

Civilian-Based Defense

EXPLORING A NONVIOLENT STRATEGY FOR DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE

Volume 10

Number 3

Fall 1995

\$4.00
Single
Issue

Civilian-Based Defense and Economic Aggression

George H. Crowell

As understood by the Civilian-Based Defense Association (CBDA), civilian-based defense (CBD), when developed and implemented, would involve thoroughly prepared, nonviolent resistance against external military aggression, and against internal military coups.

But perhaps our focus on military aggression is too narrow. An overwhelming current problem that many people face increasingly and constantly, although it is by no means new, is economic aggression. Let me illustrate what I mean from our recent experience here in Canada:

1. Foreign takeovers of Canadian business enterprises over several decades have resulted in a heavy drain on Canadian economic resources.
2. Changes in the tax system during the last two to three decades have increased the burdens of poor and middle income people, while reducing taxes for the wealthy and corporations.
3. As a result of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Canada has lost control over



its own natural resources, can no longer require that corporations which sell in Canada must provide jobs for Canadians and cannot insist that its governments at all levels must purchase goods and services only from Canadians in order to provide jobs within our own economy.

4. Our highly valued social programs, including medical care, are on the verge of being dismantled as a result of funding cuts, which have been announced as unavoidably necessary because we must give priority to reducing our public deficits and debts. But even massive cutting of social programs is not likely to reduce public debts, because rising interest payments on the debt quickly override savings from program cuts.

Canada's Economic System Is Under Attack

These are primary factors in an agenda which has been imposed on Canada by powerful economic elites who have succeeded in influencing and controlling elected decision-makers. Bondholders among them have benefited from the high interest rates set by the Bank of Canada in
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Some Lessons from Italy for CBD Promoters

Antonino Drago

I do not know the promoters of the international initiative on CBD (Shanti Sahyog, *CBD*, Spring/Summer, 1994), but from what I read about it, I have formed an opinion which takes a different tack than Gene Sharp's and Brian Martin's (*CBD*, Autumn/Winter, 1994).

I think the problems raised by

"We can no longer hope to obtain general consensus as a true people's movement for CBD emerges."

this initiative are so relevant that it seems inappropriate to write about them without embedding my remarks in an analysis of the present situation and the best strategy to be followed in the future.

1. In the past 40 years, we CBD theorists have been unable not only to foresee, but to conceive the major

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From the Editor ✕ Peter Bergel

Making the CBD Anthem a Popular Song

For me, the central decision taken by the Civilian-Based Defense Association (CBDA) board at its June meeting in Toronto was to begin moving the idea of civilian-based defense from the status of study topic to the status of popular movement (see *CBD*, Summer 1995, page 11). In taking this decision, the board was, I believe, in tune with a number of voices in the current CBD choir.

In our Summer issue, Joe Maizlish called, for us to begin preparing a defense against what he called "the occupation we already suffer" by those who wield "violent centralized power." In this issue, George Crowell calls upon Canadians to defend themselves against economic aggression. "Better organized, more systematic campaigns are needed, and the sooner the better," Crowell writes.

Also in this issue, Antonino Drago writes from Italy, "We have to learn to act as a movement with various initiatives proceeding concurrently." Mel Beckman, CBDA's popular board chair, strikes a similar chord: "Now is the time for members of churches...to begin to study the

relevance of 'people power' for national defense and to discuss whether their churches ought to become vocal in support of research and development of civilian-based defense." Later in the same article: "If the study group members persist they may be able to take the idea from their grass-roots level on up through several higher levels of church structure."

The board's decision, specifically, was to set itself a five-year goal to publicize CBD in North America to the point where at least ten percent of the population recognizes the concept when asked about it in a poll. This would be a big step in moving from the ivory tower to the village square.

Another important step is the initiatives being taken by Gene Sharp, Albert Lin and others to approach the militaries of various countries with the idea of CBD. A popular movement will have an immensely easier time gaining a foothold if it is not opposed tooth and nail by the military, in fact—as seems possible—it finds some support among military strategists. The board addressed itself

to this concern by selecting as a second five-year goal the adoption of CBD by some national government as part of its defense policy.

There seems to be widespread feeling that, while there are many matters about CBD that still need clarification and study, the time is right both historically and in terms of the maturity of the concept to begin the process that business folks would call "market testing." It is time for CBD to be taken to the marketplace of ideas and attempts made to sell it to members of the general public.

We are certain to find that the product needs improvement. That's part of the market testing process. With that in mind, let's find out what our fellow citizens think about CBD. If they are critical, let's find out what it would take to turn them into supporters. We can share that information in these pages and our theorists can then prepare the new, improved CBD for a second round of testing.

If we believe in the product, let's sing its praises. ■

Civilian-Based Defense Association 1995 Board of Directors

The following individuals have accepted responsibility for guiding the affairs and programs of the Civilian-Based Defense Association. It is a time-consuming commitment, but an important one as CBDA seeks to inject CBD into the world's debates about defense-related matters. We thank them for their efforts.

Please make your recommendations known to them and/or to *Civilian-Based Defense*.

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Letters to the Editor

Poor Example

I was surprised to read in George Lakey's *Refining Our Language*, which appeared in the Summer 1995 issue, that the situation at Oka is considered an example of nonviolent action. While nonviolent action, including observers, occurred at Oka, the situation itself was an example of the use of violence to establish and defend territorial claims. Both sides in the Oka conflict used the threat of weapons to put forward their argument and one person was killed by a member of the Warrior Society. It was hardly an example of nonviolent social defense.

—Brian Burch
Toronto, Ontario

Treat Militias Fairly

I have received a sample of your newsletter with the article about militias (*CBD*, Spring 1995). You have some interesting ideas, which I will be researching further. A bibliography would be helpful.

I have watched this movement for some time. Your author is right, that you and the militias share goals and strategies. I urge you to proselytize them; they can quickly spread your ideas nationwide through their fax, Internet and phone nets.

Having corresponded with a number of militia activists, I would offer two cautions: don't patronize them and don't stereotype them.

Patronization: The text that seemed most clearly patronizing was on page six where the author appears to say that such nonviolent steps as public hearings, political action and organized nonviolent struggle "will probably be new to most militia proponents." In fact, these are the options that most militia activists are currently pursuing.

Stereotyping: The media has a "militia" stereotype, like its stereotypes of Big Business, homosexuals, "gun nuts" and others. This isn't a conspiracy; it's just lazy sensationalism. In recent Senate hearings,

several suit-wearing, rational militia activists spoke to the committee for several hours. The TV news used one irrational sound bite from the single idiot who wore camouflage.

The militia movement has, unfortunately, attracted a number of loud-talking, attention-seeking fruit loops, as does any movement that is opposed to an existing government power structure. These people are deemed more newsworthy, just like

Having corresponded with a number of militia activists, I would offer two cautions: don't patronize them and don't stereotype them.

--Samuel Mize

Bozo is, and get more media coverage than more normal activists.

Coordination and Action: I would urge your members to seek out and share ideas with local militia activists. Simply remember that these are individuals, not local instances stamped from some national "militia nut" stereotype. Find out what they're already doing before presenting your "new" ideas—they may be better educated in nonviolent resistance than you realized.

Remember, too, that many militia "units" are not political action groups. Some exist only to prepare, in case of a last-ditch need for armed response. The members of such a group will concentrate their nonviolent activities in other groups to which they belong. Thus, the unit itself is not a nonviolent institution, but its members may be dedicated to avoiding violence if possible.

This is like the Shriners, whose organization maintains hospitals for burned and crippled children, but who individually work to prevent injuries

as well.

Most militia activists do not seek violence, but fear it, from rogue federal agents or agencies. They see ongoing deviation from the Constitution. If this becomes a tyranny, they hope to resist until lawful government can be restored. They will welcome hearing more options for realistic nonviolent or less-violent resistance, beyond their current actions and plans.

—Samuel Mize
Houston, TX

CBD and the Militia Revisited

CBDA Board Chair Mel Beckman, author of *The Militia Movement and Civilian-Based Defense: Opposite Approaches to Security?* (*CBD*, Spring 1995) notes another similarity between the CBD movement and the militia movement in this quotation from the end of an article by California militia advocate Joseph Miranda: "...it is vital for the militia to make itself a political movement capable of winning the support of the majority of Americans. That is where the victory is." (*California Liberty*, March, 1995; PO Box 3207, San Dimas, CA 91773; 800-637-1776.) --Ed.

Congratulations

Congratulations on a fine issue (Summer 1995 *CBD*). We have received the newsletter for many years—great improvement!

—Bill & Mary Carry
Royal Oak, MI.

I like your editorial efforts on the CBDA newsletter. Good to read of your past involvement (in the last issue) and to see plenty of evidence of your continuing commitment in the latest one.

—Robert Burrowes
Melbourne, Australia

Please recycle this paper

CBD and Economic Aggression

(Continued from page 1)

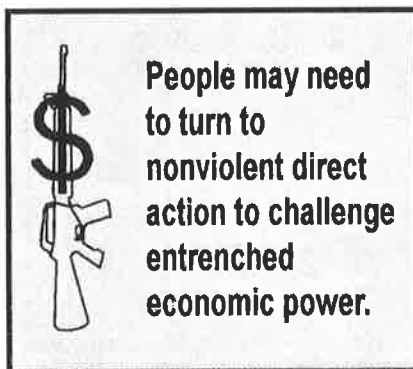
order to control inflation, even though this policy has twice since 1980 driven the economy into severe recession, from which the economy has not yet recovered. Corporations have already benefited from lower wages resulting from chronic unemployment, and, as social programs which have supported people in time of need are cut, they will benefit further from still lower wages and more compliant workers. Moreover, they will benefit from privatization of public services by moving in to take advantage of opportunities for profit as public services, notably medical care, are eliminated. If these trends continue, we can expect that the rich will get richer while poverty increases. Social conflict, crime, suicide, and discrimination against women, minorities, and children are all likely to increase as has already occurred under a deficit-cutting agenda in New Zealand.

Global Phenomenon Calls For Global Response

Economic aggression is, of course, a global phenomenon, and many people around the world are suffering from its consequences far more severely than Canadians are at present. The long history of European colonialism was fundamentally a story of economic aggression, and its legacy of exploitation of "Third World" nations continues through the activities of transnational corporations. Recently the impact of International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment programs, a particularly virulent form of economic aggression, has been so devastating that many so-called "developing" nations are, in fact, disintegrating.

People need to find effective ways of defending themselves against economic aggression. A key problem, however, is that economic aggression often occurs in forms which make it difficult to recognize. Unlike military invasion, which involves highly

visible movement of troops and equipment, economic aggression can come inconspicuously, with little public awareness of what is really happening. It may appear, or be made to appear, to be advantageous not only to the few who benefit from it most directly, but also to many others, and even to the entire society.



People may need to turn to nonviolent direct action to challenge entrenched economic power.

First Step: Provide Good Information

Although economic aggression has continued for many years in Canada, and has provided extraordinary advantages for wealthy elites, both foreign and domestic, who keep pressing for ever greater gains, it appears, judging from recent election results, that most Canadians see these developments either as beneficial, unavoidable or too confusing to sort out. Obviously the first line of defense against such aggression must be to provide a clear understanding of what is really happening. This must include counteracting the messages which dominate the mainstream media. Controlled by economic elites, these are an integral part of economic aggression. With accurate information, people could at least come to recognize the need to work for change through electoral politics. But such awareness may not be possible before many more people have experienced the urgency of the issue through increased suffering.

Accurate information by itself is obviously insufficient to bring about social change. In addition, people need to become motivated to pour vast amounts of time and energy into political struggle against powerfully entrenched economic interests led by transnational corporations and banks and supported by the media they control. Even enormous efforts through established political channels may not suffice, however. People may also need to turn to nonviolent direct action to challenge entrenched economic power.

New Nonviolent "Weapons" Needed...

The early labor movement was only able to make headway against the exploitive practices of powerful corporations through the nonviolent weapon of the strike, expressed in many different ways. When workers first went out on strike against their employers, they were subject to attack by police and military forces, to beatings, imprisonment and blacklisting. In this century, however, labor unions and strikes have been legalized in many nations, including Canada. Workers have been able to legally organize labor unions and—by observing accepted rules—have been able to legally exert the leverage of the strike, with minimal fear of severe retaliation.

...But They'll Require Sacrifices

At present, however, as economic elites devise new strategies to enrich themselves at the expense of people and the environment, the strike has become increasingly useless as a means of counteracting their power. When work forces are reduced, when plants are closed and moved as a result of free trade agreements, when social programs—workers' social wages—are cut, when central bank policies drive economies into recession and governments ever deeper into debt and when IMF structural

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CBD and Economic Aggression

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adjustment programs drive entire nations, excepting their few wealthy elites, into ever more desperate poverty, the workers' weapon of the legitimate strike becomes irrelevant. Different nonviolent strategies must be devised in order to counteract new forms of economic aggression.

Unfortunately, possible new strategies have no legal standing. Therefore, those who use them will once again have to accept great personal risk to exercise them.

The Link To CBD

It appears, at least in the current Canadian situation, that the campaign which must be mounted against economic aggression has fundamental similarities with CBD. Both would require the use of nonviolent struggle to defend valued existing institutions. These similarities involve extremely important common ground. Nevertheless, there are great practical—as well as theoretical—difficulties involved in bringing together these two types of defensive nonviolent struggle. The theoretical difficulty might be overcome simply by redefining CBD to include defense against economic aggression. But it is the practical difficulties which really count. Let us consider them in the present Canadian context.

Few Canadians see themselves threatened either by external invasion or by military coup. Even among the few Canadians who see such dangers and who respond positively to the idea that CBD offers the most viable form of defense, there is little sense of urgency about the need to promote it. On the other hand there is a great deal of growing concern about the economic deprivation which is increasing in Canada, although it is not described as "economic aggression."

Already, little-known, uncoordinated, sporadic nonviolent actions against it have occurred. Towns have blockaded their access roads in order to protest the withdrawal of public services, workers have occupied plants in attempts to prevent them

from moving out, and environmentalists have blockaded logging roads to prevent clearcutting of old growth forests. Better organized, more systematic campaigns are needed, and the sooner the better. The more people delay, the less they will have left to defend.

Best Strategy

At present, in my judgment, the best way to support CBD in Canada is to contribute insight concerning the power and relevance of nonviolent action for the struggle against economic aggression, and to participate in the struggle as it develops. Depending on the course of such a struggle, I can envision possibilities that CBD, in the accepted sense of resistance against external military aggression and against internal military coups, might become directly relevant to the Canadian situation, and the opportunity to make clear its relevance to a majority of Canadians might arise.

It would be naive for any movement against economic aggression to overlook the fact that economic power is ultimately backed by police and military power. If a Canadian struggle against economic aggression

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should ever reach the point that it could succeed in electing a government supporting this struggle and calling for an end to Canadian participation in the FTA and NAFTA, the U.S. would certainly be alarmed at the prospect of losing access to Canadian resources and markets. It would have to be expected that every

imaginable economic and political pressure would be brought to bear by the corporate community and by the U.S. government, which has consistently supported their interests, to prevent such an outcome. If such efforts failed, then the possibility that the U.S. might engineer a coup or even mount an invasion, as it has done in many other cases in this hemisphere, could not be dismissed.

As a backup to any serious struggle against economic aggression, Canada needs a capacity for CBD. Much of the needed capability for CBD could already be in place as a result of experience gained in nonviolent struggle against economic aggression. It is questionable, however, whether participants in a struggle against economic aggression could muster sufficient stamina to continue with resistance against military aggression. It would be difficult enough if they fully expected military intervention and had prepared CBD in advance. Lack of such preparations would make it far more difficult.

Whether or not CBD is defined to include nonviolent struggle to defend against economic aggression as well as against military aggression, it appears evident that the two types of struggle will increasingly need to be linked. It appears further that the struggle against economic aggression must be in the vanguard. Virtually all over the world, economic aggression is on the rise, with increasingly devastating potential consequences for people and for the environment. The promise and the perils of linking CBD with nonviolent struggle against economic aggression requires much careful thought and discussion. ■

[A member of the CBDA Board of Directors, George Crowell has since 1968 been teaching courses in social ethics in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Windsor, in Ontario.]

Lessons from Italy

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events that reveal the potential of CBD—events that have demonstrated to the world that CBD is equal to facing the worst struggles (such as wars, dictatorship, economic monopolies).

2. The developments of 1989 reveal that our main concern must be to promote CBD before world events overtake us. This implies foreseeing the potential of evolving trends as well as radical political changes.

3. In particular, public awareness of the potential of CBD is more firmly rooted and more widely dispersed than the theorists could ever have imagined based on public responses to their initiatives. Indeed, the initiatives that seem to attract the most attention are those made to some elites (military commands, the Ministry of Defense, the Parliament) suggesting new arrangements. In no country has a social movement arisen to struggle for CBD (although in Italy the National Campaign for Objection to Military Taxes is aimed in part at the goal of instituting CBD). For example, to my knowledge, no initiative for promoting CBD through the U.N. exists.

4. Gandhi's example taught us that CBD is thinkable; then theorists convinced us that it is rationally possible; then some astonishing events led us to see it as a practicable action; at last, the events of 1989 showed that it can constitute the best of several competing policies. Now we pre-1989 theorists must read the signs of the times. The first conclusion we must draw from the events of 1989 is that the time has come for



starting a political movement for CBD.

5. The political structure of Western societies is far from being nonviolent (or even peaceful). No wonder it took a non-Western leader (Gandhi) to project nonviolence onto the world stage. Likewise, it is no wonder that it now takes non-Western leaders to steer us toward CBD. It will also not surprise me if the capability of Western peoples to achieve the goals of CBD proves less than that of non-Westerners. The structures of Western society are more rigid and less susceptible to change than some non-Western structures. However, the events of 1989 tell us that some Western social structures, led by the economy, will change abruptly. Accordingly, we will have to plan international actions that anticipate such changes and position us within the flow of history.

6. We have to learn to act as a movement with various initiatives proceeding concurrently. This implies that we can

no longer hope to obtain general consensus as a true people's movement for CBD emerges.

7. In particular, we must accept that the political leadership which emerges for CBD will not be the same as the theoretical leadership. Indeed, if theory controls practice too strongly, we will find that our strategy remains theoretical while true strategy is only discovered in the midst of the struggle. We Italians accumulated some experience on this point. After 1989, some pacifist groups took typical nonviolent initiatives (e.g. Time for Peace in Jerusalem in 1989, in Sarajevo in 1991 and 1993; and mediations in

Mozambique and Algeria). Traditional CBD leaders reacted coldly or even negatively. That posed the dilemma: is it better to not react to preserve a long tradition or to join juvenile initiatives? By running on parallel tracks, we gathered some information as to what it means to take CBD initiatives. In other words, humility promotes common growth.

8. In the future, CBD must learn to speak loudly and clearly to simple people, not just to public ministers who belong to the present institutions. ■

[Antonino Drago is Associate Professor of the History of Physics at the Universita' Di Napoli in Naples, Italy. He is allied with the Ark Community and is responsible for the National Program of Research on People's Nonviolent Defense. This program is supported by the Campaign for Conscientious Objection to Military Taxes. His e-mail address is: adrago@na.infn.it]

Would CBD Help In Native American Struggles?

Peter Bergel

The need for civilian-based defense seems to arise on every side once we begin to think in terms of dealing with our security needs through disciplined nonviolent action. I have been struck by another one over the past couple of weeks as Native American land struggles have erupted in Canada on opposite sides of the continent.

Standoff in British Columbia

In British Columbia a group of Shuswap Indians sought for almost two years to peacefully reclaim a sacred site where their ancestors are buried and where sundance ceremonies have been held for some years. They charged the site was being defiled by cattle. U.S. rancher Lyle James, claiming to own the property (although unable to produce a deed for it), obtained an eviction order in June and called upon the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to remove the Indians.

The Indians refused to leave, giving rise to an extended standoff during which each side accused the other of initiating and continuing the use of firearms. According to Sgt. Peter Montague of the RCMP, two Mounties were hit (though protected by bulletproof vests). According to the Indians, a car was blown up and at least one woman wounded by the RCMP.

Both sides agreed that the RCMP scaled off an area of some 1,600 square miles permitting no entry or egress except to approved delegations trying to negotiate a settlement. No news personnel were allowed in so information about the struggle was limited to what the RCMP chose to reveal and scattered reports transmitted by shortwave radio inside the camp and picked up by a network of supporters outside. The network utilized fax machines and the Internet to disseminate its information.

This standoff ended without fatalities when the Indian defenders surrendered on September 17,

following the intervention of their spiritual leader, and were taken into custody by the RCMP. The status of their land claim was not resolved, but the record of dealings between the Shuswap and the Canadian government offers little grounds for optimism that it will be dealt with fairly. (For example, according to the network, the Indians' lawyer was not permitted to see his clients before they were brought in for a bail hearing. When he forced his way into the courtroom through a locked (!) door, he was arrested and placed under psychiatric observation.)

One Dead, Two Wounded In Ontario

On the other side of the continent, an unarmed group of Mohawk and Ojibway men, women and children reclaimed a tract of land that had been appropriated by the armed services during World War II and then turned into a park by the government when the war was over. Another standoff with police resulted during which 30-year-old Dudley George was shot dead at close range, although he reportedly had his hands over his head and was coming out to parley. Two others were critically wounded.

Dann Case

In the United States, a similar dispute has led to confrontation between the Dann Band of the Western Shoshone Indians and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Northern Nevada. The Danns, an extended ranching family, have sought the assistance of whites from the American Peace Test and other anti-nuclear groups who are trained in nonviolence. They have prepared themselves for nonviolent defense of their land and stock and have had occasion to resist BLM attempts to confiscate both. In their most dramatic clash to date, one member of the group was arrested on trumped-up charges, but most of their stock was

not successfully impounded and the BLM withdrew.

Could Indians Use CBD?

The legal issues raised by these Indian land claims are complex and depend substantially on how one interprets the long history of uneasy relations and broken treaties between the Canadian, British and U.S. governments and the Indians. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the Indians' claims and demands are at least partially just. In their view, they

are sovereign nations, independent of

How could CBDA help?

the U.S. and Canada, and should not be ruled by those governments nor subjected to their courts. Their situation, therefore, would seem ideal for the use of CBD.

- ◆ They believe their fundamental rights are being violated by invading nations.
- ◆ They are not militarily strong enough to repel the invaders or even punish them seriously.
- ◆ They believe their cause is just—an opinion shared by many who are not part of their nation.
- ◆ They are bound together by common spiritual beliefs which lend them courage and determination.

How Could CBDA Help?

Assuming that others share the conclusion that CBD could make an important contribution to some of these Indian struggles for justice, the following questions arise:

- ◆ What training would they need and how can CBDA help them get it?
- ◆ What role should non-Indians take in such a struggle?
- ◆ What can we recommend to our potential allies in the way of nonviolent strategy?

I invite anyone interested in pursuing these questions to contact me: 333 State Street, Salem, OR 97301; 503-371-8002; e-mail: pbergel@igc.apc.org.

[Peter Bergel is editor of *Civilian-Based Defense*.]

CBD and Churches Are Made for Each Other

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defense is accepted as the everyday norm, not a last, anguished resort. Governments always portray their wars as justified. On the other hand, believers who make no allowance for violence must see that most citizens reject this position as utopian, or at least beyond their ability to accept. Most citizens fear that enemies will be quite ruthless if they are not deterred by adequate defense preparations.

And so, the nations of the world continue to be heavily armed, with the anguished blessing of many churches, and despite of the opposition of a few.

Golden Opportunity

With the end of the cold war, members of churches have a golden opportunity to take another look at the moral questions involved in national defense. Now they should feel less pressure, less urgency, to accept the kind of preparations for war that were seen as necessary in the past. Now is the time for asking hard questions.

In recent years an exciting new possibility has appeared on the defense scene—one which should interest churches greatly. A new kind of defense policy has been proposed, which, if chosen by a nation and developed adequately, might eventually eliminate the need for the use of armed forces and violence. That policy is "civilian-based" defense.

Civilians in Civilian Roles As Defenders

In a civilian-based defense scenario, the people themselves, using their organizations and institutions, would be the defenders, instead of armies. Their strength, their power, would come from being prepared in advance to deny an enemy the support and cooperation needed to occupy and govern. This could be done without resorting to violence. While the enemy (from abroad or within) could attempt a military take-over, massive popular resistance prepared by the defenders would pose a huge concern and might well dissuade the attack

alone. If the attempt is made, the defending population would have an excellent chance to defeat it, while avoiding much of the bloodshed and devastation usually suffered by both countries when military defense is used.

Using civilian-based defense, it may be possible to construct a defense policy based solely, or largely, on the citizenry's innate ability to be creatively stubborn and uncoopera-

In recent years an exciting new possibility has appeared on the defense scene—one which should interest churches greatly.

tive! Perhaps a nation's enemies can be "coerced" to avoid aggression without threatening them with death and destruction as is now common. If the people are willing to become involved in their own defense, perhaps they won't need to relinquish that task to governments, which have made us all very insecure in recent decades.

With CBD, Churches Can Have It All

Churches in all countries should look closely at the potential practicality of nonviolent, civilian-based defense. It may allow the innocent to be protected without the need to threaten the guilty with violence. If this kind of defense can be developed, churches which now reluctantly agree to military forces and weaponry could gradually withdraw their support. As for the minority of churches which have been refusing to endorse war and weaponry all along, they would be able to approve and participate in the national defense.

Until now, United States churches have expressed little interest in civilian-based defense. The U.S. Catholic bishops spoke warmly of

"organized popular defense" and nonviolent resistance in their 1983 pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response* (paragraphs 223-227), but there has been little or no follow-up. Brief mention of the idea was also made in *Christian Obedience in a Nuclear Age*, a 1988 policy statement of the 200th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA, and in a 1988 Foundation Document of the United Methodist Council of Bishops, *In Defense of Creation: The Nuclear Crisis and a Just Peace*.

Churches Can Provide Leadership

Why don't the churches show more interest? Perhaps it is because their members, too, think that armed force can only be countered with armed force—that there is no other way to wield power. Now is the time for members of churches to challenge that, to begin to study the relevance of "people power" for national defense and to discuss whether their churches ought to become vocal in support of research and development of civilian-based defense.

Pastors and other church leaders might be able to introduce the idea of civilian-based defense to their people "from the top down," by providing educational materials, arranging for lectures and workshops on civilian-based defense, and by talking about it in their pulpits and classrooms.

People in the pews can also raise the level of awareness. Grass-roots education can begin with simple study groups reading Gene Sharp's *Civilian-Based Defense: A Post-Military Weapons System*, or a shorter work by the same author, *Making the Abolition of War a Realistic Goal*. Information about other resources may be requested from the Albert Einstein Institution, 1430 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138 or the Civilian-Based Defense Association, Box 92, Omaha, NE 68101.

After a study group has done its homework, it might pass a group

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CBD and Churches

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resolution asking the local church council to provide information about civilian-based defense to

Now is the time for churches to communicate a new message about defense.

the whole congregation. If the study group members persist they may be able to take the idea from their grass-roots level on up through several higher levels of church structure.

In Iowa farm country, tall steeples show how important the churches are to their members. They are no less important to city folks. People still listen to what they hear in church. Now is the time for churches to communicate a new message about defense, no longer presenting the options as either military defense or no defense, but pointing to nonviolent, civilian-based defense as a possible third option which the human family urgently needs to consider. ■

[Mel Beckman is Board Chair of the Civilian-Based Defense Association.]

Why Subscribe to CBD?

Phil Bogdonoff

This publication, *Civilian-Based Defense*, plays a major role in the on-going work to promote civilian-based defense in several ways:

- 1) *Civilian-Based Defense* links together the dispersed individuals and organizations around the world who are incubating the concept;
- 2) *Civilian-Based Defense* provides a very important forum for discussing and debating how the idea should be promoted and actualized;
- 3) *Civilian-Based Defense* is tangible evidence of an active movement and provides a doorway for those newly exposed to the idea to join and participate;
- 4) *Civilian-Based Defense* is a teaching forum for the members of our movement. We are at different

levels in our understanding of how nonviolent methods can be used for CBD and we have different opinions about what is necessary in the way of training and how to teach the ideas in order to prepare the general population to use CBD. *CBD* provides "continuing education," so to speak.

- 5) *Civilian-Based Defense*, via newsletter exchanges, promotional mailings, advertising, etc., is a vehicle for disseminating the concept to new audiences around the world and in our own backyards.
- 6) *Civilian-Based Defense* is an historical archive of the history, debate, and development of civilian-based defense.
- 7) *Civilian-Based Defense*, being one

of the only, and certainly the longest-lived publication focusing solely on CBD, sets the standard for popular discussion of the field. ■

[Phil Bogdonoff is one of CBD's Consulting Editors.]



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CIVILIAN-BASED DEFENSE ASSOCIATION
Box 92, Omaha, NE 68101 USA

Civilian-Based Defense (ISSN 0886-6015) is published quarterly by the Civilian-Based Defense Association (CBDA) to provide information about civilian-based defense (CBD) as an alternative policy for national defense and to make available international news, opinion and research about CBD. The Association is a nonprofit membership organization founded in 1982 to promote widespread consideration of CBD and to engage in educational activities to bring CBD to public attention. CBD means protecting a nation against invasions or coups d'etat by preparing its citizens to resist aggression or usurpation by withholding cooperation and by active noncooperation rather than military force. Tactics include strikes, encouraging invading forces to desert, encouraging other countries to use sanctions against the invader, etc. Citizens would learn how to use CBD before aggression starts, which distinguishes it from spontaneous resistance. Prior preparation and publicity would enhance its effectiveness and also make it a deterrent to attack.

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Consulting Editors: Mel Beckman and Philip Bogdonoff.

Subscriptions: \$15/year or \$25/two years to CBDA, Box 92, Omaha, NE 68101 USA; 402-558-2085.

Readers are invited to send news, articles and other material for publication. ■

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CBD and Churches Are Made For Each Other

Mel Beckman

On a recent trip across Iowa I had occasion to visit New Vienna, a little village where my great-grandparents once lived. About a century ago the German Catholic community built a magnificent church there, with a steeple towering 200 feet into the sky. In the nearby town of Dyersville, the spires of the church rise to a height of 212 feet. All through the farm country, what stands out on most horizons is a church steeple.

The spires indicate how important religious institutions can be in the lives of people. It has been in the churches, temples, mosques, and synagogues of the world that people have come to grips with the big questions of life...who God is, why we exist, what is good, what is evil, etc.

Forum for Discussion of Defense

Questions about war and national defense have also been discussed in the churches (using the term loosely to apply to all religious institutions) for centuries. People continue to look to their churches to find out whether it is morally permissible to use violence and to kill others in warfare or to hold in readiness the terrible weaponry needed for war.

At the risk of over-simplification, one could say that churches

usually take one or the other of two positions on these questions. The vast majority see violence as evil and preach the need to love and forgive. Still, they reluctantly accept the use of violence in war—and defense preparations in general—as being less evil than the

In recent years an exciting new possibility has appeared on the defense scene—one which should interest churches greatly.

slaughter that might occur without armed defense preparations. Indeed, given certain circumstances, going to war might not be evil at all but rather, justified.

In total disagreement with that thinking, a small minority of churches does not accept the use of violence and military preparations for war, even for defense. They advocate feeding the hungry and creating a more just world as ways to prevent war, and they would accept suffering themselves rather than inflict it on others if attacked.

Religious people of both persuasions must feel a certain frustration with their positions. Those who allow a moral space for war, and preparing for war, cannot help but see how quickly governments come to rely on armed deterrence and defense. Military

(Continued on page 8)

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"Social power, not technological means of destruction, is the strongest guarantor of human freedom." (Sharp, 1990)

November 28, 1995

Dear Friend of CBDA,

You are probably aware of an overwhelming range of urgent problems in our world. Indeed it may be hard to decide where to begin putting your personal effort towards healing our society. We now need a deep reevaluation of our basic assumptions and a change in many social operating patterns.

The insight into power inherent in civilian-based defense (CBD) is a critical piece of understanding to allow us to appreciate the real possibility of developing to a world beyond war, and even a world of real democracy. The belief that a violent military institution is necessary for our national defense is an assumption that encourages and validates the widespread violence of our society (individual and institutional, directed against the earth as well as the earth's inhabitants). CBDA can help us through the major step of realizing that this assumption is false. Once we transcend this belief in violence we can begin to find our real power.

We are the grassroots organization dedicated to promoting the idea of CBD widely. Our membership is our primary source of support. Your financial contributions are essential for our survival as a meaningful force for wider understanding of CBD.

We have been operating with a very low budget--even small contributions are helpful. We are now trying to implement a broader program, as outlined in the summer issue of the CBD magazine. Specific projects we are working on include: a video on CBD; a conference; upgrading our magazine; and publishing new, popular-level materials on CBD.

Towards these ends, we are trying to develop some foundation grants, and for this a personal link to foundation sources appears to be critical. Thus, if you have contact with any appropriate foundation board members or personnel, please help by putting us in contact with them.

Please share with us your thoughts on CBD and the work you would like to see CBDA doing. We welcome any ideas you have to share. If you use e-mail, please send your address to us at cbda@igc.apc.org.

Your direct support with a check to CBDA for whatever you can afford is extremely important. Thank you.

In peace,



Mel Beckman
Chairman



David Gallahan
Interim Director of Program and Fund Raising

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January 8, 1995

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS:

The Civilian-Based Defense Association is reorganizing. Publication of our magazine, Civilian-Based Defense, will continue, but we also want to develop other programs, and we need to make more serious efforts to do fund-raising. Our task is important. We are one of the very few organizations whose major interest is to promote consideration of nonviolent deterrence and defense. But to accomplish our task we must work harder, smarter, and more creatively. And we need more resources with which to work.

In our reorganization, the position of Executive Director will be discontinued for the time being. Administration will be handled by the Board Chairperson and the Treasurer. Applications are being taken for two paid positions. The Editor of Civilian-Based Defense will receive a small, fixed stipend for each issue published. A Director of Program and Fund-Raising will also be hired. His/her salary cannot be guaranteed at this time and will depend on Association income and the Director's ability to do fund-raising. If you would like to know more about either or both of these positions please send us a request for the job descriptions.

Paul Anders, our Executive Director, has resigned. We thank him for helping to maintain the organization and develop the magazine these past few years. The office of the Association has been moved from Cambridge to Omaha. The new mailing address of the Association is: P.O. Box 92, Omaha, NE 68101-0092 USA. The new phone number is: 402-558-2085.

June 9-10

We hope to sponsor a conference on civilian-based defense in late May or early June of 1995, in Toronto, Canada. In addition, we are studying the feasibility of producing a videotape on civilian-based defense - for use in classrooms, conferences, and other learning situations. Both projects have the potential to create much greater awareness of civilian-based defense. But thousands of dollars will be needed to fund them. We depend on our members to make contributions and to help us find new donors.


We encourage our members to think about how they can promote study of civilian-based defense in their own areas. One of our members, for example, arranged a series of public presentations on civilian-based defense in Taiwan. In the last issue of Nonviolent Sanctions, the newsletter of the Albert Einstein Institution, we read that our friends there are drafting a Baltic civilian-based defense mutual assistance treaty, with the help of former Lithuanian Defense Minister, Audrius Butkevicius. Not all our efforts can be of that magnitude but we can each do important ground-breaking work for the idea in our own locale.

Please help us, if you can, with a contribution and/or payment of dues or subscription at this time. We are trying to make a transition to a more effective organization. If you have just recently given something we thank you.

We continue to ask for your communication. Informational or theoretical articles, book reviews, phone calls, and letters to the editor for the magazine are all helpful. If you haven't seen anything in the magazine from your country lately, please send us news about what is happening. We would like to be as inclusive as possible. If you need to write in a language other than English we will try to find a translator for your material here.

Finally, a few words about the circulation of our magazine. At this time, we mail it to about 330 individuals, groups, and institutions in the United States and to about 75 others in thirty one countries. Please suggest names of individuals or groups to receive our publication. We will try to mail each of them an introductory copy. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



Melvin G. Beckman
Chairman

* By February 28th.