

# Civilian-Based Defense

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## CATHOLICS and CIVILIAN-BASED DEFENSE

by Walter H. Conser, Jr.

*"Nonviolent means of resistance to evil deserve much more study and consideration than they have thus far received. There have been significant instances in which people have successfully resisted oppression without recourse to arms."*

*--from the bishops' Pastoral*

The United States Catholic bishops' 1983 Pastoral Letter, **The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response**, urged study of nonviolent popular defense--better known as "civilian-based defense" (CBD)--as an alternative form of national defense for the United States. Although the bishops' interest in CBD caught many commentators by surprise, this position was squarely in line with the best tradition of Catholic teaching on war and peace.

Let's trace the development of that teaching before we consider CBD.

Catholic teaching on war has always based itself on two assumptions: a recognition of the reality of human conflict, and a desire for justice in the world. Papal encyclicals, resolutions by church councils, and statements by bishops have all wrestled with these two basic premises. Likewise, the American bishops' pastoral letter recognized these two as the framework for a proper discussion of national defense.

The pastoral letter also reflected the American church hierarchy's encounter with international conflict. For a legacy of the Vietnam War was its prompting of American society to ponder anew the meaning and morality of war and peace. The United States bishops went through their own process of deliberation, examination, and inquiry.

Pope John XXIII's own statements and his leadership of the Second Vatican Council provided an additional stimulus for fresh thinking by Catholics

everywhere. The Council's statement on fostering peace recognized the just war tradition and pacifism as legitimate approaches for Catholics in the modern world. The Council insisted that Catholics apply these traditions to the real world of international conflict and nuclear armaments, rather than to a hypothetical world of improbable situations and war games. The Council called for all Catholics to look at war with an entirely new attitude. It called for them to search for fresh answers to the perennial but increasingly destructive threat of war.

The just war tradition and pacifism have been the familiar framework for Catholic discussion of war.

The just war tradition, as its very name implies, distinguishes just from unjust wars. It forbids participation in the latter. Historically, the just war tradition has insisted that a war meet **all** the following minimum standards in order for it to be considered just:

- (1) The war must be officially declared by a competent authority.
- (2) The war must be on behalf of a just cause.
- (3) All peaceful remedies must have been exhausted.
- (4) There must be a reasonable chance of success such that the good resulting from the war will outweigh the necessary evil effects which will occur during the war.
- (5) There must be a high probability that the means used in war will enable the good ends to be achieved. Any means that are immoral, such as killing civilians, may **not** be used no matter how militarily effective.
- (6) The war must be carried out with the correct intentions.

These were the criteria for a just war. The inescapable question was whether a nuclear war could ever fulfill **all** of these minimum standards.

The pacifist position within Catholicism has always insisted that personal participation in **any** war was immoral behavior. Religiously-motivated individuals had a right to refuse to participate in the military, the Council insisted. Thus the Council supported the option of conscientious objection for individual Catholics. The Council supported this position as a valid alternative to the just war tradition.

Religious pacifism has always been a type of moral witness, a refusal to participate in war, and a willingness to die for one's beliefs if necessary. While the Council admired the tenacity of the pacifist's beliefs, it also recognized that self-defense by a nation was a legitimate goal. Thus pacifism was an option for individuals, but not for nations.

The Second Vatican Council bequeathed a complex legacy to Roman Catholics in the United States and elsewhere. It recognized both just war and Christian pacifism, but had reservations about the adequacy of both approaches. The Council was acutely aware that world conflict was continuing to escalate. The imperative need of our time was a way to resolve that conflict in a fair and just manner.

The bishops' pastoral letter built on the foundation laid by both the Second Vatican Council and the bishops' own reflections on the Vietnam era. While recognizing that national self-defense (and the use of limited coercive force on its behalf) was legitimate, the bishops insisted that targeting civilian population centers and being the first to use nuclear weapons were both morally unjustifiable. Moreover, they were skeptical whether any use of nuclear weapons could be justified. Consequently, they called for a halt to the testing and development of new nuclear weapons, and they strongly advocated new negotiations for a comprehensive test ban treaty.

The bishops discussed nonviolent popular resistance as an alternative means of defense. They cited its use in the past and called for extensive research and discussion of its defense potential for the future. Their understanding of CBD drew on the testimony of Gene Sharp, Director of the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions at Harvard University and a leading theorist in the field of nonviolent struggle.

Sharp describes CBD as "a defense policy utilizing prepared civilian struggle to preserve the society's freedom, sovereignty, and constitutional system from attack." Its aim is to deter and defeat such attacks through nonviolent means. CBD would use both massive and selective noncooperation and defiance by the civilian population and their institutions. Such resistance would make a population unrunable by the attackers, and would also deny the attackers their political, economic, and social objectives. A genuine capacity to do that, if accurately perceived, could deter both internal takeovers and foreign invasion, Sharp argues.

Sharp has conducted extensive research into the technique of nonviolent action. This technique refers to methods of protest, noncooperation, and intervention without physical violence, where the members of the nonviolent group do, or refuse to do, certain things.

Nonviolent action is not identical with a belief system such as religious pacifism. Instead, nonviolent action is a group of sanctions and a technique of struggle that wields power nonviolently. It does not assume that human nature is good. Nor does this technique require that its opponents are civilized people who will refrain from repression once challenged. It can be effective even when practiced by non-religious non-pacifists, and even when used against brutal attackers.

The bishops' final statement observed that military force was not the only defense against aggression,

because "nonviolent means of fending off aggression and resolving conflict best reflect the call of Jesus to love and justice." Moreover, the bishops pointed out that examples from Jesus's life and the history of Christianity demonstrated the compatibility of nonviolent means of resisting injustice with Christian theology, Christian spirituality, and any adequate Christian concept of peace.

Drawing in part on Sharp's testimony, the bishops also recognized the important strategic point that many people have used nonviolent action because it was an effective means of achieving their goals. Beyond that, the bishops observed that nonviolent resistance, like military resistance, can take many forms. Historical examples of nonviolent action show that it can be used flexibly, creatively, and resiliently in meeting different challenges.

The bishops drew a further parallel between CBD and military resistance. They stated that effective nonviolent resistance demands that its users train in its methods, obey instructions, willingly sacrifice, and remain strong in the face of repression. To quote the pastoral letter: "Non-violent resistance, like war, can take many forms depending upon the demands of a given situation. There is, for instance, organized popular defense instituted by government as part of its contingency planning. Citizens would be trained in the techniques of peaceable non-compliance and non-cooperation as a means of hindering an invading force or non-democratic government from imposing its will. Effective non-violent resistance requires the united will of a people and may demand as much patience and sacrifice from those who practice it as is now demanded by war and preparation for war." As the bishops recognized, these requirements for the traditional military soldier are also the expectations of the nonviolent resister.

The United States Catholic bishops reached the important conclusion that these stringent demands have already been met, for "there have been significant instances in which people have successfully resisted oppression without recourse to arms." "Nonviolence is not the way of the weak, the cowardly, or the impatient," the bishops insisted.

The bishops realized that their proposals for CBD sounded unusual. Yet they pointed to the previous uses of nonviolent action as in Gandhi's independence campaign, the improvised Danish and Norwegian resistance against the Nazis, and the struggles of Martin Luther King. Scores of other examples of the use of nonviolent action could be cited. Indeed, as Gene Sharp has suggested, more evidence exists today for the feasibility of a new non-military defense system than existed in 1939 that nuclear bombs were possible.

While CBD previously has been little discussed in America, Europeans have recognized its defense potential. Within the last fifteen years, the governments of Finland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Austria,

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## CIVILIAN-BASED DEFENSE: NEWS-OPINION

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## "THE PEOPLE"

The people is a beast of muddy brain  
That knows not its own force, and  
therefore stands  
Loaded with wood and stone; the  
powerless hands  
Of a mere child guide it with bit  
and rein;

One kick would be enough to break  
the chain;  
But the beast fears, and what the  
child demands,  
It does; nor its own terror  
understands,  
Confused and stupified by  
bugbears vain.

Most wonderful! with its own hands  
it ties  
And gags itself--gives itself  
death and war  
For pence doled out by kings from  
its own store.

Its own are all things between earth  
and heaven;  
But this it knows not; and if one  
arise  
To tell this truth, it kills him  
unforgiven.

By Tomasso Campanella,  
as translated from the Italian  
poem, "The People," by John  
Addington Symonds.

## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



### ENGLAND

A fifty-page article by Adam Roberts on "What is a Military Occupation?" was published at the end of 1985 in The British Year Book Of International Law 1984. It examines the types of situation that can be called military occupations and also refers to the legal status of resisters. (Publisher: Oxford University Press, 1985.) Adam Roberts can now be reached at Balliol College, Oxford, OXI 3BJ, Oxford 249601, England.

A second (revised and enlarged) edition of Adam Robert's book, Nations in Arms: The Theory and Practice of Territorial Defence, was published in April 1986 by Macmillan, London, for the International Institute for Strategic Studies. It is being published in the USA by St. Martin's Press. The book deals mainly with defense systems like those of Switzerland, Sweden and Yugoslavia, which rely largely on a militia system and an element of popular armed resistance against an invader. There are numerous references to the possible role of nonviolent forms of struggle. The new edition has a foreward by McGeorge Bundy.

### FRANCE

The 1985 Strasbourg Conference papers are being translated into French and edited so that publication can take place in September.

A statement entitled "Peace By Other Means: To Defend Ourselves Without Reneging" was released on March 5, 1986. The document was signed by five bishops, seven national offices of movements, 65 groups and 600 individuals, some Protestant, most Catholic. According to an article in America (July 12, 1986), the statement was a formal answer to the French Catholic bishops' statement "To Win The Peace", in which the French nuclear strike force was considered a legitimate means of deterrence. "Peace By Other Means" disagrees strongly. Deterrence by civil means is discussed in the last section. Planning for systematic non-collaboration and methods of nonviolent resistance is urged.

### SWITZERLAND

Voies Nouvelles et Complementaires a la Defense Armee en Suisse (New and Complementary Ways to the Armed Defense in Switzerland) is the title of a book published by GIPRI (Geneva International Peace Research Institute). This work of Michel Grenier, former president of the French-speaking Swiss FOR, emphasizes the illusion of armed defense in a case of nuclear war, but also its insufficiency in a more "classical" conflict, even in Switzerland. The author presents a "better defense: imagining and developing a peace policy of prevention of war". He ends with a concise synthesis of DCPNV (Nonviolent Civilian-based Defense). 30 pages. Available from PRO-GIPRI, rue de Zurich 41, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland, for Swiss F 5 (reduced rate for bulk orders).

### ITALY

The second volume of The Politics of Non-violent Action will be published in Italian in October.

Gene Sharp has been invited to Italy in April of 1987 to lecture on nonviolent struggle at several universities and to meet with Italian researchers on civilian-based defense.

### UNITED STATES

ATS Board member Christopher Kruegler will conduct a workshop on civilian-based defense at the Pax Christi National Assembly in Boston, August 15-17.

In Chicago, the group Peaceful Solutions conducted two workshops earlier this year on civilian-based defense - one at the Evangelical Free Church of DesPlaines and the other at the Catholic Worker House on the North Side.

During May and June, ATS Coordinator Mel Beckman, talked to groups in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Lincoln, Nebraska, Olympia and Spokane, Washington, and Sheridan, Wyoming.

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Ballinger Publishing Co. has reissued Making Europe Unconquerable in an American edition, with a new cover. The new edition will have George Kennan's review as a Forward.

Publication of Resistance, Politics, and the American Struggle for Independence, 1765-1775, is to be in August, 1986. ISBN 0-931477-75-1 cloth/\$38.50. The 800 page book will analyse in detail the decade of resistance to British colonial rule leading to American independence. The authors, Walter H. Conser, Jr., Ronald M. McCarthy, David J. Toscano, and Gene Sharp, demonstrate that deliberate and sophisticated use of nonviolent action - protests, economic boycotts, political noncooperation, and other methods - was crucial to the outcome of the independence movement. Their conclusions are based extensively on previously neglected archival sources.

### AOTEAROA (NEW ZEALAND)

The Association for Transarmament (Aotearoa) continues its work of promoting civilian-based defense for New Zealand. The organization this year presented both written and oral submissions to the Government's Defence Committee of Inquiry (see earlier story in the March, 1986 issue of CBD: News & Opinion). A Christchurch Branch of the Association was set up early in February. The Association has also published the second issue of its newsletter and is offering over a dozen publications for sale. Among them is the Association's own Submission to the Defence Committee of Inquiry.

In its written submission the Association corrects a number of misperceptions about CBD contained in the Government's discussion paper and argues that a civilian-based defense policy would be well-suited to the defense needs of New Zealand. The submission asks the Committee to recommend that the Government accept, in principle, that CBD is a practical option for New Zealand, while recognizing the need for more research. Also requested is preliminary study of the feasibility of CBD and transarmament and inclusion of material on nonviolent resolution of conflict in the school curriculum.

A copy of the 15 page submission can be obtained for \$1.50 plus postage from the Association for Transarmament (Aotearoa), P.O. Box 5629, Dunedin, New Zealand.

### AUSTRALIA

The paper on civilian-based defense Gene Sharp presented at the University of Queensland in July, 1984 is being published in revised form in a special issue of Social Alternatives which has received Australian government funding to allow for its wider publication.

### CANADA

An article by Hans Sinn, a peace researcher living near Perth, Ontario, was printed in the Summer 1986 issue Humanist in Canada. Entitled "Transarmament: Waging Conflict Without War," the article suggests that the size

of Canada and its relatively sparse population make armed defense impossible without a surrender of its territory to a militarily stronger power, whom it would then join as a junior partner. Thus, "The object of the defence of Canadian territory gets lost in the process of trying to achieve it." Sinn would like Canada to begin to take responsibility for its own security. Transarmament, he writes, is "the process by which we acquire the skills, initiate the processes, create the institutions and structures to resolve, and, if necessary, wage conflict without use of armed force. We gradually lessen our dependency on, and thus make superfluous, military hardware."

### THREE CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR CIVILIAN-BASED DEFENSE

by Liane Ellison Norman



When I'm lecturing about alternatives to military defense, I talk about how power is perceived. I often refer to "one of the great theorists of power -- Dr. Seuss," holding up The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins. Amused and curious, my audiences are open to this delightful story of the royal power structure and how it is confounded by the lowliest subject in the realm. Bartholomew's power to refuse consent is represented as magical: he has a hat which, when taken off in deference to this king, persists in reappearing on his head. (Recall other significant hats: William Tell's, those of seventeenth-century Quakers. To refuse to remove a hat has often been an act of disobedience, whose implications shake rulers profoundly.)

This story isn't about Bartholomew's power: it's about the king's power. King Derwin, the self-important ruler of Didd, whose ceremonial headsman stands with decorative battle axe by his side, believes that in his person resides all the power of Didd: Bartholomew believes the same thing about his monarch. But when Bartholomew's magic hat won't doff, the king's reaction anatomizes his dependency on what Gene Sharp would call "sources of power." The Captain of the King's Own Guard arrests Bartholomew and transports him to the palace. Sir Aleric, the royal keeper of records, keeps track of the number of hats pulled off. Sir Snipps, the royal hatmaker, recognizes that Bartholomew's is not an ordinary hat, however plain. The three wise men, Nad, the Father of Nad, and the Father of the Father of Nad, consult. Magicians and their hats are called in to put a spell on the obstinate headgear. (Their spell will take "but ten short years," they say, and the king can't wait that long.) The king's bratty nephew, the Grand Duke Wilfred, advises the king, first to try having the hat shot off, which requires the Yeoman of the Bowmen, then to have the offending head cut off by the Executioner. (It can't be done: there's a law against executing anyone in a hat.)

This is a useful book for adults, because it is such a lucid outline of the dependency of those in power on those with power. Savvy parents and teachers could use it to provide civilian-based-defense readiness.

Munro Leaf's The Story Of Ferdinand The Bull provides the opposite perspective on resistance. Here the resister, the young, pacifist bull, Ferdinand, is sharply in focus while the structure he resists is present but diffuse. Ferdinand likes above anything to sit under the cork tree and smell the flowers. He is encouraged by an understanding mother, "even though she was a cow," who nevertheless worries that he may be lonely. Ferdinand sits on a bumblebee, is stung, and leaps and snorts in anger and pain. (This is a good corrective to the notion that nonviolent resisters are sweet and saintly.) Thus Ferdinand is mistaken by bullfight promoters for a ferocious bull and is taken to the bullring -- where he sits down and smells the flowers in all the lovely ladies' hair. Taunted by picador, matador and toreador, Ferdinand is obstinate. Since there can be no bullfight without a raging bull, Ferdinand prevails. He is taken back to his meadow where he lives happily ever after, smelling the flowers.

Jean Merrill's more sophisticated novel, The Pushcart War, is a full-fledged study of a nonviolent war. It's a funny, touching, detailed analysis. It was first published in 1964: I suspect it was inspired by the uneven war between small Vietnam and the might U.S. In Merrill's story, the huge trucks of New York resent the little pushcarts and conspire to harass them off the streets. The pushcart peddlers, delightful characters like Morris the Florist, Frank the Flower, Maxie Hammerman and General Anna, decide to fight back. Using nonviolent but disruptive strategies -- though sometimes in their discouragement and anger they are tempted by violence -- they manage to cripple the giant trucks with their cheap and homemade methods, their ingenuity and their solidarity, bringing New York City traffic to a halt and creating a crisis for public officials and citizens.

It isn't a simple, one-tactic affair, the pushcart war. The trucks fight back and they fight dirty. But the pushcart peddlers stand firm, though they suffer fairly severe consequences. We see larger political forces come into play as the community becomes involved -- schoolchildren, newspaper readers, movie stars, the fashion industry, even Great Britain. Finally the trucks are forced (entirely by vigorous nonviolent means) to the negotiating table, where they must agree to a considerable reduction of their numbers and a code of courtesy regarding how large vehicles must treat smaller ones. This story is not only an enormous pleasure to read and re-read, but is as instructive as any piece of theoretical work I've ever read. It should be required for all children, but also for adults. No one interested in civilian-based defense should fail to read it and to recommend it.

## Book Reviews

**Capital Defence**, by Jacki Quilty, Lynne Dickins, Phil Anderson and Brian Martin. 1986, Canberra Peacemakers. Paper, 66 pages. Order from: Canberra Peacemakers, G.P.O. Box 1875, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia. Donation of \$A2 suggested for single copies.

Since 1979, a small citizens' group, Canberra Peacemakers, has been prodding the public to think about "social defence" for Australia. "Social defence" translates to approximately the same thing as "civilian-based defense" in the United States, although Canberra Peacemakers uses its term to cover a broader range of activities. Gene Sharp and his associates would not include citizens' non-violent resistance to a legitimate but oppressive government under the term "civilian-based defense", preferring to reserve this term for nonviolent resistance to an attempted invasion or coup d'etat. The Australian group does include such resistance under the term "social defense".

The latest project of the group is a kind of "how-to-do-it" manual for people who would like to work on social defense plans for their own cities. Canberra government workers, tradespeople, media workers and others were interviewed by the group to discover techniques which they and their co-workers might see themselves as using in the event social defence were ever needed. The core of the booklet, then, is entitled "What People Can Do." It blends information gained in the interviews with the authors' own best judgements about what ought to be done.

Because these pages come right down to occupational levels and are interspersed with delightful cartoons they are likely to do just what the authors intended, i.e., spur people in cities other than Canberra to think about how they personally could resist in a social defence situation.

No attempt is made in this booklet to give a blueprint for the social defence of Australia. The authors recognize that the "...training, plans and infrastructure for such a system can only be developed with the participation of significant numbers of people." Neither

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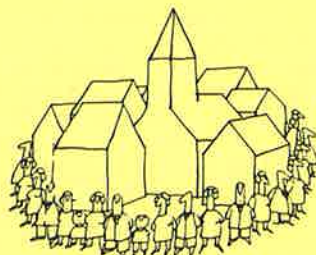


Illustration by Len Munnik. Reprinted with permission of Fellowship, Nyack, N.Y.

is an overall strategy proposed for any of the occupational groups. The focus is on possibilities for an individual worker's resistance. This might be considered one of the booklet's strengths, given the early stages of discussion of social defense.

Advances in computer technology make new modes of resistance possible. This subject is covered rather quickly, leaving one with a desire for more detailed examples.

In regard to decision-making, the authors appear to put their trust in the social defence preparedness of local communities and the good judgement of the people therein:

"If people understand the aim of the defence, have prepared themselves and their community for effective resistance, then surely they can - and must - be trusted to do what they believe is the correct thing in the circumstances."

Whether or not one agrees with Canberra Peacemakers about the local community being a good place to start organizing for civilian-based defense, one must give them a lot of credit for trying to help individual citizens see themselves as potentially capable resisters. Certainly that must be part of the overall preparation in any country where CBD is to be instituted.

***Pro Life/Pro Peace, by Lowell O. Erdahl. Minneapolis, Augsburg Publ. House, 1986. Paper, 160 pages.***

Lowell Erdahl is Bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota District of the American Lutheran Church. He writes for Christians, especially, but also for all who are wrestling with the issues of life and death. He would like to persuade them that there are responsible alternatives to present-day institutions of death - unjustifiable abortion, war, mercy killing and capital punishment.

In chapter 5, the author discusses four "Jesus alternatives" to war; 1) peace through justice, 2) peace through reconciliation, 3) peace through global security, and 4) peace through the way of the cross. It is in this fourth section that he introduces the idea of civilian-based defense.

Erdahl writes that Jesus taught his disciples to expect to be treated as he had been treated and he gave them no lethal means of defense. What, then, should Christians have done in the face of a Hitler? Erdahl writes, "It is not enough to ask whether it is justifiable to go to war against someone like Hitler. We must also ask where people like Hitler get their power." He then goes on to show how nonviolent massive non-cooperation with Hitler would have produced many martyrs but it would also have checked his power and perhaps prevented the holocaust and the war.

While Erdahl encourages his readers to see civilian-based defense from a faith perspective ("accept the cross" rather than use violence in defense) he acknowledges that many people will not have that orientation

and may simply choose CBD as the best way to force their enemies to desist from aggression. Erdahl believes Christians can and should "stand with" such people because CBD, even if practiced pragmatically and with hatred of the enemy would be more in conformity with the way of the cross than is the use of violence.

For many of Bishop Erdahl's readers the treatment of CBD in Pro Life/ Pro Peace may be a bit too short, leaving them with an unclear picture of the actual dimensions of this defense alternative. Still, it is encouraging to realize that CBD is being seen as a solution which church leaders like Bishop Erdahl can give when asked the question, "If not military preparedness, then what?"

***Making Europe Unconquerable: The Potential of Civilian-Based Deterrence and Defence by Gene Sharp. Ballinger, 250 pp., \$14.95. May be ordered from A.T.S.***

Review by George Scialabba

Does the American Left have a defense policy? One possible answer to this question would be: No, and we don't need one. The important thing is to show that "national defense," like "national interest," is largely a mystification, meant to obscure the fact that the purpose of American foreign policy is to "defend" the "interests" of those who control the domestic economy.

Propaganda aside, the function of the Cold War is to justify American and Soviet military intervention in their respective imperial spheres. What American policy-makers mask by the term "national security" is their fear that successful independent development in one Third World country will lead others to withdraw from the Western-dominated global economy. So the primary task of the left is to demystify the Cold War, to demonstrate that "defense" is a euphemism for intervention.

Another possible answer to the question of whether the American left has a defense policy would be No, and we can't afford one. The important thing is to halt the self-propelling momentum of the arms race. Nuclear "modernization," in the form of the MX, the cruise missile and space weapons, puts the survival of the species on a hair trigger. Before we can even begin to make political arguments about the real meaning of "national security," we need to convince people that these new technical developments endanger not just our security but our existence. So the primary task of the left is to freeze, and then slowly reverse, the automatization of annihilation.

There's a lot of truth in both these answers. But I still want to suggest that the left should have a defense policy, and that it should be the one outlined in Gene Sharp's new book, Making Europe Unconquerable.

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the Netherlands, and Switzerland have officially investigated the relevance of CBD for their countries' defense policy.

In Western Europe at least, it is not unusual for religious leaders and laity, party politicians and local citizens, governmental officials and military staff officers to know a lot about the background, strategic assumptions, and capabilities of CBD. Not all of these European groups have adopted CBD as a policy, but they have agreed with the spirit of the United States bishops' statement that before CBD "is dismissed as impractical or unrealistic, we urge that it be measured against the almost certain effects of a major war."

**The United States Catholic bishops recognized that CBD was a third approach to war.** Like the just war approach, CBD realistically accepts the legitimacy of using coercion on behalf of a just cause such as national defense. Like the pacifist approach, CBD uses nonviolent action.

Yet CBD is independent of both the just war and pacifist traditions. It poses a new strategic alternative for policy makers and a new ethical alternative for religious reflection upon conflict resolution.

In 1971 Pope Paul VI called for a renewal of personal and collective responsibility for the use of political power. He challenged men and women to take politics seriously in the belief that they could change the world into a better place to live. Reflecting the papal spirit, the United States bishops have urged a new and creative approach to the problem of war in our time. They have seen the potential of CBD and encouraged discussion of it. Their message is one that is deeply rooted in Christian resources and that draws on historical examples and moral thinking. Finally, it is directed to Catholics, but is intended, as the bishops state, as part of "a common public effort with all men and women of good will who seek to reverse the arms race and secure the peace of the world."

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*Reprints of this article are available. Single copies free with stamped, self-addressed envelope. Under 100, 15¢ per copy. 100 - 1000, 10¢ per copy. Over 1000, 8¢ per copy.*

#### Book Review, cont. from page 6

Sharp is possibly the world's leading historian of nonviolent action. His massive work, The Politics of Nonviolent Action, chronicles and analyses virtually every form of nonviolent struggle ever employed. He describes an impressive number and diversity of these nonviolent campaigns - from pre-revolutionary America to pre-revolutionary Iran, from Nazi-occupied Western Europe to Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe, from Central America in the '40s to the American South in the '60s. Even more striking about these various campaigns is that they were all improvised, not part of a planned, prepared, society-wide or movement-wide strategy.

In recent years, Sharp and a few others have been trying to work out a strategic theory based on these experiences, which might be adopted by an entire society as an alternative

to military defense. Sharp calls it "civilian-based defense." A good many Europeans and even some European governments - Sweden and the Netherlands - have shown interest in these ideas. Making Europe Unconquerable is an effort to introduce the theory of civilian-based defense to Americans.

For the sake of argument, let's assume that a Soviet invasion of Western Europe is a genuine threat. Mainstream strategic thought suggests two ways of deterring such an invasion: by threatening to respond with nuclear weapons or by building up sufficient conventional forces to defeat the invaders. As Sharp points out, neither of these "defense" policies has anything to do with defense. If they somehow fail as deterrents, and the invasion takes place, then the society in question will be destroyed, either by nuclear retaliation or by conventional weaponry, which nowadays approaches nuclear weaponry in destructive capacity. But suppose there were a defense strategy that could deny the invaders their goals without resulting in mass destruction?

Sharp examines possible motives for invasion. Merely inflicting damage for its own sake has rarely been any side's primary goal since the days of Attila the Hun. The most likely motives are: to preempt military action from the other side; or to achieve some kind of political or economic control, whether by establishing a surrogate regime or by influencing the invaded country's policies.

A country employing nonmilitary civilian-based defense can frustrate both of these objectives, according to Sharp. Obviously, the motive for nuclear preemption - no minor concern for West European countries whose small NATO-supplied nuclear arsenals would be wiped out, along with much of the society, by a Soviet counterforce strike - disappears altogether. Equally important, Sharp claims, the dreaded Soviet Army can be effectively fought with nonmilitary weapons.

Civilian-based defense is the planned and coordinated use of nonviolent tactics that deny political power or legitimacy to an aggressor. Examples include: specific and general strikes, slow-downs, mass resignations, boycotts, paralysis of transportation and other key functions, clandestine broadcasts and newspapers, construction of parallel institutions and survival networks, and fraternization with invading troops. There are many other possibilities.

If carried out in a sophisticated and determined way, such tactics would make it impossible for an external aggressor to exercise political or economic control. There would, of course, be costs to the defenders - executions, imprisonment, forced labor. But the costs of a nuclear or conventional defense, even a "successful" one (whatever that means), would be incomparably greater.

And there would be collateral effects on the aggressor regime. International sanctions would be easier to organize if the use of force was unilateral. More importantly, the morale of the invading troops and the home population might be difficult to maintain in the face of nonviolent resistance - the desire to avenge soldiers fallen in battle is, after all, a staple of every government's war propaganda.

Sharp points out that Soviet troops sent to Czechoslovakia in 1968 had to be rotated out of the country within a few days and stationed in Siberia, where they could not spread news of the Czech civilian resistance to the Soviet population. They were replaced by non-Russian-speaking troops, who could not communicate with the Czech resisters. Soviet reservists called up to threaten Poland in December 1980 deserted in huge numbers, which may partly explain Soviet reluctance to invade in 1981. Even dictatorial regimes must worry about domestic public opinion.

In case all this sounds utopian, Sharp emphasizes that the tactics he advocates have already been used with considerable success in 20th-century Europe: in the German Ruhr against the French after World War I; in Denmark and Norway against the Nazis; and in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland against the Soviets. Where they failed, he argues, it was precisely for lack of advance planning and coordination. If a tiny fraction of the resources currently devoted to military research, production and training were devoted to research and training in civilian-based defense, a society-wide defense plan - complex, detailed and flexible - could be worked out.

Clearly, civilian-based defense requires decentralization of social power - i.e., real democracy - and a genuinely noninterventionist foreign policy. These two requirements will no doubt make it seem terminally unrealistic to many on the left. Why not concentrate all our efforts on achieving social justice, they ask, after which international conflict will presumably wither away?

Sharp's answer would be that, despite our best efforts, international conflict probably will not wither away in time to save the earth from being turned into a radioactive cinder. Without accepting Cold War mystifications about "national security" or "national interest," we simply have to assume the persistence of international conflict for a long time to come. This means that, for better or worse, the U.S. is going to have a defense policy of some sort for the foreseeable future. Civilian-based defense is a morally and practically superior defense policy. The left should consider adopting it.

(The above review was reprinted with permission from In These Times, March 19-25, 1986. In These Times is available for \$34.95/year from 1300 W. Belmont Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60657.)

## NEW VIDEOTAPE ON CBD

"Civilian-Based Defense: A Current Assessment" was filmed at the October, 1985 conference on CBD in Arlington, Virginia. Because all conference participants were familiar with the basic concept of CBD, the conference focused on analysis to further the development of CBD and strategies to gain wider public understanding of its potential as an alternative defense system. The tape is an excellent follow-up to a group or classroom study of Gene Sharp's book, National Security Through Civilian-Based Defense. It also contains useful analysis for peace movement activists who must keep short-term strategies for peace consistent with long-term goals of an alternate defense system.

The tape runs nearly two hours, but can be used in easily divided segments.

- Part I Gene Sharp - The Need for Defense and CBD...17 minutes.
- Part II Chris Kruegler - The Relevance of CBD to Various Areas of the World ...23 minutes.
- Part III Robert Irwin - CBD and Its Relevance to the US...15 minutes.
- Part IV Gene Sharp - A Strategy for CBD ...49 minutes.
- Part V Gene Sharp - CBD and the Peace Movement...11 minutes.

Available from the Center for New Creation, 845 No. Lincoln Street, Arlington, Virginia 22201. Telephone 703-528-1446. Rent, \$25. Purchase \$75. Specify BETA or VHS.

## ATS BOARD MEETING

ATS directors will be meeting in Detroit this year, during the weekend of October 24-26. If you would like some topic or issue addressed at this meeting please type up your concerns and send them to ATS at 3636 Lafayette Avenue, Omaha, NE 68131. Or call 402-558-2085.

## THE ASSOCIATION FOR TRANSARMAMENT STUDIES

Founded in 1982, the Association exists to facilitate study, discussion and research relating to the concept of civilian-based defense. Membership does not necessarily imply endorsement of the idea but rather, support for its further consideration. Both memberships and contributions are needed. Dues and contributions are tax-deductible. Please use the form on the back of this newsletter. One may reach the Association by writing to 3636 Lafayette Avenue, Omaha, NE 68131, USA - or by calling 402-558-2085.



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