

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE METHODS OF NON-VIOLENCE  
AS USED BY MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  
AND MAHATMA GANDHI.

A Thesis  
Presented to the Faculty  
of  
Interdenominational Theological Center  
Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A.

In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree

Master of Sacred Theology

by  
Manick Samuel  
April 1970

Major Professor: Dr. William T. Osborne,  
Department of Church and Society

R.IX.7.56

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....	Page iii.
A PERSONAL PREFACE.....	iv.
LIST OF FOREIGN WORDS USED AND THEIR MEANINGS.....	x.
 Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION: The Nature of the Present Study.....	1.
II. HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE PROBLEM.....	4.
In The United States	
In India	
III. NON-VIOLENCE ACCORDING TO GANDHI.....	24.
Principle of Non-violence	
True and False Non-violence	
The Political Scope of Non-violence	
Spiritual Dimensions of Non-violence	
Examples of the Methods of Non-violence	
IV. NON-VIOLENCE ACCORDING TO KING.....	52.
Philosophical Preparation for Non-violence	
The Montgomery Experiment in Non-violence	
The Success and Failures of King's Method	
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	67.
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	84.



## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The writer was born in Bidar, India on October 25, 1931. His education was as follows:

B.A.	1953	Lucknow University, India
G.Th.	1958	Leonard Theological College, India
B.Ed.	1960	Karnatak University, India
M.Ed.	1962	Karnatak University, India
M.A.	1968	Karnatak University, India
M.Div.	1969	Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta

Teacher in Norma Fendrich High School, Bidar, India from 1953-55; pastor in different churches of Hyderabad and South India Annual Conference from 1958-68; came to the U.S.A. in September 1969 for higher studies in theology.

## A PERSONAL PREFACE

In this world filled with jealousy, malice, and hatred there seems to be a small ray of hope in what is considered to be the weakest, the frailest, and the faintest dogma of non-violence which can rid this world of these ever-devastating diseases. When everywhere nations are trying to rise against nations, when one race is trying to make short work of another race, when one country is trying to subjugate another weaker country, when one society is trying to dominate another society, when one individual is trying to rule and control another individual, it looks as though the whole world is heading towards some unforeseen catastrophe whereby love evaporates, goodwill vanishes and hatred dominates. It is with this troubled mind and the inner anguish the writer has undertaken the study of non-violence.

Power-drunk nations have been rendered blind by the potentialities of destruction which they hoard underground not knowing that the same instruments will be the angels of death to devour the very hands and minds which have produced those weapons. For a time they may be self-satisfied and self-content that they are the most powerful nations in the world.

A cursory glance at the history of nations which have ruled and established mighty empires will lead us to the conclusions that all nations, no matter how powerful, will have to be counted among the oblivion some day. Kings who have claimed themselves to be mighty are no more remembered and their memories are no more cherished. An illustration of this can be

unhesitatingly cited from the poem "Ozymandius."<sup>1</sup> There were two vast and trunkless legs on which a great many things were written but the statue was lying buried hundreds of feet under the sand until the time it was excavated by some archeologists.

It looks as though the world is heading to establish a society where hate will be the guiding principle, violence will be the rod of justice, and tyranny will be the only hope. In this society spiritual dogmas are thrown assunder and fear of the peers and elders are trampled under feet with no fear or hesitation, where human life is counted less valuable than vegetables. Many a great saint who have tried to impart some knowledge to those who were educated illiterates, were torn to pieces by the use of uncivilized, immature, blood-thirsty and money minded assassins.

There is no day in which the newspapers all over the world give illustrations which will go to prove that man, though created in the image of God, has become a self-appointed angel of the devil. Time and again we read about persons being murdered because of the money they possess, or because of the position they hold, or the ideals they advocate. When we read these things we are inwardly moved to agree that man has come to the stage that in order to get anything one has to get rid of the person who holds it.

Race has become another uncontrollable fire which is being systematically ignited by so-called responsible citizens and responsible leaders. In the name of race, many innocent children are butchered, helpless women are illtreated or maimed, and many a residential houses are bombed or set on fire with the intention that a racist purpose will be achieved. They do not

---

<sup>1</sup>Mark Van Doren, An Anthology of World Poetry (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1929), p. 1137.

realize that a man who holds the sword will die with the sword. It is because of the immaturity of mind and inability to control one's emotions that these incidents are perpetrated. They are not usually preconceived or premeditated results but they are only the off-shoots of flared up emotions. The question naturally arises as to why, how, and by whom are these emotions flared up?

With regard to the question of "Why?", we can only say that the situation determines the cause. In some cases it may be a false rumor, in some cases it may be a factual incident, or in some cases it may be based on linguistic or social issues. It cannot be generalized that one type of reason exists for this type of racial flare-up.

With regard to the question "How does this occur?" we can observe that it is difficult to specify a particular pattern of behavior in all cases. In each case there are many things which directly and indirectly influence such happenings.

With regard to the most important question "By whom are these conflicts caused?" we can generally say that usually it is the so-called "leader" who is responsible for this emotional imbalance. In doing this, he manipulates all the techniques at his disposal to entice and entrance the hearing audiences and lets loose the venom and vendetta against the opposing forces. Masses of innocent people submit their everything and follow the leader. It is painful to see that masses of people who become the victims of bullets are only those who are innocent, who are helpless, and who can scarcely distinguish between light and darkness, truth and falsehood. Sometimes we get good leaders who were really dedicated to their cause, but they were not

destined by nature to lead the people for a longer period of time. The good always is over-shadowed and over-crowded by evil, the light is engulfed by darkness, as were the dedicated leaders who became the victims of assassins' bullets.

With this torturous and painful background the writer was inwardly moved to undertake a study and an interpretation of those dogmas and those ideas which he conceived to be universal and more powerful than the crises he has described.

The saints who have clung to the ideology of non-violence might have been many in the past but in this twentieth century two great souls who have not only advocated and adhered to the principle of non-violence, but also gave their life as a ransom for the violent-filled world. Who was it who gave inspiration and guidance for these people to practice and to preach non-violence? It is none other than the greatest non-violent revolutionary the world has seen or heard and that is Jesus Christ whom the Christians consider as the Son of the Living God. It is He alone who guided and led these leaders to risk their lives in order to achieve the goal.

It is astonishing to note that by following one principle which is recorded in the Bible one man could shake the very foundations of the mighty empire on which it is claimed "no sun sets". It is with this weapon that Mahatma Gandhi fought back the mighty British empire which had all the formidable material weapons at its disposal.

It is the tragedy of human nature which has been writ large on the apostles' lives that the adherents of non-violence should become the victims of violence. Both Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. led their respective followers to success by strictly following

and eschewing the principle of non-violence. The assassins and their followers, and their supporters felt that by killing these two they could get rid of the principle which was firmer than their mortal bodies. With their death came a new life which was more powerful than their existence in this world. But it may be said that unless a seed falls into the ground and dies it cannot bring forth fruit and this was true of the life of these two great saints to whom this paper is dedicated.

## LIST OF FOREIGN WORDS USED AND THEIR MEANINGS

Agape - Understanding, redeeming good will for all men - an overflowing love

Ahimsa - Non-violence or non-injury

Atman - Soul

Bania - Sub-caste of Hinduism

Bhagavad Gita - Holy Scripture of Hindus

Brahma - Supreme soul

Brahmin - Priestly class of Hindus

Dharma - Religion

Eros - Yearning of the soul for the realm of the divine

Goonda - Ruffian

Kshatriya - Warrior class among Hindus

Philia - Intimate affection between personal friends

Satyagraha - Satya is truth which equals love and agraha is force,  
i.e., love force

Satyagrahi - One who practices satyagraha

Sudra - Untouchable, lowest class among Hindus

Tirthankaras - Early saints of Jainism

Vaisya - Merchant class among Hindus

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Nature of the Present Study

Non-violence received its importance from the time Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King, Jr. in America adopted it as the only principle for redressing the grievances of suppressed peoples and nations. Specifically these grievances were social and political in nature depending on the Indian or American context which differed according to the situation. In the Indian context, it was used as a method of acquiring freedom from political domination while in the American context it was used as a method of acquiring freedom from racial domination.

The subject of non-violence will be treated in the present study in relation to the contributions that Gandhi and King made in organizing and implementing plans for national or group freedom; but it will be noted throughout that the specifics differed according to the situational needs and different modes of behavior. Gandhi and King defined non-violence in different ways and with different backgrounds, although a commonality between these two persons was that they both represented an oppressed people.

The scope of the subject of non-violence is limited to India and the United States of America. In this subject as far as is possible an attempt is made to rely mainly on the original writings and speeches of Gandhi and



King. The reason for the use of primary sources is the present author's assumption that secondary sources will never fully express the truth as the originators own writings do.

The original sources used to grapple with the subject include some of the speeches which were delivered during the momentous periods of 1914-1948 for Gandhi and 1955-1968 for King plus important sayings quoted from the authors' original writings. This does not mean that other sources are not used. Other books written by different authors are consulted but wherever the same ideas are expressed usually the primary source is quoted. It has been observed that the majority of scholars hold the same view of both Gandhi and King. Because of Gandhi's Indian background and the influence of the Bible on the life of Gandhi the writer has traced the Biblical source from which Gandhi derived inspiration giving Biblical illustrations wherever necessary.

Therefore the method of approach will be to rely mainly upon the original writings. In passing, certain things are mentioned also about the background which helped these men to expound their theories. Further major writers who influenced their minds in their early age or the main incidents in their life which helped them to formulate and follow the principle of non-violence like Tolstoi, Thoreau are also noted.

An attempt is made to review clearly and historically the problem of non-violence; why non-violence came to prominence and why it became so effective a tool in the hands of dedicated men. Thus an historical review is presented with the hope that it will show how non-violence came to prominence and how it needs to be practiced. In dealing with the historical review both Eastern and Western literatures have been used and it will be shown how they both differed in their attempts to define the same term and because of socio-cultural implications.

In dealing with the individual contributions of Gandhi and King, the writer relied heavily on original sources which discussed the following questions: What was the inception of Mahatma Gandhi's ideas of non-violence? How did the concept of non-violence enter his mind? How was he touched by the treatment meted out to the Indians in South Africa? How did he organize the masses of Indian people to eradicate social evils? How did he influence and help others to organize and fight against the local social evils like untouchability in India? Finally, how did he use non-violence to liberate India from British domination? In these ways his concept and definitions of non-violence have been dealt with.

In dealing with Martin Luther King's ways of using non-violent methods the author has attempted to go to the very roots of the formation of the concept of non-violence. Was King being prepared for the future role during his undergraduate studies? Was he being saturated by the different philosophies of non-violence that he studied during his student days? How was he influenced by the writings on non-violence? How did the idea of eradicating social evils by means of non-violence enter his mind?

In the last chapter the writer has attempted to discuss the similarities and dissimilarities that existed between the two exponents' work, with the knowledge of how decisive the principle was for both men's endeavors although its particular usages depended upon the specific circumstances each encountered. In a more personal fashion, the present writer also hopes that the study will encourage the readers to appreciate the continuing value of the principle of non-violence in redressing the grievances of suppressed people.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

#### In The United States

The history of non-violence in America can be broadly divided into ten different periods. It is as old as 1750. It is essential for us to cover mainly the salient features of these periods. Before the American Revolution non-violence was identified with Quakers. This does not mean that others did not take the initiative but it only means that Quakers were prominent. The other sects, who were involved, were Mennonites who refused to accept the hospitality of the slave owners. The first people who advocated and practiced non-violence were Quakers, among them John Woolman<sup>1</sup> stands out uniquely. He was a self-educated man with a keen sense of social concern. During his twenty-third year he was called upon by his master to write a bill of sale of a slave girl. He was debating in his own mind as to whether he should obey the dictates of his master or the dictates of his conscience. He finally yielded to his master.<sup>2</sup>

He was faced with the same problem of writing a bill of sale for his friend. He was convinced in his heart that slavery was contrary to Christian teachings. He reasoned with his friend that his conscience did not permit him to write such a bill. The other area in which he practiced non-violence was the refusal to pay the taxes when money was spent for war.<sup>3</sup> He opined

---

<sup>1</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Non-violence in America (New York: The Bobbs - Merrill Company, Inc., 1966), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

that paying taxes to the government which was involved in waging war against another weaker country would mean the involvement of the individual in the whole process of murder. It is because of this conviction that he refused to pay the taxes. He wrote that, "It requires great self-denial and resignation of ourselves to God to attain that state wherein we can freely cease from fighting when wrongfully invaded, if by our fighting there were a probability of overcoming the invaders."<sup>1</sup> He used his journal as a vehicle to express his ideas.

The next area in which he involved himself was the question of ill treatment of the American Indians. He advocated that they be given their due share and be recognized as men and not as tools.

He had a very unique way of approaching people with his mastery with the pen. His thoughts were well formulated, reasonable and convincing in writing about the pains and sufferings of the poor people. He commends everyone to be satisfied with their daily bread. He thought that wars would take place only when people had an insatiable desire for luxuries and refused to accept the daily bread to be a gift from God.<sup>2</sup>

The second stage of non-violence comes to the forefront in the year 1838. William Lloyd Garrison became the exponent of the "Declaration of Sentiments, 1838."<sup>3</sup> Those who followed William Lloyd Garrison were called abolitionists. The abolitionists adopted non-violence as a part of their creed. The major fields of action were directed against capital punishment, opposition to all wars, and emancipation of slaves. In 1838 Garrison and his friends found the New England Non Resistance Society. In principle they

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>Selections from the Writings and Speeches of William Lloyd Garrison  
(Boston: R.F. Wallcutt, 1852), pp. 72-77.

considered that all governments were human so human beings could not be subjected to any ultimate earthly powers. They acknowledged God as King, law-giver, and ruler of mankind. As a result of this principle they considered the whole world to be their country. Since the whole world was their country they could not fight against another country.<sup>1</sup>

Abolitionists were against war and the production of any arms or ammunitions. They were of the view that the army and the navy should all be disbanded and the military office be closed. The abolitionists refused to take part in policies or serve in any government offices. They did not take part in elections. The old law of the Covenant, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth had been abrogated by Jesus Christ. They claimed that the new principle was forgiveness. They did not approve people being handed over or put to gallows.<sup>2</sup>

Though the abolitionists believed in non-violence yet they were vehement in condemning the evil practices that prevailed both in high and low places. They refused to submit passively to their enemies and they felt it their bounden duty to speak boldly for the cause of God. They adopted different means to win adherents to their principles. They were well prepared for the difficulties to be encountered and the defeats to be faced with. They fully depended upon God and their trust and confidence on God was unshakeable.

Adin Ballou<sup>3</sup> was another nineteenth century reformer who took the initiative to eradicate sin in the form of slavery, war or intemperance.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Non-Violence in America (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1966), p. 28.

<sup>3</sup>Adin Ballou, Christian Non-Resistance, In All Its Important Bearings, Illustrated and Defended (Philadelphia: J. Miller McKim, 1946). pp. 9-13, 26-28, 104-105, 107-109, 144-145.

He said that there were three kinds of non-resistance namely Philosophical non-resistance, Sentimental non-resistance, and Necessitous non-resistance. The first one deals with from a philosophical point of view disregarding the authority of Jesus Christ and divine revelation. The second one deals with the spontaneous dictates of man's higher sentiments and the last one is expressed in the phrase "Passive obedience and non-resistance."

The word "non-resistance", was used by Ballou only when it was applicable to human beings and not to animals. He did not agree that it was passive resistance, but on the contrary, he said that it was the highest kind of resistance to evil. Non-resistance was not contrary to nature. Those people who followed non-resistance were safe. He cited the example of Robert Barclay and Leonard Fell. Those two persons were attacked by highwaymen in England but when Barclay showed him the wallet the pistol from the robber's hand fell down for Barclay claimed that he was the friend of all and he was not afraid of his pistol. Deeds of kindness added strength to the influence of gentle words. The highwayman was confused and ran away from the presence of Robert Barclay.<sup>1</sup>

Adin Ballou said that war, capital punishment, and slavery were against the teachings of Christ. He suggested that these problems should be dealt in a different manner. He thought that those people who had been elected to place in government had been doing those things which were not delegated to them. Even though they were not authorized formally yet they acted on behalf of the people. Many people thought that he was a dreamer and an idealist, but he was sincerely hoping and working for the good of the poor, needy, and suffering.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid, pp. 147-148, 213-222, 229-233.

Henry David Thoreau<sup>1</sup> wrote his essay on civil disobedience when he served in jail one night for refusing to pay poll tax in Massachusetts when the government was involved in war with Mexico. He fully endorsed the view "that government is best which governs least".<sup>2</sup> He claimed that there must be good government which should aim at governing least. He felt that men were being used as machines. "All men recognized the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable."<sup>3</sup> But such was the case he thought in the revolution of 1875. He advocated the withdrawal of all abolitionists from supporting the government. Any imprisonment of a citizen without valid reason, calls for a just man to live only in prison.

Wendell Phillips,<sup>4</sup> of New England, also whole-heartedly supported and advocated non-violence. He was interested in villifying individual slave holders. He appealed to their reason and common sense rather than indulging in fears and denunciations. He reasonably and rationally argued that there was no greater enormity of sin than making merchandise of men and separating husband and wife. He vehemently decried the apathy of the pulpit and the press in not taking a firm stand against slavery. He gave many examples of the success that he attained in carrying out his plan.

---

<sup>1</sup>Henry D. Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience," A Yankee in Canada, With Anti-Slavery and Reform Papers (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866), pp. 123 - 151.

<sup>2</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Nonviolence in America (New York: The Bobbs - Merrill Company, Inc., 1966), p. 58.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 61 - 62.

<sup>4</sup>Wendell Phillips, "Philosophy of the Abolition Movement," Speech before the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, Boston, January 27, 1853, Speeches, Lectures, and Letters (Boston: James Redpath, Publisher, 1863), pp. 98-100, 106-110, 134-136, 139-140, 151-153.

Elihu Burritt<sup>1</sup> of the nineteenth century was a self-educated man. He took time to study Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Hebrew, Chaldaic, Samaritan, and Ethiopic after his work as a blacksmith. Later on he took a job at Massachusetts so that he could borrow Lexicons and Grammars. His main emphasis was to hold on to the precept of the Gospel, "overcome evil with good." He believed that it had not been tested so far by anyone in subduing the enemies and that there was a greater power in passive resistance than in resistance. The necessity of violence, he argued, did not make violence a virtue. He cited many examples of how passive resistance superseded violence such as the maxim French Revolution "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" which must be the maxim of every individual. He suggested the only way for suppressed people to get out of the clutches of the oppressor in the following words:

If there be any oppressed and aggrieved people, that are nourishing in their heart the determination to struggle again for the national being and freedom they have lost, there is only one way given under heaven among men by which they may reach the consumation of their longings and that is Passive Resistance.<sup>2</sup>

Among the Anarchists Benjamin Tucker emphasized individualist or philosophical anarchism. He advocated prohibition and the right of women's suffrage. He also advocated both non-resistance and passive resistance. Tucker not only viewed the state as unnecessary but also as a dangerous invasive agency.

Emma Goldman<sup>3</sup> was a revolutionary woman assisted Alexander Berkman in his attempt to assassinate Henry Clay Frick of the U.S.A. She was

---

<sup>1</sup>Elihu Burritt, Thoughts and Things at Home and Abroad (Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Co., 1854), pp. 269-286.

<sup>2</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Nonviolence in America (New York: The Bobbs - Merrill Company, Inc., 1966), p. 108.

<sup>3</sup>Emma Goldman, "Anarchism: What It Really Stands For," Anarchism And Other Essays (New York: Mother Earth Publishing Assoc., 1910), pp. 53-73.



deported to Russia. In her old age she was drawn towards the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence. She wrote to Berkman in the following words, "I feel violence in whatever form never has and probably never will bring constructive results."<sup>1</sup>

The progressives were those who believed in "the moral equivalent of war" as advocated by William James.<sup>2</sup> William James believed in the futility of preaching against war just as war needs military training so also warring against war needs much discipline. Wars in the past, he said, were due to pride, gold, women, slaves, and excitement. He condemned Alexander's war as a piracy and plunder. He said that European nations should solve their problems by reason and discussions. General Lea said that nations are never stationary. They must either expand or shrink. James believed that the reign of peace would some day come into being. He was against the war-party. He claimed that men were willing to lay down their life for the sake of preservation of their country and nation but a time may come when they might value something else in its place.

Clarence Darrow<sup>3</sup> came to Chicago in 1888 and became the "attorney for the damned." Among the criminals he defended were Nathan Leopold, Richard Loeb and "Big Bill" Haywood, the persecuted leader of the Western miners. His attention towards non-violence was drawn by the punishment given by the American courts. His concept of non-violence was, "the opposite to the theory of punishment, or the theory of vengeance," and he argued that though the state "was born in force and violence" yet "the only force that can win is

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>2</sup>William James, The Moral Equivalent of War (New York: American Assoc. for International Conciliation, 1910), Leaflet No. 27.

<sup>3</sup>Marx vs. Tolstoi. A Debate Between Clarence S. Darrow and Arthur M. Lewis, People's Pocket Series No. 157 (Girard, Kansas: Appeal to Reason [ca. 1910]), pp. 5-16, 38-40.

determination, non-resistance, peacable force."<sup>1</sup> The laws of Moses were based on the doctrine of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" but the doctrine of Jesus Christ was "resist not evil. But whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also."<sup>2</sup> Darrow was convinced that the only force that could bring about a change in social and political life was non-resistance and peacable force. "There is such a thing as peacable force that is more forcible than a forcible force."<sup>3</sup>

In the year 1917 the women's suffrage came to prominence. Garrison and Susan B. Anthony and Lucretia Mott urged freedom for both the slaves and the unfranchised female. During World War I women suffrage received more impetus. Though America was involved in war yet women like Alice Paul pressed their demand for the right to vote. They marched many times to Washington and picketed. When they were arrested and taken to prisons they continued their struggle in the prison. When they were sentenced for longer terms of imprisonment and confined to solitary cells they demanded to be treated as political prisoners. When their repeated requests fell on the deaf ears of the commissioner they started hunger strikes. At first the authorities did not pay much heed but later on they had to change their behavior. The use of the hunger strike was as old as seventeenth century and was used almost all over the world for various reasons.

When the first World War broke out, there were many objectors against government involvement in it. The conscientious objectors were working from different motives like political objectors, religious objectors, and the Civil Liberties Bureau. One political objector was Carl Haessler, a religious

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>Mathew 5: 38-39.

<sup>3</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Nonviolence in America (New York: The Bobbs - Merrill Company, Inc., 1966), p. 160.

objector was Maurice and the Civil Liberties Bureau's director was a recruit of the machine gun company of the 46th Infantry. He was charged with the offense of violating 64th Article of War. He argued that he had committed an offense as he was opposed to America's involvement in war. Therefore he refused to render any service to the war as it was not consistent with his thinking.

Maurice<sup>1</sup> had refused to take part in the war on the grounds that it was against the teachings of Jesus Christ. He was willing to face any problems in refusing to join war. His opinion was well expressed in the following words:

We would indeed be hypocrites and base traitors to our profession if we would be unwilling to bear the taunts and jeers of a sinful world, and its imprisonment, and, torture or death, rather than to participate in war and military service. We know that obedience to Christ will gain for us the glorious prize of eternal life. We cannot yield, we cannot compromise, we must suffer.<sup>2</sup>

Roger N. Baldwin refused the draft because he believed that state had no right to compel any individual to go to war. He expressed his idea of conscription in the following words, "I regard the principle of conscription of life as a flat contradiction of all our cherished ideals of individual freedom, democratic liberty, and Christian teaching."<sup>3</sup> He further stated that he was prepared to die for his faith just as people in France were willing to die for their faith. He realized that he was a tiny minority but he knew that his principle would win. He made this solemn decision,

Having arrived at the state of mind in which these views mean the dearest things in life to me, I cannot consistently, with self-respect, do other than I have, namely, to deliberately violate an act which seems to me to be a denial of everything which ideally and in practice I hold sacred.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Ammon Hennacy<sup>1</sup> was arrested on April 5, 1917, when he spoke against the coming war. The war started the very next day. He refused to register for the draft but he became a leader of resistance to violent methods. He opposed war. In 1933 he founded the Catholic Workers Movement which played a very significant part in anti-war protests after World War I. This Catholic Worker Movement encouraged non-payment of taxes as the government was engaged in war. They also followed civil disobedience against war preparations. They were asked to practice voluntary poverty.

In the year 1915 the mode of non-violence took a different turn. The Trade Unionists adopted techniques of non-violence in bringing the industrialists to their senses. William Haywood<sup>2</sup> assumed the leadership of the Western Federation of Miners during 1915. He was sometimes called "Big Bill," and organized the Industrial Workers of the World in 1905. In 1906 he ran as a socialist candidate for the governorship of Colorado. He was imprisoned in September 1917 on the grounds of sedition. He went to the Soviet Union in 1921. He was famous for his thorough going syndicalism. His concept was that working men guided the destinies of industries and this, he said, could be achieved by the general strike. He believed in direct action in order to get laws enforced and in the idea of filling the jails and prisons with many people.

The Industrial Workers of the World organization had in its preamble the following clauses: There is no commonality between the workers and the employer; and no peace can exist as long as hunger and want exist among millions of working people. They believed that constant struggle exists between the employer and the employed till such time when the workers would run

---

<sup>1</sup>Ammon Hennacy, ed., Two Agitators: Peter Maurin - Ammon Hennacy (New York: The Catholic Worker, 1959), pp. 6-19.

<sup>2</sup>Testimony of William D. Haywood Before The Industrial Relations Commission (Chicago: I.W.W. Publishing Bureau, [ca. 1915]), pp. 3-5, 8-17, 23-24, 26-29, 43-47, 70-71.

industries and abolish the wage system. They also took it as a mission of the working class to do away with Capitalism. By the organization of the Industrial Workers of the World they thought that they were laying the foundation of a new structure of a new society.<sup>1</sup>

The method of the "sit-down"<sup>2</sup> came into prominence with the campaign of the Congress of Industrial Organizations. They reached their peak between September 1936 and May 1937 when 485,000 working men were involved. They were charged with trespassing of private property. They had composed a chorus of their own to get inspiration.

This created a sense of tremour in the hearts of industrialists and a state of enthusiasm among workers. Most of the "sit-down" strikes were among the rubber workers of Akron. In America the "sit-down" strike goes back to 1910. In 1933 Hormel Packing Company's 2,500 employees adopted the "sit-down" strike for three days and won their case for better wages and shorter hours of work. This method was being used for many purposes and in many countries. Among the seamen a "sit-down" strike took place in 1936 with those who were working on the Panama Pacific liner which resulted in a long strike against the International Mercantile Company. In 1937 U.A.W. adopted this method and brought General Motors Corporation to terms. Later on this method was used in other places including hospitals. In 1937 the maintenance and service employees of Brooklyn Hospital engaged in a "sit-down" strike for \$15 to be paid for living outside. They came to terms and settled their disputes. In general the "sit-down" strikes were used either for the increment of pay, or the decreasing of number of hours of work, or discrimination, or speed-up, lay-offs, etc. Different sets of rules were prescribed for those persons who were engaged in "sit-down" strikes, and they were to be followed.

---

<sup>1</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Nonviolence in America (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1966), p. 240.

<sup>2</sup>Joel Seidman, Sit-Down (New York: The League for Industrial Democracy, 1937), pp. 3, 5-19, 22-31.

Under the leadership of Richard Gregg<sup>1</sup> pacifism came to prominence. The old question of conscription received new impetus, the reason for this being that the clouds of war were hovering over Europe, especially the threat of Fascism. Gregg defined pacifism with two assumptions, the first being the creation of a better civilization by the use of non-violent method and the other, a reason for the enlarged task of pacifism. He said:

War is an inherent, inevitable, essential, element of the kind of civilization in which we live... War is the very tissue of our civilization, and the only way to do away with it is to change, non-violently and deeply, the motives, functions and structures of our civilization.<sup>2</sup>

He cited the example of the Briand-Kellogg Pact of Paris to say that even the pledges which were made by the government were not kept so if this method was not practicable then it must be attempted at least. The pacifists who were above eighteen years were asked to sign a written pledge not to take part in any war or support it. Richard Gregg opposed any type of war and conscious or unconscious contribution towards war. With regard to the question of paying taxes to a government which was involved in war, he said that one should continue to pay the taxes unless he completely isolated himself from the society. He further goes on to say as long as he enjoyed the benefits of the government one needs to pay the taxes. With regard to the question raised about the labor problem, he suggested the use of non-violent methods to get grievances redressed. He did not encourage the use of violence for bringing peace among two fighting people or warring nations and he advised his followers to be calm and peaceful when they were in prison.

---

<sup>1</sup>Richard Gregg, A Pacifist Program in Time of War, Threatened War or Fascism, Pendle Hill Pamphlet No. 5 (Wallingford, Pa.: Pendle Hill, 1939), pp. 1-8, 16-23, 26-30, 57-60.

<sup>2</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Nonviolence in America (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1966), p. 272.

In the same manner, Donald Benedict<sup>1</sup> and others brought forth legislation in 1940 prescribing an alternative to military service and Mulford Sibley<sup>2</sup> and Asa Wardlaw<sup>3</sup> took the initiative in protesting against social segregation in prisons.

After the close of the Second World War, many people witnessed untold miseries and sufferings of the people who had become the victims of the atom bomb on Hiroshima. They were cut to the core in their consciences. They visualized as to how many innocent children and helpless women were burnt to ashes. The after-effects of the atom bomb were indescribable so a Pilgrimage of a Conscience movement started. Maurice McCrackin<sup>4</sup>, a student of Union Theological Seminary, refused to register for the draft in 1940. When he became a pastor, he refused to pay income taxes so in 1958 he was arrested and sentenced to six months imprisonment. His main reason for non-payment of the income tax was, he said, that indirectly he would be helping the government to do what he declared was wrong. He realized that his payment of taxes contributed to the ills which government was implementing.

Abraham Johannes Muste<sup>5</sup> was from the beginning protesting against military preparations even before the dropping of the atomic bomb. Later he organized many industrial strikes in the 1930's. He was the first to use the "sit-down" strike in the struggles of the Congress of Racial Equality.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>2</sup>Mulford Sibley and Asa Wardlaw, Conscientious Objectors In Prison 1940-1945 (Philadelphia: Pacifist Research Bureau, 1945), pp. 42-48.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Nonviolence in America (New York: The Bobbs - Merrill Company. Inc. 1966), p. 307.

<sup>5</sup>A. J. Muste, Of Holy Disobedience, Pendle Hill Pamphlet No. 64 (Wallingford, Pa.: Pendle Hill, 1952), pp. 3-34.

He was a staunch supporter of the following: The Fellowship of Reconciliation, the War Resisters League, the Committee for Non-violent Action, Peacemakers, and the magazine Liberation. He wrote a book called Of Holy Disobedience in which he justified total non-cooperation with the state which was engaged in preparation for war. It was published in 1952 and it became the ground work for the actions of the Committee for Non-violent Action. He advocated that people should not cooperate with the government on conscription. He was willing to go to jail rather than to join the army. Muste said that:

Non-conformity, Holy Disobedience, becomes a virtue and indeed a necessary and indispensable measure of spiritual self-preservation, in a day when the impulse to conform, to acquiesce, to go along is the instrument which is used to subject men to totalitarian rule and involve them in permanent war.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee for Non-Violent Action was formed in 1957 with a dozen members. Albert Bigelow<sup>2</sup> undertook a journey to the Pacific bomb test area in a 30-foot sailing boat. He requested the U.S.S.R., British and U.S.A. governments to stop nuclear tests, but he was arrested and imprisoned. The main reason which compelled him to take this decision was that two of the Hiroshima maidens who were the victims of the atom bomb were brought to this country for operations. They stayed with him for two months. They failed to understand the love that was bestowed upon them by Bigelow's family members. They were thinking of the cruelties of the effects of the bomb but their lives were changed because of the atmosphere of love that existed in his house.<sup>3</sup> So he sought to talk to the President but he was not given a chance to present his case.

---

<sup>1</sup>Staughton Lynd, ed., Nonviolence in America (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc. 1966), p. 334.

<sup>2</sup>Albert S. Bigelow, "Why I Am Sailing Into the Pacific Bomb-Test Area," Liberation (February 1958), p. 4-6.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



The Committee for Non-Violent Action in 1959 organized a demonstration against land-launched missiles near Omaha, Nebraska. During that march, Wilmer Young, an elderly Quaker, was arrested and put in jail. He was sentenced for six months imprisonment and \$500 fine.

In 1965 a large group of Americans signed a declaration pledging "Conscientious refusal to cooperate with the United States government in the prosecution of the war in Vietnam."<sup>1</sup> In 1965 they broadened the statement which included, "Refusal to cooperate with U.S. military intervention in the Dominican Republic, or the affairs of any other nation."<sup>2</sup> By the summer 6,000 signatures were on the declaration. The veterans of the non-violent movement included David Dellinger, Dorothy Day, Ammon Hennacy, Breadford Lyttle, A. J. Muste, etc.

#### In India

The history of non-violence in India dates back to many centuries before Christ. It had its roots in the Vedas and Puranas but the meaning that was attached to it was not the same as it is understood in the present context. "The 'non-harming' or 'non-injury' ranks among the foremost virtues of the Hindu Code expressive of the sacredness of all life."<sup>3</sup> The statement is self explanatory and expresses the Hindu view of life. A great significance is attached to the source of life. Every Hindu at least attempts to adhere to the principle of non-violence and consciously avoids injuring or killing animals. His motive to be non-violent springs from the fact of the sacredness of the life of an animal or an individual. He thinks it to be his

---

<sup>1</sup>Declaration Of Conscience Against The War In Vietnam (New York: published jointly by the Catholic Worker, the Committee for Nonviolent Action, the Student Peace Union, and the War Resisters League, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Benjamin Walker, The Hindu World; or, An Encyclopedic Survey of Hinduism (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 16.

religious duty to cling to the principle of non-violence. Does it then mean that it is commanded by God to rely on the principle irrespective of any situation? If it is understood in this context then it drives us to conclude that there were times when the Hindu Kings did not indulge in war. But there are innumerable instances in which many streams of blood have been flowed and many a soldier has been killed in the war only with the motive of extending ones empire. Non-violence or ahimsa has its own limitations for its usage. Every individual is commanded to practice ahimsa in his life.

We have illustrations where people have carried the principle of non-violence to its extreme ends. If India was dominated by such rulers then it would have been difficult for the people to exist in such circumstances. The Jain Tirthankaras persistantly advocated consciously sticking onto the principle of non-violence or ahimsa. They not only advocated but they also practiced it to the maximum. The name of Verdhamana Mahavira stands out uniquely. It is said of this saint that he was so engrossed in meditation that the forces of nature did not exert any influence on his meditation. It is recorded that almost his body had become a nesting place for the worms and his head had become the palace and breeding ground for lice. It may seem very strange for the Western mind but the fact cannot be denied. Even in the present days, there are some of his followers who scrupulously avoid the killing of animals. Some of the Jain use thin cloth while breathing, they cover their nostrils with the cloth so that they may not breathe in some of the germs. Some of them even sweep the ground before stepping on it. They do this because they think that the earth is filled with germs which cannot be seen by naked eyes. So, before stepping they try to save the unseeable germs. Further it is a practice that no light is burnt in their houses for they are afraid that light would attract some insects and as a result of that attraction

insects come and dash against the light and die. They further advocate that they should eat their dinner before sunset. It is also forbidden for this community to engage in cultivation for by so doing they would injure other animals. Thus we see how concerned they were to save life rather than destroy it.<sup>1</sup>

"In India not to injure does not rise from a feeling of compassion but from the idea of keeping one's self undefiled from the world."<sup>2</sup> It reveals that in following ahimsa compassion was not involved in it but only detachment from the world was advocated. One was not to entangle one's self with the world so as to defile oneself. Benjamin Walker continues to write about ahimsa in these words, "Here is no crusading mission of mercy, no forthsight adventure of loving - kindness, but a neutral, aseptic evacuation from the spirit of the will to hurt."<sup>3</sup> So in this concept of ahimsa we see that it is not motivated by mercy or kindness but it is motivated by vacating the spirit of violence.

Gautama Buddha or Siddhartha was another great advocate of ahimsa. He was not an extremist, however, he commanded his disciples not to hurt or injure people or animals. He did not adopt the principles of the Tirthankaras.

Among the five precepts that are prescribed for Buddhists, the precept of abstaining from taking life takes the first place.

'Taking life' means to murder anything that lives. It refers to the striking and killing of living beings. By 'anything that lives,' ordinary people speak of a living being, but more more-philosophically we speak of 'anything that has the life-force.' 'Taking life' is then the will to kill anything that one perceives as having life, to act so as to terminate the life-force in it, in so far as the will finds expression in bodily action or in speech with regard to animals.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Edward Conze, Buddhist Scriptures (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1959), p. 70.

We read that it is not right to be angry as to kill another person. Further it clarifies that one should abhor killing large animals as more effort is needed to do so. The Buddhists say that there are five factors involved and they are a living being, the perception of living being, a thought of murder, the action of carrying it out, and death as a result of it. Along with this they have also said that there are six ways in which the offense may be carried out, that is, by one's own hand, by instigation, by slow poisoning, by missiles, by sorcery, or by psychic power. The concept of non-violence did receive much encouragement in Buddhism.

The next stage of non-violence moves on to a king born in the Kshatriya family. Intoxicated by the desire to establish a vast empire, King Asoka took his mighty army and conquered the Kingdom of Kalinga. When he was majestically moving as a victorious king he witnessed a pathetic and sorrowful sight which pierced his heart. He saw the maimed bodies of persons in the pool of blood, widows embracing the dead bodies of their husbands, young children holding in one hand the hem of the dress of their mothers and by the other hand they held the hand of their dead fathers, and they were shedding tears to express their sorrow at the death of their fathers. He could hear the groaning sound of wounded soldiers who were about to enter the gate of death. This sight made a tremendous impact upon his mind and it brought about a complete change in his behavior. A king who took pride in the strength of his army was now just imagining and having day-dreams of the sight that confronted him. He wanted to undo the things that he had done but it was too late indeed.

Henceforth King Asoka (ca. 274-232 B.C.) gave up the hope of becoming a world conqueror but in its place he wanted to win the hearts of the people.

He was fascinated by teachings of Gautama Buddha and he became the ardent follower and exponent of Buddhist teachings. He sent missionaries to different countries to preach about Dharma in different places like Ceylon.

He followed non-violence to such an extent that he stopped his hunting expeditions which were so dear to him before becoming a disciple of Buddha. It is also said that he stopped killing animals for the supply of meat to the people in the palace. Thus this great king was brought to the knowledge of Ahimsa as a result of war. He sent rock edicts to different places wherein many precepts of Dharma were carved. In pillar edict V he gives detailed information as to what animals ought not to be killed. If we go through the list, then we will be convinced that he covered almost all the animals of the world.<sup>1</sup>

After this emperor's fervour to preach and practice ahimsa there was a lull in the influence and spread of ahimsa. We read about this principle being fully utilized only during the time of Mahatma Gandhi. It was Mahatma Gandhi who gave a new orientation and a new meaning to the concept of non-violence. Benjamin Walker said, "Gandhi carried ahimsa from the sphere of religion to the sphere of politics."<sup>2</sup> We have already noted the different aspects of ahimsa as interpreted by different leaders and different sects. In the past it was done on an individual basis but Mahatma Gandhi gave a different interpretation and used it as a tool to bring about socio-political changes.

Gregg, in bringing about a comparison of the Eastern and Western concepts of non-violence, has this statement to make:

Perhaps the East, as expressed by Buddha, Hindu ethics, the Jains, Lao-tzii, Jesus and Gandhi, has studied human behavior

---

<sup>1</sup>N.A. Nikam and Richard McKeon, The Edicts of Asoka (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 55-56.

<sup>2</sup>Benjamin Walker, The Hindu World; an Encyclopedic Survey of Hinduism (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 17.

more profoundly than any modern Westerners have yet succeeded in doing. The oriental terminology may be different from ours but that does not make the conclusions less wise. The dense population and prolonged ages of intense social experience of India, China, and other Asian civilizations brought about an insight and realization of the psychological validity of non-violent resistance. Modern development of swift means of communication and transporation, the shocks and sufferings of modern war and totalitarianism and the researches of Western psychology are perhaps tending to have the same effect as the dense population and long-sustained experience of the East, thus may be, preparing the Western mind to realize the same truth.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Gregg admits the anticipated sway of the concept of non-violence to the Western mind. We see its impact being felt within a few years in the United States where it was most effectively used by Martin Luther King to get grievances of the Black people redressed.

---

<sup>1</sup>Richard B. Gregg, The Power of Non-Violence (New York: Schocken Books, 1966), p. 65.

### CHAPTER III

#### NON-VIOLENCE ACCORDING TO GANDHI

Before proceeding on to give a description of the contribution of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi towards non-violence it is helpful to see, in brief, his birth and early education which aided him in attaining such a high position.

Mahatma Gandhi belonged to the Bania caste. He was born at Porbandar in a Divan's family. His father's name was Kaba Gandhi and his mother's name Putlibai. Because his father had high ambitions for him he had planned to give him the best possible education. In India it is education which leads a man to reach the highest pinnacle of the society. Any person desiring or wishing to be great had to be well educated. Education was neither easy nor cheap. It meant hard work. It also meant sacrifice and perseverance. This the family could provide. So Mahatma Gandhi was sent to London for higher studies in law. As a student he was not so intelligent nor impressive. Because of lack of mastery over the English language he could not express freely and practice efficiently.

He returned to India harboring within his breast the highest hopes, ambitions, and ideals to be a great lawyer. He was sincere in his efforts, patient in his dealings and honest in his thoughts. He never even dreamt that he would become one of the leading personalities of not only India but also of the world.

It is rightly said that the greatest catastrophies often produce great men. This was applicable to him. He was called to South Africa to fight for

a case which seemed to make or mar his whole career as a lawyer. It is commonly observed that in the life of man there comes a day to take a decision which would shape, mould, and direct one's life. His incident of railway travel where he was asked to leave the first class compartment only because he happened to be a non-white man, changed the course of his life.

With the humiliation that Mahatma Gandhi experienced in this journey he determined to fight tooth and nail to eradicate the inhuman treatment of the colored people. He devoutly vowed on that day that he would fully utilize the forces both mental and physical, at his disposal to give a solid affront to this disgraceful treatment. He called the meeting of all the Indians and placed the facts before them and sought their cooperation.

He was convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that physical force could not be used under any circumstances for getting justice. He fully evaluated the might of the British and was convinced that if a force was met by another force it would only result in blood shed, chaos and disharmony. He meditated upon utilizing a force that would conquer all the material forces. He decided to use the weapon of non-violence to face the weapon of rifle, machine gun, and bombs. He was inwardly moved that there was more power in the weapon of non-violence than in the weapons that were manufactured for the destruction of mortal bodies. He associated this power with "Soul Power" for he knew that the power of soul conquered all existing powers of this world.

With this as a background it is desirable and helpful to enter the study of non-violence under the following subtitles:

- Principles of non-violence.
- True and false non-violence.
- Political scope of non-violence.
- Spiritual dimensions of non-violence.
- Examples of the method of non-violence as used by Mahatma Gandhi.



### Principles of Non-violence

The basic principles of non-violence, as given by Mahatma Gandhi, are many but it is impossible to cover all of them in this paper; hence, only the salient features are selected. According to him,

There is no half way between truth and non-violence on the one hand and untruth and violence on the other hand. We may never be strong enough to be entirely non-violent in thought, word and deed. But we must keep non-violence as our goal and make steady progress towards it. The attainment of freedom, whether for a man, a nation, or the world, must be in exact proportion to the attainment of non-violence by each.<sup>1</sup>

This statement is self explanatory and reveals the stand the non-violence advocates take. There is no midway between truth and non-violence. The distinction is that either you have to be true and non-violent or you have to be violent and not true. The basis of this is really to be non-violent in word and deed and is derived from the teachings of Jesus Christ as ennumerated in the Gospel,

You have heard that it was said to the men of old, you shall not kill and whoever kills shall be liable to judgement. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgement; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, you fool shall be liable to the hell of fire.<sup>2</sup>

It is said that Mahatma Gandhi derived his inspiration from the Sermon on the Mount. He further says that non-violence should not be used as a cloak, or as a garment when ever it is desirable. On the other hand he says that it is inseparable from our very being.

Non-violence requires a continuous and conscious effort towards the full and complete attainment of the spirit of non-violence. The basic factor that is involved is the principle of self denial when one sticks on to this principle then his whole outlook on life will be transformed. Before

---

<sup>1</sup>Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Non-violence in Peace and War, Vol. I. (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1948), p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>Matthew 5: 21-22. (R.S.V.)

self denial his self forms the center of all activities but after self denial he feels, thinks, and aims for the good of others. This is the highest expression of the soul. It also embraces self purification as far as is humanly possible. "Man for man the strength of non-violence is in exact proportion to the ability, not the will, of the non-violent person to inflict violence. The power at the disposal of a non-violent person is always greater than he would have it if he were violent."<sup>1</sup> In this statement he proves in unequivocal terms the supremacy and strength of a non-violent man over violent man. The difference between the non-violent and violent man is that one has the material force which is perishable and which can only destroy mortal bodies but the other has the spiritual and soul force which is imperishable and indestructable.

He further continues to assert that there is no such thing as defeat in non-violence and still affirms that it is the only true force in life. If it is put in other terms this means that non-violence is inseparable from victory or victory is inherently associated with non-violence.

He equates non-violence with love. Any infringement of love negates the principle of non-violence. The structure and the monument of non-violence is built on the very foundation of love. Just as a building will crumble to pieces if the foundations are shaky and not firm. So also if there is no love in the principle of non-violence then the principle will have no existence. Hence love which is pure, selfless, and outreaching agape forms the basis for the practice of non-violence. Disciples of non-violence should be men of love and affection who will be ready to lay down their lives at the alter of non-violence. They should be men who face death cheerfully, troubles and persecutions

---

<sup>1</sup>Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Non-violence in Peace and War, Vol. I (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1948), p. 111.

ungrudgingly, pains and sorrows patiently. Thus love should dominate every nerve and fiber of the adherents of non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi advocated that by the practice of ahimsa by all men it is possible to establish The Kingdom of God on earth. He was not only a practical man but was also a great thinker. He believed in the original goodness of man. As is possible to train an army by proper discipline so also the army of non-violence can be trained by devoted followers of non-violence movements.<sup>1</sup>

The more he delved into the principle of non-violence the more strength and truth he found in it. He asserts that non-violence is the supreme law and further he goes on to say that all situations can be meaningfully faced by non-violence.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the fact that he had so much confidence in his thought of evolving the principle of non-violence he never hesitated to admit that the source for the real success of non-violence was none other than God. In emphasizing the possible success that can be attained through non-violence he says that without the help of God one cannot conquer the insurmountable difficulties. This goes to show that one needs the unseen help and support of God to put the principle of non-violence into practice that which seems humanly impossible. In him was combined both the human sense of perseverance and also the utter dependence upon God for help.<sup>3</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi not only limits this law as applicable to a particular country or a nation at a particular time but he says that this law is universally true and it is helpful for all nations. This he brought out clearly in the following words:

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

If one does not practice non-violence in one's personal relations with others and hopes to use it in bigger affairs, one is vastly mistaken... Mutual forbearance is not non-violence. Immediately you get the conviction that non-violence is the law of life, you have to practice it towards those who act violently towards you; and the law must apply to nations as to individuals. If the conviction is there, the rest will follow.<sup>1</sup>

Here he clearly brings about the futility of having faith in the ideology of non-violence. He even goes to the extent of saying that it becomes the law of life which should operate in every human being. Mutual tolerance he decries is no substitute for non-violence for it is something which involves some type of coercion. Any coercion negates the true sense and meaning of non-violence.

Non-violence influences others to a very great extent. In order to be very effective it must grow with the individuals. The more an individual practices non-violence the more he will influence others. It means that he has to acquire mastery over his feelings, emotions, and thoughts. Thus by one person's adherence to this principle others are drawn to it. When others decide to practice ahimsa in their life then an army is produced and as it develops it spreads to different nations. Thus it works as a contagious disease spreading from one person to another until all of them realize its greatness and embrace it.<sup>2</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi wanted to experiment with his principles in the Indian context. He thought that India was the most fertile ground for the seed of non-violence to sprout, grow, and come to fruition. Non-violence can be used as the basis for administering a state. He had at the back of his mind many of the problems that confronted the Indian nation. He was conscious of the social ills that were standing as a stumbling block for the progress of that country, the most important being the caste system. He stressed that

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

only when the congress held on to non-violence is it possible to remain non-communal. Further he asserts that non-violence must be practiced as a creed by an individual either when he is in a group or when he is alone. He says that there is bravery in dying and not in killing.

The goal of Hinduism for an individual is to be "one with eternal Brahma" or in other words merging into Brahma whereby individuality is lost. It is with this background Mahatma Gandhi considered his mission to preach and practice non-violence. He did not start with the intention of evolving the principle of non-violence but he was led to it by the prevailing circumstances. His life was inextricably intertwined with the principle of non-violence. He brings together the two elements that are in man which contribute for the good or evil of man. He says, "Man as animal is violent but as spirit is non-violent. The moment he awakes to the spirit within he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards ahimsa, or rushes to his doom."<sup>1</sup> He pinpoints the area from which non-violence emanates. He associates violence with matter and non-violence with spirit. The animalistic behavior of man, he says, is violent. In this statement Gandhi strongly condemns the use of weapons which will result in violence.

Non-violence is not a program or a plan for seizing power, but it is a program of transformation of relationships ending in a peaceful transfer of power. This was said in the context of the independence of India. In this statement is hidden the meaning of transformation of relationship. What type of relationship needs to be transformed? It is evident from the statement that any relationship that results in or advocates violence needs to be transformed. But if one is already practicing the principle of non-violence in his life he need not transform but he should endeavor to cling to the principle most honestly and sincerely.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 311.

The true meaning of satyagraha has its relevance only when the ends and means are just and true. It is not limited to a particular group of individuals but it is for everyone. Gandhi had a dream to establish a society which would live in peace and harmony with one's neighbors. Gandhi does not agree with those who say that the poor and the helpless, the weak and the lame, cannot contribute anything for the national defence. He says that everyone can contribute for the national defence provided they are the practitioners of non-violence. In explaining the strength and power of non-violence he writes these words:

In non violence the masses have a weapon which enables a child, a woman, or even decrepit old men to resist the mightiest government success fully. If your spirit is strong, mere lack of strength ceases to be a handicap.<sup>1</sup>

He experienced the difficulty of defining fully the meaning of ahimsa. Gandhi admits that just as it is not possible to describe God fully so also it is not possible to describe ahimsa. "The first principle of non-violent action is that of noncooperation with everything humiliating."<sup>2</sup> Anything that humiliates a person, involves pain, and pain is as a result of some type of violence. A non-violent person is advised and expected strictly to use love as the main guiding principle. The main sword which a satyagrahi uses is love in its true sense. Non-violence can be practiced by all regardless of age, sex, race, or nationality. It is universal in its character and available freely to all those who ardently desire to follow and practice it at all costs.

He also believed that violence can only be stopped by the grace of God and man cannot fully know the will of God. He accepts the principle that many may die to advocate and implement the principle of non-violence for

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., IIbid., II, 41.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

non-violence as a principle will never die. He was very critical about some of the American friends who said, "... the atom bomb will bring in ahimsa as nothing else can."<sup>1</sup> To this he replied,

This is very like a man glutting himself with dainties to the point of nausea and turning away from them only to return with redoubled zeal after the effect of nausea is well over. Precisely in the same manner will the world return to violence with renewed zeal after the effect of disgust is worn out.<sup>2</sup>

He further states that the finest feelings that sustained mankind have been shattered to pieces by the atomic bomb. War has only one love and that is the love of might. The bomb has destroyed the soul of Japan, but it still needs to be seen as to whether the real victory is won. The very use of atomic bombs for the wholesale destruction of men, women, and children was the most diabolical use of science. He unhesitatingly asserts that only non-violence cannot be destroyed by the atom bomb. He further warns that the world will commit suicide if it fails to adopt non-violence. In order to get out of violence the only way open is through non-violence. Hatred can be overcome only by love, Counter hatred only increases the depth of hatred. He is dogmatic in saying that non-violence neither knows nor accepts defeat at any stage. With this conviction he claims that any nation whose principle is non-violence can never be subjected to slavery even by the atomic bomb.

The highest form of bravery, he says, is for a non-violent man to die without anger or malice in defending his own self or the honor of his women. He does not encourage cowardice. He calls a coward less than a man and suggests that a coward does not deserve to be a member of a society of men and women. In other words those who choose to follow and practice non-violence ought to be men of courage and bravery.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

A non-violent person is asked not to be vindictive for non-violence believes in conversion and not in destruction. If non-violence fails, it fails only because the one who follows or puts it into practice is not well qualified to do so. He continuously emphasizes the principle that where there is ahimsa there is truth and the truth is God. The manifestation of God is invisible but wherever God is, everything is well there. So this leads one to realize that the basis and the foundation of non-violence is God. God, love and truth are used almost as synonymous terms. Any person who sincerely desires to be non-violent must be a man who has faith in God. A man who does not believe in God cannot be a non-violent person. The patience that is needed and the strength that is required to practice non-violence is possible only through the grace of God. The grace of God is available for the person who believes in God.

In appreciating the sacrifice of Jesus Christ he writes "[Jesus-] a man who was completely innocent, offered as a sacrifice for the good of others including his enemies and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act."<sup>1</sup> He had the highest regard and devotion to Jesus. Being a Hindu he did not hesitate to declare openly the greatness of Jesus. He writes about Jesus in the following words, "Jesus was the most active resister known perhaps to history. This was non-violence par excellence."<sup>2</sup> In these words are imbedded the true confession of what he got from the teachings of Jesus Christ. It may not be too much to assert that the very principle of non-violence as conceived by Mahatma Gandhi had its origin only in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Jesus alone set a supreme example before the nations of the world that might of the mighty can be conquered and overcome by non-violence. The life of Christ did influence Gandhi's life to a great extent.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 16.



the very principle of showing love to our enemies is absolutely a new principle for Hindu thought. The Bhagavad Gita advocates to face violence by violence. The theory of loving enemies certainly has its origin only in Christ. As is common for Hinduism to embrace all that it feels good so Gandhi took this principle and gave a Hindu interpretation. He admits that God alone knows the mind of a person so the person ought to do that which his conscience dictates him to do. He further says that if one pays due attention to the inner voice then he does that which comes from God. By so saying he is affirming the philosophy of man being a spark of God. He was convinced that God existed in every man. He did not want people to follow him but he definitely desired that everyone should unquestioningly submit to the soft and tender inner voice.

#### True and False Non-Violence

Whenever we deal with a topic concerning its value and efficacy it is helpful to know from the author's view point why he calls an idea true or false. Mahatma Gandhi was fully convinced that "Non-violence was not a cover for cowardice but it is the supreme virtue of the brave, ... Cowardice is wholly inconsistent with non-violence, ... Non-violence pre-supposes ability to strike."<sup>1</sup> Therefore a coward has no place in the army of non-violence. The brave are called upon to exhibit their valour by facing opposition with non-violence. Non-violence is not to be accepted as the last resort but should be used as the first resort. The person who desires to eschew and follow non-violence does it with the clear understanding that he is capable enough to fight back his enemy with force if called upon but he cannot do it only because he is the follower of non-violence.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., I, 59.

Mahatma Gandhi in stressing the importance and the use of non-violence deviates from the principle when the question of defending one's honor is involved. If one's honor is at stake he advises the use of violence in these words, "He who cannot protect himself or his nearest and dearest or their honor by non-violently facing death, may and ought to do so by violently dealing with the oppressor. He who can do neither of the two is a burden."<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to grapple with Gandhi's views on this subject. Though he advocates the use of violence when the question of one's honor is involved yet in the next few sentences he clarifies his position. The question of using violence to save the honor of one's relations may seem quite contradictory to the principle of non-violence to the Western mind but it is natural for the Eastern mind to fight for protecting one's honor. They prefer death to dishonor. The true meaning of non-violence can be understood in the following words,

One who having retaliation in his breast submits to violence out of policy is not truly non-violent, and may even be a hypocrite if he hides his intention. It should be remembered that non-violence comes into play only when it comes in contact with violence.<sup>2</sup>

This is non-violence as he defined it. It means that any person who is dedicated to non-violence must be sincere in his effort to abide by that principle at all cost. Mahatma Gandhi himself admits of the help that he received from an unseen power to strictly follow the principle of non-violence. The success, that he achieved, is by the invisible power that gave him the tenacity and strength to bear those things which would have been humanly impossible to bear. It is out of his own experience that he grew from strength to strength to lead others to be followers of non-violent

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 99.

principles. He says that there is hope for a violent man to become non-violent but there is no hope for the impotent. He had hoped and dreamt a dream that some day the "non-violence of the weak" would become the non-violence of the brave. He was hopeful that some day this dream of his might become a reality.

The non-violence which is to be practiced by the strong and the brave should not only be a mere policy but it should be a creed or a passion.

A man with a passion expresses it in every little act of his. Therefore he who is possessed by non-violence will express it in the family circle, in his dealing with neighbors, in his business... in his dealings with opponents.<sup>1</sup>

What was it that impelled and compelled him to be so concerned about it?

He saw in the congress that many were not for him nor for his principles.

There were some who were wanting to use this as a cloak to achieve freedom

but this was completely against the conscience and teachings of Mahatma

Gandhi. He was an idealist and an empiricist who practiced what he preached.

He was dedicated to a particular cause and he was willing to lay down his

life for that cause. Any person who is passionately in love either with an

ideology, or with a country, or with anything will be willing to make sacrifices

of the highest order. The supreme sacrifice that one can make is nothing

else than the sacrifice of one's life. Mahatma Gandhi demanded that in order

to be a proponent of non-violence one ought to be prepared to make the

tremendous sacrifice day by day and moment by moment.

The votary of non-violence has to cultivate his capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear. ...He who has not overcome all fear cannot practice ahimsa to perfection. The votary of ahimsa has only one fear, that is of God. He who seeks refuge in God ought to have a glimpse of the atman (the transcendent self) that transcends the body; and the moment one has glimpsed the imperishable atman one sheds the love of the perishable body... Violence is needed for the protection of things external, non-violence is needed for the protection of atman, for the protection of one's honor.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 276.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 335.

So fear becomes one of the main elements which needs to be shunned by any devotee of non-violence. Fear indirectly breeds violence and lack of fear breeds non-violence. A person has fear as long as he is dominated by the sense of attachment to life and this world but when once the attachment is detached the fear vanishes and courage takes birth. Mahatma Gandhi associated fear with flesh and body and he directed the individual to look beyond the visible to reach a higher level of life.

When India was involved in riots Mahatma Gandhi said that non-violence could not be invented at that very moment to quell the riots. He strongly emphasized that non-violence was a gradual and growing process. It could not be produced or invented at the nick of the moment. He strongly opposed the idea of hating goondas. He attributed the birth of goondas to the social disorganization in society. He said that the society was responsible for the creation, production and perpetration of goondas. Therefore it was desirable that the society make a combined effort to transform those people who had become the victims of social evil. He said that the only way to quell riots non-violently would be through the true ahimsa in one's heart. Being frustrated by the slow results of non-violence and by the prevalence of injustice he rationalized the use of violence in the following words, "No doubt the non-violent way is always the best, but where that does not come naturally the violent way is both necessary and honorable. Inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly. It must be shunned at all cost."<sup>1</sup> He calls that sabotage is another form of violence.

By reading the above quoted statement one is naturally driven to the conclusion that Mahatma Gandhi was a rationalist who was trying to defend the cause for his action because he desired to adopt the policy of non-violence whenever it was convenient and profitable to him. He not only calls people to be violent but he calls it honorable to be violent. It this is

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 402.

taken literally then it automatically rules out his principle of non-violence to be followed at all cost. It draws closer to what is termed and called situation ethics. It is the situation that determines the result of a particular principle rather than the inherent quality of the principle. How far this can be stretched is not sure but if taken in the whole context this is not what he actually meant.

He refutes the principle that non-violence advocates must plan in secrecy. Anything that is done in secrecy gives a type of protection and this type of protection is undesirable for the people who practice ahimsa. The ahimsa principle should be open and it must work against many unimaginable odds. Sabotage is the last recourse of the cowards, for all their activities are centered around and generated from hidden places. No sabotage can claim to adopt the policy of non-violence. The main aim of sabotage is to create fear and panic but the main aim of non-violence is to create love, peace, and harmony. Therefore everything that needs to be planned must be open, must be vocal, and must be known to all. The followers of non-violence are called upon to be bold, brave, courageous. Mahatma Gandhi witnessed that he had grown up from youth to seventy six years without giving any room to secrecy. Speaking about India he desired it to be a torch bearer to the suppressed and exploited nations. Unless India determined to adopt the principle of non-violence India could not influence the other nations to adopt this principle. He brought out this statement very clearly in this statement, "India will become a torch bearer to the oppressed only if she can vindicate the principle of non-violence in her own case, not jettison it as soon as independence of foreign control is achieved."<sup>1</sup> He foresaw the danger of rejection in the principle of non-violence after the attainment of the expected results.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., II, 13.

It is observed that one who was dedicated so much to the principle of non-violence accepted the fact of the impracticability of practicing non-violence in this world. Since every word is relative to the user he admits that what may be non-violent for me may be violent for someone else, what may be non-violent at a particular time may be violent at a nother time. He makes this clear by saying that it is impossible to eschew violence in this life for as no line can be drawn between violence and non-violence. For a meat eater it is necessary to kill animals but for a vegetarian it is sin to kill animals. He further continues that it is not right to allow the animals to eat crops during famine. If the people are not ready for the use of non-violence, he commends the use of force in self defence. So when non-violence is to be adopted effectively the people must be prepared and kept ready. If the people are not prepared then the practice of non-violence will not work.

#### The Political Scope of Non-Violence

Mahatma Gandhi's concept of non-violence encompasses a wider field. Any person who enjoys the fruits of a government which is ruling a nation by force is indirectly participating in the violent act of government. If a government is involved in war and if one is not in favor of it he should not only refuse to cooperate with the government but should also refuse to enjoy the fruits and privileges offered by that government. Mere non-cooperation does not exclude one from associating with the atrocities committed by the government. It is only with this conviction that Gandhi did not make use of the privileges which the British government offered him. He said that the responsibility of establishing peace among nations lies greater on greater nations. He proposed two ways of doing this and they were to remove the fear of destruction and disarmament. Greater nations should shun the

imperialistic ambitions of exploitations. Peace can only come when greater nations decide to disarm themselves. Gandhi said, "Democratic government is a distant dream so long as non-violence is not recognized as a living force, and inviolable creed, not a mere policy."<sup>1</sup> Mere policies will not help establish a truly democratic government but the adherence to the principle of non-violence will help build a democratic nation. He rules out the fact that non-violence cannot be implemented in the places where factory civilization exists, because that type of civilization is built upon the exploitation of rural economy. So one has to be rural minded in order to be non-violent.

With regard to legislation he said that those laws which were self imposed by the people upon themselves were non-violent and any laws passed against their wishes were violent. He said that a weak minded person could not be a satyagrahi, but only a strong minded person could be a true satyagrahi. He made a clear distinction between steadfastness and obstinacy. If a person realized that in saying "yes" or "no" he had committed a mistake then he should have the audacity to acknowledge his mistake and rectify. Liberty and democracy becomes unholy by shedding innocent blood. Therefore every democratic country must aim at following the principle of non-violence.

In speaking about race he draws a very gloomy picture. He said that the problem of race could be solved only when the white men decide to accept all men as their equals. He compares white civilization of South Africa with that of Asiatic civilization in these words:

The white civilization in South Africa looks black in contrast with the colored or Asiatic civilization which is comparatively white. If our people remain steadfast and non-violent until the end, I have not a shadow of a doubt that their heroic struggle will drive the last nail in the coffin of Western civilization which is being found out in its true colors in South Africa.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., I, 200.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., II, 24.

He was himself the victim of discrimination so these words flowed out of him spontaneously. He said that if Jesus were born in South Africa today then He would have to live in a ghetto. Mahatma Gandhi had no sympathies for those who knew that racial inequity is evil and yet did not attempt to fight against it.

The only tool that he effectively used to carry out his plans for self purification and also for others to abhor from doing evil was by fasting. At the same time he was of the opinion that even if the world fasted against a principle that he felt to be true then he would not budge an inch from his stand. The argument that he put forward was that if a body of atheists fasted then he might as well had to give up his belief in God.

Mahatma Gandhi had a different concept of socialism. He did not agree with the existing pattern of socialism that was prevalent in some of the socialist countries. The basis on which he refutes the theory of socialism was that it curtailed and hindered individuals' liberty. His concept was that everyone should be given full and complete freedom for full expression of personality. He called everyone thieves in the world and he proved it by giving the illustrations about charging the exorbitant rates for these things which could be sold at a lesser price. He said that India could really be a truly socialist country only when it followed non-violence or ahimsa. Non-violence, he said, was a living force and it must be manifested actively. Mere mechanical adherence would not be of any use; on the other hand putting it into practice day by day gave one the strength and courage to develop non-violence. Non-violence must be the basis for the social structure to be developed in India. Communal ills, political problems, and economic depression could be solved to a great extent by adopting the policy of non-violence. Non-violence embraces love and discards hatred,



malice, and injustice. It also covers the field of even loving enemies. Therefore non-violence should be the foundation for the existence of all nations and societies.

### Spiritual Dimensions of Non-Violence

Non-violence is adopted by an individual by his own choice and it cannot be thrust by an outside force. It recognizes the fact that an individual has the capacity and ability to retaliate and use force but he chooses to use non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi in writing about this writes, "Non-violence is the greatest and most active force in the world. One cannot be passively non-violent... One person who can express ahimsa in life exercises a force superior to all the forces of brutality."<sup>1</sup> He said that non-violence should not only be preached but it should be practiced. He further continued to say that the very existence of society depended upon non-violence. If everyone was violent then there would be no societies nor nations. He did realize that non-violence was a very slow process which needed to be adopted.

Defining the brave, he said that they should not possess the following qualities: They should have no malice, no anger, no distrust, no fear of death, or physical hurt. Non-violence is certainly not for the cowards. Therefore he says that any person who intends to follow non-violence must be a brave man. In speaking about the Satyagrahi Mahatma Gandhi says that he "... is already dead to his body even before his enemy attempts to kill him, ... to die in the act of killing is in essence to die defeated."<sup>2</sup> He did foresee the danger of following this principle. He knew that his life was at stake, and not only his but also of those who followed this principle.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., I, 113.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 318.

People have vainly attempted to make short work of the propounders and followers of this theory for they did not realize that the theory continues to go on even after the personalities have ceased to exist. He did articulate that the non-violence knew no defeat. This was possible only when it was true non-violence and not a make-believe one. A non-violent fighter knows that he is the representative of millions of people who are groaning under some type of burden, be it either social or political.

Mahatma Gandhi was a man who was very religious. He claimed that he derived power and strength from God to put all his plans into action. In emphasizing the religious significance in the practice of non-violence he said,

Truth and non-violence are not possible without a belief in God, meaning a self existent, all knowing living force which inheres in every other force known to the world and which depends on none and which will live when all other forces may conceivably perish or ceased to act. I am unable to account for my life without belief in this all-embracing living light.<sup>1</sup>

His faith in God has been fully revealed in this statement. He attributed his success only to the God who was in him and who was leading him. He further said that only unadulterated non-violence could confound and confuse the tricks of atomic violence put together.

The person who wants to follow and practice non-violence must fully dedicate himself to the cause. He should practice the five main principles and they are: he should not wish ill to others, should not cooperate with any society which is unjust to anyone, be a believer in God, practice to sacrifice everything except honor, and he should be pervaded at all times by non-violence. Only the one who is willing to abide by these should be taken as a member of the non-violent group.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., II, 112.

The two basic maxims of non-violence are: ahimsa is the supreme law, and there is no other law than truth. This leads us to understand that a man to follow ahimsa must be a man of Dharma. It taboos all untruth and violence. The whole thing must be viewed from the angle of family relationship. Just as a person does not wish harm to his fellow men or family members so also the follower of non-violence must love all persons. He said that he had seen some of the non-vegetarians being more kind than the vegetarians.

For the peace brigade he had suggested seven rules and they are,  
The volunteer is forbidden to carry any weapon.

The members must be easily recognizable.

Every volunteer must carry bandages, scissors, needle and thread, surgical knife for rendering first aid.

The art of carrying and removing the wounded must be learnt.

He should have fire-brigade training.

He should know the residents of that area.

He should pray ceaselessly and ask others to pray.<sup>1</sup>

Gandhi not only preached these principles but he also put them into practice in his daily life. He was also, like many other saints, haunted by the same question as to why the righteous suffer and the unrighteous progress in this world?

During the 1947 riots which broke out in India, he felt as though his whole policy was being thrown assunder and that India was immersed in communal fight. India passed through a very critical period of its history where peace did not prevail because of the division of India into India and Pakistan. Mahatma Gandhi was so much pained at the incidents, which took place, that he wrote, "I am in the midst of flames. Is it the kindness of

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 86-7.

God or His irony that the flames do not consume me?"<sup>1</sup> However he was not hopelessly disappointed as to be completely frustrated. When he realized that the communal tension was going to its extremities, he decided to undertake a fast unto death in the year 1948 with the intention of bringing peace and harmony among two fighting communities, namely, Hindus and Muslims. He was temporarily successful in subsiding the tide of communal tension for a few months.

At times he met with defeats and he admitted the cause for his failure as the use of faulty techniques. He said that non-violence was the law which led the world out of chaos and confusion into peace and prosperity. He ardently held on to this principle as his creed. He asserted that ahimsa is infallible. It is interesting to note that he held on to the view that God can choose anyone to get His work done. Any instrument that comes into the hands of God will become a mighty instrument before the sight of human beings. God may choose whomsoever He wills but Mahatma Gandhi observed quite often that God chooses the weak and the frailest to manifest this will. Mahatma Gandhi fully agreed with the concept of St. Paul as recorded in the First Epistle of Corinthians,

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised, hath God chosen, Yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are.<sup>2</sup>

It is an irony of fate that a man who preached, practiced, and lived a non-violent life became a victim of the bullet of an assassin on January 31,

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>2</sup>CI Cor. 1:27-28.

1948. His name will ever be written in the history of India in particular and in the history of non-violent doctrine enumerated anywhere in the world in general. For his name symbolizes strictly the principle of non-violence as taught by the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Examples of the Methods of Non-Violence

Having dealt in detail the philosophical and theological aspect of the principle of non-violence it is desirable and helpful to see its practical application in some of the situations.

In South Africa. Many years before 1906 Indians in South Africa were being treated almost as semislaves. Though originally they came as indentured workers yet by their hard labor and industry they began to compete with the Europeans in trade and business. By 1906 they numbered 12,500 in Transval. In 1906 the Transval government introduced a bill which required every Indian to register by fingerprints. This the Indians considered as disgraceful and humiliating for the criminals alone were to be registered by fingerprints. Mahatma Gandhi organized other Indians and protested against passing this bill. Many were arrested and sentenced to varying prison terms.<sup>1</sup>

The continued refusal of Indians to stop the struggle compelled the Prime Minister, General Jan Christian Smuts to come to terms with Mahatma Gandhi and agreed to repeal the bill, provided the Indians registered voluntarily. Unfortunately the Prime Minister did fail to keep his promise. He not only failed to repeal the bill but passed another law demanding the registration of all Asians.

To make the matters still worse an European judge in 1913 passed a judgement by which the Hindu and Muslim marriages were annulled. This

---

<sup>1</sup>Richard B. Gregg, The Power of Nonviolence (New York: Schocken Books, 1966), pp. 16-17.

infuriated the Indians for it meant that all the Indian children were illegitimate. So this time the women took the lead. Women crossed from Transval to Natal which was forbidden by law. The women were arrested and imprisoned. Men were annoyed so they decided to march on foot to Transval. Mahatma Gandhi informed the government of this decision but the government paid no attention to it.

The insensitiveness of the government to the Indians' demand compelled the Indians to start the march to Transval. About 4,000 men started walking at the rate of twenty five miles a day. During this march Mahatma Gandhi was arrested three times and was released on bail twice and imprisoned once. The rest were also arrested and impounded at the mines and were beaten and ill treated very badly.<sup>1</sup>

This treatment aroused the public opinion all over the world against the South African government. Sensing the danger of public opinion General Smut appointed a committee to investigate which included Mahatma Gandhi and the other two Indian leaders. Indians were not satisfied and they wanted to continue the fight. Unfortunately it was at this time a strike among European Railwaymen broke out. Gandhi realized that it was not morally right on his part to continue the agitation at this time so he suspended the Indian struggle. This was appreciated all over the world, even by his opponents.

General Smuts could do no other thing than to comply with the request of Indians because of their noble behavior at the critical time. Marriages were validated, registration was abolished, and the educated were given the assurance of entering the country. The whole process proved very successful only by the use of non-violence.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

Champaran. The people of Champaran were dominated by the indigo planters, who demanded from the peasants that at least fifteen percent of their land be used for indigo plantations. Besides this they were oppressed by many oppressive exactions and hardships so in 1917 they invited Mahatma Gandhi to go to their place and rid them of this oppression. Mahatma Gandhi immediately proceeded to Champaran without much publicity to investigate the matter. His presence created a sense of fear in the minds of planters who manipulated to influence the district magistrate to issue an order to Gandhi to leave the district. Mahatma Gandhi refused to leave the district.

When he was summoned to the court he pleaded guilty but the magistrate postponed the pronouncement of the judgement. Meanwhile lieutenant - governor issued an order allowing Mahatma Gandhi to continue the investigation. During the course of his investigation governor, after consultation with Mahatma Gandhi, appointed a government commission to inquire and report. The commission reported that the law was unfair and the exactions were unjust. The law was repealed and justice given to the peasants. This was done only through non-violence.

Vykom. In India the society was and is divided into four castes, namely, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, Sudra. The Sudra or the untouchable was treated by all as a thing and not as a living being. He was forbidden to use even the highway which passed through the residential quarters of the Brahmin class. The Brahmins of Vykom for centuries had forbidden the untouchables to use the highway that ran through Brahmin quarters.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the leaders felt that this should be changed so they took few Sudras or untouchables and started marching on that highway. The Brahmins beat all of them mercilessly but the marchers did not retaliate. Police

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-20.

arrested them and they were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. When this news reached other places volunteers poured into Vykom to sympathize and participate in this struggle. Unfortunately they were ordered out of the Brahmin quarters. They stood against the police in rain and in water up to their shoulders, each taking turn for three hours. Finally the Brahmins yielded and threw open the road for the use of all in the year 1925.

Ahmedabad Mills Incident. Ahmedabad is an industrial town in the Western part of India. The workers in the mills were paid very low wages. Repeated requests to the mill owners did not bring any change. The workers appealed to Mahatma Gandhi to help them. Mahatma Gandhi was faced with a great dilemma whether he should take the side of the workers whom he had not personally seen or known or the side of the mill owners who were his friends and supporters. He counselled the mill owners but they refused to accept his advice.

Having failed in his attempt to hammer sense of wisdom into the heads of the mill owners, he advised the workers to go on strike in 1917. He laid down the main principles to be followed when on strike. The strike went on for twenty one days. The first two weeks the principles were strictly adhered to but later on the cooperation began to dwindle. Mahatma Gandhi felt that his revolution would result in a flop. At a meeting he declared "Unless the strikers really continue the strike till a settlement is reached or till they leave the mills altogether, I will not touch the food."<sup>1</sup>

After hearing the statement from Mahatma Gandhi the workers were touched to the core of their hearts. They replied, "Not you but we shall

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 358-362.



FAST... Please forgive us for our lapse, we will now remain faithful to our pledge to the end."<sup>1</sup> But Mahatma Gandhi asked them to be faithful and eke out their living by engaging in some other kind of labor. He said that his fast would continue till the strike is ended.

The hearts of the mill owners melted and they came to some amicable settlement after three days of fasting. The workers rejoiced at their success. Mahatma Gandhi advised the workers not to be elated at the success but to work in cooperation for the success of the mill. The method that he used in order to solve this burning problem was non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi was involved in so many incidents wherein he used non-violence and succeeded in most of them, the most famous of them being the struggle against the British government at Khedda 1916-17, at Barsad in 1923 - against unjust taxes, and at Nagpur in 1927 for the right to parade holding the banner of Indian Nationalist flag.

The greatest all-India non-cooperation struggle of 1921-22 which though proved unsuccessful yet it proved a great source of creating a new sense of awakening among the sleeping masses of India for the attainment of political freedom. The Indians were mercilessly beaten but they never hesitated to continue their struggle. Writing about the ill treatment of Indians by the British soldiers on May 22, 1930, Webb Miller, a special correspondent for the United Press wrote,

My reaction to the scenes was of revulsion akin to the emotion one feels when seeing a dumb animal beaten - partly anger, partly humiliation... One surprising feature was the discipline of the volunteers. It seemed they were thoroughly imbued with Gandhi's non-violence creed, and the leaders constantly stood in front of the ranks imploring them to remember that Gandhi's soul was with them.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 362.

<sup>2</sup>Richard B. Gregg, The Power Of Nonviolence (New York: Schocken Books, 1966), pp. 25-26. quoting New York Telegram, May 22, 1930.

Thus it is observed that in a majority of the cases Mahatma Gandhi was successful in attaining what he wanted by the use of nonviolent methods.

## CHAPTER IV

### NON-VIOLENCE ACCORDING TO KING

Martin Luther King was born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta in a minister's family. His name in the United States is associated with the principle of non-violence as that of Mahatma Gandhi in India. He graduated from Morehouse College in 1948 and received his B.D. degree in 1951 from Crozer Theological Seminary. He received his Ph.D. degree in the year 1955 from Boston University in the field of Systematic Theology. Just before his graduation he was appointed pastor at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. It was during his pastorate at this place that he rose to prominence as a national leader in the year 1955 during the Montgomery bus boycott incident. In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss the philosophical and sociological trends that influenced him to formulate and practice non-violence.

#### Philosophical Preparation for Non-Violence

King was unconsciously being guided towards non-violence. Young as he was, he was filled with desire to rid his suffering community from the deplorable condition to which it was driven by the institution of slavery. Many forces interact upon the minds of the people to lean towards or to be drawn towards a particular ideology. King himself describes as to how, from the very beginning, he was guided to be the apostle of non-violence. The early experiences, both sweet and bitter, leave indelible marks on the minds of people. King had seen the barbarous acts of oppression by the

segregationists. He had seen many Negroes being savagely lynched by Ku Klux Klan; had seen with his own eyes the brutality of police towards Negroes; had read and saw the injustices that were meted out to Negroes. He realized that racial injustice led to economic injustice. During his stay at Morehouse College he read Thoreau's essay on Civil Disobedience and he fully agreed with Thoreau's views on non-cooperation with an evil system.<sup>1</sup>

Though King was studying at Crozer Theological Seminary in 1948 yet he was continuously being haunted in his mind as to how he should try to eliminate social evil. He read 'Christianity and the Social Crisis' by Walter Rauschenbusch which left an indelible imprint on his thinking. He did not accept the volume's thesis in toto, but disagreed on the principle that he was being drawn towards the nineteenth century "cult of inevitable progress." King did not agree with him on the superficial optimism concerning man's nature.<sup>2</sup> He was attracted by the Rauschenbusch concept of the Gospel for the whole man. He was fascinated to read from Plato and Aristotle down to Rousseau, Hobbes, Bentham, Mill, and Locke. He admits that those masters stimulated his thinking.

King decided to spend his Christmas holidays of 1949 studying the life and works of Karl Marx. He was specially attracted by the way in which communism was winning ground. He read and carefully scrutinized Das Kapital and the Communist Manifesto. Because of his early upbringing the idea of material progress without the presence of God did not appeal to him. The communist's ethical relativism did not appeal to him and their adoption of

---

<sup>1</sup>Martin Luther King, Jr., Stride Toward Freedom (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), pp. 90-91.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

violence to get work done was not in accordance to his way of thinking. The totalitarianistic view of communism was dangerous for the individual's full development of the society. In describing communism's emphasis on equality King writes, "Communism in theory emphasized a classless society, and a concern for social justice, though the world knows from sad experience that in practice it created new classes and a new lexicon of injustice."<sup>1</sup>

With his dialectical point of view, combining a partial yes and a partial no, he examined both capitalistic and communistic ideologies and came to the conclusion that neither capitalism nor communism contained full truth but each had partial truth. He saw that capitalism failed to see the truth in collective enterprise and Marxism failed to see the truth in individual enterprise. About the kingdom of God he says that it is a synthesis between individual enterprise and collective enterprise, which reconciles both the truths.<sup>2</sup>

One Sunday afternoon he went to Philadelphia to hear a sermon by Dr. Mordecai Johnson, former president of Howard University. He spoke on the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi in such convincing manner that King was fascinated by Mahatma Gandhi and immediately after the meeting he bought half a dozen books on Mahatma Gandhi.

King admitted that like many people he had heard about Mahatma Gandhi but he never studied him seriously. Especially he was attracted to the concept of Satyagrah. By reading Mahatma Gandhi's books a new truth dawned upon King and that was the view of love for social reform. Previous to this he had thought that the ethical teachings of Christ of the "turn of the cheek" philosophy and the "love your enemies" were only applicable in

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

individual cases and not in dealing with social problems and national conflicts. He paid a glowing tribute to Mahatma Gandhi as "... 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."<sup>1</sup> By further intense study he found the futility of the philosophies which he had so far studied in solving social problems and that the best philosophy for release of the oppressed people was non-violence. About this he writes, "I came to feel that this was the only morally and practically sound method opened to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom."<sup>2</sup>

King's thirst for knowledge was not quenched by reading the writings of different philosophers but he continued to read especially Reinhold Niebuhr's Moral Man and Immoral Society. In this Niebuhr argued that there was no intrinsic difference between violent and non-violent resistance. But Mahatma Gandhi's concept of pacifism appealed to King. The teachings of L. Harold DeWolf and Edgar S. Brightman stimulated King to study more. By 1954 his formal training came to an end and he went to Montgomery not knowing that he would have to rely more on non-violence in the days to come.

Many times individuals become the victims of circumstances. Sometimes circumstances create great people who will lead nations out of crisis situations. Writing about his own experience at Montgomery King writes,

I neither started the protest nor suggested it. I simply responded to the call of the people for a spokesman. When the protest began, my mind, consciously or unconsciously, was driven back to the Sermon on the Mount, with its sublime teachings on love, and the Gandhian method of non-violent resistance.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

Non-violence according to King involved the following basic aspects. It is not a method for cowards but it is a method of the brave and it is the way of the strong. Though it is physically passive yet it is spiritually active; also it does not seek to defeat or humiliate opponents but it attempts to win friendship, love, and understanding. Further, it is directed against the forces of evil rather than persons. King explained this truth thus,

The tension in this city is not between white people and Negro people. The tension is, at bottom, between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. And if there is a victory, it will be a victory not merely for fifty thousand Negroes, but a victory for justice and the forces of light. We are out to defeat injustice and not white persons who may be unjust.<sup>1</sup>

The other basic fact is that non-violent resistance accepts sufferings without retaliation. The adherents of non-violence were asked to avoid not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. The love that is advocated is not sentimental or affectionate emotion but it is a redemptive understanding and good will. In Greek there are three words used for love namely, eros, philia, agape. Eros means the yearning of the soul for the divine. Philia means affection between personal friends which denotes a sort of reciprocal love, that is, the person loves because he is loved. Agape means understanding, redeeming good will for all men. It is an over flowing love which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless, and creative. It begins by loving others for their own sake. It is not a passive love, it is love in action. The followers of non-violence must be convinced that the universe is on the side of justice so that he has full faith in the future. King felt that love, agape, is the only cement which can hold the broken community together. It is realized that there is an unseen power which tries to bring the disconnected aspects of reality into a harmonious whole.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 103.

The Montgomery Experiment in Nonviolence

The opportunity that came to King came as an unanticipated event. It was on December 1, 1955 Mrs. Rosa Parks, a Negro seamstress, boarded the Cleveland Avenue bus in downtown Montgomery. She was tired after her day-long work in the Montgomery fair. She was so tired that she could not physically afford to stand. As per the law of segregation the Negro passengers were to occupy the rear seats and give the front seats to white passengers. As all the seats were occupied a white passenger stepped into the bus. The driver asked Mrs. Parks to get up and give the seat to the white man. To this, Mrs. Parks quietly refused. As a result she was arrested.

Many people have tried to derive many conclusions from this incident. Some said that she was "planted" by the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People (NAACP). But this accusation was totally unwarranted, as the testimony of both Mrs. Parks and NAACP officials have revealed. Writing about this incident King claimed,

Actually, no one can understand the action of Mrs. Parks unless he realizes that eventually the cup of endurance runs over, and the human personality cries out, "I can take it no longer." Mrs. Parks refusal to move back was her intrepid affirmation that she had had enough. It was an individual expression of a timeless longing for human dignity and freedom. She was not "planted" there by the NAACP, or any other organization; she was planted there by her personal sense of dignity and self respect.<sup>1</sup>

The arrest of Mrs. Parks triggered a social reaction and created a type of awakening in the minds of the Negro leaders and community. The leaders thought that some action was needed to show that they were also human beings and they be treated respectfully as human beings. So E. D. Nixon, the signer of Mrs. Park's bond, who was led into this idea of boycotting the buses by

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 44.



Women's Political Council, assumed the leadership of the Negro community.

Nixon called King on the phone and said,

We have taken this type of thing too long already, I feel that the time has come to boycott the buses. Only through a boycott can we make it clear to the white folks that we will not accept this type of treatment any longer.<sup>1</sup>

Rev. Ralph Abernathy, E.D. Nixon, and King decided to call for a meeting of all the ministers and civic leaders the same evening to plan strategy for the bus boycott. King was over-anxious to see that the meeting took place in time and be conducted successfully. The meeting commenced at 7:30 p.m. and H.H. Hubbard led in brief devotions. Rev. L. Roy Bennett explained the whole situation. He called for Montgomery Negro citizens to boycott the buses on Monday. After his speech there were many questions and shouts from many places. Bennett refused to invite suggestions or questions but after forty-five minutes of confusion peace prevailed. After much discussion it was decided that they boycott the buses and the ministers were requested to inform the congregation. They got the leaflets printed and distributed which said,

Don't ride the bus to work, to town, to school, or any place Monday, December 5. Another Negro woman has been arrested and put in jail because she refused to give up her bus seat. Don't ride the buses to work, to town, to school, or anywhere on Monday. If you work, take a cab, or share a ride, or walk. Come to a mass meeting, Monday at 7 p.m., at the Holt Street Baptist Church for further instruction.<sup>2</sup>

The final question that haunted the minds of the Negro leaders who were planning for the bus boycott was what procedures would be adopted to transport the people to their place of work and home. They sought the

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

cooperation of the Negro taxi companies which numbered 18 with approximately 210 taxies. Rev. W. J. Powell was appointed chairman of this committee to contact the taxi companies. The committee reported by Saturday evening that all the taxi companies had agreed to cooperate with the proposed bus boycott. All preparations were made to see that the plan came out successfully. The leaflets which were distributed came into the hands of a white employer of the Montgomery advertiser who printed this in the front page with the intention of keeping the white community informed. But this served as a great media of information to the Negro community.

There was a continuous battle going on in the mind of King: Was the boycott morally ethical and Christian? As he was thinking he wrote,

Something began to say to me, he who accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it. When oppressed people willingly accept their oppression they only serve to give the oppressor a convenient justification for his acts.<sup>1</sup>

All the committee members including King were anxious to see the results with their naked eyes. There were many eyes watching for the first bus to pass through their streets. Mrs. Coretta King, seeing the bus passing completely empty, shouted to King that the bus was empty. Though they had anticipated 60 percent cooperation yet they were overjoyed to see 100 percent cooperation. A miracle had taken place.

Mrs. Parks was found guilty and fined 10 dollars with court cost and she appealed the case. The leaders, after hearing the case, went to organize an ad hoc committee to carry on the work of the bus boycott. King was elected president and Abernathy had suggested his name. King could not decline. He returned to his home and informed his wife of his election and she felt happy.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

At the general meeting King was to speak and each minute King was feeling restless for he did not know what to speak. He was faced with the problem of encouraging the Negro committee to think of their self-respect and at the same time he wanted to give the tinge of Christian love. He was conscious of maintaining an equilibrium between self respect and love. He went to the church which was packed to its capacity and many of the people were outside the church waiting to hear the decision-making statement from the president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA). He explained in detail as to what had happened and then uttered these words,

But there comes a time that people get tired. We are here this evening to say to those who have mistreated us so long that we are tired - tired of being segregated and humiliated; tired of being kicked about by the brutal feet of oppression. We had no alternative but to protest. For many years we have shown amazing patience. We have sometimes given our white brothers the feeling that we like the way we were being treated. But we come here tonight to be saved from that patience that makes us patient with anything less than freedom and justice.<sup>1</sup>

King enumerated the methods that were followed by Ku Klux Klan but he wanted the Negro community to adopt altogether a new method. He said that the method would be that of persuasion and not coercion. He emphasized the use of conscience as their guide. The Christian love must be depicted in all our actions. The words of Christ of loving enemies were reminded to the members. He asked them to love their enemies so that the enemies may be converted.<sup>2</sup>

King was a great orator who swayed the public in whichever way he wanted. He desired that the Black people should be great models for all

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 61-62.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

the people of the world. He cherished the idea that the way in which the Black people conducted themselves in that event would reveal the greatness of Black people. In encouraging them he said that when history is written the historian would admire and say of the Black people that, "There lived a great people who injected new meaning and dignity into the veins of civilization."<sup>1</sup>

This protest of bus boycott continued for a number of days so arrangements were made to transport the people from their residences to their places of work and back. They thought of maintaining a permanent committee to take care of this. Many donations were sent from foreign countries.

It is a pity that most of the rulers, kings, and organizers used the policy of "divide and rule." On January 22, the local news papers announced that the prominent Negro ministers had reached certain conclusions and they were that courtesy be granted to Negroes and certain front seats be reserved for whites and the rear seats be reserved for the Negroes. This they did with calculated design of getting the Negroes back to the buses. But the organizers faced the situation tactfully and the anticipated result fell flat.

King received many many threatening calls from different places and from different people. Almost every day someone warned him that the plans were being made to get rid of him. He was kept reminded of his death almost every day. By the end of January some angry voice said that before next week he would be taken away from the world. Even men of courage would be depressed by continuously hearing threats about their life. King was no exception to this rule. It is commonly observed in the life of saints and great men that when all other helps fail and hopes are shattered, they

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

run to the Rock that is God. King also humbly went to God and offered this prayer,

I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership, and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my powers. I have nothing left. I've come to the point where I can't face it alone.<sup>1</sup>

After uttering this prayer he claimed that he received an assurance asking him to take a stand for righteousness and truth, and that God would be with him. This assurance gave him a new vigor, strength, and inspiration.

His home was bombed on January 30, 1956, when he was at a mass meeting. The news reached him and he asked if anyone was hurt. By the time he came to his house there were hundreds of Black people standing at the verge of breaking into violence. They would have indulged in many violent actions had not King spoken some words of wisdom. His timely words were,

Now, let's not become panicky. If you have weapons, take them home; if you do not have them, please do not seek to get them. We cannot solve this problem through retaliatory violence. Remember the words of Jesus, 'He who lives by the sword will perish by the sword. We must love our white brothers no matter what they do to us. We must make them know that we love them... We must meet hate with love. If I am stopped, this movement will not stop, because God is with the movement. Go home with this glowing faith and this radiant assurance.'<sup>2</sup>

King was charged by some of his co-workers that he was black Judas. But later on Rev. U.J. Field repented for what he had said. In asking people to forgive U.J. Field he pleaded that since they had committed to the way of nonviolence they should forgive him. Non-violence demands not only the refusal to shoot a man but also the refusal to hate a man.

On December 20, the integration order reached Montgomery. On the same day a mass meeting was convened in which the members were explained

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 138.

in detail as to how they should behave in this situation. King, Abernathy and others boarded the bus and took a majestic ride as independent and equal citizens of this free nation. The reactions from the Ku Klux Klan were very harmful, but still the leaders advocated non-violence at all cost.

On May 17, 1955, the supreme court outlawed segregation in public schools. The Negroes had to play a decisive part in the days to come. They were asked to hold on to non-violence. The Negroes determined to stick on to this principle of non-violence no matter what it cost them.

It is an irony of fate that all those people who stood for justice, peace and righteousness, came to an abrupt end by the bullet of an assassin. King was led to Memphis to speak for those people who were oppressed. His plane was delayed by a few hours for someone had informed the authorities that a time bomb had been placed in the plane. He said,

I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter to me now. Because I've been to the mountain top. I won't mind. Like anybody else, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And he's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over, and I've seen the promised Land. I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised Land. So I'm happy tonight. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

It was on that fateful day of April 4, 1968, when King was getting ready to go and speak to the people, he was shot in the neck and he collapsed. Thus a great man with just twelve years of fruitful public life left this world making a great contribution to this nation. He will be an immortal idol for many young people who crave to be free and who desire to set free the suffering humanity. The light that shone in darkness was extinguished by the cruel hands of an assassin.

---

<sup>1</sup>Coretta Scott King, My Life With Martin Luther King, Jr. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 316.

### Success and Failures of King's Method

After describing the ways in which King took part and led his people to victory in the Montgomery bus boycott incident it is the wish of the writer to critically view the philosophy which he expounded. Did King have a philosophy of his own or did he fit the philosophy of others to his own situation? Was he in any way the propounder of a new philosophy or ideology? In order to find out the meaningful answers to these questions in right perspective one has to agree that King did not have his own philosophy as such, but he adopted Gandhian thought and tactics effectively to liberate his own people. Indeed he was very much influenced by the methods which were followed by Mahatma Gandhi and it will not be too much to say that he got his inspiration at least in the later stages of his thinking from Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi also did not think abstractly about the subject of non-violence for a long time in order to evolve this principle; rather, it came as a spontaneous reaction to the oppression of the British government.

The major difference between Mahatma Gandhi and King was that King was wholly given to the ideology of non-violence in all circumstances. He was not like Mahatma Gandhi who advocated violence in certain situations. King was firm in holding on to the principle of non-violence no matter what it cost him. He never budged from the principle and success or failure did not effect his faith in non-violence. There were many opportunities and circumstances which would have called for violent action from others, but King consistently relied on his principle. He attempted fully to put the principle of "turn the other cheek" into practice. This we can observe in many incidents but especially when his house was bombed and the people were at the verge of breaking into emotional fury. Further he gave a spiritual touch to the principle of non-violence in these contexts saying,

I had invited the audience to join me in prayer, and had begun by asking God's guidance and direction in all our activities. Then, in the grip of an emotion I could not control, I said, Lord, I hope no one will have to die as a result of our struggle for freedom in Montgomery. Certainly I don't want to die. But if anyone has to die, let it be me.<sup>1</sup>

The major commonality between both King and Mahatma Gandhi was that both arrived at the principle of non-violence through faith. Mahatma Gandhi many times admitted that God was guiding him in all his actions. He claimed and advocated that any man who wanted to follow the principle of non-violence should have faith in God. In the same manner King also was a man of unswerving faith. It was his faith in God which led him moment by moment when he had to make the right decisions. He always claimed that he got the help from God when all other help failed.

King knew full well that his life was in danger and he was also sure that at any time he might have to leave this world for he did think that there were many who did not like him or his ideology. So he was fully prepared for the worst.

How was this principle of non-violence not so successful in some of the cases in which it was implemented? After a careful evaluation the writer has come to the conclusion that the failure was not due to the weakness of the principle but it was due to the fact of the oppressors' refusing to respect the principle. In order for many principles to succeed there must be often times the respect of the other party to the principle that is evolved. In the case of King, the political authorities involved in a particular place did not see the efficacy of the principle, or refused to accept the importance of the principle which resulted in the failure of the cause for which the principle was used. This was not only true of King but it was also true

---

<sup>1</sup>Martin Luther King, Stride Toward Freedom (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 178.



of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi also did not always meet with success but he met defeat many times, and this defeat he attributed to be the result of wrong strategy used and at the wrong time. Time is important in the implementation of an ideology. Though King did not succeed to the fullest extent, it must be admitted that he became a major source in bringing the Black people to a conscious awakening that they too have some hidden potentialities, which if more fully utilized, will make them men of courage, wisdom, and excellence. King was the unifying force for a common course. He solidified the Black community into a compact whole. Though his services were not available for a longer time, yet he laid the foundation for black awareness among the community which was later on developed for a firmer action in the future.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

After having discussed the principle of nonviolence both specifically and in general, the writer would like to summarize his delineation in these next pages. In the first chapter the writer has attempted to give a historical survey of the subject both in India and in America. The history of nonviolence in America goes back to the times when the Quakers were in prominence. They were very zealous in practicing the teachings of Jesus Christ in their daily life, the most famous of them being John Woolman who was dedicated to the thought that the system of slavery was against the teachings of Jesus. He was employed by a slave owner who wanted him to write but later on he yielded to the demand of his master. This incident kept him worrying for a long time and so he decided to adopt the principle of nonviolence and tried to bring about the emancipation of slaves. He refused to pay taxes as that money was being spent for war. He also advocated the better treatment of American Indians.

The next person who came on the stage of nonviolence was William Lloyd Garrison. In 1838 he was the instrument in the adoption of the "Declaration of Sentiment." He ardently advocated and influenced his followers to fight for the emancipation of slaves. He was also against capital punishment and he said that capital punishment was against the teachings of Jesus and hence it should not be followed by any human institution. He was deadly opposed to war. In 1836 the "New England Nonresistance Society" was formed. The members of this society acknowledged God as their ruler and

lawgiver. They refused to take part in politics and they also did not engage themselves in government service. Though they were ardent followers of nonviolence, yet they did not hesitate to condemn the evil that they saw in high or low places.

Adin Ballou was another advocate of nonviolence. He divided nonviolence into three types namely philosophical nonviolence, sentimental nonviolence, and necessitous nonviolence. He used nonviolence only when it applied to human beings and not when applied to animals. He was opposed to the system of slavery and capital punishment. He was of the view that all these evil systems should be eradicated by means of nonviolence. He was against war. He did not want the government to be involved in war. He cited the example of Barclay and Fell to prove how nonviolence works successfully. He felt that the elected people were arrogating for themselves the power which was not delegated to them.

Henry David Thoreau wrote his essay on Civil Disobedience when he spent a night in jail for having refused to pay the tax. He refused to pay the tax on the grounds that the government was involved in war with Mexico. He believed in the theory that government is best which governs the least. He also said that every individual has the right for revolution.

Wendell Phillips was another man who wanted to villify the individual slave owners. He said that there was no greater sin than the sin of making merchandise of men. He vehemently opposed the Church for remaining silent and giving indirect support to the slave owners. He was of the view that the press and the pulpit were not performing their duties faithfully.

Elihu Burritt was a self educated man who after his work spent much time in studying. He advocated the theory of overcoming evil with good.

He was convinced that there was greater power in passive resistance than in the active resistance. He said that the only way open for the suppressed people to get out of the clutches of the oppressor is through non-violence. Among the anarchists, Benjamin Tucker stands out as unique. He started raising his voice against the system of slavery and also on the right of women to vote. He advocated the nonviolent policy to be followed. He was of the view that the state has no place to exist for it is an institution based on the power and further it is a dangerous invasive agency.

William James was one of the leading personalities of the progressives who believed in the moral equivalent of war. He felt that it was no use preaching against war. He pinpointed the reason for war in the past and suggested that the differences should be solved not by war but by discussion and reason. He believed in the goodness of man and hoped that some day men will understand the significance of nonviolence and establish the reign of peace. Clarence Darrow was called the attorney of the damned. He derived his motivation towards nonviolence by observing the judgments that were passed in the law courts. He felt that the law was too severe and many times were cruel. He advocated that the laws were based on the theory of vengeance and the only force that could win was the force of nonviolence. He further said that the Mosaic law was succeeded by the law of Jesus, so the old law had no place in the modern society.

In 1917 the Women's suffrage came to prominence. In spite of the fact that this country was involved in the first world war, the women continued their agitation for the freedom of vote. They marched to Washington and some were arrested and sentenced to various terms of prison. When the first world war broke out there were many conscientious objectors who opposed this country's involvement in the war. Some opposed because of

political motives and some others because of religious motives. Among them may be mentioned Carl Haessler and Maurice. Maurice refused to take part in the war on the grounds that it was against the teachings of Jesus Christ. He was willing to bear any amount of torture or punishment and would not submit himself to the government order to register for draft. He felt that the government had no right to compel anyone to go to war. He was convinced that what he was doing was right and nothing could change him from doing according to his conscience. He was prepared to die for his faith. Ammon Hennacy was arrested for having spoken against the impending war. He refused to register for the draft and organized the forces to fight against the violent methods. He founded the Catholic Workers Movement in 1933. He advocated non-payment of taxes when the government was involved in war. They also followed the policy of civil disobedience against the preparation for war.

In 1915 the trend of adopting the policy of nonviolence took a different shape. The trade unionists adopted this policy to bring some wisdom to the industrialists. William Haywood assumed the leadership and adopted the nonviolent method to solve the problems and redress the grievances. They adopted the sit-down method during 1936. This method was effectively used in hospitals and industries.

Richard Gregg was a pacifist. He advocated the use of nonviolence to maintain peace and order in the society. He said that the nonviolence helps create a better society, and the war could be avoided only by non-violent methods and not by any other method. He even cited the example as to how the agreements between the nations were floundered and thrown assunder. So he thought that there was no harm in trying the nonviolent method to bring about a social and political change. With regard to the

payment of taxes he said that as long as one enjoyed the fruits of the government he should continue to pay the taxes. He discouraged the use of force to bring about peace among the two fighting forces. Wardlaw and Sibley took the initiative in protesting against racial segregation in prisons. In 1940 Donald Benedict and others brought forth legislation prescribing an alternative to the military service. At the close of the Second World War people began to see the after-effects of the atom bomb. The untold miseries that were experienced by the people who were effected by the atom bomb created a sense of horror among the people. People were touched, so a pilgrimage to conscience movement started. Maurice McCrackin, a student of Union Theological College refused to register for the draft in 1940. He refused to pay the tax on the ground that he would be indirectly helping the government to carry on the suppressible acts. He was imprisoned but he did not bother to change his views. Abraham Muste was protesting from the very beginning against the war preparations even before the dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima. He was instrumental in arranging so many industrial strikes in 1930. He was the first one to use the sit-down strike in the struggle of the Congress of Racial Equality. His famous book Holy Disobedience became the groundwork for the action of the Committee for Nonviolent Action. He advocated people not register for conscription. He was willing to go to jail. Albert Bigelow took a journey to Pacific bomb test area in a 30 foot sailing boat. He suggested that the British, U.S.A. and The Russian governments should stop preparations for nuclear war. His bitter experience with two Hiroshima maidens who stayed with his family for getting operated to rid themselves the after effects of the atom bomb led him to take this decision.

In 1959 the Committee for Nonviolent Action organized a demonstration against land-launched missiles. In 1965 a large number of Americans signed a declaration pledging "Conscientious refusal to cooperate with the United States Government in the prosecution of the War in Vietnam." The main leaders were David Dellinger, Dorothy Day, Ammon Hennacy, Bradford Lyttle, A. J. Muste, etc.

The historical review of nonviolence in India goes back to five centuries before Christ. It was based on the theory that life is precious and they believed that life was given by God. Non-injury to life was and is the code of every Hindu. One must persistently try to not take any life. It was the sacred duty of every Hindu to protect life. They also believed that a man was the divine spark of eternal Brahma. Because God dwells in man so it is not right to kill man or any living being. There are instances in which this has been taken literally and drawn to a far great extent. Though this was advocated to be practiced yet it was never used as a tool to bring about social or political changes until the time of Gandhi.

Jains strictly follow the principle of non-violence even today. Some of them do not even burn the light at night thinking that the light would attract wasps and they would die. Some of them use cloth while breathing, the reason being that they will inhale some germs and thereby commit murder. Some do not even cultivate the land for they believe that in the act of cultivation they will kill many unseeable insects and germs. This indeed is an extreme case. If it is stretched to an extreme point then one will have to leave this world and be an ascetic. Buddhism also advocated non-injury to all living beings but they were not so strict as the Jains. They also advocated the principle of nonviolence. The most famous of the kings who advocated nonviolence was King Asoka who was attracted to the

principle by the horrifying sight that he saw after the Kalinga war. He sent people from one place to another with the gospel of love. But in the twentieth century it received a great impetus as an effective tool in the hands of Gandhi who used it to liberate the Indian nation from the political bondage of British domination.

In the chapter on nonviolence according to Gandhi, the writer observed that when Gandhi came on the political stage of India he saw that India needed so many changes both in the political and social fields. For any man to take a bold stand he had to have the opportunity. For Gandhi, South African Government's ill treatment of Indians came as a golden opportunity to use his organizing ability and wield the Indians into a solid group to represent their case in a combined way so that the grievances could be redressed. He realized full well that to face the British Government with the strength of arms was not possible and it would be a suicidal attempt. So he thought of using the soul force which he thought was more powerful than the material force. Therefore the idea of nonviolence entered his mind. He never did conceive during his student days that he would be one of the staunch advocates of nonviolence. It came as the result of the reaction to the oppression of the British Government. He was not sure that he would succeed, but he did try this method and it did work.

After he succeeded in getting the grievances redressed at South Africa, he was inclined to follow that method to get freedom to the Indian nation. He was very vehement in fighting for the freedom of India. He used the nonviolence method quite often. He did define his method as that which was to be followed by the brave and not by the cowards. He did not subscribe to the idea of deciding anything in secret. He was convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that nonviolence knows no defeat. One of the



inherent qualities of nonviolence was victory. If at all the principle of nonviolence did not work it was due to the wrong and faulty techniques used by him or anyone, he admitted.

He wanted the followers of nonviolence to be truly nonviolent in word and deed and he did not like anyone to be an hypocrite. He also claimed that this law was universal in character and would be helpful to use in any part of the country. He rejected the idea that the lame and the cripple did not subscribe to the national defence, but he said that by being nonviolent they did contribute to the good of the nation. He compared nonviolence with the spirit of man and violence with that of matter in man. Nonviolence demands noncooperation with everything that was humiliating. Humility included suffering and suffering meant a type of violence. He advocated that persons should shun all malice and jealousy from their hearts.

He said that one of the main prerequisites for a man to be nonviolent was to fear God and have faith in Him. No man who does not believe in God can practice nonviolence. He said that the faith in God was a must to be a nonviolent practitioner. Nonviolence should not be used as the last resort but it should be used as the first resort. Nonviolence demands much sacrifice from its adherents. One must be willing to sacrifice everything for the following of nonviolence. The person who is not afraid of anything can be a nonviolent man.

It is sad to read from his own writings that he sometimes advocated violence. Just to protect one's honor or one's family's honor he advocated violence. Not only did he advocate violence but he called the use of non-violence at such time as honorable. It puts one in an embarrassing situation

as to what one should understand by what Gandhi said, for on one hand he advocates violence, and on the other he says be non-violent. It is similar to situation ethics. He was not consistent in his teachings about nonviolence. It was not clarified in any of his later writings or sayings as to what he meant by that. This formed one of the major differences between Gandhi and King.

The use of the principle of nonviolence was recommended only when people were ready for it, and it would not be successful when people were not ready for it. Therefore he desired that an army of nonviolent volunteers be prepared to keep peace in India. Nonviolence was only adopted by the individual's own choice and it cannot be thrust upon an individual by force.

Nonviolence in the political field was helpful and desirable, Gandhi said. Any law which was passed against the wishes of the people should be systematically opposed and it should be withdrawn by the authorities concerned. If one was opposed to a government then he should also stop enjoying the privileges and rights guaranteed by that government. He did not agree with the existing type of socialism because he thought that it was based upon exploitation of the individual. He flatly denied the success of nonviolence in a society based on industrial types of culture. In order that nonviolence should succeed one must have rural thought patterns. Nonviolence, he said, presupposes the ability of a person to defend himself but out of his own individual choice he chooses to stick on to nonviolence. It was not that he was weak and therefore he needed to submit to the oppressor but in spite of the fact that he was strong enough to defend himself he chose to be nonviolent.

In the conclusion some of the incidents in which he was successful in bringing about both political and social changes have been cited. As a matter of fact, the nonviolent policy gradually evolved out of situation and was not a well planned thought principle. Later on it became a thought pattern. The illustration of Champaran shows how the poor and oppressed peasants were relieved of their burden by the use of nonviolence. The untouchables of Vykom were allowed to trespass the highway which passed through the Brahmin quarters, the Ahmedabad mill workers received the fair wages, All India Non Cooperation movement brought the divided citizens of India into a one compact whole. All these problems were solved only by the use of the method of nonviolence. Thus Gandhi did follow and lead his nation to victory by following the nonviolent policy. He did fail in many attempts and incidents and those failures he attributed to the wrong methods, techniques, and procedures he adopted. But he said that he achieved success only by the help of God. He did give much importance to faith in God.

In the chapter on nonviolence according to King, the writer has enumerated the principles and the policies that were adopted by King. He observed that King was destined by circumstances to play a very significant role in this country by following the policy of nonviolence. King was being unconsciously prepared for this role even from his undergraduate studies. But King was never conscious of this. Many times he thought of his suffering community and was bewildered as to what he should do to rid his community of this grave danger but he did not get any answer. King was preparing himself to be the minister of a church.

He was intellectually better prepared to face the situation than Gandhi. King was, from the time he was a student, studying different philosophies of nonviolence. Though he studied many of them he did not fully accept their

theories. He reasoned out and questioned the efficacy of their writings and accepted those which he could reasonably agree with. He tested and accepted only those which he thought would be useful to him in his life. He thought that the extreme ties of communism and capitalism would not help him but they would only give partial truth. He wanted to combine both of them in some proportion and evolve a theory but he was not successful. He did not evolve a theory but he only practiced what he learnt from the Bible.

It is an accepted fact that he was very much influenced by Gandhi and he studied the writings of Gandhi. If a comparative study is made then one recognizes that Gandhi did influence King and his actions to a great extent. It may be that some of the techniques might have been new but the principle was common to both. The main reason might be that both of them relied heavily upon the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is to be admired and acclaimed that King was very consistent in his thought and action of following nonviolence at all cost. He was not a person who would change according to the changing times but he stuck on to his faith in sunshine or in rain. The stormy winds did not shake his faith in the efficacy of nonviolence. At times he was so depressed that he felt quite lonesome and sought the help of God and claimed that God gave him the assurance of his presence.

Just as in the life of Gandhi the incident of South Africa made Gandhi take a firm stand so also in the life of King the incident of Mrs. Rosa Parks made King take a bold stand for the right. He never did foresee the incident. The situation moulded his life. The incident of Mrs. Parks needed a strong man who could wield the oppressed community into a compact whole and claim for them the rights and privileges. He knew the danger of getting involved in such affairs, but he deliberately and willfully chose it as his bounden

duty. Indeed he had to face many hardships and difficulties and still he bore them all patiently. He bore them with hope and courage that some day his men will triumph and victory would be theirs, and he did live to see that day when he could majestically take the front seat of a bus and travel as a respectable gentleman in Montgomery.

He did say that people who had no faith in God could not follow and practice nonviolence. It is observed that in all his speeches he took the name of God and he quoted the Bible verses and used those Bible verses for keeping the people informed of their responsibilities as the children of God and followers of Christ. He did not want them only to listen to the words but he wanted them to put them into practice. He was a social and religious reformer. At times when people were at the verge of breaking into emotional frenzy, he reminded them of the words of Christ and tried to subside their passions. He said that his fight was not against the personalities but it was against the principle. He, many times, said that his struggle was not against white brothers but it was against the evil practice of segregation. He did advocate the forgiving spirit be cultivated among the followers of nonviolence. He wanted the black community to be non-violent and do only that which God wanted them to do. He even forgave those who called him "black Judas."

Thus King did infuse a new life among the Negro community and brought them together and solidified them in such a manner that they would put forth a combined force to fight for their freedom and justice. Unfortunately the light of his life was extinguished in the prime of his life by the cruel hands of an assassin. His principle of nonviolence is still being adhered to by his followers.

### Comparison of Gandhi and King

The present writer will note again the similarities between King and Gandhi in their use of nonviolent method in bringing about social and political changes. First, both men were devoted to their religion, and they claimed that they relied on their faith for using nonviolence. Both of them admitted that their success was mainly due to the fact that they were being guided by some unseen power which both acknowledged as God. Both of them basically derived their inspiration from Jesus Christ. Second, both of them were well educated: Gandhi was educated to be a lawyer, and King was educated to be a minister. Third, both of them represented suppressed people, Gandhi belonged to the suppressed nation, and King belonged to the suppressed race. Fourth, both desired and sought freedom: Gandhi sought political freedom, and King sought social freedom and justice. Fifth, King adopted some of the tactics of Gandhi during and after the Montgomery bus boycott. Sixth, both men breathed into their nation and community a new sense of solidarity and oneness which helped them to be united under a common banner, Gandhi was responsible for bringing the whole of Indian people into one solidified group whereby they could raise their voice for freedom and call themselves a nation while King was able to bring the black people into one solidified group whereby they could raise their voice against the oppressors and demand justice. Seventh, both men achieved considerable success and victory while using the principle of nonviolence. Eighth, both men fought against formidable forces, Gandhi against British, colonial government, King against the white power structure in America. Ninth, both men demanded that their followers love their fellowmen and hate evil; they advocated the principle of love and they demanded that they love their

enemies. Tenth, it is with sorrow we note that both men became the victims of assassins' bullets.

The writer will now review the dissimilarities of Gandhi and King noted in the body of the thesis. First, Gandhi lived for a longer period and led his nation for about fifty-five years, while King lived only for thirty-nine years and led his people for just twelve years. Second, Gandhi adhered to the principle of nonviolence only when it suited him, in other words he made use of the principle whenever it was useful to him or his nation, he was not consistent in following his principle but, on the other hand, King was consistent in following his principle in his thought and action. Third, Gandhi created his original tactics which he fit to his country's need; it seems that King closely followed these tactics and principles of Gandhi, for time and again King admitted that he derived the particular methods from Gandhi. Fourth, Gandhi always kept the government informed of his plan and he always planned openly of his action, but this was not true of King. Most of King's decisions were decided and kept in secret, perhaps because of the existing political conditions based on power. Most of the time Gandhi and King were willing to negotiate with the oppressors.

Is Nonviolence Practical in Modern Times

The principle of nonviolence cannot be completely practiced in most contemporary societies. The main reason for its impracticability is that human institutions are based on power and authority. Nonviolence will not completely function in any society based on power and authority. Communists believe in taking what they want by force, and a nonviolent man will only have to suffer and wait patiently until the oppressor gives him what he wants. History has shown that the people before Gandhi and King who have followed nonviolence were not usually successful not because the principle was wrong or faulty but because the oppressor did not recognize the significance of the principle. Nonviolence is not practical unless everyone is devoted to it, because nonviolence in existential situations can be overcome by an oppressor who neither agrees to the principle nor hesitates to use force against its advocates. Therefore nonviolence as a theory is helpful but in practice it will not be successful in a society based on power, whether communist or non-communist. The principle of nonviolence is rendered useless before a society given to violence. Nonviolence has no possible success in a society continuing its violence.

Further, nonviolence is based on the assumption that man is basically good. But this assumption raises some serious doubts and questions in the mind of the writer. The doubts are if man was essentially good then why does so much evil exist? The questions that create doubts are if man is essentially good then why so much hatred, jealousy between nations and individuals? Why is there so much blood shed in this world? Why are millions of dollars being spent for war preparations? Why are so many young lives being sacrificed at the imagined and misdirected altar of patriotism?



Why again, the present writer asks, why all of these if man was essentially good? Because of the prevailing conditions in this world, the writer is too pessimistic to believe that man is essentially good. Therefore, the negative human conduct in society is uncongenial with the practice of nonviolence.

There is always the danger and the possibility of misinterpreting the nonviolent policy as a weakness. The nonviolent policy according to Gandhi and King was to be followed only by the brave. They did not advocate this policy to be followed by the cowards. It is to be followed and chosen as the first resort and not as the last resort. The oppressor, however, might think that the oppressed person is adopting this policy only because he is weak and helpless. But this may or may not be a fact. It is this fear of misinterpreting nonviolence as weakness which will encourage some nations to adopt the violent policies. For it is the desire of the nations to show their strength and valour, and power, which they may also assume necessitates a violent policy.

Further, nonviolence demands much sacrifice from its adherents which most of the people are not willing to make. So much sacrifice renders this principle too difficult to be followed and practiced by all people. Mankind generally does not wish to make sacrifice which will effect his position or place in the society. In order that nonviolence be adopted as the principle for a nation, the nation would have to make such a great sacrifice, but this might lead another nation to conquer and subjugate the nation which is wedded to the policy of nonviolence. This we can see in India alone. Gandhi advocated nonviolence as long as the British were there but, after the British left, India was faced with bringing about the integration of different independent states into one compact whole. When persuasion failed he did give his consent for the use of force to bring the different states into Indian

Union. Places like Hyderabad and Kashmir still stand out as unique examples. The nation as such was not willing to follow the nonviolent policy. Do the foregoing statements mean that there is no hope for this world to follow a nonviolent policy? The writer does not wish to leave the reader in despair nor does he himself desire to be without hopes. The writer would ask the following and last question: in this contemporary society, is it possible for one to strictly follow the principle of non-violence? For some it may seem impossible for others it may seem possible. But the writer is of the view that only if the following conditions are created are there chances of using this principle universally: first, if the society is organized and remodelled on the basis and the foundation of love rather than on the basis of power as it exists today; second, if the oppressor is somehow made to understand the futility of exploitation and made to recognize the power and importance of the principle of nonviolence; third, if all nations voluntarily agree and consent to adopt the policy of nonviolence as their creed and agree to disarm and stop war preparations; fourth, if the masses of people are enlightened and educated and trained in the principle of nonviolence; and fifth, if people are led to make any amount of sacrifice to adopt nonviolence. If these conditions are fulfilled then the principle of nonviolence can be successful, but existing social contexts do not give even a ray of hope that there might be any chance of fulfilling all these conditions. Since it does not seem to be possible to bring about these changes, the writer feels that as a principle nonviolence is good but in practice it renders one helpless in this society. Therefore if nonviolence is adopted, it is sure to end in practical defeat. It may appear temporarily that progress is achieved through nonviolence, but ultimately violence seems a necessary contributor to the world's social change.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ballou, Adin. Christian Non-Resistance in All Its Important Bearings Illustrated and Defended. Philadelphia: J. Miller M'Kim, 1846.
- Bennett, Lerone, Jr. What Manner of Man. Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company, Inc., 1964.
- Burritt, Elihu. Thoughts and Things at Home and Abroad. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Co., 1854.
- Conze, Edward. Buddhist Scriptures. Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1959.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Buddhist Thought in India. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1962.
- Declaration of Conscience Against the War in Vietnam. New York: Published Jointly by the Catholic Worker, The Committee for Non-violent Action, the Student Peace Union, and the War Resisters League, 1965.
- Fischer, Louis. Gandhi and Stalin. New York: Harper Brothers, 1947.
- \_\_\_\_\_.ed. The Essential Gandhi. New York: Random House, 1962.
- Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand. Non-violence in Peace and War, 2 Vols. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1948.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Non-violent Resistance. New York: Schocken Books, 1951.
- Goldman, Emma. "Anarchism: What it Really Stands For." Anarchism and Other Essays. New York: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1910.
- Gregg, Richard B. A Pacifist Program in Time of War, Threatened War or Fascism. Pendle Hill Pamphlet No. 5 Wallingford, Pa.: Pendle Hill, 1939.-----
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Power of Non-violence. New York: Schocken Books, 1966.
- Hennacy, Ammon, ed. Two Agitators: Peter Maurin - Ammon Hennacy. New York: The Catholic Worker, 1959.

- James, William. The Moral Equivalent of War. New York: American Association for International Conciliation, 1910.
- King, Coretta Scott. My Life With Martin Luther King, Jr. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1969.
- King, Martin Luther, Jr. Stride Towards Freedom. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958.
- Lynd, Staughton, ed. Non-violence in America. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1966.
- Marx vs. Tolstoy. A Debate Between Clarence S. Darrow and Arthur M. Lewis. People's Pocket Series No. 157. Girard, Kansas: Appeal to Reason [ca. 1910].
- Miller, William Robert. Non-violence. New York: Association Press, 1964.
- Morgan, Kenneth W. The Religion of the IHindus. New York: The Roland Press, 1953.
- Muste, A. J. Non-violence In An Aggressive World. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Of Holy Disobedience. Pendle Hill Pamphlet No. 64. Wallingford, Pa.: Pendle Hill, 1952.
- Nanda, Bal Ram. Mahatma Gandhi. Boston: Beacon Press, 1958.
- Narayan, Shriman, ed. The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, 6 Vols. Ahmedabad: Navajeevan Publishing House, 1968.
- Nikam, N.A., and Mekeon Richard. The Edicts of Asoka. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966.
- Phillips, Wendell. "Philosophy of the Abolition Movement." Speeches, Lectures, and Letters. Boston: James Redpath Publisher, 1863.
- Prabhavananda, Swami. The Spiritual Heritage of India. London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1962.
- Seidman, Joel. Sit Down. New York: The League for Industrial Democracy, 1937.
- Selection from the Writings and Speeches of William Lloyd Garrison. Boston: R. F. Walcutt, 1852.
- Sharma, D. S. The Gandhi Sutras. New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1949.
- Sibley, Mullford, and Wardlaw, Asa. Conscientious Objector in Prison 1940-1945 Philadelphia: Pacifist Research Bureau, 1945.

Testimony of William D. Haywood Before the Industrial Relations Commission.  
Chicago: I.W.W. Publishing Bureau, [ca. 1915].

Thoreau, Henry D. "Civil Disobedience." A Yankee in Canada With Anti-Slavery  
and Reform Papers, Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866.

Van Doren, Mark. An Anthology of World Poetry. New York: Albert and  
Charles Boni, 1929.

Walker, Benjamin. The Hindu World, or An Encyclopedic Survey of Hinduism.  
New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968.