

# NONVIOLENCE

*Today*

This magazine  
is printed on  
recycled paper

- Action
- Letters

- Reviews
- National Gathering

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## Editorial Collective

We hope *Nonviolence Today* will promote nonviolence in a broad sense. It is strictly nonprofit and all editors donate their time and use of personal resources. The editors for this issue were Jan, Janelle and David. We hope you will continue to support our efforts to promote the understanding and practice of nonviolence.

# Wanna Edit a Magazine?

This was a difficult editorial to write (apart from the fact that we hardly ever have editorials). This will be the last issue of *Nonviolence Today* from this editorial collective. There, I've said it.

You have probably noticed that issues of *NvT* have been getting further apart of late. We don't want the magazine to just fizzle out. "What's the problem?", I hear you ask. Well there are a number, but we think a major one is that we, the editors, no longer have the right contacts. Many of our friends who used to feed us reports of actions have grown up and decided to have children or join monasteries, or have otherwise withdrawn from the front lines. Heck, we've done it ourselves (well two out of three of us). Of course we are very grateful to our regular contributors (you know who you are) and the new contributors who have found us from time to time. But as someone complained recently (in a good-natured way) we've started to look like a reprint of Peace News. The proportion of original Australian content has seriously dwindled and while much nonviolent action is still happening around Australia, we seem to receive very little about it.

Talking about regular contributors who we haven't heard from in a long time; if you are interested to know what Robert Burrowes and Anita McKone are up to, see <http://uq.net.au/~zzdkeena/anitarobert/>.

Our own website at <http://uq.net.au/~zzdkeena/NvT/> now has a local search. You can perform full-text searches of issues back to *NvT* #15, July 1990 (when we started keeping electronic copies).

Much nonviolence idea-traffic now goes on the internet (which is not a bad thing), and Friends of the Earth and others are doing a fabulous job with their own newsletters and journals. But we are sure that there is still a place for a bimonthly (or quarterly) Australian magazine (paper or electronic) that reports on and examines nonviolent actions and theory without being tied to any particular issue. We

once joked that we'd publish an article by the gun lobby if it was about their use of nonviolent action.

So, with great difficulty, we have come to the conclusion that we are like parents who are too poor to feed their child, and must give it up for adoption. And hey, after 15 years maybe we deserve a rest.

A little history. The first issue of *Nonviolence Today* was published, under the name *Groundswell*, in October 1982, by a group of people in Melbourne, Judy Baker, Kathy Brouillette, Adrian Donkers, Michael Lockwood and Patrick Nuzum. Neil Huybregts joined the collective with issue #3. The idea for a magazine/newsletter for the Australian nonviolence network came out of a national gathering of nonviolent activists held in Canberra in August 1982. At that time the Tasmanian Wilderness Society had just publicly announced its intention to nonviolently blockade the construction of the Gordon-below-Franklin dam. 2,600 volunteers and 1,300 arrests later, the dam was stopped in July 1983. Hoorah!

The intention was for the publication of the magazine to be passed to a different group each year, at the national gathering. Darryl Bellingham brought it to Brisbane for 1984 where he, John Murray, Dianne McManus and Gordon McAllister put out #6. Jan McNicol, Jerry Smith and Elizabeth Borland joined with #7 and Gary Renwick with #10. Various of the people mentioned above, were involved in producing various issues, with John Murray being the prime mover until #17.

At the 1984 national gathering (which was held in February 1985!) no one was forthcoming in offering to take over *Groundswell* and the Brisbane collective agreed to produce it for another year. With #15 in August 1985, Janelle Briggs, David Keenan and Damian Ritchie joined, John, Jan and Jerry. Eventually the collective was reduced to Janelle, David, Jan and Jerry with Damien and several others helping with collating and mailouts from time to time (thank you all).

In March 1988 what would otherwise have been *Groundswell* #30 was renamed *Nonviolence Today* #1 with the hope of attracting a wider audience. Today we have subscribers in 13 countries, but alas we only have 100 subscribers in all.

Jerry continued until April 1994 (*NvT* #37) after which the collective attained its present form, with just Jan, Janelle and David.

So, we are hoping that some group will come forward to continue publishing this wonderful magazine. The main requirement apart from contacts, time and enthusiasm, is a computer. We will give the new editors every assistance possible. If no one is forthcoming by the end of the upcoming ANN Gathering we will give a pro-rata refund to any subscriber who asks for it and donate the remaining funds to a charity of our choice. Thankfully the magazine's problems do not include financial ones.

We hope to hear from you soon.

David Keenan,  
for the *NvT* editorial collective.

**NvT**

# Nonviolence Gathering in Brisbane, 21-25 April 2000

## Special Focus:

Limiting uranium mining and the nuclear industry in Australia. What's the best contribution ANN can make?

## Ongoing Focus:

Building relationships and networks between nonviolent activists + a social time

## Preliminary Ideas

Margaret Pestorius, Louise Finnegan, James Langley and Bryan Law had talks over Easter last year about how they would really like to see a national nonviolence gathering in 2000. This proposal arises from them, and is available for change/refinement/additional contributions. The thinking so far is:

## Venue

Brisbane is a city which has a long tradition of nonviolent social and political organisation. There are a number of groups/activists which can assist in with a nonviolence gathering, and sufficient activists to form a core of attendees. We felt that venues, panel speakers, and support from institutions would be available to facilitate a successful nonviolence gathering.

At the same time Brisbane is on the central east coast of Australia and can be accessed without too much difficulty from other cities and states. Special attention will need to be paid to supporting activists from WA and SA. Activists from NT will gain some advantage over previous venues.

## Anti-Nuclear

All of us felt that with Jabiluka coming onstream, and the US Pangea corporation singling Australia out as the preferred nuclear dump for the world a nonviolence gathering could play a useful part in the national anti-nuclear movement.

Brisbane has a specific and useful history of involvement in anti-uranium and anti-nuclear activities from the late 1950s on. There was a vibrant and popular movement in the late 70s, with over 400 arrested at King George Square on World Anti-Uranium Day 1977. Yellowcake was especially exported through Brisbane by the Bjelke-Petersen government because it was then too hard to do in Sydney or Melbourne.

Like so many instances in Queensland activists at this time were forced to defend even the most basic civil liberties of association, speech and dissent. The anti-nuclear movement continued in Brisbane with a peace and environment fleet during the 1980s, and is still active today, noticeable mainly through the Jabiluka campaign.

We felt we could merge both the venue and the special focus theme by setting aside a morning session where 'historical' activists could present the story of nuclear protest in Brisbane from the 1960s on. We're proposing to approach Drew Hutton to help us contact and organise a good selection of activists for this session.

The afternoon of that day could be used for reports from other parts of the country (and perhaps an international speaker) about what's happening now in the anti-nuclear movement with a focus on key needs and projects.

After these information sessions, and some time for thinking/feeling, we could hold a session in which activists could suggest/discuss/plan a useful contribution by ANN to the national movement.

## Other Issues

**Welcome to Country** from traditional owners. Bobby Anderson to be approached for advice/assistance. (we need to include appropriate recognition of indigenous interests and perspectives in all our sessions)

**Reconciliation** lots of nonviolence activists have been active in this area over past few years, perhaps a session, or include in story-telling sessions

**Community Safety** Pt'Chang has been an outstanding initiative coming from Victoria. Anthony Kelly to be approached to run a session on this

## Time-tabling

At present the suggestion is for two 'business' sessions a day in the morning and afternoon over three days, with evenings available for organised or other social activities including one grand informal dinner in the vegan/vegetarian manner.

One session will need to be welcoming/housekeeping/getting to know each other (Saturday morning?). If three sessions are taken up for anti-nuclear (all Sunday & Monday morning?) that leaves two business sessions available for community safety and reconciliation (Saturday afternoon and Monday afternoon). Story-telling Saturday night? Dinner Sunday night? Suggestions please.

Local contacts to make & look for help from: Manon & Jason Ph 3844 2287, James & Louise Ph 3217 2005.

Bryan Law

**NTV**

# Violent Pro-logging Mob Riot at Goolengook Bush Camp

**Monday, 21 February 2000, 2:00**

Two indigenous Aboriginal elders and forty supporters, largely activists involved with the campaign to save East Gippsland's rare old growth forests, arrived in a working coupe. The elders were there to present loggers or DNRE officials with notice that those working in the coupe were breaking international criminal law by clear felling ancient forests.

When the protesters arrived, the three forestry workers tried to drive off, with people on their car. Action escalated and blows were exchanged. An hour or two later, attending DNRE officials were served with eviction notices and genocide charges by the elders present. Later that day the chief forester for the Orbost region Gary Featherston, rang GECO, an activist centre in the nearby town of Goongerah, in a panic. He mentioned the notices served earlier that day had been passed along to him. Speculation is that by this time Orbost was firing up to riot in the bush. Rumours began to reach Goongerah that afternoon.

What follows is the most comprehensive eyewitness account we've managed to put together thus far as to what happened after that. Times are reasonably accurate, but should be taken as estimates. The police are outraged, and the victims involved are cooperating with the CIB. We have been informed that they are looking for thirty to forty men and boys, expect to identify most of them, and expect some of them to be serving in prison after a lengthy court process.

The charges have been raised from "Afray," which means "violence to cause fear in the people," to "Riot," which involves three or more persons acting with common purpose, using force to stop opposition, and alarm reasonably courageous people. As you will read in the account below, the forty men made a concerted effort to bash their opponents and scare the crap out of people who have been known to jump all over bulldozers

and climb fifty meter trees, and could certainly be described as at least reasonably courageous.

The elders involved in Monday morning's serving of criminal genocide notices have spoken out in support of the activists who were involved in the incident, denounced the industry tactics as part of a 200 year campaign of terrorism, and are meeting with Regional Chief Forester Gary Featherston Friday afternoon.

The camp at Goolengook is being rebuilt and reoccupied, with support and donations coming in from environmental centres across the country. Metropolitan environment groups are meeting with ministers and government agencies looking for positive ways to stem the rising tide of violence in the bush throughout Australia.

Everyone involved in the incident is suffering high degrees of post traumatic stress. Wounds are healing slowly and help is appreciated.

## **Composite Eyewitness Account Summary** (times are approximate)

On the night of Monday, the 21st of February, 2000, there were four people at the base camp on Goolengook road. Two were asleep in personal camps away from the main camp, and two were sitting around the fire at the communal kitchen.

## **9:30 pm**

A tip rings GECO to say approximately ten utes, with people hanging off the back, were hooning towards the camp from Orbost. Someone rings the cops from GECO.

## **10:30 pm**

Four women and five men leave from GECO for camp in a Land Rover belonging to an independent journalist, who was driving.

## **11:30 pm**

The first ute arrives at Goolengook base camp, checks out camp for a minute and speeds off again.

## **11:35 ish**

An Orbost Sergeant rings GECO, on the road and bound for Goolengook.

## **11:50 pm**

Jinker, a dog at camp, heard the loggers sneaking up on the camp and alerted the two in the kitchen. One grabbed the axe and both ran down a nearby road. Some of the mob gave chase but lost them in the bushes. The mob trashed the camp. The first structure they encountered was the kitchen tarp. Most equipment was smashed and axes were used to destroy the pots, camp ovens etc. Sinks, burners, benches, gas bottles etc., all were hurled down into a deep gully. The remaining three structures were reduced to a pile of wet, dirty and mostly destroyed remains.

Our radio and solar panel communications, our personal bedding and gear, tools, tarps, tents, a Holden car, push-bikes, library and maps, a motorbike etc. were sledgehammered, slashed, and thrown into the gully. An estimated \$30,000 worth of damages was sustained. A private camp was found across the Goolengook River from base camp, and trashed.

#### **11:55 pm**

The Land Rover receives a call from GECO that the cops are on their way

#### **12:10 am 22.2.00**

After a twenty minute search of the bush, the mob find a Canadian tourists' camp up the hill.

They slash through his tent wall by swinging weapons and pull him out by his hair, shaking him like a rag doll, kicking and beating him, dragging him to the road about fifteen metres away. There they beat the shit out of him with a variety of weapons-metal rods, thick sticks, etc. They demand answers and insult him but cool off a bit when he yells at them that he is a Canadian tourist. The tourist involved estimates that he was surrounded by twenty-five men and more around them, none of whom he can identify. He is chased back toward his tent and beaten a bit more, then speeds into the old clear fell further from the road as soon as possible, and hangs out there until they leave.

#### **12:35**

D24 (the police) called GECO to tell us that camp's been trashed. An Orbost Sergeant shows up at Goolengook with a recent recruit in one vehicle. They had passed a row of vehicles, and recorded all the number plates. From further down the road (towards camp) about fifty men (and youths) armed with sticks, crow bars and the like march past their car. The police make a tactical decision to stay in the car while the mob passes, about twenty of whom they recognise. The Sergeant is freaked out and calls Bairnsdale instead of Orbost cops.

#### **A bit later**

About four utes going south from camp pass the Land Rover going north on Goolengook Road. The Land Rover films the

utes leaving. The journalist decides that he can't see the plates properly unless he films from outside of the car. He stops the Land Rover on Goolengook road at Monster Valley, about five kilometres south of the camp, and gets out. The rest of the utes stack up on the road, and everyone in them jumps out and approach angrily. The journalist gets hit on the back of the neck and loses his glasses as the mob starts to chase him and his camera. Audio footage but only a short image survives.

One woman climbs out the back and is immediately punched in the side of the head and falls to the ground. Then she escapes around the vehicle and into the blackberries, falling down into Monster gully. The mob, beer cans in hand, circles the car and starts to smash the headlights etc. with wooden stakes, metal poles, picks, mattocks, pitch fork, etc.; physically assault everyone, and make verbal threats.

They proceed to smash in the Land Rover's windows. A man climbs out the window to rescue the woman out there, and is punched to the ground and kicked. The mob open the drivers door of the car, bending it backwards, and pull one woman out. She is surrounded, abused, and hit until she makes her way back into the car where one of her friends is calling her. The mob threw punches through the windows, jumped on the roof, threw rocks through the windows, and smashed everything. They ripped the windscreen off and threw it into the front, hitting one man on the bridge of the nose, and shattering on his face. This same man is then hit with a crow bar across the temple.

Another man in the front is being hit with iron bars on the head, hand, and knees. He is seen bleeding from the mouth, forehead, and hands. The mob is rocking the car and threatening to tip it in the gully with people in it. One man in the mob says "give them a camera, give them anything" to two people in the car, yelling "quick quick, they're gonna tip it." Eventually he's handed a stills camera from the car, which is shown to the mob, who seem slightly mollified despite it being the totally wrong camera. The mob continue smashing and rocking the car.

The occupants of the vehicle were then forcibly marched from the Rover. They were marched to the ditch and told to kneel with their heads down whilst the mob walked up and down the road hitting and spitting on everyone. Meghan is kicked in the solar plexus, women and men were sexually threatened. Ted was punched, Kate is hit in the head and pushed into the gutter. Justin was kicked in the guts. Then they said to Star "Look at the poofter. I bet he takes it up the arse". There was constant verbal and physical abuse and told if they weren't out in twelve to forty-eight hours they'd be dead and to "tell all your friends not to come back here, or we'll do you like we got your mate up there." They pushed the car on its side and said "It's only the beginning. Do you understand?" They then told us to keep our heads down. The loggers rounded up to the call of "logger boys". Another vehicle arrives and though they thought it might be the cops it is their last vehicle and shortly later they all leave. Two people bolt down the road towards camp, shortly followed by a third. Everyone else gathers to recuperate, do first aid on the man who was bashed in the car, and winch the Land Rover upright.

#### **12:50 am**

A Senior Constable of D24 called GECO for names and dates of birth of people at camp.

#### **12:58**

GECO calls cops to make sure our rescue vehicle is ok.

#### **1:02 am**

Cops call GECO say nine cops out there and CIB is on the way. Asks us to tell the Land Rover to turn back because camp is now a crime scene.

#### **1:30 am**

A Constable rings GECO to say the loggers have left camp and presumably are headed to Orbost. Further, the cops have set up road blocks to stop the utes, presumably to search them. They believe the Land Rover will be safe. We suggest they check.

#### **1:56 am**

Cops alerted GECO of the possibility of the ute convoy coming up the main road

towards Goongerah. They advise us to evacuate the house. Kids, adults, and resources are evacuated from GECO, and the community ...s alerted.

### 2:00 am

One man who had bolted down the road (five kilometres) to the policeman's car, convinces the cops to search for the man who was beaten. The victim is found near his camp site with visible wounds.

### 2:50 ish am

Once the land rover is uprighted, another person sets off on foot for the camp, leaving five at the Rover. Two policemen from Bairnsdale arrive at the Land Rover, claiming that they are trying to find the missing people. They examine some injuries and call an ambulance.

### 3:00 am

A local policeman visits GECO. He tells us he will sit in his car further down the highway, and will alert us if the mob arrives. He tells us that one camper had definitely been beaten, possibly two. He further informs us that cars were trashed, drivers were hurt, that two campers were missing, a firearm had been sighted, and that ambulance drivers were on the way to camp.

Two cops from nearby Bairnsdale arrive at the Land Rover from the south (highway).

### 3:30 ish

A policeman takes the worst victim from the top camp, the Canadian tourist, to the Land Rover, and collects one of the wom-

en walking towards the camp.

The other continues walking.

### 3:50 am

The local policeman and two others update GECO - they have found the worst victim at the Land Rover, report serious head wounds but won't tell us who. They say they are "treating him as serious, but he's sitting up talking." Cops report eleven people, who they claim are all people at the camp and the Land Rover, accounted for, give an estimate of fifty loggers, and claim twenty have already been identified, presumably by the Orbost Police Officers. The Canadian tourist who was beaten at the main camp requests that the ambulance drivers examine him and they don't. The victim inside the Land Rover is taken to hospital in ambulance.

### 8:00 am

Two CIB investigators arrive at the Land Rover. They tell everyone not to touch anything.

### Tuesday afternoon

The cops ring GECO to say seven people at camp and four at the Land Rover need a lift back.

Five people go out to Goolengook in the GECO truck. The journalist, the Canadian tourist, and a young mother of two, all of whom were involved in the incident, are driven back to Goongerah by the police, who download a copy of the journalist's footage at the town hall. One person then leaves GECO to take the tourist to the hospital and pick up the man

who was beaten in the Land Rover. He fails to receive treatment and returns to Goongerah to stay with a local qualified nurse.

When the GECO truck gets there the CIB investigators are still at camp, collecting all three totalled vehicles for fingerprinting. Footage of the crime scene, with the chief investigator from the CIB, is taken. Five people leave camp, visiting the hospital in Orbost on the way to GECO. Seven people remain at Goolengook, fall back into a smaller camp with a watch. They have no police help, no radio, and no vehicle.

### Wednesday afternoon

First contact with the remaining people at camp. There are eleven people there by now, several having returned from elsewhere. The last of the injured people are being examined by doctors and counselors today in Orbost.

### 2 March.

Over the past week camp has been totally rebuilt and is bigger and better than ever. There is a constant presence in the forest. The CIB are heading the investigation and investigating charging the mob with 'riot', a prisonable offence and a jury trial.

The latest news is that DNRE have begun roading on Goolengook road, seemingly ignorant or exploiting a sensitive situation.

We are desperately in need of people, funds, and equipment to carry on the campaign to stop the logging of East Gippsland's Old Growth forests while dealing with the repercussions of this incident. Please come to East Gippsland, or send your donations in a car full of your friends.

Contact GECO on 03 51540156

Donations in the form of gear (tarps, food, blankets, etc.) can be dropped at Friends of the Earth in Melbourne (312 Smith St, Collingwood). Ph 03 9419 8700. Car pooling is being arranged from the forests desk at FoE.

Jeff Foy

NvT

# A European Adventure in Nonviolence

Participating in the For Mother Earth Peacewalk from The Hague to Brussels in May, 1999, was a challenging experience during which I was often beyond my comfort zone. The event followed the Hague Appeal for Peace - a huge conference of at least 8,000 participants, so the walk, with anywhere between 260 and 500 people was a welcome relief from huge jumbles of anxious and enthusiastic peacemakers jockeying for position.

It was intended to form the basis of a citizen inspection team at NATO headquarters, checking up on their nuclear capabilities, but with the war in Kosovo raging, it also became clear that we wanted to bang loudly on NATO's door to urge a stop to the bombing.

People from thirty-five countries were involved, including large groups from Russia and Rumania, for whom translations were always required. Towards the end of the two week walk we were joined by over 200 Indian farmers including about twenty women, who were heading for Brussels to protest against companies producing genetically modified food. That made for an interesting overlap of issues as they were also opposed to India's nuclear tests last year.

It was considered important to maintain nonviolence, by whatever definition, not only for our goal to challenge NATO, but along the way, as we passed through the relatively supportive Netherlands countryside, into less welcoming Belgium, and to facilitate harmonious living within our own community. To me, the journey was as important as the destination. Affinity groups were established, and morning and evening circles helped information to flow relatively smoothly, with excellent hand signalling being utilised.

Rest days were largely used for planning actions and for workshops training in nonviolence. About twenty of us from

various countries agreed to work out two sessions of two and a half hours each, so that everyone would have the opportunity of at least a five hour introduction to theory and practice of nonviolence. What a challenge that was! Lots of different models were blended, to make sessions snappy and relevant. People were often tired from walking up to thirty kilometres daily (sometimes more - ouch!), and we were of many ages and cultures! Many of the West Europeans were anarchists, committed to peace, but not necessarily experienced in nonviolence. After the Indians joined us and suggested that we all form lines and go forward for arrest in waves, Gandhi style, there were mutterings that Gandhi hadn't invented nonviolence. That suggestion was not followed. And the usual differences emerged about property damage, or not. Go limp on arrest, or not; familiar issues.

We experimented with lots of role plays in small groups, and a huge preparatory one, including the whole camp, while the police helicopters were buzzing around, the day before entry into Brussels. It had been made quite clear via the media that the Mayor had made it very obvious that we were unwelcome in his city! Finding 'lodgings' for five hundred people was not easy, and was not arranged until the day of our arrival. We were bedded down on classroom floors at a Catholic school, with our wonderful kitchen crew pitching their cooking tents on the paved court-

yard, ever ready with the food for the arrestees at all hours. All vegetarian and organic, with vegans catered for.

Of course, on the day, at the gates of NATO confronted by a massive force of uniforms and vehicles and horses, nothing went according to our best laid plans. But it was crucial for the solidarity of the group, and for our strong intention to behave nonviolently, that we had practised together - at least across the language and cultural divides, we had some common understandings of our shared aims and the methods we wanted to employ.

I've never faced water cannon before. It was scary. Luckily it was a hot day! Some people including me didn't mind getting wet, but our Belgian friends told us that the first serve was not heavy pressure. Nevertheless, it flattened us to the ground. It was when a second water cannon started positioning itself from another side, closing in on us, that I felt really anxious - like a trapped (and drowning) rat! Of course, there were specially erected barbed and razor wire fences all round, lined with Darth Vader-like police, brandishing shields and, I discovered later, with pepper spray at the ready, plus mounted militia coming from another side to squash us into a smaller and smaller area for arresting purposes. What to do?



Well, let's dance, was what came to my mind. Having done the Elm Dance in a variety of situations, I know how difficult it is for arresting officers to do their business while people are dancing! Fortunately, my women's affinity group had practised the Elm Dance along the way, and a German woman had composed some English words to suit our situation. She had also speeded it up somewhat from the meditative model I was used to. Very quickly, more than 250 activists had formed into two large circles to Elm Dance while the militia looked on, rather stunned. The water cannon stopped its approach, and no one was arrested for the entire duration of the dance. It went on and on. We were hot and thirsty. But we kept dancing, until we really needed a change for our own benefit! So we changed to another song and spiral danced to that.

When the arrests eventually commenced, they were relatively gentle, compared to what the Europeans expected, and we had lots of time to dialogue with the arresting officers.

From the outskirts of the city into the centre, the convoy of about twenty deadly looking vehicles with cherry lights flashing and sirens blaring must have

given the locals the impression that some really dramatic catastrophe had occurred. But in such a highly militarised city, maybe they're used to it.

Over the next two days, the Belgian police and NATO military learned quite a lot about nonviolence as there were over four hundred administrative arrests - a scheme whereby arrestees are taken into police custody for twelve hours, but no charges are laid. So no recourse to courts, no satisfaction of a legal challenge. In fact, my second arrest was in the company of fifty others, for getting off a tram!

We were heading for Honeywell on that occasion (one of the companies which manufactures the deadly depleted uranium shells, using Australian uranium, no doubt), intending to plant sunflowers - symbol of disarmament - and before we even arrived at our destination, we were swooped on in a raid like something out of the movies! Surrounded in a flash! Another twelve hour administrative arrest. The thought police in action.

When a journalist asked the senior officer what we were being arrested for his reply was chilling: "This is a war zone. No one interferes with NATO."

We learned that the Mayor of Brussels had declared that, "There will be no manifestations in Brussels today." So, all suspects were rounded up. Many police confessed that they didn't like doing it, but were merely following orders. Now, where have we heard that before?

Later, I put in a formal complaint to our Embassy, asking them to take the matter up with the Belgian government and with their colleagues. It is worrying that in a democratic state that such powers are accorded to the mayor who can give orders to clear the streets of 'undesirables' at whim. Obviously NATO is a sacred cow in Brussels.

The Peacewalk was mostly very enjoyable, and successful in maintaining a strong commitment to nonviolence. For Mother Earth is an impressive group, based in Ghent, Belgium which has organised many walks for peace which contribute towards the creation of a culture of peace, although outcomes are difficult to measure.

Contacts: [international@motherearth.org](mailto:international@motherearth.org), <http://www.motherearth.org/>

*Jo Vallentine*

**NvT**

## Trident Ploughshares

Thirteen arrested as Activists Blockade Nuclear Bomb Store Early this morning, (13 August 1999), ten people were arrested as they blockaded the gates of Coulport Naval Depot near Glasgow, where nuclear warheads for the British Trident nuclear weapons system are stored. The action began shortly after 7:30 am, when six activists arrived at the gate already locked on to each other with tubes. This blocked the entrance as the shifts were changing.

As four of them were arrested and moved to the side of the road, four other people linked up with them to show support and solidarity. The heavy-duty cardboard tubes caused the police considerable difficulty in extricating them in order to take them into custody. Tigger MacGregor of Oxford, a fellow campaigner who was

present at the scene, explained "Once again the wrong people have been arrested. The real criminals are the heads of nuclear states who retain their nuclear arsenals in defiance of international law."

While the blockaders were diverting the police, another activist attempted to enter the base by cutting through the fence. He was arrested and held in custody.

Three activists were arrested for action at the North Gate of Faslane Naval Base at 12:45 pm.

Those arrested came from Finland, Germany, Ireland, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Through these actions Trident Ploughshares is continuing to support international law in an open and accountable manner.

These actions are the first stages of the two week Trident Ploughshares summer camp. Next events: Friday 13th August - Street action in Argyle Street Precinct Glasgow, with street theatre, music and exhibition. Photo opportunity at 2 pm in Precinct opposite entrance to St. Enoch Centre. Saturday 14th August - Rally at North Gate of Faslane Naval Base 10am. MSP Tommy Sheridan will join protesters in an hour long programme of speeches, dancing, music and street theatre. This will be followed at 11 am by a variety of direct actions against the base.

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**NvT**

# Baltimore Plowshares Activist Gets Jail

## Who

In 1973, Philip Berrigan, Elizabeth McAlister and other anti-war activists founded Jonah House, a Christian resistance community. Over the years community members have been involved in protests against U.S. government policies.

Michele Naar Obed of the Jonah House joined with three other activists, calling themselves the Jubilee Plowshares East, in disarming a fast-attack submarine at Newport News [VA] Shipbuilding on Aug. 7, 1995. Federal Judge Rebecca Beach Smith of Norfolk, Virginia convicted her of conspiracy to damage government property on May 17, 1996 and sentenced the activist on Sept. 6, 1996 to an eighteen-month sentence and three years probation. When released from prison in November 1997, Baltimore's federal probation office would not permit Naar-Obed to return to the Jonah House, claiming it promoted ongoing criminal activity.

She decided to challenge this decision by returning to Jonah House, and federal marshals arrested her on June 21, 1999. On June 22, Judge Smith sent her to jail to await a July 28 probation revocation hearing. As some fifty supporters sat in court for the revocation hearing, a court official announced a postponement, probably an attempt to break up the support.

Nevertheless, the hearing was rescheduled and Ramsey Clark, the former US Attorney General, represented Michele Naar Obed. He argued that the defendant stayed in touch with probation officials and was not a fugitive. Judge Smith was not swayed by the argument and sentenced the defendant to one year in jail for violating her probation.

## When & Where

Thursday, July 29, 1999 at 10:30 am, Federal court, Norfolk, Virginia

## Why

The judge is extremely conservative in a very militarized jurisdiction. In previous appearances before judge Rebecca Beach Smith, Naar-Obed has suffered her wrath.

When Smith originally sentenced Naar-Obed, she placed her on three-years probation and threatened her with a return to prison if she so much received a traffic citation. When she sent Naar-Obed to jail on June 22, 1999, she justified her treatment of the penniless peace activist by saying she was a danger to the community, she flaunted probation and she publicly advocated civil disobedience. She was then held on \$50,000 bail, with a host of conditions for release, including one which would require her not to go on talk shows.

This time Beach's courtroom demeanor was somewhat subdued, probably because of Clark's presence. While she sentenced the religious activist to a year in jail, she did not order any term of probation. This would allow the religious activist to return to the Jonah House upon release.

In a similar situation, Susan Crane, a member of the Jubilee Plowshares West, returned to the Jonah House against the will of probation officials in Baltimore. However, at her June 16 probation violation hearing in Portland, Maine, Federal Judge Gene Carter permitted her to return to the Jonah House. Crane testified

before Judge Smith on behalf of Naar-Obed, but her testimony was ignored.

Despite the attempt to diffuse the support for the Plowshares activist by canceling yesterday's hearing, some thirty-five supporters were in court, including Bishop Walter Sullivan of Richmond. Bishop Sullivan testified that the Jonah House was a prayerful community and a group that does outreach to the poor.

Speaking before her sentencing, Michele Naar-Obed explained the need to return home to her community the Jonah House: "We choose to live in such a way that calls for us to give away our possessions, to live in community and to take care of each other." She lived in exile for seventeen months, before returning home without permission in April of 1999. She is presently being held in the Western Tidewater Regional Jail, in Suffolk, Virginia.

Michele Naar-Obed's husband Greg Boertje-Obed and their daughter Rachel are back at the Jonah House. The community prays and works together, has a common purse, and has a long history of nonviolent civil disobedience. The community, moreover, is convinced the U.S. government is involved in criminal activity by disregarding international law in refusing to disarm its nuclear arsenal.

*Scott and Reba Mathern-Jacobson,  
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**NVT**

# The Battle in Seattle

*What Was That All About?; Elaine Bernard, a labour and trade expert, sees the beginning of a global civil society.*

Cambridge, Mass. In spite of what you may have read or heard about the anti-World Trade Organisation protests last week, the people on the streets of Seattle weren't opposed to globalisation. Their cause is an example of globalisation, with protests in solidarity with the Seattle actions taking place in many cities around the world. There is just not a version of globalisation endorsed or even envisioned by the WTO.

American media, political elites and corporations seemed startled by the emergence of this powerful worldwide movement of resistance to WTO policies.

From my perspective, it was a phenomenon beyond resistance - it was a first step toward the development of an international civil society.

Analysts have long measured the development of a democracy by the vitality of its autonomous civic life. That's because democracy is more than formal rules and the election of a government. Its lifeblood comes from the sphere of society that organises itself and is not under control of the state. This flowering of "civil society" provides space for debate for the development of public values, and is the process by which a public self, or citizenry, is created.

The protesters in Seattle were creating that space. True global citizens in the making, they demand accountability, democracy, and the right of individuals to have a voice in setting the increasingly important rules of international trade and commerce.

The WTO meeting was merely the place where these people burst onto the American public's radar. Social movements around the world had already linked into grass-roots networks, made possible by the astonishing speed at which they can communicate in the Internet era. Quick and relatively inexpensive international travel enables direct contact between even very small and poor organisations. Im-

migration brings workers from the poorest corners of the world to every major U.S. city. So Americans whose chief contact with the problems of developing countries might once have been writing a charitable check now have a more personal basis for activism: It is no longer charity, but true solidarity.

The WTO is a magnet for the concerns of these internationalists because, since its creation in 1995, it has been the central agency for writing and enforcing new global trading rules. These rules, based on the neo-liberal economic policies of free trade, privatisation and deregulation, are flawed: They value corporate power and commercial interests over labour and human rights, environmental and health concerns, and diversity. They increase inequality and stunt democracy. The WTO version of globalisation is not a rising tide lifting all boats, as free traders insist, but a dangerous race to the bottom.

For example, the WTO says its purview does not include social issues - only trade. So it claims to be powerless to do anything about a repressive regime selling the products of sweatshops that use child labour. Yet let this regime use the same children in sweatshops to produce "pirated" CDs or fake designer T-shirts, and the WTO can spring into action with a series of powerful levers to protect corporate "intellectual property rights." So, it's really not a question of free trade versus protectionism, but of who and what is free, and who and what is protected.

The WTO says that countries can regulate only "product," not "process." But moving beyond the simple regulation of end product and toward regulating how things are made has been an important achievement of the labour, consumer and environmental movements. The difference between a shirt produced under near-slave-like conditions and a shirt produced by union labour under decent conditions isn't readily obvious in the packaged product; we must monitor the process by which that shirt is produced.

These are the kinds of issues that inspired

the Battle in Seattle. So what did the protest accomplish? First, it has put the public back into this vital public policy discussion, which for too long has been dominated by a powerful few in secret meetings.

Second, the protests have illuminated the fact that there is no such thing as pure and simple trade, especially once we start to deal with social programs and government actions deemed to be "non-tariff barriers to trade." As the Europeans have long understood, a common market must have a social and political dimension to it.

Third, the protests have fostered some interesting new alliances: north and south, labour and environmentalist, Generation X and old hands from the 1960s.

There are still significant differences among the wide array of protesters. Some believe the WTO should be abolished; others simply want a seat at its table for labour and environmental activists. Workers in industrialised countries worry about job loss and runaway plants; workers in developing countries fear that labour standards and environmental protection are simply ways to keep their products from getting to wealthy markets.

But that's what makes the emergence of these international advocacy networks so important. They are a forum for debating, negotiating and deliberating global solidarity. They are the beginnings of an emerging international civil society. And as demonstrated in Seattle, they will be heard.

*Elaine Bernard,  
Harvard Trade Union Program  
from: Washington Post, Sunday, December  
5, 1999.*

**NvT**

# How We Really Shut Down the WTO

It's been two weeks now since the morning when I awoke before dawn to join the blockade that shut down the opening meeting of the WTO. Since getting out of jail, I've been reading the media coverage and trying to make sense out of the divergence between what I know happened and what has been reported.

For once in a political protest, when we chanted "*The whole world is watching!*" we were telling the truth. I've never seen so much media attention on a political action. However, most of what has been written is so inaccurate that I can't decide if the reporters in question should be charged with conspiracy or simply incompetence. The reports have pontificated endlessly about a few broken windows, and mostly ignored the Direct Action Network, the group that successfully organised the nonviolent direct action that ultimately involved thousands of people. The true story of what made the action a success is not being told.

The police, in defending their brutal and stupid mishandling of the situation, have said they were "*not prepared for the violence*". In reality, they were unprepared for the nonviolence and the numbers and commitment of the nonviolent activists - even though the blockade was organised in open, public meetings and there was nothing secret about our strategy. My suspicion is that our model of organisation and decision making was so foreign to their picture of what constitutes leadership that they literally could not see what was going on in front of them. When authoritarians think about leadership, the picture in their minds is of one person, usually a guy, or a small group standing up and telling other people what to do. Power is centralised and requires obedience.

In contrast, our model of power was decentralised, and leadership was invested in the group as a whole. People were empowered to make their own decisions,

and the centralised structures were for co-ordination, not control. As a result, we had great flexibility and resilience, and many people were inspired to acts of courage they could never have been ordered to do.

Here are some of the key aspects of our model of organising:

## **Training and Preparation:**

In the weeks and days before the blockade, thousands of people were given non-violence training - a three hour course that combined the history and philosophy of nonviolence with real life practice through role plays in staying calm in tense situations, using nonviolent tactics, responding to brutality, and making decisions together. Thousands also went through a second-level training in jail preparation, solidarity strategies and tactics and legal aspects. As well, there were first aid trainings, trainings in blockade tactics, street theatre, meeting facilitation, and other skills. While many more thousands of people took part in the blockade who had not attended any of these trainings, a nucleus of groups existed

who were prepared to face police brutality and who could provide a core of resistance and strength. And in jail, I saw many situations that played out just like the role plays. Activists were able to protect members of their group from being singled out or removed by using tactics introduced in the trainings. The solidarity tactics we had prepared became a real block to the functioning of the system.

## **Common Agreements:**

Each participant in the action was asked to agree to the nonviolence guidelines: To refrain from violence, physical or verbal; not to carry weapons, not to bring or use illegal drugs or alcohol, and not to destroy property. We were asked to agree only for the purpose of the 11/30 action - not to sign on to any of these as a life philosophy, and the group acknowledged that there is much diversity of opinion around some of these guidelines.

## **Affinity Groups, Clusters and Spokes-councils:**

The participants in the action were organised into small groups called Affinity

Groups. Each group was empowered to make its own decisions around how it would participate in the blockade. There were groups doing street theatre, others preparing to lock themselves to structures, groups with banners and giant puppets, others simply prepared to link arms and nonviolently block delegates. Within each group, there were generally some people prepared to risk arrest and others who would be their support people in jail, as well as a first aid person.

Affinity groups were organised into clusters. The area around the Convention Centre was broken down into thirteen sections, and affinity groups and clusters committed to hold particular sections. As well, some groups were 'flying groups' - free to move to wherever they were most needed. All of this was coordinated at Spokescouncil meetings, where Affinity Groups each sent a representative who was empowered to speak for the group.

In practice, this form of organisation meant that groups could move and react with great flexibility during the blockade. If a call went out for more people at a certain location, an affinity group could assess the numbers holding the line where they were and choose whether or not to move. When faced with tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets and horses, groups and individuals could assess their own ability to withstand the brutality. As a result, blockade lines held in the face of incredible police violence. When one group of people was finally swept away by gas and clubs, another would move in to take their place. Yet there was also room for those of us in the middle-aged, bad lungs/bad backs affinity group to hold lines in areas that were relatively peaceful, to interact and dialogue with the delegates we turned back, and to support the labour march that brought tens of thousands through the area at midday. No centralised leader could have coordinated the scene in the midst of the chaos, and none was needed — the organic, autonomous organisation we had proved far more powerful and effective. No authoritarian figure could have compelled people to hold a blockade line while being tear gassed - but empowered people free to make their own decisions did choose to do that.

#### **Consensus decision making:**

The affinity groups, clusters, spokescouncils and working groups involved with DAN made decisions by consensus - a process that allows every voice to be heard and that stresses respect for minority opinions. Consensus was part of the nonviolence and jail trainings and we made a small attempt to also offer some special training in meeting facilitation. We did not interpret consensus to mean unanimity. The only mandatory agreement was to act within the nonviolent guidelines. Beyond that, the DAN organisers set a tone that valued autonomy and freedom over conformity, and stressed co-ordination rather than pressure to conform. So, for example, our jail solidarity strategy involved staying in jail where we could use the pressure of our numbers to protect individuals from being singled out for heavier charges or more brutal treatment. But no one was pressured to stay in jail, or made to feel guilty for bailing out before the others. We recognised that each person has their own needs and life situation, and that what was important was to have taken action at whatever level we each could. Had we pressured people to stay in jail, many would have resisted and felt resentful and misused. Because we didn't, because people felt empowered, not manipulated, the vast majority decided for themselves to remain in, and many people pushed themselves far beyond the boundaries of what they had expected to do.

#### **Vision and Spirit:**

The action included art, dance, celebration, song, ritual and magic. It was more than a protest; it was an uprising of a vision of true abundance, a celebration of life and creativity and connection, that remained joyful in the face of brutality and brought alive the creative forces that can truly counter those of injustice and control. Many people brought the strength of their personal spiritual practice to the action. I saw Buddhists turn away angry delegates with loving kindness. We Witches led rituals before the action and in jail, and called on the elements of nature to sustain us. I was given Reiki when sick and we celebrated Hanukah with no candles, but only the blessings and the story of the struggle for religious freedom. We found the spirit to sing in

our cells, to dance a spiral dance in the holding cell, to laugh at the hundred petty humiliations the jail inflicts, to comfort each other and listen to each other in tense moments, to use our time together to continue teaching and organising and envisioning the flourishing of this movement. For me, it was one of the most profound spiritual experiences of my life.

I'm writing this for two reasons. First, I want to give credit to the DAN organisers who did a brilliant and difficult job, who learned and applied the lessons of the last twenty years of nonviolent direct action, and who created a powerful, successful and life-changing action in the face of enormous odds, an action that has changed the global political landscape and radicalised a new generation. And secondly, because the true story of how this action was organised provides a powerful model that activists can learn from. Seattle was only a beginning. We have before us the task of building a global movement to overthrow corporate control and create a new economy based on fairness and justice, on a sound ecology and a healthy environment, one that protects human rights and serves freedom. We have many campaigns ahead of us, and we deserve to learn the true lessons of our successes.

This letter available online at: <http://www.reclaiming.org/starhawk/wto.html> (Please feel free to forward this and post it or reprint it. You don't need to ask my permission although I'd be happy to know where it ends up. I'd appreciate it if you'd include a link to the Reclaiming website, where my personal website can also be found: <http://www.reclaiming.org/starhawk> . Please also include also the following note.)

The Direct Action Network needs your help to cover expenses and legal fees which are still mounting up. Any donations will be appreciated. Please show your support! Checks can be made to Cascadia Art and Revolution and sent to DAN at Direct Action Network, PO Box 95113, Seattle, WA 98145.

Thanks and blessings,  
Starhawk  
NVT

# Resources for Radicals

The second edition of *Resources for Radicals*, an annotated bibliography of print resources for those involved in movements for social transformation, was formally released at a recent Homes Not Bombs gathering that took place in Toronto.

*Resources for Radicals* is written and compiled by Brian Burch, a Toronto based writer with a history of activism going back to the time of the Vietnam War. His work has appeared in over 100 publications and anthologies in Canada, the United States, England and Australia. He is a member of the National Writers Union (UAW Local 1981) and I.U. 670 of the Industrial Workers of the World. His other books include *For Christ and Kropotkin*, *Still Under the Thumb* and *Next Exit*.

Like the first edition, *Resources for Radicals* grew out of requests for further information that arose from workshops in nonviolence conducted by Toronto Action for Social Change. Participants were seeking a list of resources that they could read for more in depth information, inspiration, ideas and analysis than could be shared in the space of a workshop.

Periodicals as diverse as *Earth First! Journal*, *The Catholic Worker*, *Highgrader*, *Freedom*, *Friends Journal*, *Natural Life*, *The New Socialist* and *Shelterforce* are included in this annotated bibliography. Books from authors as varied as Dorothy Day, Emma Goldman, Petra Kelly, Peter Kropotkin, Brian Martin, Thomas Merton, Sheila Rowbotham and William Kilbourne form the core of *Resources for Radicals*.

A wide range of topics are touched on, from meeting facilitation to community gardening to civil disobedience to union organising. Work coming from such struggles as the feminist, animal rights, ecology and the peace movement abound.

*Resources for Radicals* is available from Toronto Action for Social Change, P.O. Box 73620, 509 St. Clair Ave. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6C 1C0. Ph:

416-651-5800. Email: tasc@web.net. The price (including postage and handling) is: \$11.00 Canada, \$12.00 U.S., \$14.00 Rest of the World.

*Resources for Radicals* is revised frequently, with a new edition every two years. Books and magazines focusing on feminism, union organising, popular culture, sexual freedom, humanism, anarchism, radical Christianity, strikes, demonstrations, ecology, nonviolence, socialism, co-operatives, aboriginal rights, pacifism, urban renewal, urban agriculture, revolutionary theory, black history, community shared agriculture, pro-choice, anti-imperialism, communism, penal abolition, multi-faith dialogue, conflict resolution, ploughshares efforts, alternative dance and theatre forms, critical mass, paganism, public transportation, monkey wrenching, socialism, community organising, community economic development, gender diversity, squatting, seamless pro-life, alternative media, anti-facism, anti-racism, animal liberation, intentional communities, disAbilities activism, civilian based defense, co-operatives and other expressions of radical nonviolent dissent are welcome and should be sent to: 20 Spruce St., Toronto, Ontario (Canada) M5A 2H7.

Especially welcome are handbooks, guides for trainers and directories.

What was said about the first edition of *Resources for Radicals*?

- "activist groups will find a number of vital resources here and groups in the U.S. will particularly benefit from the many Canadian titles that have gone unnoticed." Factsheet Five.

- "An inexpensive, essential compilation of crucial information. A Must Have." Eidos

- "one clear selection criterion is at work, that of nonviolence. - you will not find a 'how to' manual for letter bombs in this collection. But you will find practical, as well as theoretical, material. You will also find a lot of religious publications - more than perhaps many humanists will appreciate. My final comment is one of caution: don't read this at one sitting - you'll stop highlighting titles somewhere in the G's and therefore miss a lot of great stuff written by people in the second half of the alphabet!" Humanist in Canada

- "The publication is a most welcome addition to the area of social change, a subject that generally lacks in reference works... it is highly recommended for public and academic libraries, and strongly recommended for individuals involved with social change." Counterpoise

- "its a very good compilation of books and periodicals related to the more enlightened side of society." The Advocate

Brian Burch  
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# Seeking Peace: Notes and Conversations Along the Way

By Johann Christoph Arnold  
Prefaced by Tich Nhat Hanh  
Foreword by Madeleine L'Engle

I have read and appreciated the last issue of *NvT* and would like to draw the readership's attention to a book that has meant a lot to me in my search for peace. Non-violence is much more than not fighting in a war.

This book delves deeper. Here is an excerpt from the book itself:  
*Peace has nothing to do with passivity or resignation.*

*It is not for the spineless or self-absorbed, or for those content with a quiet life. Peace demands that we live honestly before God, before others, and in the light of our own conscience. It does not come without the burden of duty, for it demands deeds of love.*

*Peace is a relentless pursuit kept up only with hope and courage, vision and commitment. Thus the search for it cannot be a selfish one.*

*It cannot be merely a question of finding fulfilment, achieving closure, or, as Aristotle put it, actualising our human potential. No! To seek peace means to seek harmony with ourselves, with others, and with God.*

To obtain a copy of this book  
Phone: (02) 6723 2213  
E-mail: dantho@northnet.com.au

Rosanna Barth  
**NvT**

# Pacifism as Pathology: Reflections on the Role of Armed Struggle in North America

by Ward Churchill (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 1998)

In *Pacifism as Pathology*, Native American activist and writer Ward Churchill offers a provocative if somewhat confused critique of pacifism.

He shows a clear understanding of the radical nature of pacifism when he says that "*the emotional content of the principle of nonviolence is tantamount to a gut-level rejection of much, or even all, that the present social order stands for - an intrinsically revolutionary perspective.*"

He sees that pacifism combines a refusal to attack others even in self-defense with a willingness to endure "physical punishment in pursuit of social justice" (p. 46). He admires "*real pacifists*" who run real risks, but he thinks that in the U.S. they "*represent the exception rather than the rule*" (p. 48). In denouncing pacifist

pretense the author also at times dismisses pacifism in general.

Churchill heaps scorn on those for whom nonviolence is primarily a matter of lifestyle rather than of confronting state pow-

er. He lists a variety of behaviors that sometimes pass, as he says, for "*prefiguring the revolution*" - from changed gender roles to vegetarianism (pp. 63-64). I'm left wondering whether he thinks addressing state power should be accom-

panied by efforts at cultural transformation. How, for instance, does he assess anti-alcohol campaigns on Native American reservations? And what about teaching conflict resolution skills to children, or enabling prisoners to gain self-acceptance and empowerment via the Alternatives to Violence Project?

Churchill thinks that in the U.S. militant nonviolence is too often displaced by “a sort of *‘politics of the comfort zone,’ ... devoid of perceived risk to its advocates [and] minus any conceivable revolutionary impetus as well*” (p. 49). He berates those who plan minimally disruptive “symbolic demonstrations” and develop cozy relations with the police while working “to prevent others from going further” (p. 56). He believes some U.S. nonviolent activists do their utmost to prevent the repressive practices of the U.S. government from coming down on themselves. Creating “solidarity” with armed groups resisting U.S. oppression abroad, for instance, as in Vietnam or El Salvador, helps ensure that the bloodletting will be done by others far away. He imagines a time when inhabitants of the “comfort zone” will repeat this approach within the U.S., resulting in nonwhites taking up arms and experiencing the bloodshed while nonviolent whites watch and await the outcome, ready to identify with either victor (see pp. 61-63, 70-76).

For this and other reasons, Churchill holds little hope for cooperation between nonviolent activists and their armed counterparts. Yet he himself wonders whether Black Panther leaders killed by police in Chicago in December 1969 could have been saved had nonviolent activists interposed their bodies between the Panthers and the police, as members of Witness for Peace later got between the Sandinistas and the Contras in Nicaragua (pp. 59-60). This is what nonviolent activists from the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center in Boulder actually did in 1988-89 when they supported armed Mexicanos who occupied a plot of land in Tierra Amarillo, New Mexico. The land had been stolen from them and they were reclaiming it. Members of the Peace and Justice Center were convinced of the rightness of the Mexicano cause as well as of the likelihood that without well-

publicized physical intervention of allies from outside they would be gunned down by the state police. In the end the Mexicanos kept the land and now use it as a cultural center. In this case armed and non-armed activists, who had no previous contact, agreed on the immediate goal and communicated well all along the way, in the process gaining mutual education and bonds of affection.

Though some of Churchill’s criticisms have validity - especially his warning about “*politics of the comfort zone*” - in the opening sections of his book he undercuts this validity by constructing his critique on a foundation of misunderstanding and error. Here I cite the four most significant such errors.

Churchill’s first significant error occurs in his opening paragraph when he says of pacifism that “*always, it promises that the harsh realities of state power can be transcended via good feelings and purity of purpose rather than by self-defense and resort to combat*” (p. 30). In truth, pacifism promises no such thing. Those who practice nonviolence know that the harsh realities of state power can be transcended only if combated by an alternate form of power, such as the power of the massive nonviolent resistance that brought down the Marcos regime in the Philippines in 1986 or breached the Berlin Wall in 1989 or is practiced today in the democracy campaign led by Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma or non-armed resistance to Indonesian occupation of East Timor. Such acts of nonviolence involve great risk and cost lives.

In a second significant error Churchill confuses passivity with pacifism, on the basis of which he says that the slaughter of the Jews in the Holocaust represents a “catastrophic failure” of nonviolent resistance (p. 41). To what extent European Jews employed nonviolent resistance against the Nazi onslaught is a contested point. But the quotations from Jewish scholars Churchill uses as evidence - Lucy Dawidowicz saying that it was “passivity” (p. 106) and Bruno Bettelheim that it was “inertia” (p. 36) that led to most Jewish deaths at the hands of the Nazis - do not prove his point. He himself refers to “*the passivity of the preponder-*

*ance of Jews during the Holocaust*” (p. 107, n. 26). Passivity and inertia are not forms of nonviolent resistance. (On the nonviolent resistance to the Nazis by some Jews, see Yehuda Bauer’s article in *Protest, Power, and Change* [1997], ed. Roger S. Powers and William B. Voegelé, pp. 276-277.)

A third error is Churchill’s contention that nonviolent efforts succeed only insofar as they are buttressed by violence. Thus, he maintains that any gains of Gandhi’s nonviolent campaign against British rule in India were “*contingent upon others physically gutting their opponents for them*” (p. 42), with the campaign “*salvaged only by the existence of violent peripheral processes,*” such as Britain’s engagement in two world wars in quick succession (p. 41). He even attributes this latter view to Gandhi himself (p. 109, n. 38), referring as documentation not to specific words of Gandhi but to a whole volume of his writings, the anthology *All Men Are Brothers* (1958). In re-reading this book I found nothing that resembles what Churchill says. One could just as well claim that Britain was so demoralized and weakened in the face of nonviolent resistance from its most-prized colony that it was ill-equipped to wage successful armed conflict elsewhere.

A fourth significant error is Churchill’s claim that the Civil Rights movement led by Martin Luther King, Jr., “*attracted considerable celebrity, but precious little in the way of tangible political gains prior to the emergence of a trend signaled in 1967 by the redesignation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC; more or less the campus arm of King’s Civil Rights Movement) as the Student National Coordinating Committee*” (p. 42). This would be an astonishing revelation to any who experienced how sustained nonviolent action in the face of great danger enabled a disempowered people to bring an end to a cruelly demeaning system of legalized discrimination well before 1967. Passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 forever ended the apartheid-like patterns of the U.S. South. Both were achieved by nonviolent means prior to the highly publicized rejection of nonviolence by certain



advocates of "black power" in the late 1960's - defections that resulted not in more social gains but in a splintering of a once effective movement.

Churchill's several errors provide the basis for a faulty conclusion: "*The essential contradiction inherent to pacifist praxis is that, for survival itself, any nonviolent confrontation of state power must ultimately depend either on the state refraining from unleashing some real measure of its potential violence, or the active presence of some counterbalancing violence of precisely the sort pacifism professes to reject as a political option*" (p. 44). The only possible outcome for those who choose pacifist means, thus, is either ineffectiveness or suicide (p.45).

This conclusion doesn't stand in the face of the evidence not only from the U.S. or India. Nonviolent action overthrew the Philippine government in 1986; brought down the governments of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland in 1989; led to the secession of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia from the USSR in 1990; and ended Communist rule in the Soviet Union in 1991. Among other examples are the recent mainly-female Chipko (tree-huggers) movement to end ecological ruin in a mountainous area of North India, and the successful effort of the indigenous Maori to resist European colonization in New Zealand in the 19th-century.

Churchill says that "*the American nonviolent movement which has labored so long and so hard to isolate all divergent oppositional tendencies, is in the end isolating itself, becoming ever more demographically white, middle-class, and 'respectable'*" (p. 64). What he means by "American" is confusing, since one wouldn't expect him to adopt the jingoistic convention of using this term exclusively for the U.S.A. If he means the

Americas in general, he overlooks the Latin American cases of nonviolent action documented in *Relentless Persistence* (1991), edited by Philip McManus and Gerald Schlabach. If he refers only to the U.S., he slights examples of non-white nonviolent action, including the major recent movements led by King and by Cesar Chavez but also many current unsung activities happening all across the country. His real intent seems to be to suggest that nonviolence is the method only of privileged whites, an approach that distorts truth to play on white guilt.

Churchill says his ultimate goal is "a nonviolent and cooperative world" (p. 103), and that getting there requires a revolution. For this, pacifism gets in the way, because "*in order to be effective and ultimately successful, any revolutionary movement within advanced capitalist nations*" must practice both armed self-defense and military offense (p. 91). In sum, the revolution will be violent, to a large degree.

To help cure pacifist pathology Churchill prescribes hands-on training in the use of weapons, such as assault rifles, so those who want change will be able freely to choose whether to wage conflict with guns or without them. This proposal, in my view, should be adopted only in a setting where mindfulness is nurtured (say, in the manner of Thich Nhat Hanh) and where the relation between ends and means is explored thoroughly and deeply. "*The means,*" Gandhi said, "*may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. ... We reap exactly as we sow*" (Hind Swaraj, chap. 16).

What seems lacking in this volume is the sustained reflection on the role of armed struggle promised in the book's subtitle.

Churchill says the revolution we require must be violent. The past two centuries have seen numerous revolutions and attempted revolutions waged by violent means.

To date not a single one has produced the nonviolent and cooperative society Churchill says he wants. The historical record - whether we look at France in 1789, Russia in 1917, China in 1949, Cuba in 1960, Nicaragua in 1979, etc. - shows that once violence is set in motion it isn't easily stopped. The revolution, like Saturn, devours its own children.

My final response to Churchill is to point out that there is a pathology, an ancient one, the pathology of violence. In advanced capitalist societies we all imbibe a disease of competition and dominance, in which some win, some lose, and violence is normality - violence against self, against others, against nature. In such a setting the only real revolution is to reject violence and to cultivate alternatives. As King said at the end of *Stride toward Freedom* (1957), "*Today the choice is no longer between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence.*" The remedy for people steeped in violence is to throw off the fever. This entails personal as well as social transformation, on every level - physical, spiritual, mental but also political, economic, cultural. The task is to create a world without dominance, in which every person, every group participates fully in decisions on matters affecting their earthly fate. This is the revolution of pacifism, a revolution that must be chosen and cultivated, because it cannot be imposed. The alternative is annihilation.

LeRoy Moore,  
Ph.D. Rocky Mountain Peace and  
Justice Center

NvT

# The Recurrent Vision and the Peace Brigade Movement

For as long as there have been wars there have also been plans to stop them. There have been saints who have preached non-violence, leading political figures and academics who have advocated various grandiose plans to achieve world peace through alliances, world government or international armies, and people who have put their lives on the line, by physically placing their bodies between disputing parties to try to end conflicts, or by taking risks in order to try to end oppression. And while bloody conflicts and injustice exists, even in far away places, there will always be people of good will who will cross borders, often at great personal risk, to intervene as peacekeepers, peacemakers or peacebuilders.

And now the world is watching. Innumerable wars and armed conflicts rage or simmer in different countries or neighbourhoods around the planet, viewable from television sets or doorsteps depending on one's location. Humanitarian aid agencies supported by churches house war-weary people fleeing men with guns. Governments try to intervene in armed conflicts by sending men with guns, sometimes under United Nations auspices, to "help". At times soldiers in these new roles have complained that they feel humiliated because they are prohibited from responding in line with their traditional training. As soldiers and global strategic thinkers show little ability to creatively transform their conflict intervention methods, there are calls for the development of a nonviolent alternative.

A long and rich history of nonviolent cross border interventions, that is non-governmental efforts at sending peace missions, known as Peace Brigades, Peace Teams or Peace Armies, already exists. These ad hoc citizens' efforts have been sent out since the time of the League of Nations and in total there have been more such citizens' missions than UN Peacekeeping missions. Although this history constitutes a rich source of prac-

tical experience, of lessons learned, these people's actions are not as well known. They are underfunded and can send few volunteers to the field, leaving them invisible to global media. This means that the lessons gained have never been drawn together and subjected to sustained scrutiny, which means that inadequate progress has been made in fulfilling the potential inherent in these interventions. To remedy this failing, the first step is to collect the stories of nonviolent cross-border intervention in one place for scrutiny. My co-editor, Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan, and I thought that it was time that these interventions were looked at seriously and for the last few years have been engaged in a project to chronicle and analyse these attempts. The book where we have attempted to do this, *Nonviolent Intervention Across Borders: A Recurrent Vision*, presents a new and comprehensive typology, written by Robert Burrowes, providing a framework within which to examine these interventions.

As noted above, the voices for a completely unarmed peacekeeping force have

been heard regularly throughout this century. Pacifists who believed in stopping conflicts and protecting victims could hardly have done otherwise but call for such a force if they wished to maintain consistency. But there were practical reasons also. Charles Walker, the American Quaker advocate of a World Peace Guard, suggests that the military may not be the best instrument for securing peace. He criticises the proposals of some military veterans of UN missions who have been pushing the concept of a military agency which includes peacemaking (conflict resolution) and peacebuilding (socio-economic development and reconstruction) functions. A peace force which has been engaged in military operations will find it difficult to talk to the party it has been shooting at. If violence is used, then a peacekeeping force may, in critical situations, "become a paramilitary force with aspects of an occupying army" in which case community relations programs, even those attempted by dedicated officers, cannot hope to overcome or mitigate the community's hostility. Perhaps, as Walker notes, it is an inevitable consequence

that *"the effect of a military force will be estimated in military terms"*. And finally, following a survey of peacekeeping possibilities, he concludes that *"peacekeeping missions by military forces are likely to serve primarily the interests of the superpowers; and threaten to isolate, exploit or dominate smaller and weaker nations, particularly in the Third World"*. Walker and other advocates of the unarmed alternative see these problems as inherent in military forces, especially those under the control of a supranational authority where the large powers dominate and have rights of veto.

Current popular dissatisfaction with international "peacekeeping" as it is now practised through the United Nations, and "peace enforcement" in the NATO mould, is leading to an upsurge of interest in nonmilitary peacekeeping. The governments of Germany, Denmark and Holland have recently stated their intent to develop a new form of international peacekeeping that does not rely solely on armed troops. These governmental initiatives have followed and at times led to nongovernmental forums being established to debate the methodology to be used by such unarmed units. The government of Austria has helped in the financing of a centre for the study of peacekeeping with a significant focus on unarmed intervention. Two multinational conferences took place in 1994 and 1995 involving participants from thirty countries, and twice as many nongovernmental organisations, seeking to establish large-scale nongovernmental peacekeeping contingents.

One of these conferences, a consultation in Washington, DC, on the concept of peace teams which was funded by the United States Institute for Peace, was attended by participants from more than twenty countries with experience or interest in nongovernmental and governmental peacekeeping. Several European states (notably Germany, Denmark, Austria and Sweden) are considering or have decided to devote a portion of their defence budget to examining the unarmed option. Denmark, the Society of Friends (Quakers), and groups devoted to UN reform are outlining an unarmed option to operate under the auspices of the UN,

sometimes referred to as "White Berets". Further, partisan efforts (that is those aiming to bring about change by identifying themselves with the oppressed) have become accepted as quite normal over the past few decades.

In short, interest in this type of activism has never been higher. United Nations Volunteers have initiated a new peace-makers program in Burundi modelled, in part, on the work of Peace Brigades International. Nongovernmental groups currently sending volunteers to the field (often to provide "protective accompaniment" to local peace and social justice activists or in attempts to bring warring parties together) include Witness for Peace, Christian Peacemaker Teams, SIPAZ, Project Accompaniment, the Balkan Peace Team and Peace Brigades International. Combined, they are currently placing and supporting almost 100 volunteers in conflict zones scattered across a dozen countries. Compared to the mid-1980s when there were only two organisations attempting this work, with a handful of volunteers working in two countries, it is clear that this is an idea that has taken on a life of its own.

It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that there is currently no single publication which collects into one volume the history of past and current actions of "Peace Teams", the contingents that have made ordinary citizens players in conflicts in the international political arena. Their history is generally traced only through articles appearing in small circulation journals, or internal newsletters of the groups themselves.

Of course, it should be noted that unarmed nonviolent interventions do not merely take place in the international arena or in an organised way. Where many of our cities resemble urban war zones there is much to be said for acting locally. Elise Boulding has talked of a "Peace Team" (being a "multi-ethnic/racial, multicultural group of persons under secular or religious nongovernmental sponsorship, national or international in character, who have undergone specific nonviolence training in conflict areas in their home countries") creating social and physical "safe spaces" or

"peace zones" in conflict-ridden inner city areas. She gives the Sisters of Loretto Project in Denver, Colorado as an example. Other examples include the Mennonite's peace monitors at Wounded Knee, the actions of the Christian Peacemaker Team in Washington, and nonviolent community safety and peacekeeping actions (at large festivals, rallies and marches) by the Melbourne volunteer organisation Pt'chang.

While Nonviolent Intervention details the history and activities of citizen-based, international, nonviolent crisis intervention initiatives, it is hoped that it will also provide lessons for those wishing to act nearer home.

Numerous cases of spontaneous interposition that have interrupted conflicts have also been recorded. The most important early account of these examples, of what is now commonly referred to as "people's power" is contained in Gene Keyes' 1978 article *"Peacekeeping by Unarmed Buffer Forces"* published in *Peace and Change*. In that paper Keyes reports on spontaneous interpositions in Algeria in 1962, in Aden in 1967, and in China in 1968. Following the French pullout from Algeria, a large-scale civil war seemed inevitable when in towns such as Boghari, *"A crowd of war-weary men and women created a human barrier between the opposing forces. When the soldiers pressed forward, the civilians forced them to embrace each other and fraternize."* In what was the former federation of Southern Arabia, over 2,000 demonstrators, including women, children and the elderly, *"stopped heavy fighting between rival nationalist groups...when they marched through battle-torn streets screaming for a ceasefire"*. During China's Cultural Revolution a mini-war erupted between two Maoist student factions at Tsinghua University in Peking. Eventually, a contingent of workers, some 60,000 strong, entered the university shouting the slogan "use reason not violence, use reason not violence, lay down your weapons and form a big alliance". The workers stood their ground in the face of extreme provocation and violence and their action eventually led to an alliance of the fighting factions. More recently, in the Philippines, in Bangkok,

in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, Moscow and in Belgrade the efficacy of spontaneous people's power has clearly been demonstrated.

These actions are inspiring and historically important, offering insight into the dynamics of what Keyes calls "massive nonviolent buffer actions", however they do not provide adequate guidance for those planning interventions in areas where the activists have little or no relationship with the belligerents.

For those who have bothered to look at the past it is clear, and now it is becoming increasingly obvious even to those who are not specifically interested in the area, that alternatives to the mainstream style of peace interventions are not merely theoretical - there have been many attempts to think through a nonviolent approach and many examples of this vision

have now been attempted in practice - they are also becoming a practical necessity. The focus of our work is to provide detailed examples of nonviolent non-governmental international peace intervention initiatives undertaken by grassroots activists, and to attempt to distil the lessons provided by these examples for the benefit of those embarking on service in peace teams or those attempting to establish new peace team initiatives. The interventions discussed in *Nonviolent Intervention Across Borders* include mobilization actions (the voyage of the *Lusitania Expresso* to Timor), nonviolent humanitarian assistance ("friendshipments" by Pastors for Peace), nonviolent witness and accompaniment (by Peace Brigades International, Project Accompaniment, Christian Peacemaker Teams, the Balkan Peace Team, and Cry for Justice), nonviolent intercession (by the anti-bomb Sahara Protest Team), nonvi-

olent solidarity (in the form of the Cambodian Dhammayietra peace marches and the lesson-rich Mir Sada action in Bosnia), and nonviolent interposition (in Nicaragua by Witness for Peace and in Iraq by the Gulf Peace Team).

Thomas Weber

The book edited by Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan and Thomas Weber, titled *Nonviolent Intervention Across Borders: A Recurrent Vision*, has just been published by the Spark M. Matsunaga Institute for Peace at the University of Hawaii, distributed by the University of Hawaii Press, and is available for US\$20 plus US\$6 shipping costs. Orders to: University of Hawaii Press, Order Department, 28-40 Kolowalu St, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822 1888. Phone: 1 808 956 8255, Fax: 1 800 650 7811, Website: <http://www2.hawaii.edu/uhpess>.



# Building Nonviolent Economic Systems

*Report on a workshop held during the Victorian nonviolence gathering, 3-5 March, 2000.*

On the third day of the Victorian nonviolence gathering, twelve or so groovy people met to consider the question: "How can we work towards creating nonviolent economic systems?" I facilitated the workshop, motivated by a desire to share some of my thinking in this area and to hear others' ideas.

After noting the major impact that economic systems have on our world and our daily lives, we threw around ideas about how we could tell whether an economic system was 'good' or 'healthy'. The criteria we came up with for a good economic system included:

- everyone benefits; resources are shared equally
  - sustainable
  - we're in charge of the system (not vice versa)
  - accumulation and greed are difficult
  - true accounting for environmental/social costs of economy; true pricing of products
  - local / bioregional focus
  - the system is a means, not an end.
- I summarised by saying that good economic

systems are those that "meet the present and future needs of the whole earth community" - a definition that includes the needs of non-human species as well as human beings. I suggested that these were also 'nonviolent' economic

systems, since nonviolence is centrally concerned with meeting physical and emotional needs.

We then turned our attention to the dominant economic system that has evolved in Western Europe and North America over the last few centuries, and that is increasingly being applied on a global scale today. We pooled our knowledge to compile the following list of the effects of this dominant economic system:

- inequality; 25% of the world population use 75% of the resources; 1% own 90% of the capital
- mass starvation
- wage slavery; child labour; diminishing workers' rights
- material poverty, including in the "first world" (eg. U.S.); time poverty
- war - funded by economic system, and stimulates growth
- corporate power; information controlled by elite
- gross ecological breakdown (eg. East Timor, elsewhere in Asia); rainforest loss; soil
- mass denial of earth's limitations
- efforts to repair damage can cause more damage

We acknowledged that capitalism does meet some needs of some people, some of the time; and that there are some people within the present economic system who are neither in material nor time poverty. However, on the whole we concluded that the dominant economic system generates poverty, inequality, ecological collapse and alienation. We decided that it does not meet our criteria for a good economic system, described above.

By this time, many of us were beginning

to feel depressed from viewing this jigsaw puzzle of corporate power and human suffering. We went on to look at the more hopeful picture of the many alternatives that exist alongside or within the dominant economic system. Our list of alternatives included:

- cooperatives (eg. Mondragon in Spain); food coops
- LETS systems; LETS without currency (= community exchange); barter systems, swapping labour and goods
- surplus economies - planning for community needs
- permaculture; community supported agriculture schemes; WWOOFing
- mutual aid
- community collectives (not for profit; internal)
- skill sharing
- heroic individual acts of resistance (eg. posties not delivering junk mail)
- Grameen bank; credit coops; friendly societies; home equity loans (1% interest)
- ethical investment agencies
- intentional economic communities
- voluntary simplicity; stop spending.

There were many more alternatives that we didn't have time to discuss. I suggested that these types of economic choices and structures were part of a patchwork that would form nonviolent economic systems. I also proposed that these economic systems could be guided by ten principles: steady-state rather than growth-oriented; limitation (not multiplication) of wants; production oriented primarily to needs, not wants; relatively small-scale; organised primarily on a local basis, to meet local rather than international/national needs; self-reliance rather than dependence; cash economy plays a minor role; non-hierarchical struc-

tures and non-exploitative social relations; cooperation not competition; and diversity at all levels. We noted bioregionalism as a framework that could encompass the above.

Then the key question: it's a nice vision, but how do we get there? We discussed the importance of a "bottom(s)-up" approach - involving sitting around and downing cold beers on a mass scale - but decided that possibly something more strategically focused might be useful. I suggested a nonviolent strategy involving three prongs:

- encouraging and supporting alternative personal economic choices
- creating and consolidating alternative economic structures
- resisting the expansion of the dominant economic system.

There are many ways of tackling each of these three aims; work around these is already happening. The times they are a-changin'! I also suggested that since the dominant economic system is closely linked with other systemic parts of society, in creating nonviolent economic systems it is also necessary to change other exploitative aspects of our society - ie. revolutionary change is needed.

We finished on a high, acknowledging that despite the power of the dominant economic system, it is also vulnerable to change. I left the workshop with a sense of optimism about the possibility of changing the course of our economic system. I was also reminded of the importance of looking after ourselves as we go about creating the world we want.

*Mark Cerin*

**NVT**

# PBI East Timor Project

## Why East Timor?

East Timor occupies the eastern half of the island of Timor, which lies between Indonesia and Australia (approximately 300 miles north of Darwin).

Since its occupation by Indonesia in 1975, East Timor has suffered from extreme violence which has left nearly a third of its population dead.

With the downfall of the Suharto regime and the collapse of the South East Asian economies in mid 1998, civil organisations in East Timor were able to begin to operate openly for the first time, though still facing considerable threats. Under considerable international pressure, the Indonesian government announced that they would allow East Timorese to vote in a UN monitored consultation on the political status of the territory. Tensions remained high, particularly between the majority of East Timorese who were known to support independence from Indonesia, and militias formed by the Indonesian military in an attempt to hold onto East Timor by any means necessary.

Two Peace Brigades International (PBI) members joined the International Federation for East Timor Observer Project which monitored the referendum. On August 30, East Timorese voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence. However, as was feared by many, the announcement of the results led to the ravaging of East Timor by the military and militias. Thousands of people are reported to have been killed and about 400,000-500,000 were forced to leave their homes. Those that couldn't flee to the mountains were forced into 'refugee' camps controlled by the militias in West Timor or to other Indonesian provinces.

It is clear that considerable international attention needs to continue to be focused on East Timor in order to assist the East Timorese in rebuilding their society following the decades of violence and repression, and to prevent such violence continuing either in East Timor itself or against East Timorese who have been

forced to leave.

PBI has responded to requests for a long-term presence in the region by establishing an advance team of three people who completed training and preparation in Darwin, before travelling to Bali and Jakarta. They made connections with a wide range of local groups and individuals and members of the international community, an essential prerequisite to enable them to provide effective protective accompaniment. The advance team then travelled to West Timor where it is now operating in support of East Timorese refugees who continue to face harassment. The team will be strengthened in this work when joined by others training in January and February.

## What are the aims of the project?

The East Timor Project of Peace Brigades International (PBI) is establishing, upon the written request of East Timorese human rights groups, a permanent presence of international volunteers in the region. We are committed to nonviolence and non-partisanship, engaging in dialogue and listening to all parties to a conflict. We do not take sides in a conflict or propose solutions. We recognise that, for just resolution, the parties involved must determine the solution themselves.

The objectives of the East Timor PBI project are to:

- Help maintain a peaceful space for civil society to operate and grow;
- Foster social and political dialogue and reconciliation;
- Model nonviolence and to promote nonviolent resolution of conflicts;
- Empower civil society in all of the above activities, so as to reduce and eventually end the need for a PBI presence.

East Timor is mountainous and culturally diverse. There are twelve main indigenous language groups in East Timor. Tetun is the main East Timorese language with Portuguese spoken among older generations and Bahasa Indonesia among the young.

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## Heart Politics Conference

Dear NvT,

I can hardly believe that it's been almost a whole year since the last Heart Politics conference at Camp Drewe, and that another conference on the North Coast is soon to take place. Life seems to be zooming along - to where, or why, I'm not sure; I just know that it's all happening at an extraordinary rate.

When we met last September, our small group took on the long-term task of encouraging greater Aboriginal presence at the next conference.

This intention was later conveyed in writing to the Interhelp group (who convene the Heart Politics gatherings) to be sure that any actions we might take were in accord with their past/present efforts along these lines. Since then, there has not been any specific *action* taken by our small group - I think everyone agreed this is largely a word-of-mouth process, talking to who you know, in your area, etc.

If you are still interested in actively encouraging Aboriginal participation in Heart Politics this year, or know of anyone coming/considering coming, you can contact Stu by email: [stuart@nor.com.au](mailto:stuart@nor.com.au) or by phone, (02)6688-6392.

Margaret Louise

**NvT**

## The Pt'chang Report

Dear NvT,

Pt'chang, the Melbourne-based nonviolent community safety and peacekeeping group has just released its third annual report. Covering a range of innovative peacekeeping and safety projects over the last year, this fifty-five page reports highlights Pt'chang's role in helping to create safety at events, festivals and in urban communities. The report covers the Community Listening Project, the ConFest Safety Project, Pt'chang at the Jabiluka blockade camp and at Earthcore, Australia's largest outdoor techno event. The report is a way for Pt'chang as a group to compile knowledge and experience gained at each project and is an

## www.PeaceChannel.com

Dear NvT,

A pioneering internet magazine was launched from the South Pacific to coincide with the new millennium. *The Peace Channel* went online on New Year's Eve from Auckland, New Zealand, one of the first cities in the world to celebrate the new millennium.

Peace Channel creator, Auckland University of Technology (AUT) lecturer Jeremy Traylen, says the magazine is about the people of tomorrow. *"It's about the world that they are inheriting and the world that they really want to create,"* Mr Traylen says.

The magazine is being sponsored by AUT as part of its support for the UN International Year for the Culture of Peace and to celebrate officially becoming a university on January 1 - a world first for the new millennium.

The premiere issue of the magazine includes a special presentation, called Peace Miracles, on breakthroughs in the quest for world peace from the period 1977-99. ([www.peacemiracles.com](http://www.peacemiracles.com)) There is also an online survey for visitors to share their thoughts on the challenges facing humanity in the new millennium.

Mr Traylen says The Peace Channel aims to put the modern technology of the internet to positive use.

*"We live in a world where there are a lot of problems but there are also solutions and we are beginning to take positive steps towards implementing those solutions,"* he says.

*"People need to know that there is hope and that a world without poverty and without war is not some kind of far-fetched dream."*

Jeremy Traylen

**NvT**

important part of our accountability to the communities in which we work. Interesting reading and a resource for activists or organisations looking at ways of nonviolently and effectively creating safety at events or on a community level.

The Pt'chang Report 1998/99 is available from Pt'chang for A\$8 plus \$2 post-

## Vanunu: 13 Years in Prison

Dear NvT,

Whistle-blower Mordechai Vanunu, has spent thirteen years in prison, eleven and a half years in solitary confinement, for just telling the truth. Amnesty International says that his prison conditions are "cruel, inhuman and degrading" and ask for his immediate release.

Some new winds are blowing in Israel, Palestinian prisoners are released as a part of a new peace treaty. It's time that Mordechai Vanunu will be among these people coming out in freedom.

Write letters and show your concern about Vanunu. Addresses are on the website: [www.vanunu.freemove.co.uk](http://www.vanunu.freemove.co.uk) where you also find information about Vanunu and the campaign. There are regular vigils outside the Israeli embassy in London.

You can send an email and ask for Vanunu's release to Israel's newly elected Prime Minister, Ehud Barak: [ebarak@parliament.gov.il](mailto:ebarak@parliament.gov.il) and to [amuta@ehudbaradk.co.il](mailto:amuta@ehudbaradk.co.il)

To support Mordechai you can also write to him in prison. Write not just a few words, write a letter and tell about yourself and your life, and if you have a photo to send he will appreciate that. It's a way to make you more real. Remember that he hasn't met anyone else than some relatives for thirteen years! You can send books, he is for the moment specially interested in history, but are also interested in many other subjects as philosophy, nature (you may have books at home that you can send instead of buying new ones). Mordechai will be forty-five years old on the 13th October, 1999. Address: Mordechai Vanunu, Ashkelon prison, Ashkelon, Israel.

It may take a very long time before you get any reply, but he gets your letters - and that's what matters.

Peace and love,  
Ann-Britt Sternfeldt

**NvT**

age (\$10 total) by writing to: PO Box 69 Brunswick Victoria Australia 3056 or +61(0)407 815333.

Anthony Kelly

**NvT**

# in back of it all

## What is NONVIOLENCE TODAY?

*Nonviolence Today* is published every two months to help increase the understanding and use of nonviolence. We publish reports and evaluations of trainings and actions, with a view to improving the quality of both. It's the peoples' magazine and first hand participant reports are especially welcome. *Nonviolence Today* also serves an educational role in promoting a theoretical understanding of nonviolence as a political philosophy. There is much diversity of opinion of what that is, but the common ground of agreement is probably that political power

comes from cooperation. If we don't like the behaviour of power holders, then we withdraw our cooperation in sufficient numbers and they will be disabled. Nonviolent action is a technique which has existed throughout history and occurs in all cultures and has been used by an enormous range of social groups. Nonviolence can be applied to activities as widely different as personal growth and national defence. Violence is not necessary for social change and is, in fact, counterproductive to greater freedom, justice and harmony.

## Subscription Information

Although *Nonviolence Today* is on sale in some alternative bookshops around Australia, subscriptions are a better form of support. Supporting and Maniacal subscriptions make it possible for us to send the magazine to organizations and people who couldn't otherwise receive it, e.g. organisations in the Third World. Unless requested not to, the names and towns of supporting and maniacal subscribers will be published for the time period which applies. The subscription card should have annoyed you

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## Notes for Contributors

*Nonviolence Today* exists to promote  
(1) nonviolence as a political theory and  
(2) the study and practice of nonviolent action as a method of social change.

Theoretical proposals and analyses of actions and campaigns that advance these goals are most welcome. We may edit articles to maintain a focus on nonviolence.

We prefer contributions to be sent by electronic mail (see address above) or on a floppy disk, which we will return. Failing that, preferably typed (for scanning), or clear, legible handwriting (if in doubt, please type it). Please inform us of the authorship of any items you send and tell us if they're not for publication.

Photographs are extremely desirable, preferably: (1) clearly captioned on the back; (2) dramatic.

Copy deadlines are at the end of January, March, May, July, September, November.