

NONVIOLENT ORGANIZATIONS IN THE MIDST OF MODERN CONFLICT:  
AN UNEXPECTED SOURCE OF POWER IN COLOMBIA'S CIVIL WAR

BY

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## ABSTRACT

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*The focus of this thesis is the examination of Gene Sharp's theory of power as viewed through the practice of nonviolent direct action, which together present a clear and effective alternative to violent methods of defense. This paper exemplifies and applies these theories from Gene Sharp's "The Politics of Nonviolent Action" to one specific case study of violent conflict, Colombia's civil war, to demonstrate the practical application of nonviolent action and the validity of Sharp's Theory of Power. It also examines the effect that nonviolent action, carried out by organizations and communities from both within and outside the country, is having on traditional power positions established within Colombia's civil war between the oppressive guerrilla and paramilitary groups and the population that they threaten. It will be shown that through the use of several methods of nonviolent action, these traditional social power roles are being shifted and/ or dissolved, and that these nonviolent activists are playing an important role in moving the country toward peace. This thesis presents, through analysis of this case study, a form for contemporary understanding and application of Sharp's theory in order to help promote the use of nonviolent action as an organized alternative to violent defense and warfare.*

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## **PART I: Introduction and Relevance of Research**

### **Problem Statement**

This thesis examines nonviolence as a real and effective alternative to violence. By briefly looking at the evolution of violence and warfare in general and then specifically within the Colombian civil war, it is shown that violence has gradually become a less effective means in ending conflict. In order to offer an alternative to the ineffectiveness of violence, Gene Sharp's theory of nonviolence and power is used to build a theoretical base, and current examples of nonviolence in Colombia are provided to demonstrate application of this theory. Through this research and case study, it is shown that nonviolent methods are and will continue to play an important role in managing conflict in Colombia.

### Nonviolence vs. Violence: Warfare in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

"Returning violence for violence only multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." -- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here? Chaos or Community*<sup>1</sup>

The perception and understanding of conflict continues to change as technology and warfare evolve and advance. One such change in the thinking on violence is a growing concern among some scholars about the ability of its methods to obtain objectives and security during conflict.<sup>2</sup> Their concern does not seem ungrounded, for as new types of technology and warfare are introduced, the use of violence is losing effectiveness in conflict. According to Jonathan Schell, the fundamental scientific discoveries of the twentieth century and the rise in available destructive force "has called into question the age-old reliance of politics on violent means."<sup>3</sup>

Violence does have a history of being useful in obtaining land and wealth or conquering peoples and forcing ideologies, but as Schell notes, it is also “a mark of human failure and a bringer of sorrow, [which] has now also become dysfunctional as a political instrument.”<sup>4</sup> The advancement of technology in warfare has added to the destructive ability of violence but, at the same time, has hindered its effectiveness. With the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century came nuclear weapons and guerrilla warfare which began to change the way potential proponents of conflict viewed the use of violence. The introduction of nuclear weapons caused the rationality of war to be undermined, making it a means to an end.<sup>5</sup> These new weapons of mass destruction fortified the idea of the inefficiency of weaponry, as violence became a tool that would most assuredly bring great destruction for destroying, in all likelihood, both the user and the victim in its cycle. Schell attempts to emphasize this destructive power of nuclear weapons with the reminder that, “The use of just a few dozen of the world’s thirty thousand or so nuclear weapons, let us recall, could kill more people in a single unthinkable afternoon than the two world wars put together.”<sup>6</sup> This technology thus created, according to Paul Hirst, a “military stalemate”<sup>7</sup> that was overridden by another form of war known as “guerilla warfare.”<sup>8</sup>

Originally used against Napoleon’s armies in Spain and reintroduced in the 1960s as a “fashionable” form of fighting, Hirst describes guerrilla tactics as depending “on the balance of political forces” and “whether there is a powerful conventional ‘sponsor.’”<sup>9</sup> Guerilla warfare in general reduces the structure of warfare, taking conflict into rural areas and dividing warring fronts into many locations. This rural and less organized and formalized set of tactics has made fighting adversaries much more difficult.

In addition to the advancements in technology has come an evolution in warfare. According to Hirst, “It is widely believed that we are in a period of revolutionary change in warfare...”<sup>10</sup> “Most states, even the USA, have large obsolescent forces based on platforms such as tanks and supersonic fighters that will become increasingly vulnerable...”<sup>11</sup> and in addition, the enemies will increasingly “not be states but other bodies like... terrorist groups and militias.”<sup>12</sup> Conflicts will not only become less focused around the state, but they “are also likely to be vicious and outside the scope of the rule of law...”<sup>13</sup> As conflict shifts toward rural locations or more individual enemies such as suicide bombers, one’s enemy in a conflict becomes more and more difficult to locate and even moreso to fight or conquer using traditional means of violence. Thus, as violence becomes less effective in conquering an enemy or bringing an end to conflict, the need for a shift in focus toward a legitimate alternative for these methods exists.<sup>14</sup>

While the current state of violent warfare in the 21<sup>st</sup> century continues to evolve and develop,<sup>15</sup> it is evident that violent conflict is continuing to escalate on a global scale.<sup>16</sup> Because conflicts are growing more and more violent and destructive while lacking the ability for resolution, finding alternative methods to violence is of growing importance. Within this search for alternatives, a ‘disregarded history’<sup>17</sup> of nonviolence has emerged. This history of nonviolent action is one in which scholars claim these methods of nonviolence have often been used throughout history as a means to an end of conflict and have also been capable of obtaining objectives.<sup>18</sup>

The study of nonviolence has stemmed not only from the recent lack of success of violence, but also the effectiveness and increased popularity of this alternative method.



According to Holmes and Gan, in conflicts such as the break-up of the Soviet Union and the overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic, “nonviolence arguably has played an even larger role [than violence].”<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately, Holmes and Gan also note that “nonviolence has yet to emerge fully into the light of recognition in institutions of higher learning.”<sup>20</sup> Though an individual can easily gain knowledge and training on the various forms and tactics of violence or its history,<sup>21</sup> obtaining the same information about nonviolence seems much more difficult.

Nonetheless, nonviolence indeed has a long history of use and countless examples of its ability to obtain desired results. This new research on the effectiveness of nonviolence is gradually leading more and more institutions<sup>22</sup> and individuals to consider the possibilities of its place in the emerging state of warfare. Believers in nonviolence are hopeful that continued research in this area could lead to the spread of support and understanding of nonviolent action as a successful and realistic alternative to violent defense and warfare in conflict resolution.

Some of the leading scholarship on nonviolence has been done by Gene Sharp. His efforts to explore and expose the use and effectiveness of nonviolence in conflict were manifested in a three book series. This study, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, finally gave credibility and academic integrity to an alternative method. His work outlines a solid structure of both theory and practice that deems nonviolent action a valid and realistic method of conflict resolution. He gives specific attention to the important link between nonviolent struggle and the use of power. Though Sharp has presented his case of the ‘disregarded history’ of nonviolent action, it is important to determine if his theory and

methods are still relevant and being practiced in current conflict situations. Through a thorough analysis and understanding of both Gene Sharp's Theory of Power and the link that exists between power and nonviolence, it is the objective of this thesis to apply this theory base to a particular contemporary case study, Colombia's civil war.

Colombia was chosen as a case study for its delicate balance and demonstration of both violent conflict and the practice of nonviolent methods. Colombia has experienced a steady pattern of political instability, civil war, and failed amnesties since its independence on August 7, 1819. The present armed conflict also known as the Colombian Civil War which began in the mid 1960s, has lasted for over 40 years and has led to around 25,000 casualties each year, with an estimated 300,000 Colombians dying in the 15 year span from 1985-2000.<sup>23</sup> Though the Colombian government has made many efforts toward peace,<sup>24</sup> the violence continues. From 2002-2005 alone, at least 3 million people, over 5 percent of Colombia's population, were forcibly displaced.<sup>25</sup> Data from the Global IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) Project shows that "Worldwide, only Sudan has more displaced persons."<sup>26</sup> According to U.N. humanitarian coordinator Jan Egeland, "Colombia is therefore by far the biggest humanitarian catastrophe in the Western Hemisphere."<sup>27</sup>

Alongside the violence, however, there are many external peace organizations in Colombia as well as grassroots groups and communities formed by Colombian citizens that are teaching and utilizing nonviolent tactics. These groups are refusing to participate violently in the longstanding civil war and are encouraging and training others that there are alternative methods that can be used to resist oppressors. The combination of violence and nonviolence makes Colombia an important case study to support Gene Sharp's theory

on nonviolence and power. By extracting and applying the main elements of Sharp's theory to Colombia, this thesis will demonstrate and reiterate as shown through current methods, situations, and organizations, the effectiveness of nonviolent action in the midst of modern conflict.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this thesis, after defining and laying the theoretical base of power and nonviolence, is to examine the presence and role that nonviolent action has in Colombia. It looks specifically at nonviolent action amidst traditional power relationships between the oppressive guerrilla and paramilitary groups and the population which they threaten. Combining the theory of power, nonviolent action, and the history and current situation in Colombia, it will be shown that through nonviolent action, not only is the conflict slowly being mitigated, but that traditional social power roles are being shifted and/ or dissolved. Using Colombia as a case study, this thesis establishes a form of contemporary understanding and application of Sharp's theory. This modern day example of the effectiveness of nonviolence may further legitimize the use of its methods as an organized alternative to violent defense and warfare which merits additional funding and research.

Through this research on Colombia, the effectiveness of the education, training, and practice of nonviolent tactics and the understanding of 'subject dependent' power by the Colombian people is having in breaking down the oppressor groups and strengthening the grievance population, will be demonstrated. If the population of Colombia continues in larger and larger numbers to refuse to cooperate with warring factions and participate in

violent conflict, the possibility exists for a gradual shift from the historical cycle of violence that has plagued Colombia since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Description of Data

Based on the theoretical base of the theory of power and the role of nonviolence in power relationships, this study uses the qualitative method of a specific case study as the main form of observation and support. In order to test the conclusions made in the hypothesis, Colombia has been selected as the case study based primarily on it holding the three important pieces of this research: the presence of conflict, power relationships, and nonviolent action. Also factored into the decision to focus on Colombia, in addition to the fact that these three components exist, was that there is a solid collection of examples of the use of nonviolence within the country, which facilitated the research of showing its effects.

Colombia is a case study important and relevant to other existing studies of nonviolence and the theory of power. With the extensive literature on Colombia's violent history and the recent publications of the massacres occurring in 'peace communities' which caused increased support of these communities through financial and human resources by international organizations, Colombia provides a clear demonstration of the possibility of power shifting. In addition, this country's conflict is an important focus of study due to the current effects that violence is having on the security of its civilian population and the lack of many alternatives to violence, such as amnesties and cease fires, to bring an end to the armed conflict in Colombia.

Within this topic several pertinent definitions are clarified within this thesis in order to form a structure for understanding of the relevant theories. This thesis uses and compares current nonviolent literature, with a focus on the work of Gene Sharp as a leading authority in nonviolence, to thoroughly define and present terms such as power and nonviolent action. Additionally, by using examples of nonviolent action and examining the occurrence of the weakening of power roles or the strengthening of nonviolent struggle groups, this thesis demonstrates the possible effects of nonviolent action on Colombia's conflict and its traditional power roles. This study also acts as an additional form of support for nonviolent action as a means of resolution to conflict situations in general.

#### Limitations of Research

Alongside the hopefulness for solid conclusions based on this research study is the understanding of the limitations and problems built into the direction and focus of this research. One of the main limitations has been not actually studying or collecting data within Colombia itself, which also made it difficult, due to the long and complicated history in Colombia, to identify all of the oppressor/ ruler roles currently in place there. In addition, the limitations of library/ internet-based research made it very difficult to both truly understand the current state of power relationships within the country and to measure the amount of power a group or individual holds.

Another difficulty was the collection and search for nonbiased evidence of the weakening of power of oppressors, reduction of fear in nonviolent strugglers, and the lack of effectiveness of oppressor's threats and sanctions. Though there is current 'evidence' supporting Colombia as a case study, which demonstrates power shift and diffusion within

the country, unfortunately many ‘success’ stories come from nonviolent groups themselves, not from well known journals or mainstream academic sources, which may cause questions of the reliability of the evidence.

Also, with Colombia as a case study, there are inherently limitations besides the ability to travel and observe within the country. Because the civil war that is focused on in this study has not yet ended, it was difficult to present with authority conclusive and complete results of the applied research. Even upon making and presenting conclusions from this research, because only a single case study was chosen, the results are inevitably very specific to the chosen conflict and set of variables, and it is difficult to determine, without further study, the importance and ability of application of these findings to other situations of conflict.

## **PART II: Theoretical Base**

### **Gene Sharp’s Theory of Power and Nonviolence**

Dr. Gene Sharp, an expert on the power theory and its relationship with nonviolence, is the center of much of the academic discussion on this topic. The basic idea of Sharp’s theory of power is that power is a concept and a tool that is obtained from external sources, and that no one has power (i.e. government or oppressive forces) unless it is given to them by others. Within the first book of the three part series *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Sharp examines and defines power more specifically as it applies to both social and political situations. Sharp defines social power as “the capacity to control behavior of others, directly or indirectly, through action by groups of people, which action impinges on other groups of people”<sup>28</sup> (i.e. Non-profit groups that are able to, through

petitions and boycotts, directly cause alteration of unethical or non environmental friendly practices of multinationals).

Political power is defined by Sharp as social power that is “wielded for political objectives, especially by people in opposition to or in support of such institutions”<sup>29</sup> (i.e. When non-profit groups lobby the legislature in attempt to change the country’s laws governing the practices of multinationals). Political power more specifically refers to “the totality of all influences and pressures (including sanctions) available to a group or society for use in maintaining itself, implementing its policies, and conducting internal and external conflicts.”<sup>30</sup> And so, based on these definitions, “power may be measured by relative ability to control a situation, people, and institutions for some activity.”<sup>31</sup>

This definition and theory of power based on the ability to control, also known as the ‘consent theory of power,’<sup>32</sup> when viewed in the area of politics, focuses heavily on the relationship necessary in which to foster a ‘ruler’ and a ‘ruled.’ “Based on a division between rulers and subjects and on the withdrawing of consent as the main avenue for effecting political change,” Gene Sharp emphasizes the important dual dependence in the maintaining of power roles within society.<sup>33</sup> Political power, in other words, recognizes that rulers derive their power from those over whom they rule or as Liane Norman puts it, “the power to govern depends on the willingness of a multitude of people to be governed.”<sup>34</sup>

This theory of power then presents, in Sharp’s own words, the important idea that:

“It is an obvious, simple but often forgotten observation of great theoretical and practical significance, that the power wielded by individuals and groups in the highest political positions of command and decision in any government- whom for the sake of brevity call “rulers”- is not intrinsic to them. Such power must come from outside themselves. The political power that they wield as rulers comes from the society which they

govern... All dominating elites and rulers depend for their sources of power upon the cooperation of the population and of the institutions.”<sup>35</sup>

Therefore, this power that “rulers” obtain from ‘outside themselves’ is derived from the interaction of the following sources: the authority or legitimacy given by the subjects, human resources or the amount of the population who obey, cooperate or assist, the skills and knowledge of the human resources in supporting the needs of the ruler, intangible factors such as habits and attitudes toward obedience, material resources of property, natural resources and means of communication, and sanctions used by the ruler against their subjects.<sup>36,37</sup>

The definition of power as a concept along with the understanding of how this power is derived and plays a role in the relationship between the ruler and the governed, is an important factor in the objectives of this research within a specific case study. By applying the idea that “the cooperation of those around a ruler is absolutely essential if (s)he is to have any power at all,”<sup>38</sup> these conclusions will provide additional academic support to the observable evidence that traditional power roles (i.e. the paramilitary and guerrilla oppressors) in Colombia’s civil war are being affected by the lack of cooperation of parts of the population or “grievance group.”<sup>39</sup> Viewing the power groups within Colombia through the definitions and structure established by this theory, these factions have traditionally expressed the ability to control a situation, people and institutions for their own gain through the use of a combination of the tactics used in gaining power (i.e. authority, sanctions, etc.). They have thus become the rulers and/or holders of power in the civil war via the cooperation of the grievance population or those whom they threaten, who have allowed them to wield this power.



If, as is beginning to occur currently within Colombia,<sup>40</sup> the ruled population would withhold from the “rulers” their cooperation/ consent, it would cause significant impact on traditional power relationships. James VanHise supports Sharp’s idea of a ruler’s dependence on the subjects by saying that without at least the passive support of the general population “the most powerful dictator in the world becomes just another crackpot with dreams of world domination.”<sup>41</sup> And additionally, with this action, oppressive groups within Colombia will lose their ability to utilize power in order to control material, property, and human resources. With each individual that refuses to allow the oppressors control over them, that is one less individual giving consent of these traditionally held power roles in the conflict, and one less individual willing to fight and perpetuate the war. Ideally, those fighting would become smaller and smaller groups carrying weapons no longer useful in instilling fear in the population, because the people have delegitimized their authority and dissolved their role as rulers over them.

#### Nonviolent Action and the Power Theory:

According to Brian Martin, Gene Sharp’s study “has elaborated a theory of power which offers a framework for understanding how non-violent action works.”<sup>42</sup> James VanHise clarifies that Gene Sharp declares nonviolent action to be a technique of neither passiveness nor of avoiding conflict,<sup>43</sup> but one that Sharp himself says, “involves the matching of forces and the waging of ‘battles,’<sup>44</sup> and uses social, psychological, economic and political methods of applying sanctions, pressures or punishments, rather than violence.”<sup>45</sup> Sharp's theory “includes nearly two hundred identified methods of symbolic protest, social noncooperation, economic boycotts, labor strikes, political noncooperation,

and nonviolent intervention.”<sup>46</sup> Some of these specific methods are examined more carefully later in this thesis and are then exemplified by current nonviolent organizations within Colombia.

In moving toward understanding nonviolent action, it is therefore important to view it in conjunction with Sharp’s theory of power. Through theorists, specialists, and practitioners such as Sharp, Liane Ellison Norman, and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, power is understood as “an integral part of nonviolent struggles.”<sup>47</sup> This is in “direct contradiction to the popular misconceptions that nonviolent action is powerless,”<sup>48</sup> and to the idea that “the theory of power derives from violence, and that victory necessarily goes to the side with the greater capacity for violence.”<sup>49</sup> The technique of strategic nonviolence is, in reality, based on the insight that the power of rulers derives from consent by the subjects. Thus the power is actually held in the hands of the ruled. By using nonviolence to remove support for rulers, the people’s nonviolent action becomes a force potentially stronger than any type of violence could create. Brian Martin proposes that, “Nonviolent action is the process of withdrawing consent and thus is a way to challenge key modern problems of dictatorship, genocide, war and systems of oppression.”<sup>50</sup>

Without consent as given by the ruled, the ruler's power will slowly be eroded. Nonviolent struggle then cannot be truly understood without a base knowledge of power relationships, because as Sharp notes, the “practice, dynamics, and consequences of nonviolent struggle are all directly dependent upon the wielding of power and its effects on the power opponent group.”<sup>51</sup> Therefore, based on this dependence on the population/ subjects for power, “[w]hen people refuse their cooperation, withhold help, and persist in

their disobedience and defiance, they are denying their opponent the basic human assistance and cooperation that any government or hierarchical system requires.”<sup>52</sup> And the conclusion follows within Sharp’s analysis that “[i]f people and institutions do this in sufficient numbers for long enough, that government or hierarchical system will no longer have power.”<sup>53</sup> Without the consent of the people, the ruler or oppressive group no longer holds any power over the population they are attempting to control or govern.

If citizens have so much control over power in political and social relationships through simple nonviolent actions such as noncooperation or civil disobedience, the question then becomes ‘why don’t subjects refuse leader’s power more often?’ or from another perspective, ‘why do people obey?’. Clearly the question of why people obey is also central to understanding the dynamics of political power; for when a situation of ‘disobedience’ is observed in the form of nonviolent action, it is important to note what obstacles these individuals or groups must overcome to complete an act of ‘disobedience.’

Sharp lists within Part One of his series, *Power and Struggle*, seven specific reasons as to why ‘men obey.’ He says that it is either out of habit, fear of sanctions, moral obligation, self interest, psychological identification with the ruler, zones of indifference, or absence of self-confidence that people obey a “ruler.”<sup>54</sup> James VanHise, in his article “Power and Struggle,” simplifies and explains Sharp’s writings on his seven concepts of obedience. VanHise considers habit to be “the main reason people do not question the actions their “superiors” expect of them,”<sup>55</sup> and that it is “the fear of sanctions, rather than the sanctions themselves, that is most effective in enforcing obedience.”<sup>56</sup> He defines a moral obligation to obey as an “inner constraining power” which he deems to be “the

product of cultural programming and deliberate indoctrination by the state, church and media.”<sup>57</sup>

Self interest might also drive a subject to obey merely because of the “potential for financial gain and enhanced prestige.”<sup>58</sup> And, in an expanded form of self interest, the need for a sense of belonging, through what Sharp calls 'psychological identification with the ruler,' people may obey because they “feel an emotional tie with the leader or the system, experiencing its victories and defeats as their own. The most common manifestations of this are patriotism and nationalism.”<sup>59</sup> These can be contrasted with the last two in Sharp's list of seven, which are more passive reasons for obedience, such as 'zones of indifference'<sup>60</sup> where according to VanHise, “people often obey commands without consciously questioning their legitimacy,” and absence of self-confidence, where some “prefer to hand control of their lives over to the ruling class [and]... may feel inadequate to make their own decisions.”<sup>61</sup> Thus often, even if an individual or group feels oppressed by regulations or finds actions asked of them by a ruler unjust or unfair, they may continue their cooperation and obedience to the ruling power/ group for any of the above reasons.<sup>62</sup>

James VanHise seems to agree with Sharp's suggestions for the reasoning behind people's obedience in his article, “Power and Struggle.” He not only further defined the seven reasons Sharp laid out, but he also points out that examining human obedience as domination and submission proves psychological factors to be of great importance to the act of obedience. VanHise further notes that arguments that try to depict nonviolent tactics as “merely symbolic gestures,” often fail to consider the fact that power and domination are symbolic terms as well.<sup>63</sup> According to VanHise, “Withdrawing support even symbolically,

calls into question the props and illusions that hold power up. Yet people are often ignorant of the power they hold, and governments conspire to maintain the illusion of their monolithic power, making their subjects feel helpless.”<sup>64</sup> The theory of power is supported by VanHise’s arguments, which are inline with Sharp's, that the people in fact hold power over the ruled. It is also clear, through both Sharp and VanHise, that the concept of power is one that can be wielded by the people should they choose to overcome the mental and physical obstacles which keep them obedient to the rulers/ oppressive groups.

#### The Dissolving/Diffusion of Power

When citizens withdraw support from rulers or groups, and refuse to be fearful of threats or sanctions, ignore threats of punishment and/or violence, refuse to obey or provide the resources that make rulers powerful (by practicing nonviolent tactics such as protest or social or economic noncooperation), they deem a ruler’s power ineffective. According to Sharp, this withdrawal of support leads to the devolution and dissolving of power.<sup>65</sup> Thus, when viewed from within this perspective, nonviolent action, in addition to being able to cause a loss of power, can cause a shift or diffusion in power as well. Because of the nature of its methods, attempts at violent punishment against nonviolent strugglers produces not only a loss of power and/or legitimacy of the ruler, but a gain in power and support in favor of the nonviolent struggle group.<sup>66</sup>

This concept is introduced by Sharp in *Part Three: The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action of The Politics of Nonviolent Action* as “Political Jiu-Jitsu.”<sup>67</sup> Holmes and Gan's book, *Nonviolence In Theory and Practice*, is supportive of this idea, stating that the “nature of nonviolent struggle makes it possible for the actionists also to win considerable

support even in the camp of the opponent and among third parties.”<sup>68</sup> One such known example of this phenomenon occurred during the United States civil rights movement when a change in public mentality toward support of the movement took place when dogs and fire hoses were turned on school children.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, it seems to be widely accepted in the area of nonviolent scholarship, that through nonviolent action power changes occur by weakening the ruler and strengthening the nonviolent struggle group.

Through several previously referenced resources such as Gene Sharp’s *Power and Struggle* and Holmes and Gan’s *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice*, the importance of simultaneously understanding the topics of power and the use of nonviolent action is demonstrated. In addition, these sources and nonviolent theorists show that despite nonviolence having historical roots across religions and philosophies,<sup>70</sup> the teaching, perfecting, and relying on nonviolence in practice is still in its infancy.

Though many on-line articles such as, “Disregarded History,” by Gene Sharp<sup>71</sup> and books, such as *Relentless Persistence: Nonviolent Action in Latin America*,<sup>72</sup> give countless case studies on the successful use in both the recent and distant past of nonviolent tactics, these tactics are not readily turned to and studied today as a means to an end when analyzing violent confrontations such as civil wars. It is therefore the objective of this research to apply the above two-part theory of power within nonviolent action, to a current case study holding the characteristics of nonviolence, power relationships, and civil war, in order to bolster the relevance of nonviolent action and demonstrate realistic manifestations of its claims.

### **PART III: Colombia as a Case Study**

The thorough analysis of Colombia's conflict situation will serve to exemplify the truths and implications of this two-part theory of power within nonviolent action. This country provides the necessary elements for this study, as a violent location where traditional power roles have been established but which are being challenged, shifted, and/or dissolved through the means of nonviolent action. This specific case study focuses on the continued fighting within Colombia, as well as the current use of nonviolent action, both by international peace organizations and internal nonviolent movements and communities. By viewing this action and the actors in correlation with the traditional power relationships within the civil war, it will perhaps help to reinforce nonviolent action as a valid method of bringing peace to this country and conflict throughout the world.

Many major sources, formed by researching peace groups and nonviolent examples occurring within Colombia, support this country serving as a valid case study. The main web-sites as well as branch pages within the sites of three such peace organizations (the American Friends Service Committee,<sup>73</sup> the Fellowship of Reconciliation,<sup>74</sup> and Witness for Peace<sup>75</sup>), provided a closer look at nonviolent work being done in Latin America and Colombia. The magazine Building from the Inside Out: Peace Initiatives in War-Torn Colombia produced by Gretchen Alther, John Lindsay-Poland, and Sarah Weintraub also contributed invaluable information to the research within this country.

Much research contributed to the completion of this comprehensive analysis including various sources of literature on the history of Colombia as well as on the nonviolent groups at work within the country. One particularly beneficial piece of literature for the section on history was the overview of recent conflict given by the Colombia

Human Rights Network homepage. It provided a comprehensive look at the problems occurring in Colombia in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which allowed for a better understanding of how the country arrived at its current state of war. The web-site provided a general understanding of the major guerrilla groups present in Colombia, the history of the political struggle, and a listing of major terror attacks and pivotal events. Other sources, such as the CIA World Factbook, were also referenced for this section.

Through this knowledge on the violent history and current state of Colombia, it is clear that it is an important candidate for an alternative method to peace. Since its independence from Spain in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Colombia has experienced a steady pattern of political instability, civil war, and failed amnesties. With forty years of continuous civil conflict, casualties and displaced persons in this country have easily reached into the hundreds of thousands.<sup>76</sup> The Colombian government has made innumerable efforts toward peace,<sup>77, 78</sup> and yet the violence continues.

According to Sharp, "Political power may be possessed by governments, the State, institutions, opposition movements, and other groups."<sup>79</sup> In the case of Colombia, it seems to be the country's army, insurgent/ guerrilla groups and the paramilitary that wield the role of power within the civil conflict. The two largest and oldest insurgent groups, the FARC ("Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia" or "Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia") and the ELN ("Ejército de Liberación Nacional" or "National Liberation Army") as well as the largest paramilitary group, the AUC ("Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia" or "Colombian United Self-Defense Forces"), are still in existence and continue



to kill, victimize, and rule over Colombian civilians in their struggle for power, drugs, territory, recruits, and money.<sup>80</sup>

Colombia has a long history of political conflict and chaos, violence and amnesties which have brought the country to its current state.<sup>81</sup> As early in Colombia's history as the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, liberal and conservative groups began to form, and continually underwent transformations within their philosophies throughout their formation process, which continued into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. During the formation of these groups, the Constitution of 1886 was established which suspended many democratic rights in addition to its purpose of consolidating the central government and eliminating federalism. It ultimately drove radical opposition groups into fighting the War of a Thousand Days from 1899-1902, which consolidated the bipartisan system, however a long period of repression of the union movement and the indigenous people followed.

The 1900s brought more uprisings and injustice, beginning with the move by the United States to separate Colombia from Panama in order to ensure control of the eventual interoceanic canal. In 1926 the Socialist Revolutionary Party was founded, and two years later the union movement was formed due to a massacre by the government of striking workers from the United Fruit Company. Beginning in 1930, the Liberal party ruled the government for 16 years surviving an attempted coup d'état in 1944, but when Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, a populist leader and future presidential candidate from the Liberal party, was assassinated in Bogotá, Colombia in 1948, a bloody riot ensued known as "El Bogotazo." In response to the rioting, Laureano Gómez, a conservative fascist began a campaign as President, elected without the participation of the liberal party, by which to

control the “liberal masses,” and attempted to push through a new Constitution which called for a totalitarian regime. The events rapidly worked together to bring about a 10 year partisan civil war from 1948-1958 between the Liberals and Conservatives known as “La Violencia,” that led to over 200,000 deaths and an extremely large population of displaced citizens, estimated in the millions.

During the course of this civil war, a successful coup took place in 1953 with General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, head of the armed forces, professing to lead democratic elections, but instead ruling as a dictator and quite easily taking over the reigns of the oppressive conservative before him, President Laureano Gómez. Within a year, a second government massacre occurred, only this time it was against university students in Bogotá, which perhaps acted as a catalyst to an important and influential alliance. The communist and liberal guerrillas became joined together under the leader Manuel Marulanda, to form the largest guerrilla group in Colombia known at present as the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), but at that time, taking the name *liberales comunes* (common liberals).<sup>82</sup> It was fairly soon after this formation that history began to shape into what is still the image of the current civil conflict in Colombia.

As the government made steps against the *liberales comunes* and the communists, violence escalated, and the U.S. became involved with counterinsurgency training. In 1957 in correlation with a bipartisan supported coup ousting the country’s leader, Rojas Pinilla, an amnesty was offered. Negotiations were made and demobilization, without disarmament, occurred. These actions attempted to try and reintegrate the guerrillas back into civilian life, though unfortunately, in reality, many of the guerrillas who turned

themselves in were murdered or jailed. Toward the final years of this decade long civil war, the Liberal and Conservative parties, who began to work together to focus on the removal of the oppressor, decided to jointly rule the country under what is known as the Frente Nacional (National Front). This agreement which devised a plan for alternating four-year presidents between the Conservatives and Liberals, did serve to end the violence and promote economic growth, however, because of its nature, the contract also led to excluded political parties, which in turn led to a new outbreak of violence.

Out of this frustration and violence came the formation of many more guerrilla forces into distinct political groups. Between 1960 and 1985 many more revolutionary groups were formed in opposition to the exclusionary government, including People's United Front (Frente Unido por el Pueblo), the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional- ELN), the Popular Liberation Army (Ejército Popular de Liberación- EPL) inspired by Maoist theories, the National Popular Alliance (Alianza Nacional Popular- ANAPO) run by former dictator Rojas Pinilla who also formed another group called the April 19 Movement (Movimiento 19 de Abril- M-19),<sup>83</sup> the Worker's Self Defense (Auto Defensa Obrera- ADO), the Workers Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores- PRT), and the Patriotic Union (La Unión Patriótica- UP) which is the political arm of the FARC.

In 1978, in the midst of these group formations, the government passed the Estatuto de Seguridad (Security Statute), which was considered "anti-terrorist" legislation against suspected guerrillas or their collaborators, and led to the free reign of state security forces and in turn disappearances, torturing, and political assassinations. A step toward peace was

made when the FARC decided to sign a peace accord with the government in 1984, leading the majority of their fighters to renounce armed struggle. Unfortunately, as a result of this move, the paramilitary began to form and the ceasefire began to lose credibility. It was because of these happenings that the M-19 group took over the Palace of Justice in an effort to hold the government accountable for negotiations such as ceasefires and amnesties made with guerrilla groups. This only led to more tragedy however, as many M-19 fighters, Supreme Court Justices, and 90 civilians were killed, and the peace process with the guerrilla groups came to an end.

The military's response to the government peace process, the formation of the paramilitary, also did nothing to help settle the conflict. Arming civilians, the military formed these paramilitary groups as part of a counter-insurgency strategy that carried out their own massacres against unions and civilians suspected of supporting guerrilla forces. In addition, these right-wing paramilitary groups began a "social cleansing" campaign against the "disposables," such as prostitutes, petty criminals, and street children.

In the late 1980s, a new consolidated group was formed, Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordination, which consisted of the M-19, EPL, ELN, and the FARC. Shortly after this group's formation, another attempt at amnesty occurred. President Virgilio Barco, in trying to disarm the paramilitary and declaring a war on drugs, began a new peace process requiring guerrillas to dismantle their military apparatus, turn in weapons, and re-integrate themselves back into society. As a result, the paramilitary joined with the army, growing in strength, and terrorist attacks increased immensely.

Throughout the 1990s, political groups continued to fight for rank in the government, with assassinations common. A constitutional reform took place, again offering another amnesty, this time to drug traffickers in an attempt to end terrorism, which ended up leading to a handful of truces and white flags raised by major drug cartel leaders. Unfortunately in the end, however, not all participated in the efforts toward peace and violence only increased, with arrested drug leaders escaping from prison and starting new terror campaigns. In 1994, the U.S. declared Colombia a “narco-democracy” after evidence was shown that the president, Ernesto Samper Pizano, was supported by drug cartels. During the next year, 25,000 homicides took place with 60% attributed to the paramilitary, and impunity reached 97%. In the latter part of the decade due to the human rights violations and nearly one million people displaced, a new president, Andrés Pastrana, made attempts toward peace. The U.S. and the U.N. also increased their presence in the country, both physically and financially, but the demands of guerrilla forces went unmet and terrorist activities continued. Several peace talks were attempted by President Andrés Pastrana from 1999-2002, as well as by President Álvaro Uribe from 2002-2010, but by often leaving civil society out of the negotiations, these attempts held little hope for success.

With peace talks continually on the table, by 2000, both guerrilla groups and paramilitaries requested inclusion in them. However, in the same year Congress passed a strict imprisonment law against those detained who were proven to have committed “crimes against humanity.” The peace process stagnated with one or another guerrilla group agreeing to cooperate toward peace at different times in that year, but never all at

once. There seemed a constant exchange of violence between paramilitary groups and guerrilla forces, with the government, civilians, and foreign aid donors caught in the middle, often becoming hostages and victims of murder and assassination.

In 2001, after extensive meetings between FARC's leader, Manuel Marulanda, and President Pastrana, a new peace attempt was made under the 13-point "Pact of Los Pozos." This agreement included small efforts toward peace such as negotiations toward prisoner exchange and ceasefire, but more so, a hope of future gains toward peace. In response, the U.S. agreed to increase trade with Colombia, but refused to take a role in peace negotiations with the FARC. Colombia also accepted financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2001 as their economy began to struggle, and the Clinton administration proposed a \$1.6 billion military package for the country, based on the understanding of the influence of drug money on the conflict.

With the perceived failure of peace talks once again, there was a shift in strategy from negotiation to military in trying to resolve the civil war. This new support of military and armed intervention led to United States involvement under Plan Colombia.<sup>84</sup> The U.S. finally approved the aid package of Plan Colombia at \$1.3 billion, after giving the Secretary of State the right to waive the human rights certification if it was of "national security interest."<sup>85</sup> In the end, all but one of the human rights conditions was waived. Unfortunately, much of the literature on this subject shows that U.S. government involvement is only complicating matters, and often escalating violence between groups fighting over valuable land and money because of the additional influx of arms and supplies.

Besides U.S. Involvement seeming to add to the confusion and stagnation of peace efforts, it also seems to be inducing the spread of the civil war across borders. The United State's Plan Colombia (an estimated \$740 million in 2006, with 80% of this going toward military and security efforts<sup>86</sup>) has driven one of the largest rebel groups, the FARC, southward, at the expense of Ecuador's northern border towns such as Lago Agrio, where "more than 100 people have been killed by assassins connected to these groups."<sup>87</sup>

As of 2009, Colombia has the world's largest internal displacement crisis only after Sudan, according to figures from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.<sup>88</sup> From 2002 to 2005 alone, more than three million people (over 5% of Colombia's population), were forcibly displaced because of the current ongoing armed conflict, with more than half of all of these displaced being children under 18 years of age.<sup>89</sup> The two largest insurgent groups, the FARC and the ELN, as well as the largest paramilitary group, AUC, are still in existence and continue to fight. The President of the Republic of Colombia from 2002-2010, Alvaro Uribe Velez, made some progress during his two terms in office,<sup>90,91</sup> but a referendum proposal that would have allowed him the opportunity to run again was rejected by the Constitutional Court of Colombia in February 2010.<sup>92</sup> President Uribe has been forced to pass on the conflict to another, and his predecessor, President Juan Manuel Santos, sworn in on August 7, 2010, has already, like many before him, pledged to "free his country from the 'nightmare of violence.'"<sup>93</sup>

## **PART IV: Theory in Practice: Nonviolent Action in Colombia**

### **International Peace Organizations: The Manifestation of their Missions and Objectives within Colombia's Civil War**

Amidst a world full of violence and conflict, many citizens are turning to peace organizations in an attempt to bring about social change, working for the use of nonviolence and an end to injustice and conflict. Many of these outside peace organizations are working within Colombia's conflict situation, and The Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and Witness for Peace (WFP) are three such interfaith, intercultural, and international movements. The similarity in their missions, objectives, and support communities is clear and their combined efforts are making great steps toward the accepted, mainstream use of nonviolence and the moving away from poverty, injustice, discrimination, and violence within the United States and across the globe.

These organizations are using their similar visions to come together within the civil war engulfed country of Colombia. Establishing projects and working for peace, the FOR, AFSC, and WFP are using a variety of forms in their efforts from nonviolent tactics and service activities within the country to the education of the situation abroad, to support and aid the population/ victims of this country's civil war. Through their presence, efforts, training, and support in Colombia, these organizations are driving and fostering a new wave of internally formed grassroots movements that are rising up and demanding social change toward nonviolence and peaceful activity despite the long-standing tradition of civil war and cycles of violence.



## Fellowship of Reconciliation

“The FOR has been in the forefront of the nonviolent struggle for peace with justice. What is important about the FOR is what it stands for. And that is a courageous dedication to the liberation of humanity from the triple evils of poverty, racism, and violence.”

-Coretta Scott King, Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change<sup>94</sup>

The “world’s oldest, largest interfaith peace group,”<sup>95</sup> and undoubtedly the most wide-spread of these three peace organizations is the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Over ninety years old, this organization developed out of a pledge made in 1914 by two men, an English Quaker, Henry Hodgkin, and a German Lutheran, Friedrich Sigmund-Schultze, at a railroad station in Germany following an ecumenical conference held in Switzerland.<sup>96</sup> This conference, held by Christians attempting to “prevent the outbreak of war in Europe,” was forcibly ended by the beginning of World War I, and though the conference goal was no longer valid, Henry Hodgkin and Friedrich Sigmund-Schultze set a new pledge: “to find a way of working for peace” in the midst of war. Christians gathered in England in December 1914 to found the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and in 1915, just one year later, the U.S. FOR was established.

Since its founding, this organization has moved away from its narrow roots and become an interfaith movement, including members from not only its founding religion, Christianity, but Judaism, Buddhism, and Islam, as well as peoples from various other faiths and those with no formal religious affiliation at all. Its past and present members and supporters including nonviolent activists such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Thich Nhat Hanh, and Albert Einstein, FOR is strongly established and supported throughout the world. FOR has become an international organization with movements on every continent and in more than 40 countries. In the United States alone, there are approximately 100 local groups associated with the FOR and more than 12 national religious peace fellowships

from all religious backgrounds such as that of the Buddhist, Muslim, Lutheran, Jewish, and Catholic Peace Fellowships.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation, from its beginning in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, has carried on educational projects and programs encouraging international as well as domestic peace and justice, the rights of conscience, and nonviolent alternatives to conflict.<sup>97</sup>

Through its mission and vision statement FOR clearly expresses its seeking of justice, peace, and the use of nonviolence both on a small scale and throughout the world.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation's Mission:

“FOR seeks to replace violence, war, racism, and economic injustice with nonviolence, peace, and justice. We are an interfaith organization committed to active nonviolence as a transforming way of life and as a means of radical change. We educate, train, build coalitions, and engage in nonviolent and compassionate actions locally, nationally, and globally.”<sup>98</sup>

The Fellowship of Reconciliation's Vision:

“We envision a world of justice, peace, and freedom. It is a revolutionary vision of a beloved community where differences are respected, conflicts are addressed nonviolently, oppressive structures are dismantled, and where people live in harmony with the earth, nurtured by diverse spiritual traditions that foster compassion, solidarity, and reconciliation.”<sup>99</sup>

It is the hope of this organization that the men and women that are the members and supporters of this organization not only concur with FOR's mission and vision and seek to “recognize the essential unity of all creation and have joined together to explore the power of love and truth for resolving human conflict,”<sup>100</sup> but that they also seek to apply six specific principles to all aspects of their lives.

1. “Identify with those of every nation, race, gender, sexual orientation, and religion who are the victims of injustice and exploitation, and seek to develop resources of active nonviolence to transform such circumstances;
2. Refuse to participate in any war or to sanction military preparations; work to abolish war and promote good will among races, nations, and classes;

3. Strive to build a social order that will utilize the resources of human ingenuity and wisdom for the benefit of all, an order in which no individual or group will be exploited or oppressed for the profit or pleasure of others;
4. Advocate fair and compassionate methods of dealing with offenders against society; they also serve as advocates for victims of crimes and their families who suffer loss and emotional anguish, recognizing that the restitution and reconciliation can help to heal both victims and offenders.
5. Endeavor to show respect for personality and reverence for all creation;
6. Seek to avoid bitterness and contention in dealing with controversy, and to maintain the spirit of self-giving love while engaged in the effort to achieve these purposes.”<sup>101</sup>

Throughout its ninety year legacy, holding these strong principles and visions as guides, the FOR has participated in many important and well-known events revolving around peace and social change.<sup>102</sup> Beginning just one year after its establishment in 1916 and into 1917, the FOR helped to form the National Civil Liberties Bureau, which is now known as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and also supported the conscientious objectors of WWI, playing a role in the forced recognition of the legal rights of these objectors. During the 1920’s and 1930’s, the Fellowship of Reconciliation helped to organize the National Conference of Christians and Jews, sent a “peace delegation to meet Sandino in Nicaragua,” worked to secure better working conditions alongside the labor movement, and sponsored the Ambassadors of Reconciliation in the visiting of leaders across the globe. Throughout the 1940’s, FOR’s main focus was nonviolent resistance to World War II, including the rescuing of Jews and political refugees running from Nazism by members of the European FOR, being a driving force in the “struggle against internment of Japanese Americans,” and organizing “to prevent the Pentagon from extending wartime conscription into universal military training.”<sup>103</sup> During this time, they

also helped to put to the test a court decision based on the banning and/or discrimination in interstate travel, supporting an interracial team on the first “freedom ride.”

Moving away from WWII and toward the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War, in the 1950s the FOR played a role in the organization of the American Committee on Africa, as a larger stand for African independence. In addition, they worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. during the Montgomery bus boycott, holding nonviolent workshops throughout the South and producing a full-color comic book (*Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story*, selling more than 250,000 copies). Also during that decade and into the 1960’s, FOR reached out in response to basic humanitarian crises such as famines, launching the six-year Food for China program, and homelessness, heading the establishment of the Shelters for the Shelterless program.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation’s support of the civil rights movement continued into the 60’s, but was also coupled with their tireless efforts against the Vietnam War. FOR not only raised money for both sides in the Vietnam war for medical aid, but they formed the International Committee of Conscience on Vietnam, made up of 10,000 clergy from 40 countries. They also began work with a Vietnamese Buddhist pacifist movement, supporting and sponsoring the world tour of Thich Nhat Hanh, a Buddhist monk.

The next three decades brought new wars for FOR to resist and campaign against, and new humanitarian efforts to support. In the 1970’s, FOR fought against the death penalty in conjunction with the ACLU, founded “a transnational project linking war, environmental problems, poverty and other social issues” called Dai Dong (made up of thousands of scientists around the world), and led marches, educational projects, and civil

disobedience campaigns against the Cold War and the arms race. The 80's brought more work against the Cold War, as FOR initiated the Nuclear Freeze campaign and the US-USSR reconciliation program, utilizing techniques such as teach-ins, artistic and educational resources, and conferences. They also played a crucial role in the Philippines during this time and headed nonviolence training seminars just before the nonviolent overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship took place.

Throughout the 1990's, the Fellowship of Reconciliation really began to spread their nonviolent mission and tactics globally. Major efforts were focused on the support of the Iraqis as well as Serbs and Kosovars in the former Yugoslavia. FOR sent peace delegations of activists and religious leaders to Iraq in an attempt to prevent war, and later began an ongoing project centered on saving the Iraqi children from the devastating effects of the sanctions placed upon Iraq, which was also used to assist the high poverty level of children in the US, entitled the "Campaign to Save a Generation." The Fellowship of Reconciliation organization also started both the "Stop the Killing, Start the Healing," movement as a fight against the rise of gun-violence in the United States, as well as the International Reconciliation Work Camp Project and the Bosnian Student Project with its efforts in removing students from the former Yugoslavia, from areas of war into the homes and schools of the US. Within this decade, the FOR also worked in support of the withdrawal of the US military from Panama and both during and after the war in former Yugoslavia to end the suffering of the Kosovars and Serbs.<sup>104</sup>

Into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, FOR continues its efforts throughout the world, its nonviolent movements more widespread and fervent than ever: gaining approximately 75 new

supporters each month with well over 13,000 members in the US and over 400,000 more internationally; the FOR counts more than 20,000 active contributors in the US alone.<sup>105</sup> Members are currently working and have programs in Iraq, Iran, Bosnia, Israel/ Palestine, and Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition to these programs, they also conduct nonviolent peace trainings, vigils, prayer services, demonstrations, youth peacemaker training, organized acts of civil disobedience, and peace internships, trying to fight for gender, racial, and economic justice and convince people across the United States and around the world that violence is not the answer.

#### American Friends Service Committee

Another well-known, long-standing, and successful peace organization in the struggle for the use of nonviolence is the American Friends Service Committee. Founded not long after the FOR in 1917 by Quakers including Rufus Jones and Henry Cadbury,<sup>106</sup> its original purpose, based on Quaker ideals, was “to provide conscientious objectors with an opportunity to aid civilian war victims.”<sup>107</sup> Today, the AFSC is still directed by a board of Quakers and staffed by both Quakers and other peoples of faith who share the same ideals as the Service Committee.

The AFSC is supported by peoples of many cultures, races, and religions, and its efforts are based on the “Quaker belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.”<sup>108</sup> Holding strong to their Quaker roots, within their mission statement the AFSC describes their organization as “a practical expression of the faith of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).”<sup>109</sup> They, like the FOR, have a driving mission committed to justice and nonviolence, relying on the power of love;

however, the AFSC seems to emphasize the transforming power of the human and the divine, as well as the “leadings of the Spirit” making clear, also in line with their Quaker founding, that these truths and leadings that they’ve found “are not the exclusive possession of any group.”

Within its mission statement, the American Friends Service Committee holds much hope in the power of goodness and its ability to transform and transcend evil:

“This AFSC community works to transform conditions and relationships both in the world and in ourselves, which threaten to overwhelm what is precious in human beings. We nurture the faith that conflicts can be resolved nonviolently, that enmity can be transformed into friendship, strife into cooperation, poverty into well-being, and injustice into dignity and participation. We believe that ultimately goodness can prevail over evil, and oppression in all its many forms can give way.”<sup>110</sup>

This belief in the power of good and of the divine to conquer violence, discrimination, and evil is also clearly expressed within the “AFSC values”:

1. “We Cherish the belief that there is that of God in each person, leading us to respect the worth and dignity of all. We are guided and empowered by the spirit in following the radical thrust of the early Christian witness. From these beliefs flow the core understandings that form the spiritual framework of our organization and guide its work.
2. We regard no person as our enemy. While we often oppose specific actions and abuses of power, we seek to address the goodness and truth in each individual.
3. We assert the transforming power of love and nonviolence as a challenge to injustice and violence and as a force for reconciliation.
4. We seek and trust the power of the Spirit to guide the individual and collective search for truth and practical action.
5. We accept our understandings of truth as incomplete and have faith that new perceptions of truth will continue to be revealed both to us and to others.”<sup>111</sup>

With Quaker values and a strong belief in the power of the Spirit, of love, and of nonviolence, the members of the American Friends Service Committee have set out to do and have done much in the realm of nonviolent activity over the past 90 years of their

existence. As adopted by the Board of Directors on June 19, 1994, the AFSC has pledged a long list of goals for themselves. Included within this list are promises to try to understand war, injustice, and poverty, act with courage even in unpopular movements, reconcile enemies, facilitate just and peaceful resolutions to conflict, work to prevent and relieve suffering, encourage social transformation towards a society that “recognizes the dignity of each person,” “transform the institutions of society,” and be committed to a “Spirit-led journey, undertaken ‘to see what love can do.’”<sup>112</sup>

With these high goals set for themselves, the members of the AFSC have reached much success and many people over the years. During the first year of the American Friends Service Committee’s existence, it sent delegations of both women and men to France in order for them to work with British Friends to rebuild and repair houses, found a maternity hospital, care for and feed refugee children, and provide basic necessities for returning refugees to assist them in restarting their lives.<sup>113</sup> In 1918, after WWI had ended, the work of the AFSC had spread into Poland, Serbia, Germany, Austria, and Russia where they set-up orphanages, assisted in the rehabilitation of agriculture, gave food to hungry children, and gave assistance to famine and disease victims.

The AFSC played a very active role throughout the world both during the 1930’s as well as directly after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. The AFSC helped many refugees escape from Nazi Germany, assisted children from both sides of the Spanish Civil War, built hospitals and gave food to refugees in the occupied countries of France and Germany (feeding 1.2 million children a day in Germany<sup>114</sup>), and came to the aid of victims from the London blitz



of 1940-41. Immediately following WWII, the Quakers' work spread to India, China, Japan, and countries across Europe, where they provided reconstruction and relief.

In 1947, the American Friends Service Committee, along with the British Friends Service Council, were awarded and accepted on behalf of Quakers world-wide, the Nobel Peace Prize. This award included prize money of \$40,000 and "recognized 300 years of Quaker efforts to heal rifts and oppose war," specifically these two organizations' work "during and after the two World Wars to feed starving children and help Europe rebuild itself."<sup>115</sup> The Quakers used the prize money to fund a film and publish Quaker proposals for peace between the United States and the Soviet Union.

During the presentation speech given by the chair of the Nobel Committee, Gunnar Jahn, it was emphasized that it was not only the extent of the work this organization had done but "the spirit in which it was performed."<sup>116</sup> Jahn noted that the Quakers brought into practice "sympathy with others; the desire to help others... without regard to nationality or race; feelings which, when carried into deeds, must provide the foundations of a lasting peace."<sup>117</sup> True to the Quaker tradition, in the acceptance speech Henry Cadbury gave for the Nobel Prize in 1947, he emphasized once more "...that common folk-not statesmen, nor generals... just simple plain men and women like the few thousand Quakers and their friends-if they devote themselves to resolute insistence on Goodwill in place of force... can do something to build a better, peaceful world."<sup>118</sup>

In this same year and into the next, the AFSC continued their work by assisting in resettling refugees in India whose homes had been lost during the partition of India as well as aiding Arab refugees on the Gaza strip. During the next decade, the AFSC began placing

a strong focus on programming to attempt to dissolve disparity and tension in developing countries, making attempts at preemptive action against war. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the AFSC spread their peace activities across the globe, continuing peace work through the Korean and Algerian Wars and well as the Hungarian Revolution. In the 1960s, the focus for programming shifted to some extent toward the Vietnam war as well as the Nigerian-Biafran War, assisting in child care, medical supplies and prosthetics for Vietnamese civilians.

With the help of contributions, bequests, and material gifts amounting to nearly 50 million dollars in 1994, the American Friends Service Committee continues to try to eliminate the injustice that they recognize as the roots for conflict across the United States and within countries suffering from violence throughout the world, with 30% (\$13 million) of their 43 million dollar budget spent toward International Programs and 53% spent on Community Relations, Peace Education, and Special Programs (\$27.1 million).<sup>119</sup> Within the US, they have spread their assistance and programming to minority groups such as Native-Americans, Mexican Americans, and African-Americans as well as to the poverty-stricken migrant workers and prisoners. Their movement continues to try and create community awareness, by creating more sufficient living, working, and educational conditions, as well as constantly educating the public on “issues of war and peace.”<sup>120</sup>

Currently, the AFSC plays a part in many specific programs and peace efforts in the United States such as the STOPMAX Campaign, working against torture in prisons, educating citizens in New York on heating their homes through the winter months (getting citizens in touch with groups that assist with heating bills and winterizing homes, as well as

educating them on obtaining government assistance through involvement in town meetings and meetings with U.S. representatives), and informing ‘Iowans’ on the importance of the immigrant population within their state (Sponsoring weekend legal clinics, creating interfaith coalitions attempting to educate and break down stereotypes placed on immigrants, and bringing together a “summit” of peoples from the legal, religious, health, social services, business, and government communities “to discuss the impact of recent national legislation on their respective fields.”).<sup>121</sup>

The Service Committee is also active in many countries throughout the world, with a few specific examples of their international programming being that they are providing assistance with healing and support in Afghanistan as well as partnering with youth in the Israeli/ Palestinian conflict. Within the violence-entrenched country of Afghanistan, the AFSC is doing much work leading processes to help the people, specifically women, cope with the violence through means such as poetry and meditation using the Qur’an. They are also setting up peer support groups which “provide skills needed to prevent violence and understand its roots...” training staff at the Afghan Women’s Resource Center and Noor Education Centre, have built nine schools since 2002, and trained some 60 Afghan teachers.<sup>122</sup> The AFSC has joined with Israeli/ Palestinian youth in educating people on the “refuser” movement with Israel which consists of youth who are refusing to serve their mandatory time within the army. The AFSC have sponsored these youth to speak at local U.S. high schools as well as work with the “U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation,” to allow them to demonstrate that the Quaker message and hope for an end to conflict is shared by young and old alike throughout the world.”<sup>123</sup>

## Witness for Peace

A third, much newer organization committed to nonviolence is Witness for Peace. Founded only recently in 1983, WFP, though more specific in its geographical area of assistance, is similar to the other two peace organizations, as it considers itself a “politically independent, nationwide grassroots organization of people committed to nonviolence and led by faith and conscience.”<sup>124</sup> Over the past 23 years of its history, Witness for Peace has developed and held a team of skilled international volunteers for their program sites abroad as well as 15,000 members nationwide, supporting more than 10,000 people on short-term delegations to the Caribbean and Latin America. Though its supporters and administration are scattered throughout the U.S. and around the world, with branch offices abroad and a national office in Washington, DC (with staff there representing the regions of the United States as well as the countries where it has presence), the overall comprehensive mission of the organization is shared:

“...[to] support peace, justice, and sustainable economies in the Americas by changing U.S. policies and corporate practices which contribute to poverty and oppression in Latin America and the Caribbean.”<sup>125</sup>

In addition to supporting this mission, Witness for Peace and its members hold a seven part Covenant:

1. “We commit ourselves to nonviolence in word and in deed as the essential operating principle of Witness for Peace.
2. We commit ourselves to honesty and openness in our relationships with one another.
3. We commit ourselves to a prayerful (reflective), spiritual approach to unity with one another as the foundations for this project.
4. We commit ourselves to be responsible and accountable in our actions to the community of which we are a part and to the principles of leadership which have been established.
5. We commit ourselves to maintaining the political independence of Witness for Peace.

6. We commit ourselves to act in solidarity and community with the Latin American and Caribbean people, respecting their lives, their culture, and their decisions. We will respect the suggestions of our hosts with regard to our presence and mobility in another land.
7. We commit ourselves to record our witness and, upon return, to share our experience with the North American people through the media, public education, and political action.”<sup>126</sup>

With clear goals and a strong covenant, the history of this organization, though more brief than the two other peace organizations, is not lacking in its productivity and the manifestation of its mission in the US, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Instantaneously upon its founding in 1983, the WFP began practicing its covenant in the contra War in Nicaragua, sending delegations of U.S. citizens to Nicaragua to accompany the Nicaraguan citizens within war zones, establishing an on-going WFP presence there, and “document[ing] the “human face” of the Reagan Administration’s military policy.”<sup>127</sup> It continued this strong demonstration of its disagreement with U.S. policy as it brought the information of the consequences of these policies through large-scale media and grassroots education to the public within the United States. During the beginnings of this organization, “WFP established its successful model of merging the powerful forces of on-the-ground documentation, assertive media strategies, a dynamic delegations program, and stateside grassroots mobilization.”<sup>128</sup>

Throughout its history, it has continued to travel and bring its resources to peoples and countries affected by “harmful U.S. policies and corporate practices,” in order to “document the human costs of unfair trade and military policy, transform U.S. citizens who travel with [them] to Latin America, and mobilizes a motivated grassroots network of nonviolent activists who hold policymakers accountable and work for positive change.”<sup>129</sup>

Currently Witness for Peace continues its mission to understand the viewpoint of those living oppressed and in poverty and has a presence and is doing work in Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Colombia. During the 1990s and into today, WFP is an advocate against U.S. policy in these countries such as “Operation Hold the Line,” “Operation Gatekeeper,” and “Operation Safeguard.”<sup>130</sup> WFP also educates the public away from placing the blame on the migrant workers, instead focusing it onto U.S. government policy. In addition, Witness for Peace investigates and ‘exposes’ the results of IMF ‘debt relief’ and the hand of U.S. imposed ideology within its focus countries.

#### Fellowship of Reconciliation, American Friends Service Committee, and Witness for Peace Work in Colombia

With similar goals and mission statements, these three peace organizations have formed and are determined to work against violence, injustice, and help countries move down the road toward peace. Using trainings, delegations, education, and community service, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, American Friends Service Committee, and Witness for Peace are working in the U.S. and abroad to try to make the dream of a peaceful world a reality. These organizations have collaborated in their efforts of nonviolence and peace in Colombia, a country that, as described previously, has thus far been unable to break free from its long history of violence.

From the time of its independence, Colombia has suffered from civil war and failed amnesties. Robert Kaplan describes Colombia as a country “where guerrilla groups, both left-wing and right-wing, have downplayed ideology in favor of decentralized baronies and franchises built on terrorism, narco-trafficking, kidnapping, counterfeiting, and the siphoning of oil-pipeline revenues from local governments.”<sup>131</sup> The failure of government

administrations through the years to put an end to the fighting and atrocities has led to the emergence of the involvement of outside peace organizations who have heard the cries of Colombia's citizens and tried to meet the needs of the victims of this four decade long civil war. The Fellowship of Reconciliation, American Friends Service Committee, and Witness for Peace are working both independently and in collaboration within this country to try to ease the tensions of conflict and put an end to the traditions of violence. Through programming, humanitarian efforts, and U.S. delegations and task forces, these organizations are implementing their missions of peace and nonviolence in Colombia.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the community service work of the Fellowship of Reconciliation has spread to over 44 countries including one of the most violent, Colombia. The FOR Task Force on Latin America and the Caribbean (TFLAC) was created in 1983 with 3 main goals:

1. "to strengthen communication and collaboration between North and Latin American nonviolent movements;
2. to help FOR members become actively engaged in Latin American and Caribbean issues;
3. to promote demilitarization and justice in U.S. policy toward the region through public education, collaboration with other North American groups, and advocacy."<sup>132</sup>

Within the programming of the TFLAC is the 'Colombia Program,' with one specific goal within it to support San José de Apartadó, a peace community of 1,200 peasant pacifists<sup>133</sup> within Colombia, as they remain committed to justice and nonviolence. Additionally, other goals of the Colombia Program are to educate and involve United States citizens on the continued conflict taking place in Colombia, the policy of the United States government

toward the conflict, and about the nonviolent alternatives that may be applied to political violence and the war.<sup>134</sup>

Specific actions taken by FOR volunteers include: delegations acting as safeguards and moral support by accompanying members of this peace community “as human rights observers on behalf of the international community,” distributing monthly email updates to keep people informed on the current situation, giving talks upon their return from Colombia on their experiences there to inform and encourage potential future delegates, and participating in national efforts which attempt to change U.S. Policy.<sup>135</sup> In 2006, FOR sent an international delegation to Colombia to learn about the ongoing conflict firsthand and held *Semana por la Paz* (Week for Peace) in Colombia from October 1-6, where thousands of churches and individuals of faith in the United States and Colombia came together to pray and take action for peace in Colombia. In November 2006, FOR sponsored Renato Areiza, coordinator of the Council for Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, in a series of talks sharing first hand stories about the community across the United States.<sup>136</sup>

The American Friends Service Committee has also, since 1995 until recently, made great efforts as an organization to bring peace and justice to Colombia. Unfortunately, according to an article in the Philadelphia Inquirer, because of recent budget cuts, the Colombia office of AFSC has been closed.<sup>137</sup> Before its closure, however, through activity done in Colombia, the Andean Regions, and in the United States, the AFSC was constantly working “to oppose the suffering caused by armed actors and to support human rights and



peacebuilding initiatives.”<sup>138</sup> The AFSC had set very specific goals for their work in Colombia, the Andean Region, and in the United States:

1. “To dismantle the myth that the war in Colombia is a war on drugs or narco-terrorism by creating resources and making available speakers in the United States that can address and take apart the illusion that the conflict in Colombia is just about drugs;
2. To mobilize the US public to put pressure on the US government in order to change its so called drug war policies towards Colombia;
3. To bring representatives from partner communities and AFSC Quaker International Affairs Representatives from Colombia to meet with Congressional leaders on a regular basis to lobby for changes to US policy;
4. [To] [document] and [present] cases of human rights abuses to congressional members so that they may be more educated about the impact of US policy in Colombia;”
5. [To] [create] an early warning system to alert concerned US citizens about assassinations of indigenous leaders in Colombian peace communities;
6. [To work] with women helping their communities deal with violence in the Putumayo department of Colombia;
7. To educate US public about indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities living in peaceful resistance by creating fact finding missions from the US to Colombia and bringing leaders from the communities living in peaceful resistance to speak to legislative representatives and the US public about the true situation in their country;
8. To lead human rights and mental health workshops with the Indigenous Guard of the Nasa people in Colombia’s Cauca department;
9. And to create exchanges between indigenous people in Colombia, Ecuador, and the United States (At the indigenous Summit of the Peoples in August 2004 they shared their experiences of resistance and peacebuilding and created strategies for the future).”<sup>139, 140</sup>

Before the site was updated, and the Colombian section removed, the AFSC demonstrated that they are well-researched and dedicated to this topic and this struggle for peace, with specific branches of their site explaining the facts and timelines concerning Colombia’s civil war, a glossary of key terms, a section on discussion points for opposing U.S. Policy in Colombia, maps of Colombia, information on the Indigenous People in Colombia, links to trade and labor rights, related articles, relevant outside links, and much

more.<sup>141</sup> There were also branches of AFSC's old website that explained trade and militarization in Colombia, Peace Communities (along with definitions and example articles), Voices for Peace ("an attempt by the AFSC to magnify the voices of Colombians working for peace at a time when war, drugs, and violence are generally the foci of the larger media networks"<sup>142</sup>), reports from the field, Colombian contacts, and other organizations involved in Colombia.

The third peace organization discussed above, Witness for Peace, is also making clear efforts toward education of the Colombia situation and seeking peace for this country. WFP has a clear emphasis on educational delegations with many groups having already completed their trips (Some titles of these delegations were "U.S. Connections to Colombia Labor/ Human Rights Issues," "U.S. Policy in Colombia: Drugs, Military Aid, and Human Rights," and "Sowing Peace in Times of War, Military Aid, and Human Rights."<sup>143</sup>). The WFP's delegations have specific agendas including meeting with activists, leaders, and the business communities to hear different analyses of U.S. policy in Colombia, and learning about the economic history of Colombia's civil war. In addition, these delegations usually see the results of aerial spraying, hear testimonies from displaced people and others affected by the conflict, travel to areas outside of Bogotá to witness the effects of U.S. military assistance and counter-narcotics practices, talk about the violence with union organizers, meet with the Colombia government, military officials, and the U.S. Embassy, and develop grassroots legislative and media strategies to help work for change.<sup>144</sup> Besides these Delegations, the WFP has a Colombia Team which reports about the situation within Colombia to be printed in the WFP newsletter, to try to keep citizens informed.

Fellowship of Reconciliation, American Friends Service Committee, and Witness for Peace are strong international movements with long histories and similar goals to bring peace and justice to the world through nonviolence. It is their history and experience which allow them to educate and encourage others on the effects that nonviolence can have in the midst of conflict. As parts in a larger movement toward a peaceful world, they continue to delve into conflicts, such as the war in Colombia, to learn about the current situation, bring stories home to the U.S. and elsewhere that others might get involved to support nonviolence and an end to war, and stand with and educate the citizens in that country that they might someday stand on their own in nonviolence and pacifism and encourage their surrounding communities to do the same.

### **How International Peace Organizations are Fostering Social Change and Internal Nonviolent Movements**

As these organizations, along with other efforts such as ESPERE (supported by Harvard University and led by Father Leonel Narváez<sup>145</sup>), protect the beliefs and lives of citizens committed to nonviolence and peace within Colombia and educate them on tactics of nonviolence, forgiveness, and reconciliation, change is taking place within this country. Though it can be said that “at no time have Colombians given up their quest for peace, human rights, and nonviolent social change,”<sup>146</sup> it is with the recent support of these peace organizations that social change is being fostered. The situation of the war and ideas of peace and nonviolence are more clear, bolstered by this education of both citizens within the country and abroad, financial support, and physical protection, making the efforts of Colombian citizens more accepted and successful.

Though the opinion of many has changed on the capacity of negotiation and communication to bring peace and “the space for nonviolent organization is narrow and dangerous,” many of the citizens and communities within Colombia with the support of these organizations are working against the violence; the violence which has caused millions to be displaced (One in almost every 10 Colombians) and Colombia to lead the world in murders and kidnappings, with 80% of conflict-related deaths being civilian casualties.<sup>147</sup> According to Gretchen Alther, John Lindsay-Poland, and Sarah Weintraub in *Building from the Inside Out*,

“The experience of communities building peace amid so much violence in Colombia often goes unnoticed. ‘Peace’ is considered the responsibility of political leaders, high levels of government and institutions. But the experiences of peace-building within communities is vital, because it is on the level of communities that the war in Colombia is lived and fought. It is families, communities, and individuals who are torn apart by war.”<sup>148</sup>

Groups and communities, formed within Colombia by citizens of the country, are teaching and utilizing nonviolent tactics against the current civil war. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, labor and agrarian movements along with human rights movements worked for nonviolence and peace. Their struggle was taken over by citizens' peace movements in the late 1990s, such as the Children's and Citizens' Mandates for Peace. Through efforts and organizations fostered and formed within the country the citizens of Colombia are taking solid steps toward an environment of peace.

#### Medellín Youth Network

One group using community strength in protesting against war is the Medellín Youth Network. This group is operating only on principles of nonviolence within Medellín, the second largest city in Colombia, which is due in part to the fact that so many families

have fled there from the violent countrysides. Formed in 1990 by youth who had lost loved ones in the war, this group “trains youth in nonviolence and cooperative play, supports young men who refuse to serve with the police, military of illegal armed groups, and promotes respect for human rights and youth’s ideas in Colombian society.”<sup>149</sup> With 30 core youth staff and 150 other youth regularly involved, the members of this organization come together for support and to try to “break the stigma that ‘youth’ [equal] violence” by publicizing their pacifist views using processions, public draft-card burning (all male Colombians graduating from secondary school must serve a year in the police or army with no alternative services or refusal on ground of conscience<sup>150</sup>) music, and theater.<sup>151</sup>

In the late 1990s, the youth organization learned about similar conflicts to Colombia's occurring around the world and about new ideas such as conscientious objection and nonviolence, which fanned their enthusiasm and strengthened their struggle. It was at this point that they began offering nonviolent training and demonstrating the world that they wanted to live in, taking their efforts into conflict ridden neighborhoods and schools. In addition, the Youth Network began extending their anti-militarism and human rights efforts to include nonviolent direct action which meant upping their confrontations with armed groups and witnessing armed battles. They continue to “encourage young people’s belief in the value of all human life, to work together to overcome fear, and to become empowered to live and espouse these values.”<sup>152</sup> With much training to build confidence and understanding of the principles and practice of active nonviolence, they support conscientious objection (conscientious objectors are barred from

higher education and from many jobs) through theater performances, informing media, draft-card burning, and leafleting induction lines.

The Medellín Youth Network in 2003 organized an international conference to connect anti-militarist activists to share experiences and ideas, and, working with an FOR delegation, took part in a rally and march against the arrest of Los Pasajeros, a popular rock group arrested and detained for performing at a protest rally. In 2004, they organized and participated spontaneously in several efforts of protest during the annual Day of the Workers March and Colombia's Independence Day gaining both media attention and the governor of the state's support of "free expression." One of their members, Leonardo Jimenez, exemplifies this group organized for youth, as his father was killed after objecting to paramilitary doing business in his restaurant. Like most members, he has a direct history with the violence, a strong conviction to pacifism, and the need to let others know that despite an "adult-centric" mentality, youth have ideas about politics and the war. He says,

"The exhaustion [from violence] has generated in us an identity. The war has generated in us an identity. Our common stories have generated in us an identity... We have been accused of being dreamers, utopians, because we talk of a world without armies, of anti-militarism. And that is not in people's minds. Because what the war has done is introduce a chip, like a computer program, that processes one's ideas, and then there can't be anything different than that program."<sup>153</sup>

The Medellín Youth Network is working against this 'programming' through their nonviolent identities and pacifist convictions.

### La Ruta Pácfista de las Mujeres

La Ruta Pácfista de las Mujeres (the Women's Path of Peace), simply called Ruta, is another group that was internally formed to strengthen nonviolent action against war.

When a 1996 meeting revealed that 95% of women in one community in Urabá had been raped, a few women from Medellín called for an act of solidarity: “A thousand Colombian women from women’s groups around the country to go to Urabá and put their arms around those who had suffered the humiliation of war.”<sup>154</sup> When 1,500 did meet in Urabá on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Ruta movement began. It was formed around the following thoughts:

“Any woman in Colombia has anguished when her child, husband, father, or brother goes to war. She has buried and mourned him. And she has suffered violence directly; she has been threatened and accused and forced to take one side or another in a limitless conflict that has touched every aspect of daily life. She has also been raped.”<sup>155</sup>

This movement encourages women to support each other in body and spirit, but more than that, to move from being victims of war to “being social and political actors in a struggle for nonviolent change.”<sup>156</sup> They started regional and nationwide marches to meet women who needed companionship and solidarity because of the war.

One such march led 3,000 women in a caravan of 100 buses to Putumayo, the center of U.S.-Colombian drug eradication efforts that include aerial fumigation of coca fields (which has “increased food insecurity, the spread of coca cultivation to other regions, destruction of natural resources, and recently-proven genetic damage in young women”<sup>157</sup>). They went to protest against the “militarist policy of the current government, which favors the use of weapons and force to treat problems that are rooted in and generate poverty, historic expropriation, marginalization, and disorder.”<sup>158</sup> During this mobilization, the U.S. Ambassador to Colombia spoke against Ruta’s declaration, but the women within this group who say that their efforts are a mixture of utopian values and extreme realism,

thought the attention was significant as it meant that their “movement had political weight.”<sup>159</sup> In 2001, Ruta was awarded the Millennium Peace Prize for Women by United Nations Development Fund for Women and International Alert, a British organization. La Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres said upon acceptance of this award that they “lead peaceful revolutions without bullets, without anti-personnel mines, without destroying the country’s infrastructure and environment, without massacres, without disappearances, without threats, and without torture.”<sup>160</sup>

#### Movimiento de los Nios por La Paz

Movimiento de los Nios por La Paz (Children's Movement for Peace) is a national organization in Colombia that formed following visits by Graca Machel, wife of former South African president Nelson Mandela. Machel's conveyance of experiences of child involvement in the peace process in her native country, Mozambique, spawned the idea of children voting on their rights as citizens in Colombia.<sup>161</sup> Through her visits, as well as the support of the idea by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Children's Movement for Peace was created as a medium for young people and a foundation for carrying out the child vote.

This child vote, the Children’s Mandate, took place in 1996 when an event was organized by the Children's Movement and within the Network of Initiatives for Peace and against War (REDEPAZ; Colombia’s largest peace network) along with UNICEF and the National Civil Registry Office, where Colombian children voted for rights out of a ballot of twelve. When “guerrillas and government troops pledged not to disrupt this unique exercise in democracy,” some 2.7 million children voters showed up and “rejected violence” and



chose the right to life and peace as the most important rights of citizens.<sup>162,163</sup> According to one child voter, “Peace is most important because without it you cannot have any other right.”<sup>164</sup>

The adults followed the children's lead, and the Citizens' Mandate followed a year later, with ten million people voting (“Almost three times as many people voted in the Citizen's Mandate for Peace than voted in the presidential election a year later”) for a “politically negotiated solution to the armed conflict and respect for human rights and international law.”<sup>165</sup> With voter turnout 40% higher than normal elections, voters voted “Yes” for a Citizen's Mandate for Peace, Life and Freedom.<sup>166</sup>

“Children's Movement for Peace has encouraged millions of young Colombians to think and act in the interest of peace, among themselves, and by influencing the adult population in this direction.”<sup>167</sup> The movement has been nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize and is the focus of a book published on nine individual stories of young people working within the Children's Movement for Peace in Colombia, “who have experienced war and terrible violence, yet have chosen to work for peace.”<sup>168</sup>

### Peace Communities

A different type of community work and change taking place from the inside on a larger scale are new grassroots community movements which believe from first hand experience that violence cannot be fought with violence, and thus have begun to form “Comunidades de Paz” or “Peace Communities,” also known largely as “Communities in Resistance.” They began forming in 1990s, and are made up mostly of indigenous, black, and peasants, many of them formed from the large, displaced population of indigenous

created by the war who consider what is happening to them to be ethnocide.<sup>169</sup> There are more than 50 such Peace Communities like San José de Apartadó in Colombia, (one of the communities supported by the Fellowship of Reconciliation) that have made this declaration to be neutral in the civil war occurring in their country.<sup>170</sup>

At the center of their formation are both a belief in nonviolence, more specifically this idea of remaining neutral in the conflict, and a rejection of contact with and support of the violence of all armed parties acting in Colombia's civil war, including the security forces of the state, as well as a denunciation of human rights abuses by any and all warring factions in the war.<sup>171</sup> Residing in one of the most violent countries in the world, while declaring a right not to take part in the violence and conflict, requires "mechanisms of self protection."<sup>172</sup> In the opinion of one such community, Andalucía,<sup>173</sup> their self-protection virtually is nonviolence. They consider a mentality of strengthening community organization, having in place security procedures, creating sustainable agricultural projects as a community, and developing strong ties to both the national and international community to be their sources of security and safety.<sup>174</sup>

It is the internal organization of these communities as well as their connections and ties with international NGOs, such as the peace organization, American Friends Service Committee, and surrounding communities with similar beliefs that assist in providing needed support of their efforts. Groups like the AFSC have supported this community-level nonviolent resistance through the encouraged involvement of both leaders and members of the community, region, and nation in peace building efforts, as well as through education of individuals on relevant policy and programs which correlate with their cause.<sup>175</sup> It is the

moral, physical, and financial support of these peace organizations that have fostered this growth of movements, this wave of social change within Colombia of avid believers in a hope for peace in their country and in using nonviolent means to get there.

Amidst the ongoing violence and social hardships, “peace communities,” “communities in resistance,” rely on the most basic strategies for peace, calling for peaceful negotiations and solutions to Colombia’s civil war. Driving these strategies are the seemingly simple goals and desires of protecting the lives and territory of their communities, and developing them only through peaceful means. According to the American Friends Service Committee, “For these communities, their belief in nonviolence and the power of negotiation to bring about peace is not just a tactic but comes from who they are.”<sup>176</sup>

Holmes and Gan, *Nonviolence in Theory and in Practice*, offers much to support an underlying hope for the success of the efforts, creeds, and organization of these nonviolent communities. One section, “Peace through Strength,” written by Liane Ellison Norman, showed how continually accepted understandings of war, as inevitable or even necessary in society, and peace, as a near impossible and idealist goal, allow violence to continue. This directly relates to Sharp’s discussion on the civil ruler and the necessity of the ruled, or as Norman puts it in other terms, the “dependent and fragile,” nature of power. By refusing to accept the inevitability of civil war within their country, nonviolent groups are beginning to pull power away from oppressors. Within the peace communities, by practicing civil disobedience through their noncooperation with the guerillas and paramilitary and their efforts to force individuals into violence and convert them into their

ranks, citizens are breaking down the fragile power structure that has so long been in place.

As is described within Holmes and Gan's book, without the governed giving their consent, the power of the governor is lost, and therein lies the effectiveness of civil disobedience and nonviolent action. As grassroots movements toward peace and nonviolence in Colombia display successful nonviolence, stemming from Norman's point of view out of courage and ingenuity, if, as she suggests, they are coupled with organization and discipline, nonviolent action could in fact become a useful tool in both defense against domestic tyranny and foreign conquest.<sup>177</sup> These communities are successfully acting as models of Norman's formula and Sharp's two-part theory, wielding power behind their nonviolent action. These communities' have become powerful in their nonviolence through their internal organization, ties to other peace communities and to peace and NGO organizations internationally. This strength in numbers, combined with their strong stance against the war, denouncing actions/ roles which aid efforts of violence and destruction, as well as discipline that holds them to this nonviolent way of life, despite efforts to weaken and eradicate their communities, have allowed them to begin a shift in their role as "governed," and of the traditional power roles in the civil war.

Peace then, in Holmes and Gan's opinion, can, in fact, be reached through the means of nonviolence, but according to Sharp, this is only possible if the nonviolent actors show courage and action, not passivity. These peace communities, despite their adoption of nonviolence and neutrality within the war, are more than just pacifists and readily demonstrate this courage described by Sharp in situations where the need for action cannot be ignored. As a part of the indigenous movement toward peace, the Indigenous Guard was

formed and plays the role of Sharp's necessary actors when passivity is no longer valid. José Bernal, one of 126 women, men, and youth guard members also known as "Protectors of life," stated that they've "had to confront the guerrilla, the paramilitary, the army, and the police- and we've been successful."<sup>178</sup> He describes that before the communities organized in an effort for nonviolence and "active neutrality,"<sup>179</sup> armed groups would enter their communities and the people would flee under threats on their lives, becoming among the large number of displaced in Colombia. Since the formation of the guard and the internal organization of the nonviolent citizens, the entirety of the community will approach the person or group and say, "Gentlemen, you are involving us in a conflict that is not ours. But you are in our territory, and here, we rule." Through their actions against military, paramilitary and guerrillas alike, they have saved the lives of many.<sup>180</sup>

Though the efforts of peace communities are valiant, and have shifted the mentality of many citizens throughout the country and the world toward a new hope in the power of nonviolence, such courageous actions toward peace (like those that have come before which seemingly go against the very nature and custom of violence within society) cannot expect to succeed without great resistance to change, nor without great problems and struggle. Unfortunately, in some instances, the peace communities' beliefs in the security of nonviolence, declared neutrality, and denunciation of the armed-actors violence are not enough to keep the atrocities of the conflict on the outside.

San José de Apartadó is one of oldest and most well known peace communities, which probably contributes largely to the fact that it has become one of the communities attacked and punished most violently for its efforts toward peace. Formed in March 1997<sup>181</sup>

after declaring neutrality against a civil war that had taken the lives of many local people, this village is a part of the frontlines of the “grassroots citizen initiative to find a peaceful settlement.”<sup>182</sup> Located in the Urabá region near Panama, this group, like the majority of other peace communities, was created by citizens who desired to separate themselves from the existing conflict by refusing entry to all armed groups- the guerrilla, paramilitary, and state security forces alike.<sup>183</sup> Adopting the consensus that the men in the community are not to serve in the army that “attacks the civil population and assassinates children,” this quiet community could not save itself from the manifestation of this declaration and the violent action and forces which they had formed their community in resistance to.

On February 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of 2005, eight members of the San José de Apartadó Peace Community, including three young children, were brutally murdered by Colombian military’s 17<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Brigades. Also among the dead was a co-founder of the Peace Community and an internationally recognized peace activist, Luis Eduardo Guerra. Guerra was an important leader and crucial loss to the community, as he had through his travels and willingness to speak out, given peace communities a stronger voice. He also emphasized and gave “first hand testimony” to what he considered to be one of the major driving forces to the “dire situation” of violence that continues in Colombia; the School of Americas and US foreign Policy.<sup>184</sup>

## **PART V: Conclusion**

The peace organizations, movements within Colombia, and citizens within peace communities are in solidarity against military action and for finding a peaceful solution to the country's ongoing civil war. Through a strong resolve to find this solution without the

use of arms, they are educating the world around them, regionally and internationally, and breaking down the power of the government, who fails to see the power of nonviolence as these nonviolent actors protest in unison against the draft, against the fighting, and against the military involvement of developing nations.

Nonviolent movements within Colombia, through peace organizations within and outside of the country, are starting to take hold and make waves of change in the thought patterns of society. It is peace communities, along with youth and women's movements across the country in their commitment to neutrality, peace, and nonviolence, that this study exemplifies, that are encouraging and allowing people to rise above the devastation left by the perpetual cycle of violence in Colombia to a more connected and peaceful way of life within their society.

Leading by example and acting as agents of social change alongside the peace organizations supporting them, these communities, armed with education of forgiveness, resolution, and nonviolent tactics, have begun to affect the violent world around them. Their practices are based on nonviolence, love, and tolerance, and are coupled with the important aspects of courage and strength, in order to be able to stand firm and unmovable in their nonviolent perspectives. FOR, AFSC, and WFP have driven social change in many countries during and after the devastation of war and violence since their existence. It is the conclusion and hope of this study that the outcome of their efforts combined within Colombia, along with the community movements within the country, and the openness of citizens to a more peaceful, loving way of life, will be no different.

### Implications of Results/ Possibility for Future Study

As is described within *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice*, the power behind civil disobedience and nonviolent action is that without the governed to give their consent, the power of the governor is lost. Nonviolent theorists, like Gene Sharp, thus claim that it is possible to achieve this power shift/ diffusion through nonviolent action. Despite the possibilities for the effective use of nonviolence, many nonviolence theorists point out that society has instilled violence as the only method to ensure security and other objectives, and thus resources of funding, time, research, practice, and lives are focused and invested in the pursuit of violence for gain.

However, the effectiveness of the use of violence, in viewing the current state of conflict in the world through specific instances such as the confusion for a continued plan of action for Afghanistan and innumerable terrorist attacks across the globe, is becoming questionable and, perhaps, not as effective as it was once deemed to be for traditional warfare. And yet, nonviolence, to the dismay of many hopeful nonviolent theorists, continues to be overlooked in the quest for effective means of gaining power and objectives. One Quaker, Stephen Cary, clarifies this frustration stating that, “It appears to us tragic that even though the present violent method of resolving conflict is widely acknowledged to be bankrupt, so many of the most creative people of our time still direct their total energies to the preparation of weapons for war and the development of policies of intimidation.”<sup>185</sup>

Though it is only minimally supported as a feasible method of gaining security and power over oppressors, nonviolent action has, nonetheless, had what Gene Sharp refers to as a “disregarded history” of success. In addition, his research through the compilation of



past case studies shows that these instances of nonviolent action used, for example, in colonial America against dictators and oppressors in Latin America and Europe, and, more recently, in India's struggle for independence, and the civil rights movement in the United States, were usually successful even sometimes with little or no planning or organization.

Norman agrees with this conclusion saying that,

“Historic instances... represent spontaneous rather than well-developed strategies, relying more on ingenuity and courage than preparation and disciplines. But that very spontaneity, ingenuity and courage suggest that *with* preparation and discipline, with advance planning, with reinforcement by education and popular culture, nonviolent strategies can provide defense against both foreign conquest and domestic tyranny.”<sup>186</sup>

With Gene Sharp's two-part theory as a foundation, the examination of Colombia as a case study provides a modern day example of the use of nonviolent action on power relationships. However, because of the limitations of this research, as outlined above, and the ongoing nature of violence in Colombia, more research in this area is needed.

Additional research, perhaps in the form of measurable decreases of violent activity within the country (specifically around the locations of nonviolent efforts of organizations and citizens), in combination with the results of this study, would provide further crucial and current support for Gene Sharp, Liane Norman, Jonathan Schell, and other nonviolent theorists who have theorized the possibilities of success that nonviolent action holds.

Establishing the continued success of nonviolence in gaining objectives and continuing to emphasize the importance of the reliance on subjects in giving power to rulers, could encourage the contribution and support of nonviolent action through financial and educational resources. This support would allow for continued research on nonviolence, which would increase the possibility of more efficient planning and

organization being implemented within this method, bolstering its effectiveness as a strategy, and increasing its validity. In turn, this would lead to more productive comparisons of nonviolent methods with current mainstream violent tactics in the process of finding solutions and resolve when new conflict arises.

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- <sup>2</sup>Norman, Liane Ellison (1986, March). *Peace Through Strength*. In Holmes, Robert L. and Barry L. Gan, *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice*, 2nd Edition (pp. 214-218). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2005., Pg. 214.
- <sup>3</sup>Schell, Jonathan (2003). *The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, Pg. 4.
- <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. 7.
- <sup>5</sup>Hirst, Paul (2001). *War and Power in the 21st Century: The State, Military Conflict, and the International System*. Cambridge: Polity Press, Pg. 36.
- <sup>6</sup>Schell, 2003, Pg. 8.
- <sup>7</sup>Hirst, 2001, Pg. 36.
- <sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. 37.
- <sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. 38. Hirst specifically lists “sponsor” examples including: the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula War, and the Reagan government for the Contras.
- <sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. 7.
- <sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. 89.
- <sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. 96.
- <sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. 97.
- <sup>14</sup>Sharp, Gene (1973). *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part One- Power and Struggle*. Boston, MA: Porter Sargent Publishers, Pg. 3.
- <sup>15</sup>Schell, 2003, Pg. 13.
- <sup>16</sup>Schell, 2002, Pg. 331.
- <sup>17</sup>This concept and phrase was taken from Sharp, Gene (1976). *Disregarded History: The Power of Nonviolent Action*. Originally published in *Fellowship*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 3-11. Retrieved from: <http://www.fragmentsweb.org/fourtx/dishistx.html>
- <sup>18</sup>Sharp, Gene. “The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part One- Power and Struggle.” 1973, Pg. 4.
- <sup>19</sup>Holmes, Robert L. and Barry L. Gan (2005). *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice, 2nd Edition*, Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Pg. xiii.
- <sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. xv.
- <sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>22</sup>Such as the Albert Einstein Institution [www.aeinstein.org](http://www.aeinstein.org)
- <sup>23</sup>LeGrand, Catherine (2003). *The Colombian Crisis in historical perspective*. *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, January-July 2003, Findarticles.com. Retrieved from: [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_6971/is\\_5556\\_28/ai\\_n28172832/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_6971/is_5556_28/ai_n28172832/); Delegations to Colombia from the Witness for Peace web-site: <http://www.witnessforpeace.org/sites/colombia.html>
- <sup>24</sup>Sullivan, Kevin (2004, December 26). *Disarmament Holds Out Hope for Elusive Peace in Colombia: Paramilitary Group Could Easily Rise Again, Skeptics Warn*. *Washington Post Foreign Service*; *Washington Post On-line*, Pg. A36. Retrieved from: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A26003-2004Dec25?language=printer>
- <sup>25</sup>Human Rights Watch (2005, October 13). *Colombia: Millions Displaced by Conflict Denied Basic Rights*. *Human Rights Watch- News*. Retrieved from: <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2005/10/14/colomb11864.htm>
- <sup>26</sup>See Global International Displaced Persons Project (2005, August). *IDP Estimates*. Retrieved from: <http://www.idpproject.org/statistics.htm> within Human Rights Watch. *Internal Displacement in Colombia*. Retrieved from: <http://hrw.org/reports/2005/colombia1005/5.htm>
- <sup>27</sup>*New York Times* (2004, May 11), *Crisis Facing Colombians Is Called Worst in Hemisphere*,” *The New York Times*, p. A8, Retrieved from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/11/world/crisis-facing-colombians-is-called-worst-in-hemisphere.html> within Human Rights Watch, “Internal Displacement in Colombia.” Retrieved from: <http://hrw.org/reports/2005/colombia1005/5.htm>
- <sup>28</sup>Sharp, Gene. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part One- Power and Struggle*. Pg. 7.
- <sup>29</sup>Sharp, Gene. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part One- Power and Struggle*. Pg. 7.
- <sup>30</sup>Sharp, Gene. “The Role of Power in Nonviolent Struggle.” *The Albert Einstein Institution*, Monograph Series No. 3, Pg. 2. <http://www.aeinstein.org/organizationse4f0.html>
- <sup>31</sup>Sharp, Gene. *The Role of Power in Nonviolent Struggle*. Pg. 3.
- <sup>32</sup>Martin, Brian (1989). *Gene Sharp’s Theory of Power*. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 26, No. 2, Pg. 214.
- <sup>33</sup>*Ibid.* Pg. 213.
- <sup>34</sup>Norman, Pg. 215.
- <sup>35</sup>Sharp, Gene. *The Role of Power in Nonviolent Struggle*. Pg. 3.
- <sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, Pg. 4.

- <sup>37</sup> Sharp, Gene. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part One- Power and Struggle*. Pg. 11.
- <sup>38</sup> VanHise, James (1997). Power and Struggle. [Review of the book *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part One- Power and Struggle*, by Gene Sharp]. Retrieved from: [http://www.fragmentsweb.org/TXT2/p\\_srevtx.html](http://www.fragmentsweb.org/TXT2/p_srevtx.html)
- <sup>39</sup> Sharp, Gene. The Role of Power in Nonviolent Struggle. Pg. 2.
- <sup>40</sup> This statement is exemplified and explained more thoroughly in later sections on “Colombia as a Case Study” and “Theory in Practice.”
- <sup>41</sup> VanHise, James. Power and Struggle. Pg. 2.
- <sup>42</sup> Martin, Pg. 213.
- <sup>43</sup> VanHise, James. Power and Struggle. Pg. 1.
- <sup>44</sup> Sharp, Gene (1973). Nonviolent Action: An Active Technique of Struggle. In Holmes, Robert L. and Barry L. Gan, *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice, 2nd Edition* (pp.247-252). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Pg. 249.
- <sup>45</sup> Sharp, Gene. The Role of Power in Nonviolent Struggle. Pg. 1.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 1-2.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 2.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 1.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 6.
- <sup>50</sup> Martin, Pg. 213.
- <sup>51</sup> Sharp, Gene. The Role of Power in Nonviolent Struggle. Pg. 1.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 9.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 9.
- <sup>54</sup> Sharp, Gene. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part One- Power and Struggle*. Pg. 19-24.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 19; VanHise, James. Power and Struggle. Pg. 3.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 19-20; *Ibid.*
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 20-22; *Ibid.*
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 22; *Ibid.*
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 23; *Ibid.*
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 23; *Ibid.*
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 23-24.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 19-24.
- <sup>63</sup> VanHise, James. Power and Struggle. Pg. 3.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>65</sup> Martin, Pg. 218.
- <sup>66</sup> Sharp, Gene (1973). *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part Three- The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action*. Boston, MA: Porter Sargent Publishers, Pg. 657.
- <sup>67</sup> VanHise, James (1984). Nonviolent Warfare: Alternative to Armageddon. Retrieved from: <http://www.fragmentsweb.org/stuff/nvwar.html>, Pg. 4.
- <sup>68</sup> Holmes and Gan, Pg. 252.
- <sup>69</sup> VanHise, James. Nonviolent Warfare: Alternative to Armageddon. Pg 3.
- <sup>70</sup> Holmes and Gan, Pg. 36.
- <sup>71</sup> Sharp, Gene (1976). Disregarded History: The Power of Nonviolent Action. Originally published in Fellowship, Vol. 42, No. 3, 3-11. Retrieved from: <http://www.fragmentsweb.org/fourt/dishistx.html>
- <sup>72</sup> McManus, Philip & Gerald Schlabach (1991). *Relentless Persistence: Nonviolent Action in Latin America*. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers.
- <sup>73</sup> “American Friends Service Committee Latin American Program,” [www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org), See Bibliography for other branches of this site used.
- <sup>74</sup> “Fellowship of Reconciliation,” [www.forusa.org](http://www.forusa.org); See Bibliography for other branches of this site used.
- <sup>75</sup> “Witness for Peace”. [www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org). See Bibliography for other branch sites used.
- <sup>76</sup> Delegations to Colombia from the Witness for Peace web-site: <http://www.witnessforpeace.org/sites/colombia.html>
- <sup>77</sup> Sullivan, Kevin (2004, December 26). Disarmament Holds Out Hope for Elusive Peace in Colombia: Paramilitary Group Could Easily Rise Again, Skeptics Warn. Washington Post Foreign Service; Washington Post On-line, Pg. A36. Retrieved from: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A26003-2004Dec25?language=printer>
- <sup>78</sup> One of the most recent attempts by the Colombian government was in made in 2005 with the Justice and Peace Law. Many individuals and groups, like the AFSC, oppose this new law as it allows paramilitary to hide assets and escape punishment. In Forero, Juan (2005, June 23). New Colombia Law Grants Concessions to Paramilitaries, *New York Times*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/23/international/americas/23colombia.html>

<sup>79</sup> Sharp, Gene. *The Role of Power in Nonviolent Struggle*. Pg. 3.

<sup>80</sup> Bouvier, Virginia (2010, January 28). *Time for a Peace Paradigm in Colombia*, Peace Brief 8, United States Institute of Peace. Retrieved from: <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/PB8TimeforaPeaceParadigmInColombia.pdf>

<sup>81</sup> The next section concerning Colombia's recent history is summarized from the "Overview of Recent Colombian History" located on the Colombia Human Rights Network website: <http://colhrnet.igc.org/timeline.htm>; Wolf, Paul (2002)/ *Evolution of the Colombian Civil War: 1928-1973*. Retrieved from: [http://www.icdc.com/~paulwolf/colombia\\_colombiawar.htm](http://www.icdc.com/~paulwolf/colombia_colombiawar.htm) (*collection of declassified U.S. Documents online*).

<sup>82</sup> In 1964, Liberales comunes joined with the left-over communists and took their present name of Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

<sup>83</sup> The M-19 movement formed by former President Pinilla and his daughter, was born after an election in the 1970s that the ANAPO lost and in turn deemed the election a fraud. The new movement pushed for reform and democratization, was a constant target of repression, and would eventually request amnesty, ceasefire with the other guerrillas, and a national dialogue. They would also take over government buildings such as that of the Dominican Republican Embassy in 1980 and the Palace of Justice in 1985 as part of their fight against the corrupt government.

<sup>84</sup> Alther 2004, Pg. 6

<sup>85</sup> "Overview of Recent Colombia n History" <http://colhrnet.igc.org/timeline.htm>; Colombia Observatory (2005, August 2). *State Department Again Certifies Colombia Despite Evidence of Human Rights Abuses*. Amnesty International (Public Document). Retrieved from: <http://www.chicagoans.net/node/45>

<sup>86</sup> FOR Task Force on Latin America & the Caribbean from FOR's web-site: <http://www.forusa.org/programs/tflac/tflac.html>

<sup>87</sup> Farnam, Arie (2002, July 11). *Colombia's civil war drifts south into Ecuador: More than 100 people in an Amazonian province have died as FARC and rival paramilitaries move in*. *Christian Science Monitor On-line*. Retrieved from: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0711/p07s01-woam.html>

<sup>88</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre- IDMC (2010, May). *Internal Displacement, Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2009*. Retrieved from: [http://www.internaldisplacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1\(httpInfoFiles\)/8980F134C9CF4373C1257725006167DA/\\$file/Global\\_Overview\\_2009.pdf](http://www.internaldisplacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1(httpInfoFiles)/8980F134C9CF4373C1257725006167DA/$file/Global_Overview_2009.pdf)

<sup>89</sup> Human Rights Watch (2005, October 13), *Colombia: Millions Displaced by Conflict Denied Basic Rights*. Human Rights Watch- News. Retrieved from: <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2005/10/14/colomb11864.htm>

<sup>90</sup> According to one article, Uribe "spurred record economic growth and investment while beating back insurgents and slashing by half the number of murders during eight years in office." Murphy, Helen & Bristow, Matthew (2010 June 21). *Colombia's Santos Hails Uribe in Landslide Victory (Correct)*. Bloomberg Business Week. Retrieved from: <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-06-21/colombia-s-santos-hails-uribe-in-landslide-victory-correct-.html>

<sup>91</sup> Central Intelligence Agency (2005, November 1). *CIA- The World FactBook- Colombia*. Retrieved from: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/co.html> (2010, August 3): <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html>

<sup>92</sup> Drost, Nadja (2010, March 2). *Colombia Gets Ready for Life After Uribe*. *Time, World On-line*. Retrieved from: <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1968848,00.html>

<sup>93</sup> Murphy, Helen & Bristow, Matthew (2010 June 21). *Colombia's Santos Hails Uribe in Landslide Victory (Correct)*. Bloomberg Business Week. Retrieved from: <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-06-21/colombia-s-santos-hails-uribe-in-landslide-victory-correct-.html>

<sup>94</sup> Fellowship of Reconciliation Website: "History and Supporters," <http://forusa.org/about/history.html>

<sup>95</sup> Fellowship of Reconciliation Website: "The Good Fight," <http://forusa.org/content/good-fight>

<sup>96</sup> The next section concerning the founding of FOR is taken from the organizations website: "History of the Fellowship of Reconciliation," <http://www.forusa.org/about/history.html>

<sup>97</sup> The following information on FOR's mission, vision, and purpose are taken from within the organizations website including the branch pages: <http://www.forusa.org/about/vismis.html>, <http://www.forusa.org/about/sop.html>, and <http://forusa.org/content/good-fight>

<sup>98</sup> Fellowship of Reconciliation Website: "Vision and Mission Statements," <http://www.forusa.org/about/vismis.html>

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> Fellowship of Reconciliation Website: "FOR Statement of Purpose," <http://www.forusa.org/about/sop.html>

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> The next section concerning the important aspects of FOR's history is taken from the Fellowship of Reconciliation Website: "History of the Fellowship of Reconciliation," <http://forusa.org/content/history-fellowship-reconciliation>

<sup>103</sup> Taken directly from the 1940's section in "History of the Fellowship of Reconciliation" on the Fellowship of Reconciliation Website: <http://forusa.org/content/history-fellowship-reconciliation>

- <sup>104</sup> This completes the history section based on a branch of the FOR web-site: <http://forusa.org/content/history-fellowship-reconciliation> also within the archived site: <http://www.forusa.org/about/history.html>.
- <sup>105</sup> Fellowship of Reconciliation: “The Good Fight,” <http://forusa.org/content/good-fight>
- <sup>106</sup> Taken from “Rufus Jones: A Luminous Life,” directed by Sharon Mullally and Barbara Attie, 2001.
- <sup>107</sup> American Friends Service Committee Website: “About AFSC,” <http://afsc.org/about>
- <sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>109</sup> This quote and the section following on AFSC’s mission and values are taken from a branch within the American Friends Service Committee Website: “Mission and Values,” <http://afsc.org/mission-and-values>.
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>113</sup> The following section on the history of the American Friends Service Committee was all taken from a branch of the Organization’s website: “AFSC History,” <http://afsc.org/afsc-history>.
- <sup>114</sup> Taken from “Rufus Jones: A Luminous Life,” directed by Sharon Mullally and Barbara Attie, 2001.
- <sup>115</sup> American Friends Service Committee Website: “Nobel Peace Prize,” <http://afsc.org/nobel-prize>
- <sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>119</sup> These figures were taken from the American Friends Service Committee Website: “Financial Information,” <http://afsc.org/financial-information>
- <sup>120</sup> This concludes the history section of the American Friends Service Committee which was gathered from the organizations web-site: “AFSC History,” <http://afsc.org/afsc-history>.
- <sup>121</sup> This information on the current programming of the American Friends Service Committee was learned from the “Our Work” branch of their web-site: <http://afsc.org/our-work>
- <sup>122</sup> American Friends Service Committee Website: “Our Work,” <http://afsc.org/our-work>; the archive site <http://www.afsc.org/about/highlight.htm>
- <sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>124</sup> This next section on the founding, mission, and history of Witness for Peace is taken from their website: “About Witness for Peace,” <http://witnessforpeace.org/section.php?id=81> and “Mission and History,” <http://witnessforpeace.org/section.php?id=89>.
- <sup>125</sup> Witness for Peace Website: “About Witness for Peace,” <http://witnessforpeace.org/section.php?id=81>
- <sup>126</sup> Covenant taken from the Witness for Peace Website: “Witness for Peace Covenant,” <http://witnessforpeace.org/article.php?id=355>
- <sup>127</sup> Witness for Peace Website: “About Witness for Peace,” <http://witnessforpeace.org/section.php?id=81>
- <sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>130</sup> These operations were put in place by the U.S. to try and prevent immigration across the U.S.-Mexican border, but instead only led immigrants to choose the remaining dangerous crossing areas increasing death rates of those crossing the border to 464 people in 2005. Witness for Peace Website, “About Witness for Peace,” <http://witnessforpeace.org/section.php?id=81>; Migration Information Source (MPI). (2003). Chronology of Events Since September 11, 2001 Related to Immigration and National Security, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/chronology.pdf>
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- <sup>132</sup> The following section on the FOR Task Force on Latin America & the Caribbean is taken from Fellowship of Reconciliation Website: <http://www.forcolombia.org/>; originally retrieved from: <http://www.forusa.org/programs/tflac.html>
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- <sup>135</sup> Fellowship of Reconciliation Website, FOR Task Force on Latin America & the Caribbean: <http://www.forcolombia.org/>; originally retrieved from: <http://www.forusa.org/programs/tflac.html>“
- <sup>136</sup> Fellowship of Reconciliation Archived Website, Colombia Peace Presence Update (2006, September), <http://www.forusa.org/programs/colombia/col-pp-update0906.html> and Colombia Peace Presence Program, <http://forcolombia.org/peacepresence>

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- <sup>139</sup> American Friends Service Committee archive Website: "Supporting Life and Peace in Colombia," <http://www.afsc.org/colombia/default.htm>
- <sup>140</sup> American Friends Service Committee archive Website: "AFSC's Work in Colombia," <http://www.afsc.org/colombia/work/default.htm>
- <sup>141</sup> American Friends Service Committee archive Website: "Learn About Colombia," <http://www.afsc.org/colombia/learn-about/default.htm>
- <sup>142</sup> American Friends Service Committee website: "Voices for Peace," <http://afsc.org/colombia/peace-testimonies/default.htm>
- <sup>143</sup> This information came from a flyer produced by Witness for Peace on "Witness for Peace Delegations," [http://witnessforpeace.org/userdata\\_display.php?modin=51&upcoming=1](http://witnessforpeace.org/userdata_display.php?modin=51&upcoming=1).
- <sup>144</sup> Witness for Peace Archived website, "Delegations to Colombia," <http://www.witnessforpeace.org/sites/colombia.html> and partially from "Witness for Peace Delegations: Frequently Asked Questions" <http://witnessforpeace.org/article.php?list=type&type=117>
- <sup>145</sup> Alther 2004, Pg. 7
- <sup>146</sup> Alther, Gretchen, John Lindsay-Poland, Sarah Weintraub, *Building from the Inside Out: Peace Initiatives in War-Torn Colombia*, November 2004, Pg. 5.
- <sup>147</sup> Alther 2004, Pg. 5, 3
- <sup>148</sup> Alther 2004 Pg. 7
- <sup>149</sup> (Medellin Youth Network) Alther 2004, Pg. 8
- <sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 9
- <sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 8
- <sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 11
- <sup>154</sup> (The Women's Path of Peace), Alther 2004 Pg. 12
- <sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 13
- <sup>159</sup> (Marina Gallego of Ruta) Alther 2004, Pg. 13
- <sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg. 13-14
- <sup>161</sup> Carter, L. Randolph and Michael Shieler, "And a Child Shall Lead: The Children's Movement for Peace and Return to Happiness in Colombia," Pg. 162 within Paul van Tongeren, Malin Brenk, Marte Hellema, & Julietter Verhoeven (Eds.) (2005). *People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society*. A Project of the European Centre for Conflict Prevention, Boulder, CO: Lynn Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- <sup>162</sup> Carter 2005, Pg. 163.
- <sup>163</sup> Alther 2004, Pg. 5.
- <sup>164</sup> Carter 2005, Pg. 163.
- <sup>165</sup> Alther 2004, Pg. 5
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- <sup>172</sup> Alther, Gretcen. What is a "Peace Community"? Understanding Grassroots Resistance in Colombia. *American Friends Service Committee* [www.afsc.org/colombia/peace-testimonies/voices-for-peace3.htm](http://www.afsc.org/colombia/peace-testimonies/voices-for-peace3.htm)
- <sup>173</sup> This is not the real name of the community as this name was given as a code name for security reasons by the author.
- <sup>174</sup> Alther, Gretcen. What is a "Peace Community"? Understanding Grassroots Resistance in Colombia.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> American Friends Service Committee Archived Website, “Indigenous People in Colombia,” [www.afsc.org/colombia/peace-testimonies/voices-for-peace4.htm](http://www.afsc.org/colombia/peace-testimonies/voices-for-peace4.htm)

<sup>177</sup> Holmes and Gan, Pg. 216.

<sup>178</sup> American Friends Service Committee Archived Website, “Protector of Life,” [www.afsc.org/colombia/peace-testimonies/voices-for-peace5.htm](http://www.afsc.org/colombia/peace-testimonies/voices-for-peace5.htm)

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