

VETERANS FOR PEACE UK
HANDBOOK 2016

VETERANS FOR PEACE UK: HANDBOOK

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SECTION 1: HISTORY

1.1 Veterans For Peace (VFP)

VFP was founded in the United States of America in 1985 under the VFP Statement of Purpose.

VFP has over 100 chapters in the USA with a VFP National Office, a VFP National Board of Directors and a set of VFP National Bylaws.

The National Board of Directors appoints an Executive Director to run the day to day business of VFP National Office.

1.2 Veterans For Peace UK (VFP UK)

VFP UK was founded during the summer of 2011 in London. We work within the VFP Statement of Purpose.

Our first public action was a solidarity vigil outside of Colchester Military Prison on Saturday 6 August 2011 in support of the courageous action taken by Michael Lyons in refusing to deploy to Afghanistan and to encourage further nonviolent resistance to that war from within the military.

At the 2012 VFP National Convention held in Miami the bylaws of VFP were changed to allow veterans of the armed forces of foreign nations to join VFP. On 20 November 2012 VFP UK became the first International Chapter of VFP (Chapter 1001).

At the VFP UK Annual Gathering 2014 we approved a set of byelaws, elected a steering group and appointed a coordinator to manage VFP UK on a day to day basis.

In February 2014 VFP UK was presented with a Recognition Award by the Islamic Human Rights Council.

At the 2015 VFP National Convention in San Diego, VFP UK founding member Ben Griffin was presented with the VFP Leadership in Peace Award.

In 2016 the steering group started work on a re-structure of VFP UK in response to our growth in membership and regional expansion. The aim was to spread power, responsibility and decision-making within VFP UK. This handbook is the result of that work and was ratified at the 2016 AGM.

SECTION 2: VFP STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

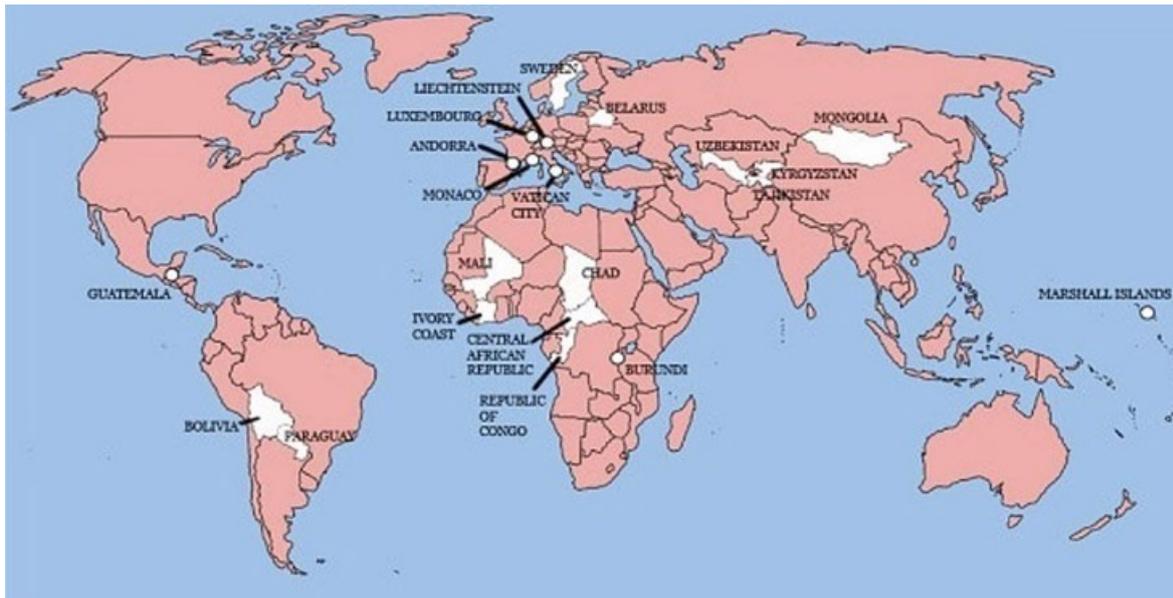
We, as military veterans, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others both nationally and internationally

1. To increase public awareness of the causes and costs of war
2. To restrain our governments from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations
3. To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons
4. To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
5. To abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

SECTION 3: UK CONTEXT

In the map below, countries coloured pink have been invaded by military forces commanded by the United Kingdom and its predecessor states. Only 22 countries in the world have not been invaded by military forces commanded by the United Kingdom and its predecessor states, they are coloured white.



The United Kingdom (UK) is a warfare state and a prime driver of war in the world.

The UK is one of just nine nuclear armed states.

The UK is one of the five largest global arms exporters.

The UK is second only to the USA in terms of the number of lethal drone strikes executed.

The UK is one of just eighteen countries that still recruit children into their armed forces.

The UK military is deployed in over 80 countries worldwide.

The UK maintains permanent military bases in 14 countries and overseas territories.

The USA has six military bases on UK soil and access to many UK military and intelligence installations.

SECTION 4: VFP UK STATEMENT OF INTENT

The United Kingdom is a prime driver of war in the world.

We say: 'War is not the solution to the problems we face in the 21st century'.

Through our actions we will embolden the population to:

- Reject militarism
- Demand nuclear disarmament
- Abandon the arms trade
- Expel all foreign forces from the UK
- Close all UK foreign bases and return all UK military forces to the British Isles.

We intend to liberate the people, resources and environment of the UK from the War System.

SECTION 5: VFP UK STATEMENT OF CONDUCT

1. We will use our anger at injustice as a positive, nonviolent force for change.
2. We will not assault, verbally or physically, in person or online, those who oppose or disagree with us, even if they assault us.
3. Our attitude, as conveyed through our words, symbols and actions, will be one of openness, friendliness, and respect toward all people we encounter.
4. We will follow the directions of the designated coordinators during public actions.
5. We use consensus based decision making within our groups.
6. We reject military clothing and symbols.
7. We speak as members **of** VFP UK but not **for** VFP UK, unless designated as a spokesperson.
8. Rank, unit, combat experience, age, gender, race, wealth, education, class, religion and nationality carry no status within VFP.

SECTION 6: MEMBERSHIP

6.1 Eligibility for membership

- a) Veterans of the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom.
- b) Veterans of the Armed Forces of other countries.
- c) UK citizens who have served with or in service to the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom in an area and during a period of war, conflict or other hostile activity.

6.2 Conditions of membership

- a) Members will provide proof of service.
- b) Members will comply with the VFP UK Handbook

6.3 Record of membership

The Admin Group maintain an accurate record of the VFP UK membership.

6.4 Make-up of the membership

We are an ex-services organisation of men and women, who collectively have served in every war that Britain has fought since WW2.

Our members are from a wide variety of different faiths and no faith.

Our members have a wide range of political views.

6.5 Restrict or expel from membership

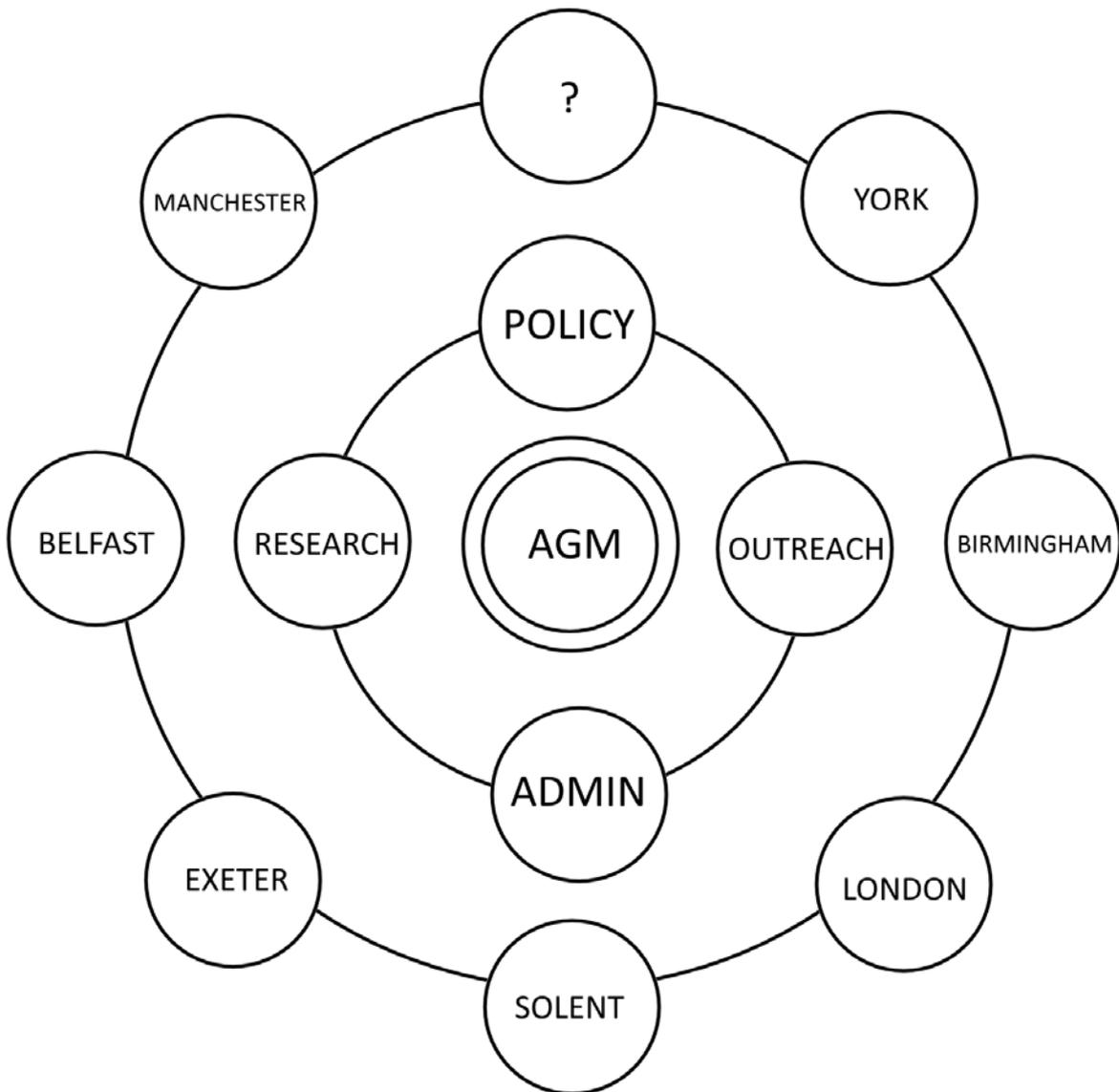
The Policy Group has the authority to admit, restrict or expel to and from the membership of VFP UK. The Policy Group shall state their reasons for any action under this section to the Annual General Meeting. Any action under this section may be appealed at the Annual General Meeting.

6.6 Infiltration

There is a long history in the UK of the infiltration of anti-war and peace groups. It is reasonable to expect that VFP UK has been infiltrated by the police, the military, the intelligence services and others.

We are an open and nonviolent organisation. We have no secret communications or secret meetings. Our intentions and actions are clearly stated on our website.

SECTION 7: STRUCTURE



SECTION 7: STRUCTURE

7.1 Annual General Meeting

VFP UK is governed by the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The AGM is normally held in November, during the weekend of Remembrance Sunday.

The Policy Group is elected during the AGM.

Proposed changes to the handbook are discussed and decided on during the AGM.

Priorities for the following year are discussed and decided on during the AGM.

The authority of the AGM is delegated to the Policy Group in between AGMs.

7.2 Groups

VFP UK is organised into two distinct types of groups; Action Groups and Working Groups.

Each group has a designated coordinator.

7.3 Action Groups

Carry out action in their geographical area in support of VFP UK Intent.

Five VFP UK Members are required to register an Action Group.

Each group has a designated coordinator.

7.4 Working Groups

There are four permanent Working Groups; Policy, Admin, Research, Output.

Each Working Group is coordinated by a member of the Policy Group.

7.4.1 Policy Group

Consists of five members elected at the AGM.

Responsible for day to day decision making on behalf of the AGM.

Develop VFP UK policy and strategy.

Delegate tasks to the working groups.

SECTION 7: STRUCTURE

7.4.2 Admin Group

Responsible for the administration of VFP UK.

Maintain the financial records of VFP UK.

Maintain the membership records of VFP UK.

Responsible for the technical maintenance of the VFP UK website.

7.4.3 Research Group

Responsible for research that informs and supports the work of VFP UK.

Maintain the VFP UK Archive held at The Bishopsgate Institute.

Maintains the VFP UK Wikipedia Page.

Collates information on the activity of VFP Action Groups.

7.4.4 Outreach Group

Responsible for disseminating information.

7.5 Ad Hoc Groups

Are formed for specific projects or actions.

SECTION 8: ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

8.1 Qualification

To stand for election to the Policy Group you must be a member of VFP UK for two years.

You will commit to being present at the quarterly Policy Group meetings.

You will be expected to take part in day to day communication.

You will be prepared to coordinate one of the permanent Working Groups.

8.2 Election

Candidates must make themselves known to the admin group one week before the AGM.

A list of candidates will be published before the AGM.

Each candidate may speak for two minutes at the AGM.

Members will vote at the AGM by naming five candidates on the ballot paper.

The five candidates with the most votes will be elected to the Policy Group.

8.3 Term of Office

Members shall have a term of office lasting one year and be able to stand for re-election.

SECTION 9: FINANCES

9.1 Accounts

The Admin Group shall produce financial accounts, in accordance with standard accounting practices, not less than annually.

9.2 Audit

The Policy Group shall ensure that the financial accounts are independently examined.

9.3 Transparency

Copies of the annual accounts review shall be made available to VFP UK members on request.

9.4 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of Veterans For Peace UK shall be from April 1 through March 31 of the following year.

9.5 Dues

VFP UK does not collect membership dues.

9.6 Grants

Applications from members and groups should be made in writing to the Policy Group

9.7 Expenses

Wherever possible hosting organisations should pay members expenses. Members of VFP UK who have incurred costs on VFP business can apply to the Admin Group for reimbursement if required.

SECTION 10: INDEPENDENCE

10.1 Financial

VFP UK does not apply for funding from individuals or organisations deemed to speak or act in any way contrary to our Purpose and Intent.

VFP UK does not knowingly accept donations from individuals or organisations deemed to speak or act in any way contrary to our Purpose and Intent.

The most effective way for VFP UK to maintain financial independence is through regular donations from our own members.

10.2 Political

VFP UK does not subscribe to any specific ideology.

VFP UK does not endorse any political party or politician.

VFP UK does not work for or with governments.

SECTION 11: LEGAL STATUS

11.1 Type of Organisation

VFP UK is an Unincorporated Association.

11.2 Regulations

VFP UK have no legal obligation to any regulatory body.

11.3 Financial Obligation

VFP UK have no legal obligation to submit financial accounts or reports to anyone outside of VFP UK.

11.4 Contracts

VFP UK cannot enter into contracts, own property, rent premises or employ people.

11.5 Liability

Members of the VFP UK Policy Group are personally responsible for the obligations and debts of VFP UK and are liable if VFP UK were to be sued.

SECTION 12: AMENDMENT OF HANDBOOK

12.1 Living Document

This handbook is intended to be a living document that evolves over time with the growth of VFP UK.

12.2 Amendments

Suggested amendments to this handbook may be submitted to the Policy Group at any time.

12.3 Additions

Proposed additions shall be written in green.

12.4 Subtractions

Proposed subtractions shall be written in red.

12.5 Approval

Sections in written black have been approved at the AGM.

ANNEXE A: CONTACT INFORMATION

To Be Completed after the 2016 AGM

ANNEXE B: PRIORITY CAMPAIGNS

B.1 Boycott the War System

It is our intention to devise and build a campaign to boycott the War System within the UK.

B.2 End Child Engagement by HM Armed Forces.

The UK is one of just eighteen countries worldwide that still recruit children into the armed forces. HM Armed Forces also engage with young people to gain influence, with the aim of building uncritical support for the armed forces and the wars they fight.

This strategy is sophisticated and conducted through many different means including; Community engagement teams, cadet forces, online engagement, school visits, military charities, computer games, toys, films, local councils and businesses.

It is the aim of VFP UK to counter and undermine the child engagement strategy of HM Armed Forces and eventually deny them access to children.

We are currently campaigning with Forces Watch, Child Soldiers International and others to have the recruitment age for the British Army raised to 18.

B.3 Stop Trident renewal.

The UK is one of just nine nuclear armed states. To use these weapons would mean the end of life on earth as we know it. Just holding these weapons makes the UK a target of other nuclear armed states. These weapons and their maintenance represent a huge diversion of resources away from the needs of the people. VFP UK is actively involved with CND in the Stop Trident Renewal campaign.

B.4 Shut down the Arms Fair.

The UK is one of the five largest global arms exporters. Every two years London hosts Europe's largest arms fair. The arms trade is a key component of the war system and a driver of war around the world. VFP UK is actively involved with Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) and East London Against the Arms Fair (ELAAF) in campaigning to shut down the DSEi Arms Fair.

ANNEXE C: DEFINITIONS

War System

The War System consists of every institution and individual who accept war and the preparation for war as a means to achieve status, power and wealth.

Warfare State

All states hold a monopoly of violence within their borders. Those that don't are called failing or failed states. Most states have some capacity to defend their borders from external threats, usually other states.

Warfare States have the capacity and will to extend their monopoly of violence beyond their own borders.

Militarism

Militarism is the belief or desire of a government or people that a country should maintain a strong military capability and be prepared to use it aggressively to secure or promote national interests. It also implies the glorification of the ideals of a professional military class and the predominance of the armed forces in the institutions, administration, policy and propaganda of the state.

Militarism is the ideology of the War System and the Warfare State.

A militarist is a purveyor of or believer in militarism.

Consensus based decision making

Consensus decision making is a way of reaching agreement between all members of a group. Instead of simply voting for an item and having the majority of the group getting their way, a consensus group is committed to finding solutions that everyone actively supports – or at least can live with. This process makes sure that all opinions, ideas and concerns are taken into account. By listening closely to each other, the group aims to come up with proposals that work for everyone.

ANNEXE D: ADVICE FOR ACTION GROUPS

Meet on a regular basis.

If possible base meetings around an event or action.

Identify ways to challenge the War System and Militarism in your area.

Start a WhatsApp group to keep in touch.

Send in reports of your upcoming and completed actions to be published on our website.

Build links with local peace groups.

Maintain your independence.

Provide mutual support to other VFP Action Groups.

ANNEXE E: ADVICE FOR MEMBERS AT LARGE

Join your nearest VFP UK Action Group.

Join the VFP UK Facebook Group.

Join your regional VFP UK email list.

Attend the Annual Gathering in November.

Join a VFP UK Working Group.

Wear VFP clothing and symbols as often as you can, as it can lead to conversations and new members.

Carry VFP cards and other VFP literature, hand them out to individuals, and leave them in public places like buses, trains, noticeboards, military museums, exhibitions and churches.

Join and/or build links as a VFP member with other peace groups in your area.

Attend local peace demos, stalls and events in VFP clothing and with VFP literature to hand out.

Wear a white poppy during the Remembrance period and be prepared to discuss why with strangers. Wear both red and white if you are concerned about hostility.

Increase your own knowledge of militarism and war by reading and get yourself informed and prepared so you can put your arguments with conviction.

Subscribe to peace activist sites on the internet.

Get involved in internet discussions on veterans' sites, providing you are ready to be abused. But stay calm and reasonable: don't abuse back, and as a member of VFP avoid violent language and don't bring VFP into disrepute.

Visit local military and other museums wearing hoodies and be prepared to start a discussion

Contact your local MP to build awareness of our Purpose and Intent, maybe sending literature or articles and posts from our website.

Write to your local press to challenge articles and news which glorify war and spread militarism.

Offer to speak at local groups such as Probus, WI.

Use local contacts to see if you can get VFP invited to speak in your local schools.

Provide mutual support to other VFP members.

ANNEXE F: REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY AT THE CENOTAPH

Date: Remembrance Sunday

Time: After the official state parade has finished

Location: Meet at Whitehall Place

Every year on Remembrance Sunday, Veterans For Peace UK walk to The Cenotaph under the banner "NEVER AGAIN".

We will hold a ceremony at The Cenotaph to remember all of those killed in war including civilians and enemy soldiers.

Supporters of VFP UK are invited and encouraged to follow us to The Cenotaph.

The Ceremony

VFP UK line up facing the Cenotaph.

The song "1916" is sung

The poem "Suicide in the Trenches" is recited

A wreath of white poppies is laid.

The Last Post is played.

One minute of silence is observed.

Reveille is played.

VFP UK walk back to Whitehall Place.

Dress

VFP Members: VFP UK Hoody, Shirt, Black Tie, Dark Trousers / skirt, Dark Shoes.

Followers: As if you are attending a funeral.

Equipment

Never Again Banner – To be carried by two VFP members at the front.

Wreath of White Poppies

VFP UK Banner – To be carried by two VFP members at the rear and before the followers.

ANNEXE F: REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY AT THE CENOTAPH

Instructions for Followers

All are invited to follow us to The Cenotaph.

No banners, placards or megaphones are to be carried by those following VFP UK.

All those attending agree to conform to the VFP UK Statement of Conduct



ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT PROTEST AND PERSUASION

Formal Statements

1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public statements
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

Communications with a Wider Audience

7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, and television
12. Skywriting and earth writing

Group Representations

13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Symbolic Public Acts

18. Displays of flags and symbolic colours
19. Wearing of symbols
20. Prayer and worship
21. Delivering symbolic objects
22. Protest disrobing's
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits
26. Paint as protest
27. New signs and names
28. Symbolic sounds
29. Symbolic reclamations
30. Rude gestures

Pressures on Individuals

31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials
33. Fraternization
34. Vigils

Drama and Music

35. Humorous skits and pranks
36. Performances of plays and music
37. Singing

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Processions

- 38. Marches
- 39. Parades
- 40. Religious processions
- 41. Pilgrimages
- 42. Motorcades

Honouring the Dead

- 43. Political mourning
- 44. Mock funerals
- 45. Demonstrative funerals
- 46. Homage at burial places

Public Assemblies

- 47. Assemblies of protest or support
- 48. Protest meetings
- 49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
- 50. Teach-ins

Withdrawal and Renunciation

- 51. Walk-outs
- 52. Silence
- 53. Renouncing honours
- 54. Turning one's back

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

THE METHODS OF SOCIAL NON-COOPERATION

Ostracism of Persons

- 55. Social boycott
- 56. Selective social boycott
- 57. Lysistratic non-action
- 58. Excommunication
- 59. Interdict

Non-cooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions

- 60. Suspension of social and sports activities
- 61. Boycott of social affairs
- 62. Student strike
- 63. Social disobedience
- 64. Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal from the Social System

- 65. Stay-at-home
- 66. Total personal non-cooperation
- 67. "Flight" of workers
- 68. Sanctuary
- 69. Collective disappearance
- 70. Protest emigration (hijrat)

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC NON-COOPERATION: ECONOMIC BOYCOTTS

Actions by Consumers

- 71. Consumers' boycott
- 72. Non-consumption of boycotted goods
- 73. Policy of austerity
- 74. Rent withholding
- 75. Refusal to rent
- 76. National consumers' boycott
- 77. International consumers' boycott

Action by Workers and Producers

- 78. Workmen's boycott
- 79. Producers' boycott

Action by Middlemen

- 80. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

Action by Owners and Management

- 81. Traders' boycott
- 82. Refusal to let or sell property
- 83. Lockout
- 84. Refusal of industrial assistance
- 85. Merchants' "general strike"

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Action by Holders of Financial Resources

- 86. Withdrawal of bank deposits
- 87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
- 88. Refusal to pay debts or interest
- 89. Severance of funds and credit
- 90. Revenue refusal
- 91. Refusal of a government's money

Action by Governments

- 92. Domestic embargo
- 93. Blacklisting of traders
- 94. International sellers' embargo
- 95. International buyers' embargo
- 96. International trade embargo

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION: THE STRIKE

Symbolic Strikes

- 97. Protest strike
- 98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

Agricultural Strikes

- 99. Peasant strike
- 100. Farm Workers' strike

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Strikes by Special Groups

- 101. Refusal of impressed labour
- 102. Prisoners' strike
- 103. Craft strike
- 104. Professional strike

Ordinary Industrial Strikes

- 105. Establishment strike
- 106. Industry strike
- 107. Sympathetic strike

Restricted Strikes

- 108. Detailed Strike
- 109. Bumper strike
- 110. Slowdown strike
- 111. Working-to-rule strike
- 112. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
- 113. Strike by resignation
- 114. Limited strike
- 115. Selective strike

Multi-Industry Strikes

- 116. Generalized strike
- 117. General strike

Combination of Strikes and Economic Closures

- 118. Hartal

119. Economic shutdown

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

THE METHODS OF POLITICAL NONCOOPERATION

Rejection of Authority

120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance

121. Refusal of public support

122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Citizens' Non-cooperation with Government

123. Boycott of legislative bodies

124. Boycott of elections

125. Boycott of government employment and positions

126. Boycott of government depts., agencies, and other bodies

127. Withdrawal from government educational institutions

128. Boycott of government-supported organizations

129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents

130. Removal of own signs and place marks

131. Refusal to accept appointed officials

132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

Citizens' Alternatives to Obedience

133. Reluctant and slow compliance

134. Non-obedience in absence of direct supervision

135. Popular non-obedience

136. Disguised disobedience

137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse

138. Sit-down

139. Non-cooperation with conscription and deportation

140. Hiding, escape, and false identities

141. Civil disobedience of “illegitimate” laws

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Action by Government Personnel

142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides

143. Blocking of lines of command and information

144. Stalling and obstruction

145. General administrative non-cooperation

146. Judicial non-cooperation

147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective non-cooperation by enforcement agents

148. Mutiny

Domestic Governmental Action

149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays

150. Non-cooperation by constituent governmental units

International Governmental Action

151. Changes in diplomatic and other representations

152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events

153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition

154. Severance of diplomatic relations

155. Withdrawal from international organizations

156. Refusal of membership in international bodies

157. Expulsion from international organizations

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT INTERVENTION

Psychological Intervention

158. Self-exposure to the elements

159. The fast

a. Fast of moral pressure

b. Hunger strike

c. Satyagrahic fast

160. Reverse trial

161. Nonviolent harassment

Physical Intervention

162. Sit-in

163. Stand-in

164. Ride-in

165. Wade-in

166. Mill-in

167. Pray-in

168. Nonviolent raids

169. Nonviolent air raids

170. Nonviolent invasion

171. Nonviolent interjection

172. Nonviolent obstruction

173. Nonviolent occupation

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Social Intervention

- 174. Establishing new social patterns
- 175. Overloading of facilities
- 176. Stall-in
- 177. Speak-in
- 178. Guerrilla theatre
- 179. Alternative social institutions
- 180. Alternative communication system

Economic and Political Intervention

- 181. Reverse Strike
- 182. Stay-in Strike
- 183. Nonviolent land seizure
- 184. Defiance of Blockades
- 185. Politically Motivated Counterfeiting
- 186. Preclusive Purchasing
- 187. Seizure of assets
- 188. Dumping
- 189. Selective patronage
- 190. Alternative markets
- 191. Alternative transportation systems
- 192. Alternative economic institutions
- 193. Overloading of administrative systems
- 194. Disclosing identities of secret agents
- 195. Seeking imprisonment
- 196. Civil disobedience of “neutral” laws
- 197. Work-on without collaboration

198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

ANNEXE G: 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

*Far too often people struggling for democratic rights and justice are not aware of the full range of methods of nonviolent action. Wise strategy, attention to the dynamics of nonviolent struggle, and careful selection of methods can increase a group's chances of success. Gene Sharp researched and catalogued these 198 methods and provided a rich selection of historical examples in his seminal work, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (3 Vols.) Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973.*