

T H E

A L B E R T

E I N S T E I N

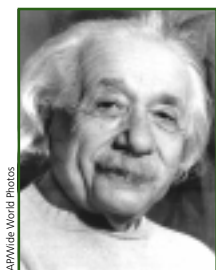
I N S T I T U T I O N



Advancing the study and use of
strategic nonviolent action
in conflicts throughout
the world.

Albert Einstein was deeply concerned about war, oppression, dictatorship, genocide, and nuclear weapons. He was willing to explore new approaches to confronting these problems of political violence, although he was not always happy with the choices available to him. At various times he was a war resister, a supporter of war against the Nazi system, and an advocate of world government. In his later life, he became enormously impressed with the potential of nonviolent struggle. When asked in 1950 what message he would like to share with the peoples of the world, he replied: “We should strive to do things in [Gandhi’s] spirit: not to use violence in fighting for our cause....”

Today, the Albert Einstein Institution continues work on that aspect of Einstein’s thought, examining the potential of nonviolent struggle to resolve the continuing problems of political violence.



AP/Wide World Photos

COVER PHOTO: Pro-democracy protestors rally in Bangkok against military-controlled government, May 1992. **CREDIT:** Impact Visuals



“Solidarity” demonstrators in Poland, 1987.

Today, more than ever before, people are turning to methods of nonviolent action to fight for democracy and human rights. Around the world groups are discovering that nonviolent struggle can be an effective alternative to both violence and submission to injustice.

People armed with “nonviolent weapons”—such as economic boycotts, mass demonstrations, strikes, political noncooperation, and civil disobedience—helped defeat a coup d’état in the former Soviet Union, brought down Communist regimes in eastern Europe, undermined the legitimacy of the Chinese government, and helped dismantle the system of apartheid in South Africa. “People power” is transforming the global political landscape in unprecedented ways.

Unlike military warfare—predicated on the rigorous study of past battles and supported by billions of dollars worth of military infrastructure and weapons—the history of nonviolent struggle is primarily one of improvisation and spontaneity. People employing nonviolent struggle often must base their decisions on anecdotal information, political manifestos, or just plain guesswork. Lessons learned by one generation have rarely been passed on to the next. More often than not, nonviolent struggle movements feel like they must “reinvent the wheel.”

The need for analyses of nonviolent action is great. Conflicts involving nonviolent struggle are often severe, the opponents frequently ruthless, the costs at times quite high. However, through better understanding of the particular dynamics of nonviolent action, wise planning, and careful strategic judgment, the risks to nonviolent resisters can be reduced, and the effectiveness of their actions and chances of success can be dramatically increased. The Albert Einstein Institution is dedicated to this task.

The Goals of the Albert Einstein Institution

The Einstein Institution is committed to the defense of democratic freedoms and institutions and to the reduction of political violence through the use of nonviolent action. It is dedicated to examining how freedom, justice, and peace can be achieved without sacrificing one to the other.

The immediate goals of the Einstein Institution are to understand the dynamics of nonviolent action in conflicts, to explore its policy potential, and to communicate this through print and other media, translations, conferences, consultations, and workshops. The long-range goal of the Einstein Institution is to strengthen the technique of strategic nonviolent action to be an effective alternative in conflict and defense.

Nonviolent Action

Nonviolent action provides a way of acting effectively in a conflict without the use of physical violence. Its use empowers population groups by giving them the means to resist oppression and injustice.

While nonviolent forms of struggle do not kill, injure, or destroy, they undermine an opponent's social, economic, political, and military power by withholding and withdrawing the pillars of support required by an adversary to maintain its position and to achieve its goals.

Rejection of a regime's legitimacy may weaken and destroy the loyalty and obedience of the population. Economic boycotts and strikes can disrupt a regime's economic power. Political noncooperation may nullify oppressive government policies. Disaffection and mutiny of troops facing nonviolent resisters can limit a regime's military might.

Nearly two hundred methods of nonviolent action have been identified and, without doubt, scores more exist or will emerge in future conflicts. Through these methods, or "weapons," of nonviolent action, people engage in conflict by doing—or refusing to do—certain things without using physical violence. As a technique, nonviolent action therefore is not passive. It is not inaction. It is action that is nonviolent.



Selma to Montgomery March, 1965.

The Institution's Programs

The **Policy and Outreach Program** aims to provide, upon request, the best resources to date on the use of strategic nonviolent action directly to groups involved in or preparing for acute conflict. By preparing and disseminating needed materials, supporting translations, and conducting consultations and workshops (among other activities), the Policy and Outreach Program seeks to help increase the skill, competency, and effectiveness of democratic nonviolent movements to achieve liberation from dictatorships and civil, political, or economic oppression. Further, the Program aims to assist governments and societies to consider “civilian-based defense” policies—strategically prepared and organized policies of nonviolent noncooperation and defiance—to defend and protect their democratic gains against both foreign aggression and internal attack.

The activities of this Program are based on the premise that the greater the knowledge among participants and leaders about the nature, dynamics, and strategic principles of nonviolent struggle, the greater the chances those nonviolent movements will be able to act skillfully and effectively.

Recent projects include “jungle” workshops with Burmese pro-democracy groups, intensive ten-day courses with Tibetan leaders and activists, a book-length Tibetan translation with a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, anti-coup consultations in Thailand, civilian-based defense presentations in the Baltic states, and the development of materials on strategic planning.

The only grants program of its kind, our **Fellows Program** is deepening insights on the dynamics of nonviolent struggle and is contributing to the development of a solid literature for further examination. The Einstein Institution Fellows Program supports individual researchers studying the history, characteristics, and potential applications of nonviolent action. It also supports practitioners in the preparation of accounts, documentation, and anal-



Filipinos block tanks during 1986 “People P



Gene Sharp, director of our Policy and Outreach Program, conducting a workshop in Manerplaw, Burma, October 1992.

ysis of their experiences in the use of nonviolent struggle. Awards are granted on an annual basis (see our website for application procedures).

Einstein Fellows projects include a study of the 1943 *Rosenstrasse* protest, the only incidence of mass German opposition to the Nazi effort to exterminate Jews; an analysis of the national and local civil rights movements in Birmingham, Alabama; an examination of the rise and collapse of nonviolent campaigns in the Kosovo conflict; a participation observation study of “nonviolent accompaniment” in Sri Lanka; and an analysis of nonviolent rebellions in Asia and Africa since 1979.



“Power” uprising.

The Einstein Institution’s **Publications/Media Program** publishes a newsletter and a monograph series, as well as conference reports, pamphlets, and occasional papers. The Institution is an underwriter of the major documentary film *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict*. The Institution has also sponsored the editing of a major encyclopedia on nonviolent action titled

Protest, Power, and Change and an annotated bibliography of English-language books concerned with nonviolent action titled *Nonviolent Action: A Research Guide*.

Other books and monographs published include *Resistance, Politics, and the American Independence Struggle, 1765-1775*, Walter Conser, Ronald McCarthy, David Toscano, and Gene Sharp (eds.); *Civilian-Based Defense in a New Era*, by Johan Jørgen Holst; and *Civil Resistance in the East European and Soviet Revolutions*, by Adam Roberts.



NONVIOLENT FORMS OF STRUGGLE HAVE BEEN USED THROUGHOUT HISTORY

- Plebeian withdrawal from Rome to secure reforms, 494 B.C.
- American colonial economic and political boycotts, 1765-1775
- Hungarian national resistance to Austrian rule, 1850-1867
- Women’s suffrage movement in the United States, 1913-1919
- Indian independence movement from the 1920s to 1947
- Ousting of the Martínez dictatorship in El Salvador in 1944
- Norwegian, Danish, and Dutch resistance to occupation by Nazi Germany

How You Can Help

There is still much more ground to cover. Your support is crucial as we look to the future. We cannot underscore enough the importance of learning from past conflicts and the power of sharing information on strategic nonviolent struggle—information that gives people in extremely difficult situations the tools to evaluate and choose effective alternatives to violence.

We invite you to explore our web site at www.aeinstein.org for more information on our work. Together we can deepen our understanding of realistic nonviolent alternatives to war and violence and offer crucial support to people striving for their democratic rights and freedoms.

Funding for our work comes primarily from individuals and private foundations. Incorporated in 1983, the Albert Einstein Institution is a publicly supported nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. To make your tax-deductible contribution or to obtain information about the Institution's work, please contact:



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THROUGHOUT HISTORY, IN CONFLICTS AS VARIED AS:

- Civil rights movement in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s
- Czechoslovakian resistance to the Soviet-led invasion and occupation, 1968-1969
- Solidarity movement in Poland, 1980-1989
- "People power" revolution in the Philippines that brought down Marcos, 1986
- "Velvet" revolutions of 1989 against Eastern European regimes
- Key aspects of the South African struggle against apartheid

HISTORICAL EXAMPLES

Mission Statement

The mission of the Albert Einstein Institution is to advance the worldwide study and strategic use of non-violent action in conflict. The Institution is committed to

- ▶ defending democratic freedoms and institutions;
- ▶ opposing oppression, dictatorship, and genocide; and
- ▶ reducing reliance on violence as an instrument of policy.

This mission is pursued in three ways by

- ▶ encouraging research and policy studies on the methods of nonviolent action and their past use in diverse conflicts;
- ▶ sharing the results of this research with the public through publications, conferences, and the media; and
- ▶ consulting with groups in conflict about the strategic potential of nonviolent action.



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