should have all necessary emergency phone numbers (e.g., the cell number of your police liaison, rescue squad, EMT (emergency medical technician) or ambulance, fire department, and the vigil director and perhaps the vigil squad leaders.

Following through after the vigil

1. Getting participants together after the can be a healthy way to end the event , to share stories, lessons learned. (This session may create more positive, personal change than the event itself.)
2. After the vigil, the vigil and/or media coordinator creates a brief summary and "thank you" e-mail (who, what, when, where and why) to all concerned.
3. A "scribe" should be appointed to write up the history of your event and keep a log on every event for your historical archive (or just to be reminded of what you've learned from the event). both good (do it again) or bad (don't do it again).

A CASE STUDY FOR TRAINING SQUAD LEADERS (Part 1)

How we trained squad leaders for a Souforce direct action in New Orleans



Recruiting and Training Squad leaders is a key element to a successful action.

SQUAD LEADER'S ROLE: We are asking you to shepherd a group of volunteers through the Souforce action in New Orleans: There will be a.) Vigils, b.) A funeral procession behind a New Orleans Jazz Band with a casket carrying true stories of GLBTQ Southern Baptists, and c.) The possibility of civil disobedience and arrest when delivering the casket to 12,000 national delegates inside the Superdome.

You and your squad will be scheduled to vigil together at various times to present our case against the homophobic rhetoric of the Southern Baptist Convention. During the funeral procession we will mourn and applaud together. Then some especially trained volunteers will attempt to enter the Superdome carrying the casket. You will be responsible for ensuring that your squad carries out the actions according to our NONVIOLENCE VOWS and other on-site directives in a safe and loving manner.

SQUAD FORMATION: Squads are a place for recruitment and retention for volunteers beyond a particular direct action. You will be meeting your squad during the first training. Please sit near the front of the room so you can easily stand and be seen when the squads are forming. Make sure you bring your squad number card with you. You will receive an arm band to wear that indicate you are a squad leader. Please wear these at all times.

At the first training our vigil director will give a brief explanation of our squads and their function. Then you will be asked to come to the front of the room. Please find a spot to stand that allows folks to see you and to gather around you. Each squad is numbered. Hold your bright squad number high so folks can see it. Make sure you are not too close to another squad so you have some room to gather.

WHEN YOU FORM YOUR SQUAD:

1. Introduce yourself to your squad and tell them a bit about yourself and your understanding of your role as a squad leader. Then invite the others to introduce themselves. As they speak check their names on your lists. Make sure that all those on your squad list are present. Have each person put his/her local phone number on each of the two copies of the squad list sheet. You will keep one copy and give the other to the vigil director. If more folks are added to your group we will both make the additions.

2. Be sure you have a copy of those phone numbers and that everyone knows where and when to meet for your next vigil/meeting time. Tell them how to find you easily. Give them your local cell number. If you do not have a cell phone, see if one of your group members has one and if you can borrow it or if they will be responsible to be the contact person for your group. Put that name and phone number on your squad list at the bottom. The one with the phone needs to be available and able to relay messages to squad members should plans change or the leadership team needs to contact you. At least one of the squad leaders needs to be easily accessible by cell phone.

A DIRECT ACTION TRAINING FOR SQUAD LEADERS (Part 2)



3. Make sure that all have the black armband for the funeral procession.
4. Ask squad members if they have decided to participate in the possible civil disobedience and arrest. Those who are **MUST** attend the civil disobedience training on legal and potential violence issues and be asked again if they are certain they can handle arrest and detention process.
5. All registrants will be required to fill out personal information cards in order to get a t-shirt. Make sure your squad members have this t-shirt and be sure to double check that they have filled out this card-it asks for medical information that you will need.
6. Before the action, those who are willing to be arrested must have a signed nonviolence pledge, \$100 cash, a written description of any medical needs and a picture ID with them at all the times.
7. Ask all squad members to print the on the back of their name badges: next-of-kin, relationship, contact number and any medical information that would be important in case of emergency.
8. Ask squad members to come to Action Central with sunscreen, hats, rain gear, layered clothing (for cold weather), Soulforce shirts, name badges, and any water or food they may need. Participants should eat and use the toilet before they arrive on the vigil or march locations. Tell folks to become as centered as possible before they arrive at any Soulforce activity.
9. You may want to arrange for other times to meet-to eat together, get to know each other better, etc. Please be aware that some folks may be coming to their first Soulforce event and may not know anyone else. Let's be sure to extend the hand of hospitality that will help them feel included and an important part of this important action. Please try to eat together at the Soulforce events.
10. Make sure that everyone knows to wear their Soulforce shirt to all the actions (in cold weather over their heavy shirts or jackets (that's why larger sized shirts are optional). Help them understand why it is so important to conduct themselves in a loving, non-violent, respectful way to all. We will not break any laws with the exception of the civil disobedience. This means we keep all traffic and pedestrian laws. You might give squad form into twos for a buddy system that helps keep safe from potential violence.
11. Ask if there are questions about anything they have heard so far. Answer the questions or ask for assistance from any of the leadership team. Give folks suggestions about what to think about or focus on during the vigil. Remind everyone that things can change any time and often do quite unexpectedly.

A CHECK LIST FOR ACTION DAY (Part 1)



1. CONVENE GROUP: Make sure that you are on time or early and you are located where your group can find you. You will be given a large card with the number of your group to hold so people can find you.

2. LIST OF NAMES AND INFORMATION CARDS: Find all the members of your group and make sure that they are on your squad list. Add any new people to the list and/or note ones who do not show up. Make sure you have a copy of the personal information card from everyone. Also be sure that the new member puts the necessary information on the back of their name badge. We are planning for groups of 10-15. More may join you as we reconfigure for new arrivals, so be sure that you have everyone's name and cards as you move toward arrest. If anyone comes wanting to join the vigil and they do not have a Soulforce shirt-it is up to you to decide. Whatever you decide you must have extra nonviolence pledge cards to have newcomers sign and carry. Some locals may want join your vigil. That's your call.

3. CHECK-IN WITH EVERYONE: Make sure that each squad member seems physically, emotionally and spiritually ready to participate. Review the requirements for arrest: 18 or over, sign pledge, valid id, ability to pay fine, no limiting medical issues, name on list, etc. Check to see if all have what they need for the weather. Make sure that everyone has the local emergency number given to you in the training.

4. DO SOME FORM OF CENTERING EXERCISE ACTIVITY: Pray, meditate, sing, talk with each other as appropriate until the action/vigil begins. If folks appear afraid or angry, be sure to check in with them.

5. MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE KNOWS WE ARE ENGAGING IN A NONVIOLENT ACT OF VOLUNTARY REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING. Invite them to prayerfully offer any discomfort, fear, inconvenience, pain, and anger to the Spirit as an antidote to the suffering and persecution our sisters and brothers are facing. If it is helpful ask them to offer this in the name of a particular person.

6. REMIND EVERYONE HOW QUICKLY THINGS CAN CHANGE: You will be the liaison with the Soulforce leadership team and will direct your squad members in responding to those sudden changes. You will be told before the event of the changes that have already been called for.

A CHECK LIST FOR ACTION DAY (Part 2)

7. BE ATTENTIVE TO THE INDIVIDUALS IN YOUR GROUP THROUGHOUT THE ARREST AND DETENTION.

Group prayers, singing, processing feelings/thoughts are often helpful. Sometimes just the slightest touch helps to center someone who is having difficulty. Make sure that you ask "Are you OK?" and if not, be sure you ask if it's OK before you touch or hug them.

8. TRY TO KEEP TRACK OF INDIVIDUAL SQUAD MEMBERS THROUGHOUT THE ACTION:

Know which individuals are willing to face arrest. Write down their names if/when arrested. If you join the civil disobedience be sure a responsible, respected member of the squad takes your place as leader. See that they have a copy of the list of names and numbers. Be sure they underline or circle the name of anyone arrested. DO NOT LET A MEMBER OF YOUR SQUAD GET LOST OUT THERE. Some squad members will want to meet at the place where the arrested have been taken. A vigil leader will notify you or your stand in what happens next.

9. AFTER THE ARREST you or your stand-in squad leader should check the list of names against those being released until all are accounted for. Those not arrested will reconvene after the arrest for processing and closure. You or your stand-in must be certain that every squad member is present (or if not present accounted for) at that final meeting. If you or your stand-in is not available for the time and place those arrested will be released, BE CERTAIN the names and numbers of those arrested from your squad are in the hands of the vigil leader who is waiting at the jail or processing center.

10. ABOVE ALL STAY CALM. Your spirit is contagious. Your squad members will feel calm and certain if you are calm and certain. Your squad members will panic if you even come close to panicking yourself. Remind yourself and them that to participate in an act of relentless nonviolent resistance is for their benefit first. If their lives are not inspired by the action, something is going/has gone wrong. But second they are also there to help cut off the suffering of others and that we were born to do justice and that in doing it we should discover a "soul force" within ourselves that we may not have known.



**BLESSINGS!
NAMASTE!**

(May the Spirit in you meet the Spirit in us all.)



Using the Media Wisely (Remember they use you to make a profit. Take charge!)

by Laura Montgomery Rutt, A Former Soulforce Media Coordinator

Be Prepared: If you are willing to talk to reporters think ahead. Plan what carefully exactly what you want to say. Then jot down and memorize your message, the point or points you want to make. Don't let the media distract you from your message.

Be Mindful: You are not required to answer the question that was asked. ("I think more to the point is the fact that... **<Stay on message>**.") Reporters sometimes don't know the right questions to ask, help them out. Or if they know it but hesitate to ask, ask it yourself rhetorically. ("You probably would like to ask me...")

Be Yourself: Short personal stories are powerful. (But think of them ahead of time).

Be Proactive: Do not allow reporters to frame the issue and put you on the defensive.

Be Positive: Don't repeat negative phrases or let reporters' questions draw you off message. If the reporter accuses or criticizes you, stay positive and on message.

Be Respectful: Do not assume the reporter is friendly to our cause, but treat reporters with respect and congeniality. They are the ones that get our message out. Never lose your temper or say things you'll regret. If you feel tricked end the interview!

Be Cautious: Never speak "off the record." If you think you are, you really aren't.

Be Brief: Keep repeating your answer BRIEFLY whatever question might be asked. Stay on message. Don't be cute or clever. Don't let the reporter mislead you with a joke or a personal reference. Get back to one of the message points in every answer.

Be Quiet: Once you have made your point, stop talking. If you ramble on you may open the door to being misquoted or taken out of context. And be sure your mike is off.

Be Smart: A good reporter will always ask, "Is there anything you want to add?" The only wrong answer to this question is "NO." If you have nothing new to say, reiterate your message points, If you've forgotten one of your message points, state it now.

Be Happy: After the interview, you will think of things you didn't say or should have said differently. We learn from our mistakes.



GUIDELINES FOR A NONVIOLENT MARCH (Part 1)

Extrapolated directly from the writings of Gandhi and King



1963 The March from Selma to Montgomery (Perhaps the most famous protest march in U.S. history)

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1. A march has a specific, narrowly-focused, clearly-stated goal.
2. A march is not an end in itself but one tactic in a total strategy to reach a specific goal.
3. A march is only called for after negotiations have broken down with an adversary and then only to compel the adversary back to negotiations.
4. A march is costly to volunteers and the organizations they represent (in time, money, and energy). That cost must be honestly and openly considered before the march is called.
5. A march is timed for maximum effect.
6. A march must require risk, courage, and stamina for the marcher (to demonstrate the marcher's total commitment and genuine concern).
7. A march is a serious-minded attempt to persuade the adversary that your request is just. A march based on the principles of nonviolence as described by Gandhi and King is not a parade, a party, or a celebration that may confuse the adversary or even give the adversary more reason to hate or fear the marchers.
8. A marcher must be carefully trained in the goal(s) of the march and sign a pledge to maintain standards of behavior and dress that will convince the adversary that the marcher is determined and sincere.
9. A march is not called to support a candidate, party, or issue which may divide the marchers but a specific goal or purpose upon which the marchers are united.
10. A march must focus the print and electronic media on the specific, clearly-stated, narrowly-focused goal before, during, and after the march to avoid any confusion as to why the march has been called.

GUIDELINES FOR A NONVIOLENT MARCH (Part 2)



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Gandhi's "March to the Sea to Make Salt"

11. A march must be directed by carefully trained monitors and before the march all marchers must agree to obey those monitor's commands.
12. A march must not seek to embarrass, coerce or terrorize the adversary, but quietly, calmly, and courageously convince the adversary that the marcher's goal is just.
13. A marcher must understand the principles of nonviolence and pledge to refrain from violence of fist, tongue or heart during the march.
14. Gandhi says a marcher "must be a person of faith." King says a marcher "must meditate daily on the life and teachings of Jesus." Soulforce says "Wherever you are on your journey of faith you are welcome to march with us but only if you are willing to sign and abide by our Nonviolence Vow."

NOTE: Remember that neither Gandhi nor King required sectarian allegiance to any one statement of faith or religious practice. It is well know that thousands marched with Gandhi, King and with Soulforce who did not consider themselves "people of faith" or were "recovering" from bad faith experiences.

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING A NONVIOLENT VIGIL



What is a Vigil?

A vigil is a "devotional watching" or "maintaining a state of spiritual wakefulness" in anticipation of positive change or things to come. Vigils have historically been associated with people of faith and religion. Originally and to this day they occur on the eve of a church feast and often involve fasting. Over time, however, vigils have also come to be viewed and used as outward symbols and demonstrations of people's faith and hope surrounding various situations.

Why Do We Vigil?

We vigil primarily for our own spiritual renewal and for the hopeful transformation of society. We vigil in faithful anticipation that hearts and minds, especially those of our adversary, will be changed by our personal truth and witness. We participate in this humble process of voluntary redemptive suffering as yet -another way of demonstrating the power and presence of God in our lives and to renew our resolve in following God's call for love, justice and mercy.

When Do We Vigil?

We vigil individually and/or collectively when the power of our inner "soul ... force" spirit calls us. It is always prudent to initiate a vigil only after careful mental, physical and spiritual and preparation. Additionally, Soulforce may elect to incorporate a vigil into a pre-planned direct action as an educational and informational venue and/or to serve as a means of opening (or re-opening) dialog and negotiations with an adversary.

Types of Soulforce Vigils

There are many types of vigils. Soulforce primarily uses two types: Silent vigils and teaching Vigils. A "silent vigil" is prayerful, without engaging in conversation with each other, passers-by or the media. In a "teaching vigil," vigilers are interactive and communicate with the public and media, distributing leaflets or other educational materials. Soulforce occasionally incorporates both types during the same direct action.

When a vigil is part of a Soulforce direct action we vigil only as a team under the careful guidelines and directives set forth by the leadership team or designated person(s). To do otherwise could not only jeopardize the safety of self and others but also undermine and be counter-productive to the overall success of the direct action and its goals.

A CHECK LIST FOR THOSE WHO VIGIL



We Vigil:

- 1...under the direction and manner set forth by the leadership team or designated leader.
- 2...with a carefully thought out and well defined plan and purpose.
- 3...with a carefully constructed printed case for “Why We Vigil” for media, police, spectators.
- 4...after preparing ourselves spiritually, mentally and physically.
- 5...in a spirit of love and nonviolence, seeking reconciliation, not victory.
- 6...when those who vigil have signed a vow to avoid violence of heart, tongue and fist.
- 7...when those who vigil have promised to be respectful/observing the rules of common courtesy and mutual respect for friend and foe alike.
- 8...when those who vigil have promised to care for the safety and wellbeing of ourselves and others, including our adversary.
- 9...with means and methods that are as pure and honorable as the goals we seek to achieve.



GANDHI ON FASTING*

AS AN ACT OF RELENTLESS NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE



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FASTING: The ultimate and the most potent weapon in the armory of soul force for resisting injustice and converting the evil doer. When dealing with an adversary who has closed the door to serious negotiations, fasting is a powerful appeal to the wrong-doer's better nature with the ultimate object of evoking the best in him.

PERSONAL FAST: Fasting for health, as penance or purification for fuller self-expression, for the attainment of spirit's supremacy over the flesh. Fasting that refers to one's own mistakes and failings and is a great discipline and a most powerful factor in one's evolution.

CIVIL RIGHTS FAST: Fasting as a means of resisting injustice and converting the evil-doer.' As such it is 'the highest expression of the prayer of a pure and loving heart. It is an appeal to the wrong-doer's better nature with the object of evoking the best in him.

FASTING AND ITS INFLUENCE: The mass mind is influenced not through speeches and writings but only by suffering. The only language the masses understand is the language of the heart; and fasting, when utterly unselfish, is the language of the heart.'

FASTING AND ITS LIMITS: The fast must be suffering that is self-inflicted, of strictly limited application and NOT a hunger-strike (a fast undertaken without previous preparation and adequate thought, making demands that force the opponent to comply).

WARNING: This weapon (fasting) cannot be lightly wielded. It can be resorted to on rare occasions and by one skilled in the art or under expert guidance. It undertaken without previous preparation and adequate thought it is not a soul force fast but a hunger strike.

Gandhi is fully aware of the risks involved in fasting as a method of soul force. This is why he insists on its being very sparingly used and only by those or under the direction of those who have mastered the science of satyagraha (soul force) and acquired the necessary disciplines.

A fast cannot be undertaken against one's opponent but to move the hearts of allies.

QUALIFICATIONS: The person fasting must possess spiritual fitness and a clear vision (and be known by the people as such a person.) A nonviolent fast further requires: infinite patience, firm resolve, single-mindedness of purpose, perfect calm are required for a nonviolent fast. A fast becomes violent when lack of faith, anger, impatience, and selfishness are present.

In addition to truth and non-violence a living faith in God is indispensable for a nonviolent fast. The nonviolent faster should have the confidence that God will grant him/her the necessary strength and that, if these is the slightest impurity in the fast, he will not hesitate to renounce it at once.'

Each of these Gandhi quotes on fasting were collected by Gopinath Dhawan in his "The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi." There various sources can be found on p.55.

GUIDELINES FOR A CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND POSSIBLE ARREST (Part 1)



BASIC REQUIREMENTS

BASIC REQUIREMENTS: If you are willing to be arrested in a Soulforce Action you must...

- ...Be 18 years of age or older
- ...Be a U.S. citizen
- ...Have no outstanding arrest warrants and not be on probation.
- ...Agree to follow the directions given to you by your squad leader.
- ...Sign, wear, and uphold the Soulforce "pledge to nonviolence" adapted from Dr. King, 1963
- ...Be able to keep your cool and remain silent even when people openly project hatred at you.
- ...Carry a photo and license or official ID.

THE POSSIBILITY OF ARREST IN NEW ORLEANS: We've described our direct action in New Orleans (the march, the vigil and the possible civil disobedience at the Superdome) based on our current plans and our past discussions with the police. However actions can sometimes change at the last moment due to a variety of reasons not possible to anticipate during the action planning. However, barring unexpected developments this is what we expect to happen.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH: No infants, children or youth under 18 may accompany you if there is even the smallest risk of violent confrontation or arrest. If arrested, police are required to take a child or youth under 18 to a local social services office. You may have legal difficulties regaining custody.

ARRESTEES AND THEIR SQUAD: All arrestees must attend the special civil disobedience training. After completing the training, you will be assigned to a civil disobedience squad leader. We will have extra squad leaders ready to train last minute volunteers on site. But these last minute volunteers will be questioned in detail by the leadership team to see if they are qualified to face possible arrest.

SQUAD ARRESTS: The squads whose members have been specially trained in civil disobedience and arrest will walk together to the police line. They will cross the line one squad at a time as directed by their squad leader. Police will arrest one squad at a time and arrestees will be taken to a mass arrest processing locale.

INTERACTING WITH POLICE: Show respect to the police at all times. Our complaint is not with the police. It is with the untruths of our adversaries. We have come to do a nonviolent action and the police are here to help us complete it safely. Our behavior toward the police is one of many opportunities that Soulforce has to witness to our cause and to earn the respect of those around us.

RESPONDING TO ARREST: Do not go limp. Do not resist. Any resistance is in violation of your Soulforce vows. It will reflect very badly on Soulforce and could result in your being charged with a serious crime.

GUIDELINES FOR A CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND POSSIBLE ARREST (Part 2)



COUNTER DEMONSTRATORS AND THE MEDIA: Counter demonstrators range from the silent to the openly hostile. If you anger easily, you should not join the Soulforce Action. This policy is both for your protection as well as that of Soulforce. Hostile demonstrators (e.g. Fred Phelps family) seek media coverage. Don't respond. It's exactly what they want.

IGNORE THE HOSTILES: If you engage in any way by arguing or by yelling back insults of your own, or demonstrating your anger in any way, you will have lowered yourself and Soulforce to their level. The encounter will end up on the evening news. We can send a very powerful, positive message to the press and to the public if we ignore the hostiles and move forward with our nonviolent action peacefully.

NOT IGNORING THE HOSTILES MAY HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES: Enforcement officers are watchful for the possibility of a major disturbance caused by the interaction of Soulforce with the hostiles. If a physical disturbance begins for any reason, regardless of "who started it", the police have warned us that they will press much more serious charges against everyone involved. It is therefore very important, as at all Soulforce actions, to keep your vow to avoid violence of the heart, tongue, fist. If your squad leader decides that the action needs to end, follow the squad leader's orders without question.

CHANGING OR ABORTING AN ACTION: Any changes to Action logistics will be relayed to squad leaders by one of the leadership team. Each squad leader will have a two-way radio to facilitate communication between the senior leaders and the squad leaders. Although we don't presently expect any counterdemonstrators who are openly violent, if the police see any potential for violence or a similar disturbance they will ask us to abort the action for our own safety. The leader will make the final decision to abort (or not to abort) the action. The squad leaders will be informed and will in turn inform your squad. We don't expect this to happen but we want you to know in advance the possibility exists.

OPTING OUT OF A SOULFORCE ACTION WITHOUT SHAME: If you feel uncomfortable with the action (or with your participation in it) you *always* have the option to walk away. If you cannot in good conscience follow your squad leader's directions, walk away. If you feel that your squad leader is asking you to put your personal safety in danger, walk away. Soulforce is *not an authoritarian organization* that demands unquestioning obedience. Use your common sense about your safety and the safety of others. However, please do not argue with your squad leader or start a debate on *appropriate action tactics*. Either follow your squad leader's advice or walk away feeling no shame or failure.

WARNING: Once arrested there is no longer a choice to opt out, because you will be in police custody.

CIVIL AUTHORITIES: We have described our action in advance to the Washington D.C. Court under whose jurisdiction the arrests will take place. The Court has not yet decided the charge in advance. If the demonstration proceeds peacefully our expectation and theirs is that the charge will be a low-level misdemeanor with a fine of approximately \$100 and no jail sentence.

SERIOUS QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE MAKING YOUR DECISION TO RISK (OR NOT RISK) ARREST.

It is best to advise your Legal Chair - in advance -- of any of these situations.



- 1) Those with outstanding arrest warrants:** People with outstanding arrest warrants will be treated differently. They may be held for a long period and returned to the arresting jurisdiction. People with outstanding arrest warrants should NOT participate in the arrest portion of the action.
- 2) Trans*:** Typically, trans* folk are processed and jailed according to the gender stated on their ID. A person whose valid ID is not the same gender as their appearance often faces special challenges. The jail might require a change into jail clothing (including loss of wigs and/or under garments).
- 3) People taking medications:** There are potential problems for people taking medication! **IT HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT YOU NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ARREST UNLESS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT YOUR MEDICATIONS FOR UP TO 20 HOURS.** Any prescription medications you will need should be left in its original container with clearly marked pharmacy label displaying your name, contents, doctor's name and dosage instructions. It is recommended that you notify your squad leader, who will tell our Soulforce legal chair. Letter from your doctor could be very helpful.
- 4) Infectious Disease Status (HIV, TB, etc.):** If you inform the authorities that you have an infectious disease such as tuberculosis or an active HIV-related infection, you are likely to be separated from the others. Be certain the Soulforce attorney is aware of your health status.
- 5) People with Disabilities:** Physically disabled persons may not be arrested at all, and are not usually placed in a cell with others who are arrested. Sometimes special accommodations are made but don't count on it.
- 6) Stop Drinking Coffee** a week or so before your possible arrest. To suffer the first stage of caffeine withdrawal in jail is a very painful experience. Nicotine withdrawal can also be a problem.
- 7) About toilets.** Know where they are. Use them if possible before arrest. Another opportunity might not present itself for hours.
- 8) Do not bring valuables:** Bring only a picture ID, \$100 cash, your name badge with your medical and contact information tucked neatly into the back of the plastic holder. Don't wear rings, watches, necklaces, or other jewelry. Wear comfortable but not showy or risqué underwear. Just before arrest hand extra items like sunscreen, hats, layered clothing, copies of your case, maps to your squad leader.
- 9) Be prepared for long hot waits in direct sunlight** (Apply sunscreen before the action).
- 10). Be prepared for long cold waits on the line or in jail.** (Wear layered clothing.)

GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO SUDDEN UNEXPECTED VIOLENCE



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1. Most physical violence is preceded by or coincides with verbal violence. It is imperative that you prepare yourself to encounter both. And always refrain from responding violently (with fist, tongue or heart) to any and all violence.
2. In your voluntary redemptive suffering, your goal is to change hearts and minds through your non-violent response to your adversary's violence - both verbal and physical.
3. When we take a voluntary stand against injustice, we don't know how our adversaries will react. However they respond, we take on the suffering without complaint or retaliation and our adversaries will see our courage and witness our commitment.
4. Your non-violent response requires a "zero" reaction to the violence. Do not engage your adversary verbally or physically. Instead, focus mentally, spiritually and physically on the redemptive purpose of your suffering.
5. To help calm yourself focus on a specific point. Maintain a calm facial expression. Silently repeat words: ("love my enemies" or just "love.") You also may choose to pray or meditate silently.
6. If the violence ever becomes physical, it is crucial that you make no attempt to stop the attacker(s). (There is no redemption in forcibly stopping violence in this situation. It is our role to suffer on this small scale in order to demonstrate the greater suffering in our cause.)
7. HOWEVER you should immediately take measures to "shield" the vital areas of your body. Use your hands and forearms to protect your face. Bend your elbows and drop your arms to protect your ribs. If you fall or are knocked to the ground, stay there! DO NOT ATTEMPT TO GET UP! Instead, roll to your back and continue to use your arms as shields. Lying in a "fetal position" on your side leaves your spine vulnerable to serious injury.
8. When physical violence is directed toward another person in your group, you may choose to shield that person using your own body, absorbing his/her suffering yourself. Again, make no attempt to stop the attacker(s). Position your body between the victim and the attacker(s). Or stand and face the attacker(s) shielding yourself as described. Or face the victim and wrap your arms around him/her in a protective manner.
9. When two or more of you choose to shield one or more victims, it is effective to surround the victim(s) in a "huddle" arrangement, locking arms at waist level in order to better protect your own ribs. (Or surround the victim(s) facing the attacker(s).)
10. When the violence stops, seek medical attention if necessary. Notify the action leader. Do whatever you need to do in order to renew your spirit and heal physically. Remember that your suffering has real purpose and is changing hearts and

AVOIDING ARREST!



We are not protesting in order to be arrested. We are protesting injustice and if we are arrested we will follow procedures to avoid any violence of heart, tongue or fist towards our adversary or the police who arrest us.

Ecumenical Issues

- The stand that we are taking is in protest to ecumenical, not legal, systems.
- However, our actions will cause a real legal reaction if we proceed through all the steps of the Civil Disobedience.

Being Prepared

- We can have quite an impact on what happens to us while we are standing in support, being arrested or detained, being processed, in jail, or in court -- if we are prepared.

Maintain Solidarity

- Solidarity is, in reality, is a state of mind that unites us. It is our commitment to one another, to our common cause, and to our Pledge of Non-Violence. It is our dedication to support one another and to pursue our common goals at all times, in every situation, and to the best of our ability.
- In order to maintain our spirits and effectiveness, we must develop an ability to deal with the legal system while trusting in the solidarity of others in the group.
- In a large demonstration, we could get separated from each other, possibly isolating individuals. Make a sincere effort to stay in pairs and with your squad.

Non-violence Is essential

- Our approach to the legal system is up to each of us. But the Soulforce pledge is to be cooperative, respectful and orderly.
- Our attitude and demeanor can be as important a part of our nonviolent civil disobedience as anything else.
- We must maintain the nonviolent attitude of honesty and directness for which Soulforce is noted while dealing with observers, law enforcement officers, the courts and others.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN WHEN YOU ARE ARRESTED? (Part 1)



The Legal Process, generally

- The legal system's terms and mystique may create an impression of complexity and unapproachability. But with study and thought the legal process can be less intimidating.
- When we understand the steps, the choices, and the effects of those choices, then we can make decisions about the things in which we participate and what we want to avoid.
- There are many possible levels of commitment.
- We must individually choose our involvement according to our own situation. Every task is important.

1st step: Warning *The Nonviolence pledge you signed requires you to cooperate.*

1. Immediately prior to arrest the police will give a warning to the group of demonstrators.
2. They will say which law(s) is (are) being broken and will say that anyone remaining will be arrested.
3. Typical charges may include: disorderly conduct, trespassing, resisting arrest, and obstruction.
4. This is your final moment to make a choice about arrest: to stay and be arrested or to leave.
5. Each individual may be warned after the group has been warned (or not). If you've changed your mind, this is your last chance to avoid arrest.
6. Once arrested you have no more choices.

2nd step: Arrest

1. An officer will officially place you under arrest by saying something like: "You are now under arrest. Please proceed to" Each individual may be warned individually after the group has been warned.
2. He or she will then direct you to the holding area.

You are now under arrest and must stay. The Soulforce pledge requires that we cooperate.

3rd step: Holding

1. A temporary location may be set up by the police to hold your group. It may be in an informal area, or on a transport bus.
2. Don't be confused by the apparent informality. You are under arrest and must do exactly as you are told.
3. You are not free to leave the holding location or to interact with others outside the holding area.
4. You will often be handcuffed.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN WHEN YOU ARE ARRESTED? (Part 2)



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4th step: Transport

1. Often those who are arrested will be taken to transportation vehicles.
2. Sometime you are asked to walk a short distance as a group to the police processing area.
3. Resistance of any kind during these steps is symbolic at best and will cost you more than you want to pay.

5th step: Processing and Booking

1. Most people who are arrested are placed in a holding area or asked to remain on a transport bus waiting to be booked.
2. Don't expect meals, drinks, phone calls, or bathrooms. Sometimes there are pay phones, so you may want to bring quarters, or your phone card #, and a contact phone #.
3. Typically you will be photographed, fingerprinted, asked to empty pockets and turn over property, and asked for info.
4. You are only required to give name, address, and 10. Usually Social Security number is requested. It is essential to bring a current, government issued 10 for identification.

6th step: Action on your Case

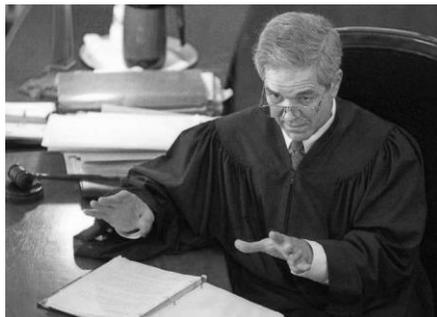
1. The case may be resolved soon after processing. Or you may be released after being given a summons or ticket with the charges and court date for later resolution of the case.
2. Or you may need to be arraigned. If you wait in jail it will usually take 24-48 hours after being charged. Or you can post bond to get out of jail more quickly but you may be required to return for arraignment several weeks even months later.

Choice: To wait, or to post bond and get out of jail more rapidly.

Further Explanation of Arraignment

3. Appear before a judge and answer to the charges. Within 24-48 hours after arrest a defendant who remains in custody will be brought into court for an arraignment. If you post bond, you may be required to return for arraignment several weeks later. At arraignment the defendant is read his/her rights and is informed of the charges.
4. At arraignment, each person (now called a defendant) will be asked how s/he pleads to the charges. You can make one of several pleas, as shown below: You can request that charges be dropped, or dismissed.
5. Note: You don't need a lawyer for this and can represent yourself. But it is generally helpful to have counsel of your own choosing to guide you through the process. Soulforce will have a legal representative available for the group. That person will have negotiated, in advance, about possible charges. There should be few, if any, surprises.

PLEAS IN THE COURT AND WHAT THEY MEAN



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GUILTY:

1. By entering a "guilty" plea a defendant makes an admission that there are factual bases for the charges and waives the right to contest the charges, obtain a trial, or appeal the decision.
2. By pleading guilty you are saying, "Yes I committed the act of which you accuse me. I don't deny it. I am guilty as charged." Mahatma Ghandi was a civil disobedient who always pled guilty in court as a matter of principle.
3. The judge will take the plea, sentence the defendant and impose the penalty. This is typically what Soulforce negotiates for the civil disobedience action.

NOLO CONTENDERE OR NO CONTEST

1. By entering a plea of No Contest a defendant waives the right to contest or challenge the charges. Like a guilty plea, it waives the right to a trial or appeal. However is not an admission of guilt.
2. The judge reviews the complaint and makes a determination of guilt. If found guilty, the judge will sentence the defendant.
3. Some people feel that this plea is a compromise between pleading guilty and not guilty.

NOT GUILTY

1. By entering a plea of not guilty a defendant is entitled to a trial and must be convicted, or change to a guilty plea, before s/he can be sentenced.
2. A "not guilty" plea can have two basic grounds. First, it may mean that you claim you did not commit the act alleged in the summons and complaint. Or, it may be based on a legal defense.
3. The burden of showing guilt lies with the state; you are presumed innocent unless the state can prove your guilt. In rare cases a defendant may be acquitted (found not guilty) during the trial.
4. Sometimes the charges will be dismissed.

GUIDELINES FOR A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH



DEFINITIONS: A Civil Rights March is not a celebration but a nonviolent direct action against a specific injustice demanding a very specific response from the adversary. These guidelines are from Gandhi.

1. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH has a specific, narrowly-focused, clearly-stated goal.
2. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH is not an end in itself but one tactic in a total strategy to reach a specific goal.
3. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH is only called for after negotiations have broken down with an adversary and then only to compel the adversary back to negotiations.
4. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH is costly (in time, money, and energy) to volunteers and the organizations they represent and that cost must be honestly and openly considered before the march is called.
5. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH is timed for maximum effect.
6. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH must require risk, courage, and stamina for the marcher (to demonstrate the marcher's total commitment and genuine concern).
7. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH is a serious-minded attempt to persuade the adversary that the request is just. A march is not a parade, party, or celebration that may confuse the adversary or even give the adversary more reason to hate or fear the marchers.
8. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCHER must be carefully trained in the goal of the march & sign a pledge to maintain standards of behavior & dress during the march that will convince the adversary that the marcher is determined & sincere.
9. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH is not called to support a candidate, party, or issue which may divide the marchers, but a specific goal or purpose upon which the marchers are united.
10. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH must focus the print and electronic media on the specific, clearly-stated, narrowly-focused goal before, during, and after the march to avoid any confusion about the goal.
11. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH must be directed by carefully trained monitors and before the march all marchers must agree to obey those monitor's commands.
12. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH must not seek to embarrass, coerce or terrorize the adversary, but quietly, calmly, and courageously convince the adversary that the marcher's goal is just.
13. A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCHER must understand the principles of nonviolence and pledge to refrain from violence of fist, tongue, or heart during the march.
14. A marcher must be a person of faith. NOTE: Neither Gandhi nor King required sectarian allegiance to anyone statement of faith or religious practice, but both men stated clearly that a truly nonviolent march cannot be carried out by marchers without some faith commitment. Do you agree?

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON THE 99%



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PRESIDENT OBAMA ON THE SUFFERING OF THE 99%

(December 4, 2013)^{xc}

"People's frustrations are rooted in the nagging sense that no matter how hard they work, the deck is stacked against them.

*Taxes have been slashed for the wealthiest.
The economy has become profoundly unequal and families more insecure.*

Since 1979, our productivity is up by more than 90 percent, but the income of a typical family has increased by less than eight percent.

Since 1979, our economy has more than doubled in size, but most of that growth has flowed to a fortunate few.

The top 10 percent no longer takes in one-third of our income -- it now takes half.

*In the past, the average CEO made about 20 to 30 times the income of the average worker.
Today's CEO now makes 273 times more.*

A family in the top 1 percent has a net worth 288 times higher than the typical (99%) family.

*A child born in the top 20 percent has about a 2-in-3 chance of staying at or near the top.
A child born into the bottom 20 percent has a less than 1-in-20 shot at making it to the top.*

Our levels of income inequality rank near countries like Jamaica and Argentina.

It is harder for a child born in America to improve her station in life than it is for children in most of our wealthy allies -- like Canada or Germany or France.

The combined trends of increased inequality and decreasing mobility pose a fundamental threat to the American Dream, our way of life, and what we stand for around the globe.

*And it is not simply a moral claim that I'm making here.
There are practical consequences to rising inequality and reduced mobility."*

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON THE 99%

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON IMMIGRATION REFORM (Part 1)



The Berlin Wall



The Mexican American Wall

THE SUFFERING

IN 27 YEARS, 245 PEOPLE DIED TRYING TO CROSS THE BERLIN WALL.^{xciv}

IN 15 YEARS, 5,500 PEOPLE HAVE DIED TRYING TO CROSS THE MEXICAN AMERICAN WALL.^{xcv} *

*AND HUNDREDS OF TIMES A YEAR NEW BODIES ARE DISCOVERED IN THE DESERT VICTIMS OF HEAT EXHAUSTION, DEHYDRATION, STARVATION OR MURDER.

WHY DO THEY COME? The Statue of Liberty describes the plight of the undocumented. *"Give me your tired, your poor; your huddled masses yearning to breathe free; the wretched refuse of your teeming shore; send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

HOW MANY HAVE COME? An estimated 11,000,000 undocumented immigrants live in the U.S. (down from 12.5 million in 2007). By 2008, there were 8.3 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. workforce. Currently they are 3.5 percent of the U.S. population and 5.4 percent of the workforce.

THE FAMILIES: "Approximately 5.5 million children of immigrants live in the U.S. including 4.5 million U.S. born citizens living in mixed-legal status families with at least one parent who is an unauthorized immigrant. **U.S. POLICY RISKS A CHILD'S SEPARATION FROM PARENTS OR A PARENT.**

THE CHILDREN: "In 2011 approximately 5,100 American children with a detained or deported parents end up in the public child welfare system. If deportations continue at these levels in five years an additional 15,000 children in the child welfare system could be at risk of permanent separation from their detained or deported parent."^{xcvi} **U.S. POLICY CAUSES CHILDREN TO SUFFER.**

THE DRAGNET: "In recent years, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has detained and deported record numbers of people from the United States. In fiscal year 2011, ICE deported nearly 400,000 people. Many of them were long-time residents with no serious criminal history, and one out of every five was the parent of a U.S. citizen child."^{xcvii} **U.S. POLICY CAUSES PARENTS TO SUFFER.**

LOCK 'EM UP: "The 'lock'em up' approach is contrary to common sense and our American values...Our detention system locks up hundreds of thousands of immigrants unnecessarily every year, exposing detainees to brutal and inhumane conditions of confinement at massive costs to American taxpayers. This lock-up system is a massive waste of taxpayer dollars, costing \$2 billion a year."^{xcviii} Being detained means not just facing a loss of liberty, separation from their families and the prospect of deportation. It means being vulnerable to the myriad abuses that the system has been found to be rife with including rape and unconstitutional levels of medical and mental health care that have left people fighting for their lives."^{xcix} **U.S. POLICY CAUSES THE UNDOCUMENTED TO SUFFER.** (Continue next page.)

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON IMMIGRATION REFORM (Part 2)

THE MYTHS EXTREMISTS USE TO WAGE WAR AGAINST IMMIGRATION REFORM

1. **"Anchor Babies" keep their parents in the United States.** Over 108,000 parents of U.S.-born children have been deported over the last decade.
2. **Anyone who illegally enters the U.S. is a criminal.** As the laws are currently written, illegal entry into the United States does not make one a "criminal".
3. **Illegal immigrants don't pay taxes but still get benefits including free education for their children.** The undocumented pay taxes including \$6 to \$7 billion in SS taxes for benefits they may never get.
4. **There are more illegal immigrants here now than ever before.** In 1900, the foreign-born constituted nearly 20% of the population. Today, about 12% of the population is foreign-born.
5. **Illegal immigrants bring crime.** Violent crime across the nation has declined by 34% and property crime by 26%. The foreign-born are imprisoned at a much lower rate than native-born Americans.
6. **Immigrants take good jobs from Americans.** Between 2000 and 2005, the supply of low-skilled American-born workers slipped by 1.8 million. Unskilled workers are needed.
7. **Today's immigrants don't want to blend in and become "Americanized" and refuse to learn English.** In 2010, 500,000 became naturalized citizens. They had to get here, find work, overcome language barriers, pay naturalization fees, deal with immigration bureaucracy, and take a written citizenship test. This is not the behavior of people who take becoming American lightly.
8. **There's a way to enter the country legally for anyone who wants to get in line.** There is no "line" for poor people with few skills to gain permanent U.S. residency. Under current policy, many of our own ancestors who arrived between 1790 and 1924 would not be allowed in today.^c

EXTREMIST LAWMAKERS WAGE WAR AGAINST IMMIGRATION REFORM

The extremist lawmakers have defeated every attempt Congress has made toward immigration reform. **(2013) S.744 "The Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013"** Written by a bipartisan group of 8 senators to cover every aspect of the immigration process from border and enforcement issues to legal immigration reforms. **EXTREMISTS BLOCKED PASSAGE.**

(2001 – 2012) The Dream Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Provides conditional residency to certain undocumented immigrants of good moral character who graduate from U.S. high schools, arrived in the United States as minors, and lived in the country continuously for five years prior to the bill's enactment. **FOR 12 YEARS EXTREMIST LAWMAKERS HAVE BLOCKED PASSAGE.**

REPUBLICANS BLOCK IMMIGRATION REFORM FOR POLITICAL REASONS ONLY!

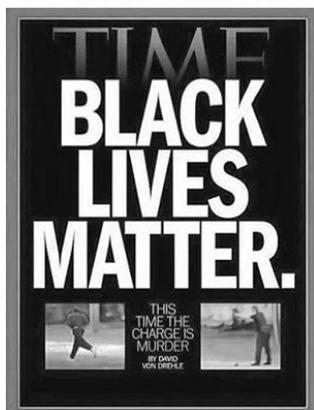
COULTER: Calls a path to citizenship the "browning of America...Democrats want more illegal immigrants, because they need brand new voters, warm bodies, another 30 million voters."^{ci}

CRUZ: Considering immigration reform now would diminish the "incredible opportunity to retake the Senate in 2014...Immigration reform is the number one thing Republicans could do to mess that up."^{cii}

The undocumented give back far more than they take and yet during the last 5 years, the White House has deported "one of the largest peacetime outflows of people in America's history." Instead of providing a reasonable path to citizenship we're spending an estimated \$46 billion to let them die in the desert. We deport, detain and deter this incredible natural resource with a 2,000 mile wall, 38,405 border police at a cost of \$400 million in 2015 alone.

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN (Part 1)



ciii

In *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*,⁷ author Michelle Alexander writes: “Since the nation’s founding, African Americans repeatedly have been controlled through institutions such as slavery and Jim Crow.”^{civ} In her view mass incarceration is the new form of “exploitation and repression” for black Americans and it is the “war on drugs” that President Reagan launched in 1982 that would guarantee that exploitation and repression for generations to come.

It is sad that so many progressive Americans, like myself, have taken so long to make the connection between the “war on drugs” and the “exploitation and repression” of black Americans. The data:

While African-Americans constitute 13.1% of the nation's population, they make up nearly 40% of the prison population. Even though African-Americans use or sell drugs about the same rate as whites, they are 2.8 to 5.5 times more likely to be arrested for drugs than whites. Black offenders also receive longer sentences compared to whites. Most offenders are in prison for nonviolent drug offenses.^{cv}

- A black male born in 1991 has a 29% chance of spending time in prison during his life.^[7]
- One out of nine African American men will be incarcerated between the ages of 20 and 34.
- Black males ages 30 to 34 have the highest incarceration rate of any race/ethnicity gender and age combination.
- In 2014, 6% of all black males ages 30 to 39 were in prison, compared to 2% of Hispanic and 1% of white males in the same age group.^{“[8]”}
- The leading cause of incarceration of an African American male is a non-violent drug offense
- Between 1985 and 1995 the American prison population of drug offenders increased from 38,900 to 224,900 with African American males at the top (King 166).
- In less than thirty years, the U.S. penal population exploded from around 300,000 to more than 2 million, with drug convictions accounting for the majority of the increase.^{“cvi”}

And the “exploitation and repression” begins long before incarceration and continues long after a prisoner is released in voting, employment, housing, education, public benefits and jury service.”

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN (Part 2)

FROM BIRTH AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN FACE EXPLOITATION AND REPRESSION

Black children come from homes with far less resources and opportunities than white children:

In 2009, a representative survey of American households revealed that the median wealth of white families was \$113,149 compared with \$6,325 for Latino families and \$5,677 for black families.^{cvii}

Black children attend schools that are inferior to the schools white children attend:

Schools with predominantly white and wealthy students have a 1 in 4 chance of earning high test scores for multiple years while only 1 in 300 schools attended by poor children of color will do the same.^{cviii}

Black children are less likely to complete their education:

The percentage of African-Americans graduating from high school decreased between 1991 and 2004 while it increased for white students.

Black children who do graduate end up with far more debt than white children:

Four in five black students graduate with debt, compared to 64% of whites.^{cxix} Black graduates are often more saddled with college loans, making it harder for them to start socking away savings than their white peers.

Black children grow up in an environment of fear of being harassed and bullied even by police.

A former New York police captain, now a NY State Senator, testified that NYPD Commissioner Kelly told the NY State governor that young Black and Latino men were the focus of stop and frisk because "he wanted to instill fear in them every time they leave their home..."^{cx}

Black children grow up in an environment of fear of being killed even by police:

Police officers, security guards, or self-appointed vigilantes extrajudicially killed at least 313 African-Americans in 2012. This means a black person was killed by a security officer every 28 hours. The report notes that it's possible that the real number could be much higher.^{cxii} Of the 313 killings, the report found that 275 of them or 88% were cases of excessive force. The vast majority of the time, police officers, security guards, or armed vigilantes who extrajudicially kill black people escape accountability.^{cxiii}



cxiii

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON THE POOR



cxiv

More than 46 million Americans live below the poverty line, including 16 million children.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, poverty is earning less than \$11,945 per year for a single person and \$23,283 for a family of four.

Nearly a quarter of people in poverty have jobs, but their pay is so low that they still don't have enough money to meet basic needs like food, shelter, clothing and health care.

Women are more likely to be poor than men.

African-Americans, Latinos and Native-Americans are more likely to be poor than whites.

REPUBLICAN EXTREMISTS

CUT FOOD STAMPS

The cut to food stamps will be about \$800 million per year or \$8 billion over the next decade. The Congressional Budget Office estimates they will impact about 850,000 households.

A House-passed bill cut \$20 billion from SNAP over 10 years, while the Senate's legislation cut \$4.1 billion over that same period.

REFUSED TO EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS

1.3 million workers have been without jobless benefits since December 28, 2013. Most of the long term unemployed are having an extremely difficult time in finding jobs; Most long term unemployment takes an extreme toll on people's health and wellbeing; and, these These benefits are a key source of income for millions of people.

REFUSED TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

Hiking the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour would save \$4.6 billion in food stamp that it would also increase GDP by roughly \$32.6 billion and create approximately 140,000 new jobs. Benefiting 15 percent of the American workforce, such a hike would lift almost a million workers out of poverty.

DENIED HEALTH INSURANCE

Twenty-one Republican dominated states have rejected the expansion of Medicaid leaving about five million people without health coverage. If one is below 133 percent of poverty, there is no subsidy and no funds to help until they are poor enough to meet current Medicaid requirements, i.e. 100 percent of poverty. Thousands of those left out of coverage are veterans. Extremist Republicans in Montana opted out of Medicaid expansion leaving 70,000 Montanans in that gap without access to health care.

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON THE POOR

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON WOMEN!



CXV

Ignoring a woman's civil rights: Legislative and rhetorical attacks on women and women's rights are taking place across the nation in ever increasing number. The extremists are hard at work legislating restrictions on women's health care and limiting protections for women and their families. Planned Parenthood clinics are the extremist's primary target for harassment and eventual closure.

Ignoring a woman's civil rights: The extremists are motivated primarily by their determination to bypass Roe v Wade, the Supreme Court's historic 1973 decision to allow women the right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. The extremists insist that abortion is "a moral issue" when in fact it is "a civil rights issue." No citizen can be denied this right; and yet the extremists have decided to ignore or get around the law altogether.

Ignoring a woman's civil rights: Ironically, women depend on Planned Parenthood and other women's health clinics for much more than abortion services. Planned Parenthood's national budget for 2012-2013 used just 3% for "abortion services" while 35% was used for testing and treating sexually transmitted diseases in women and men; 35% to provide contraception information and contraceptives; 16% for cancer screening and prevention; 11% to provide other health services to women.

Ignoring a woman's civil rights: The extremists are hard at work: 1) Restricting contraception; 2) Cutting off funding for Planned Parenthood and other women's health clinics; 3) State-mandated, medically unnecessary ultrasounds; 4) Abortion taxes and even "abortion insurance;" 5) Abortion waiting periods; 6) Forcing women to tell their employers why they want birth control; 7) Prohibiting insurance companies from including abortion coverage in their policies.^{CXVI}

Ignoring a woman's civil rights: 48 states considered approximately 360 anti-choice laws in 2013. Ultimately 22 states enacted 70 restrictions. In 2011 80 anti-choice measures became law; 38 in 2012. Some of the shutdowns have been of major clinics. For instance, Virginia's No. 1 women's health clinic, NOVA Women's Healthcare in Fairfax, Va., shut down after state and local governments enacted regulations the abortion provider appeared unable to meet.^{CXVII}

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON WOMEN

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON VOTING RIGHTS



EXTREMIST REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS have launched a nationwide attack on voter's rights "to protect the nation from voter fraud." In fact there is no threat of voter fraud." Between 2000 and 2010 there were 649 million votes cast in general elections and just 13 cases of in-person voter impersonation.^{cxix}

EXTREMIST REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS need the "voter fraud" lie to cover their real intent, to disenfranchise African-American and Hispanic-American voters, other minorities and the poor. These are constituencies that traditionally vote Democrat. The nonwhite proportion of the electorate increases 2% a year. By 2020 they will grow from one fourth to one third of the electorate and by 2030 nonwhite voters will overtake white voters for the lead."^{cxx} Extremists are fighting back by...

Requiring new voter ID cards; Ending early voting; Ending same day registration; Ending 'Out of Precinct' voting; Eliminating polling stations; Stripping felons of voting rights; Redistricting precincts to prevent minority communities from electing candidates of their choice.

EXTREMIST REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS were enabled in their rush to disenfranchise millions of minority voters when the U.S Supreme Court struck down a significant portion of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. For almost fifty years the Act had prevented extremists from similar restrictive attacks on voting rights. Here's the irony. On 15 March, 1965, one day before President Johnson made his historic defense of the pending Voting Rights Act, Dr. King **wrote a *New York Times* editorial describing why segregationists denied African Americans the right to vote for a century after slavery ended: "...to freeze Negro registration at a level which can be successfully negated by segregationist voting strength."**

JIM CROW IS BACK: The ultimate goal for these new restrictions on the minority's right to vote is the exact same goal, "...to freeze [nonwhite] registration at a level which can be successfully negated by [white] voting strength." In his editorial Dr. King explained how segregationists had blocked African-American's voting rights by "The Gestapo-like control of county and local governments; the abuse of local and state laws; and by "complex registration procedures designed to slow up and frustrate."

EXTREMIST REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS are using the segregationist handbook to restrict minority voting rights. Dr. King quotes Burke Marshall, an assistant attorney general: "Where the will to keep Negro registration to a minimum is strong...the delaying practices that can be used are virtually infinite."

EXTREMIST REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS are playing another game of "Whack a mole." Every time we stop them from legislating a new way to restrict voting rights, they will pop up with another. Dr. King warned us: "...**No nation can long continue to flourish or to find its way to a better society while it allows any one of its citizens, let alone vast numbers...to be denied the right to participate in the most fundamental of all privileges of democracy – the right to vote.**"^{cxxi}

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON VOTING RIGHTS

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON LGBTQ RIGHTS



cxxii

More than 200 million Americans are members of religious organizations that condemn homosexuality and homosexuals. Their leaders ignore Jefferson's "wall of separation" between church and state. They elect federal and state officials who believe that the Bible (as they understand it) is a higher authority than the U.S. Constitution (that they have sworn to "support and defend"). These religion-based politicians are determined to create new laws that reverse the gains LGBTQ Americans have made and permanently deny them all the rights and protections the U.S. Constitution guarantees.

Employment Nondiscrimination: Qualified, hardworking Americans are denied job opportunities, fired or otherwise discriminated against just because they are LGBTQ. There are 7 million LGBTQ private sector employees, 1 million state and local employees, and 200,000 employees of the federal government^{cxxiii} with no federal law to protect them from employment discrimination. 29 states have no laws that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. 33 states have no laws that protect on the basis of gender identity. As a result, LGBT people face serious discrimination in employment, including being fired, being denied a promotion and experiencing harassment on the job.^{cxxiv}

Marriage Equality: As of January, 2014, there are 33 states that deny lesbian and gay couples the rights and protections of marriage. Since 2002 extremist politicians have proposed a Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA) to amend the U.S. Constitution to deny the rights and protections of marriage to all lesbian and gay Americans. In 2013 a Tea-party backed member of the House introduced it again. It is very apparent that political and religious extremists are determined to pass the FMA.

The United Methodist Church (with 15 million American members) "does not condone the practice of homosexuality, considers the practice incompatible with Christian teaching, refuses to ordain or marry and is presently holding religious courts to try their UMC ministers who marry lesbian or gay couples.

The Southern Baptist Convention, (with 30 million American members) declares that *"even a desire to engage in a homosexual relationship is always sinful, impure, degrading, shameful, unnatural, indecent and perverted."*

The Roman Catholic Church (with 60 million American members) still teaches that *"homosexual orientation is objectively disordered"* and that our loving, intimate, same-sex acts are *"intrinsically evil."*

The Latter-Day Saints (Mormons, with 12 million members) in principle forbids homosexual behavior. Sexual relations outside of opposite-sex marriage are contrary to the will of God.

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON LGBTQ RIGHTS

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON GUN REFORM



CXXV

In 2013, at least 194 children aged 12 and under were shot and killed in the U.S.

There have been 31 school shootings since Columbine, April 20, 1999.

More than 30,000 Americans have been shot to death since 20 children and their 6 teachers died at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Dec. 14, 2012.

America's rate of child shooting deaths is 4 times higher than Canada's and 65 times higher than the United Kingdom's. School shootings in every other country in the world COMBINED since then is 14.^{cxxvi}

Still extremists in Congress refuse to pass any gun-control legislation. A bipartisan compromise to expand background checks for gun buyers, ban assault weapons and ban high-capacity gun magazines failed on April 17, 2013. A bipartisan amendment to impose stiff penalties on gun traffickers, which was supported by the N.R.A. was also defeated.

Besides their power to defeat federal gun-control legislation, the National Rifle Association and the other pro-gun extremists are punishing state legislators who support gun control. On September 10, 2013, voters in Colorado (the state that suffered the Columbine massacre of 12 students and a teacher) recalled State Senators John Morse and Angela Giron because they supported gun-control legislation requiring background checks on private gun sales and limited magazine clips to 15 rounds.

It is certain that no gun control legislation will guarantee the end of this killing spree but "the absence of a perfect solution nor opposition from the powerful gun lobby is not an excuse to do nothing – not when some 30 people are killed with guns every day in America."^{cxxvii}

TRUTH: 4.5 million guns, including approximately 2 million handguns, are sold in the U.S. every year with an estimated 283 million guns currently in civilian hands. The average number of guns per owner has increased from 4.1 in 1994 to 6.9 in 2004.

CONSEQUENCES: More than 30,000 people are killed by firearms each year in the U.S. More than 30 people are shot and killed each day. One half are between the ages of 18 and 35. One third are under the age of 20. Homicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-24 year-olds and the primary cause of death among African Americans of that age group. There are more than 10,000 gun homicides in the U.S. every year, less than 50 in Japan, 150 in Germany, Italy, France, less than 200 in Canada.^{cxxviii}

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON GUN REFORM

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON THE ENVIRONMENT



cxxix

VOICES OF THE FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIAN EXTREMISTS

Jerry Falwell (Pastor Thomas Road Baptist Church): "Environmental action is Satan's attempt to redirect the church's primary focus."^{cxxx}

James Dobson (Focus on the Family) and **Gary Bauer** (Family Research Council): Environmentalists are "using the global warming controversy to shift the emphasis away from the great moral issues of our time."

Richard Land (President of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission): Environmentalist "exaggerated or baseless fears lead to unreasonable policies that can do a lot more harm than the things feared."

David Barton (Evangelical pastor and former vice chair of the Texas Republican Party): "It's not global warming. It's the judgment of God."^{cxxxi}

Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming: "states "there is no convincing scientific evidence that human contribution to greenhouse gases is causing dangerous global warming" and maintains that "reducing greenhouse gases cannot achieve significant reductions in future global temperatures."

VOICES OF THE POLITICAL EXTREMISTS

Sen. Ted Cruz (D. Texas): "The last 15 years, there has been no recorded warming. Contrary to all the theories that they are expounding, it hasn't happened,"^{cxxxii}

Sen. Rand Paul (R. Kentucky) "... mocked concerns about global warming, rising sea levels and endangered polar bears Thursday, accusing the White House of being run by "extremists" and "hysterics" who don't care about jobs."^{cxxxiii}

Sen. Marco Rubio (R. Florida): "We can pass a bunch of laws that will destroy our economy, but it isn't going to change the weather."^{cxxxiv}

Janet Parshall (Political pundit and radio host): Describes the environmentalist's "lust for political power" and "spiritual deception" are "deadly to the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Glen Beck (Talk show host): Environmentalist hold "anti-human" beliefs ...worshiping the ancient god of Babylon, the god of weather."

WARNING:

"Just as corporate America has infused the GOP with an anti-science ideology, the Religious Right is more than eager to provide cover for politicians and their corporate backers by claiming God's blessing for their dishonest assertions and destructive policies."^{cxxxv}

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON THE ENVIRONMENT

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON HEALTH CARE REFORM



WHY HEALTHCARE REFORM IS NEEDED:

1. Health care costs are soaring.

Unpaid medical bills will bankrupt nearly 2 million people this year. And 56 million adults—20 percent of the population between the 19 and 64—will still struggle with health-care-related bills. ^{cxxxvii}

2. Health care quality in the U.S. is the worst in the developed world (unless you're wealthy.)

Chronic diseases cause 70% of all U.S. deaths and 75% of all dollars spent. This cost can be lowered through disease prevention and wellness programs provided through health care reform. ^{cxxxviii}

3. Health care insurance is needed because 25% of the American people don't have it.

Approximately 44 million Americans have no insurance. 38 million have inadequate insurance. ^{cxxxix} Over 101,000 Americans die each year simply because they didn't have insurance. ^{cxl}

4. Health care reform is needed to help end the economic costs of health care fraud.

Between 3-10% (\$60-\$200 billion) is lost to fraud each year. When those percentages are applied to the \$436 billion Medicare program, Medicare fraud is approximately \$14-\$30 billion. ^{cxli}

WHAT THE AFFORDABLE HEALTH ACT (OBAMACARE) PROVIDES

Extends coverage to those with pre-existing conditions, children, and those who were laid off. Gives subsidies to small businesses, seniors with high prescription drug costs, and funding to ease the shortage of doctors and nurses. The costs will be offset with higher payroll taxes, higher fees to prescription drug companies, and lower payments to hospitals. ^{cxlii} Other Key provisions include prohibiting insurance companies from dropping you when you are sick, expanding Medicaid to 15.9 million Americans and creating state specific health insurance marketplaces (sometimes known as an exchanges) where low-to-middle-income Americans can shop for free or low cost health insurance. ^{cxliii}

WHY EXTREMISTS OPPOSE HEALTH CARE REFORM

The GOP was never really concerned about a "government takeover of health care", "rationing", "the doctor-patient relationship" or mythical "death panels," but that an American public grateful for access to health care could *provide Democrats with an enduring majority for years to come.* ^{cxliv}

Once again, extremist legislators, desperate to maintain their political power are creating a misinformation storm to confuse the American public. To impress their supporters extremist Republicans have voted 51 times to end Obama Care. But even in condemning Obama Care, Ted Cruz admits the real reason for his opposition: "It is the most unpopular law in the country," Cruz claims. "Millions have lost their jobs, have lost their health care, have been forced into part-time work, have their premiums skyrocketing. Washington isn't listening. That's how we win election." ^{cxlv}

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON HEALTH CARE REFORM

A VOW OF NONVIOLENCE

From Pax Christi USA (A Roman Catholic Justice Movement)

Pax Christi USA rejects war, preparations for war, and every form of violence and domination. It advocates primacy of conscience, economic and social justice, and respect for creation.

A VOW OF NONVIOLENCE



cxlvi

"Recognizing the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, I vow to practice the nonviolence of Jesus who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount---

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called [sons and daughters] of God...You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be [sons and daughters] of your Father in heaven," (Matt.5:9, 43-44).

Before God the Creator I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus

- by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life;
- by accepting suffering in the struggle for justice rather than inflicting it;
- by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence;
- by persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart;
- by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of a means to live;
- by actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth.

God, I trust in your sustaining love and believe that just as you gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so you will also bestow grace to fulfill it. ---Pax Christi USA

_____ (Your name) _____ (Date)

This Vow of Nonviolence was composed by Eileen Egan and Rev. John Dear, S.J. Tens of thousands of people have taken the Vow. The Vow of Nonviolence can be pronounced privately, with a local peace community, as part of a parish liturgy, or any other way that suits you. Many profess the Vow each year as part of their New Year observance.^{cxlvii}

READ TO RESIST!

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<http://www.thekingcenter.org/books-bibliography#collection>

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- PBS Home Video, **Eyes on the Prize** (2 part series) American Civil Rights Movement from 1952-1965

About the Author by Ken Martin, MCC Elder and Pastor (ret.)

In 1993 Mel White was appointed Dean of the Cathedral of Hope Metropolitan Community Church in Dallas, Texas, the world's largest congregation ministering primarily to LGBTQ Americans. In his 1994 autobiography, "Stranger at the Gate: to be Gay and Christian in America," Mel describes the thirty painful years he spent trying to overcome his homosexuality through ex-gay therapies, exorcism and electric shock and the relief he felt when finally able to accept his sexual orientation as a gift from God. Commissioned to begin the Cathedral's national justice ministry, Mel and his partner, Gary Nixon, wondered what they could do to help end similar suffering by their LGBTQ sisters and brothers. In Mel's words, "Without taking much time to study civil rights movements of the past, we just blundered in."



1995

2014

On February 1, 1995, Mel was arrested trying to get an appointment with Pat Robertson to help him understand the tragic consequences of his endless antigay rhetoric. While in jail, Mel had a "pastoral call" from Coretta Scotts King's personal assistant, Lynn Cothren. During their brief visit Lynn gave Mel an autographed copy of Dr. King's "Why We Can't Wait" and a polite warning that Mel's justice ministry would not succeed until he understood M.K. Gandhi's principles of nonviolent resistance.

After a twenty-one day fast, Mel was released from jail. While reading through Dr. King's essential writings and speeches, he was surprised to learn how important Gandhi's teachings had been in shaping Dr. King's civil rights movement. Mel was about to give up hope in ever working his way through the 50,000 pages of Gandhi's "Collected Works" when he discovered "The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi" by Gopinath Dawhan, a rather mysterious colleague and contemporary of Gandhi who managed to create a 350 page map or guidebook through Gandhi's 103 volumes.

With Dahwan's guidebook in hand, Mel spent the next five years studying Gandhi's principles of nonviolence or Satyagraha, "the force of truth" or "soul force." He also studied nonviolence at the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Nyack, New York, at the King Center in Atlanta, on various nonviolent direct actions with civil right leaders Jim and Phil Lawson and on a journey to India on the anniversary of Gandhi's assassination as a guest of Gandhi's grandson, Arun. During that time, Mel began to organize Gandhi's principles of nonviolence into a NONVIOLENCE HANDBOOK that would shape his justice ministry and with Gary he co-founded Soulforce, an organization dedicated to helping end the religious and political oppression of LGBTQ people.

Gandhi and King had little time to systematize the principles of Satyagraha, or "soul force." Mel has extrapolated these principles from their essays, diaries, articles, books, speeches, interviews, collected writings and rare copies of original print materials, for example the actual pledges Gandhi and King asked their marchers to sign in South Africa, India, and in the U.S. If you are interested in the original data follow Mel's footnotes then check it out for yourself in "The Collected Writings of M.K. Gandhi" (Navijivan Publishing) and in Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr. (Harper Collins).

Contact: Mel White, P.O.Box 14385, Long Beach, CA. 90803 mel@melwhite.org www.melwhite.org

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