

## NONVIOLENCE AND DIRECT ACTION

### Philosophy

Nonviolence is a deeply held conviction that all people should be treated with respect and compassion; as human beings. This means being able to empathize with the people being confronted and to create an atmosphere in which the parties involved can deal with each other with respect, despite their different opinions. It also means using the support and power we gain from coming together to act on our beliefs with dignity and courage to create needed change. Using nonviolence, we seek to build a society in which people aren't forced, physically or mentally, to do things they don't want to do.. The real causes of oppression which we seek to remove are the economic and political institutions and practices which support injustice, not the individual human beings who are often trapped into carrying out the destructive purposes of these systems.

### Tactical Reasons for Remaining Nonviolent

- Nonviolence will enhance our image with the media, friends, and other folks.

- It will increase the chance of developing sympathy and support among officials, police, and other potentially antagonistic people.

- It will keep undecided people from turning against us because of our actions.

- Nonviolence comes from and helps build courage, determination, and openness, whereas violence arises from and breeds fear, frustration and secrecy.

- It builds trust and strength within the demonstrators.

- It avoids hysteria and panic by promoting effectual discourse.

- Nonviolence will demonstrate the protestors desire not to impose an unyielding position upon other members of the Stanford community, e.g. administrators, students, employees. Rather, by always allowing those who disagree or don't understand us to convince/question us, we provide the option for those not sharing our viewpoint the leeway to adapt their stance. No one will modify their opinion if they believe their prestige or independence is threatened. There will be less likelihood of a response being delivered out of fear or reflex. By eliminating these responses, issues become clarified.

### Guidelines for Behavior

- Don't panic.

- Everyone should be aware of what is happening and take responsibility to maintain discipline within the group.

- Restrain any personal feelings toward individual officials or police.

- No personal attacks, verbal or otherwise, on officials or police.

- Keep the tone of your voice non-antagonistic and don't use sarcasm.

-Eliminate smart-ass comments; non-constructive remarks destroy momentum and direct energy from discussion.

-When confronted by officials, everyone should sit down so as to be less physically threatening. If things get tight at any time, sit down.

-After every group decision, observe a minute of silence to regain our thoughts and reflect on our actions.

-Don't bring alcohol, dope, or other controlled substances, because of the legal risks and to preserve mental coherence.

-Maintain mutual respect.

-Observe and maintain group unity. We should touch each other (holding hands, hugs, etc.) Physical contact can be reassuring in stressing situations.

### History of SCRIP Nonviolence

Last spring, SCRIP organized a mass action which was supported by numerous campus and community groups. This sit-in was just one of many SCRIP events which, for the most part, left a favorable impression on those who were involved. The nonviolent way in which events progressed certainly contributed to the support given us by the community and media. This increased the power of our social statement by emphasizing commitment and thought rather than emotion and mindlessness.

This nonviolence must be consciously and continually strived for. There are many obstacles to peaceful direct action.

--Cat calls disrupt the discussion process and seem foolish.

--Aisles tend to get blocked and confusion develops.

--It is difficult to stop heated discussion for a moment of reflective silence.

Many situations could have caused problems last year if not for the quick actions and planning by "monitors" who went through a nonviolence training session:

--The appearance of riot-gearred police easily stirs emotion and irrational behavior.

--Only four persons managed an unplanned rally of several hundred students supporting the protestors inside the building, Old Union. On many instances the actions and movements of the crowd, actually harmless seemed threatening to police and interfered with the orderly arrest procedure decided upon by the arrestees. Another point-- declarations of nonviolence made at this night rally won the support of many students who otherwise may not have become involved at this critical stage of the struggle. It was this enthusiastic support that was reported by the media.

Provocateurs and sectarians must not be allowed to influence our actions. It was disclosed that of the group of anti-nuke protestors arrested at Rocky Flats last week two were actually under-cover police agents. There is evidence that police informers attended SCRIP meetings last spring. On several occasions outsiders interrupted meetings and discussions to scream out their slogans and calls to violence.

The line between violence and nonviolence is blurry. Since part of nonviolent consensus decision making is not imposing your desires upon others without their consent: Think about what you do, and what you advocate in light of the overall framework of nonviolence.

Compiled by  
a collective group  
from SWOPSI 108

## NONVIOLENCE GUIDELINES

### Philosophy

Nonviolence is a deeply held conviction that all people should be treated with respect and compassion; as human beings, not faceless bureaucrats or as rabble-rousing rade with spring fever. This means being able to empathize with the people being confronted and to create an atmosphere in which the parties involved can deal with each other with respect, despite their different opinions. It also means using the support and power we gain from coming together to act on our beliefs with dignity and courage to create needed change.

### Tactical Reasons for Remaining Nonviolent

- Nonviolence will enhance our image with the media, friends, and other folks.
- It will increase the chance of developing sympathy and support among officials, police, and other potentially antagonistic people.
- It will keep undecided people from turning against us because of our actions.
- Nonviolence comes from and helps build courage, determination, and openness, whereas violence arises from and breeds fear, frustration, and secrecy.
- It builds trust and strength within the demonstrators.
- It avoids hysteria and panic by promoting effectual discourse.
- And finally, nonviolence is safer than violence, both physically and legally.

### Guidelines for Behavior

- Don't panic.
- Everyone should be aware of what is happening and take responsibility to maintain discipline within the group.
- Restrain any personal feelings toward individual officials or police.
- No personal attacks, verbal or otherwise, on officials or police.
- Keep the tone of your voice non-antagonistic and don't use sarcasm.
- Minimize smart-ass remarks.
- When confronted by officials, everyone should sit down so as to be less physically threatening. If things get tight at any time, sit down.
- Be ready to react to and to use the key-words "Quiet" and "Sit Down".
- Don't bring along alcohol, dope, or other controlled substances, because of the legal risks and to preserve mental coherence.
- Observe a minute of silence to regain our thoughts and reflect on our actions before we march.
- Tone the songs and marching chants to strength and determination, not bitterness and irrational anger.
- We should touch each other (holding hands, hugs, etc.). Physical contact can be reassuring in stressful situations.

### Affinity Groups

An affinity group is a group of 3 to 10 people who preferably know each other and will stay close together during the actions of the day. The reasons for having these groups are to build strength from each other's presence and to reduce mob feelings and alienation caused by being with lots of people in a tense situation. They will help maintain nonviolence by making everyone of us personally accountable to a small peer group. This will dissuade heckling, hostility, etc. Structuring the demonstration this way will also promote coordination of activities and make disciplining ourselves easier. Hopefully, everyone will belong to an affinity group or can join one.



May 7, 1978

Dear

At the last SOC meeting, held Saturday May 6th, important questions were raised about the future of the organization. All of us have criticisms, suggestions, and questions concerning the projects that SOC has undertaken this year, and about the goals, structure, and future direction of the organization. The following were among the questions and issues raised:

1. Should the SOC coalition continue to exist as such or are there more viable alternatives for coordinating our efforts next year?
2. A critical analysis of SOC involvement with ASSU politics and of Disorientation Week.
3. Structural questions such as frequency of and procedure at meetings.
4. The disposition of leftover funds from Disorientation Week.
5. Should the coalition develop a statement of "principles of unity"?
6. How can we better promote communication among the constituencies of the SOC groups? Should there be a quarterly newsletter?
7. Possible planning and coordinating of joint actions on issues of common concern.
8. Possibilities of setting up a fall SWOPSI course that would explore the basis of left-wing coalition politics?

All of these concerns led us to agree on the need for a large-scale SOC conference before we move on to the summer and the 1978-79 school year, especially because many of the coalition's most active and experienced members will not be around after graduation.

June 4th was selected as the date for this conference. We urge you to set aside that Sunday, so that we will have as large and diverse a group of participants as possible. We especially encourage attendance by those who found themselves dissatisfied with SOC this year.

We will encourage each group to send as many delegates as possible (hopefully at least three), with a special emphasis on getting strong participation from both men and women. We would also like to see groups send people who have worked with SOC in the past and people who have not yet done so, but who plan to be active in their groups next year. We hope the conference will end with a party/barbecue that will celebrate our first year of existence.

There will be a planning meeting to organize the agenda and other aspects of the conference on Wednesday, May 17. The meeting will take place over dinner at Columbae House, beginning at 6P.M. We urge all groups to send representatives.

Before the planning meeting, we would like as much input as possible about whether people are interested in attending the conference, and about the issues they feel the conference should address. We ask everyone who receives this letter to RSVP with Dave Catanzarite (321-8868) or Elizabeth Greenberg (328-9362) before May 15.

Sincerely,

Dave Catanzarite

Elizabeth Greenberg