

Gandhi's Vision for a New Paradigm in International Relations, a World Health System, and Direct Non-Violent Action In Times of Social Breakdown

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Zepp-LaRouche presented this paper to the two-day online International Conference of the Association of Asian Scholars on "Revisiting Gandhi: Peace, Justice and Development," October 30-31, 2020, for the celebration of the 150th birthday of Mohandas K. Gandhi. She also delivered an abbreviated, ten-minute version of the paper and participated in the discussion session.

International Relations

As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads around the globe, all the many unacceptable problems of systemic injustice previously plaguing the world, the poverty and underdevelopment that has existed in the entire post World War II period, have suddenly exploded and torn away the thin veil, which had masked the fragility of the present global system the whole time.

As of now, the pandemic has killed more than one million people, and according to the UN World Health Organization (WHO), it threatens to kill at least another million before a vaccine can be applied to the whole world population, and it even may be worse than that.¹

1. While there are some experts who even question if a vaccine can be found, the WHO is [warning](#) that the death toll could hit two million before a vaccine is in wide use.



Studio of Elliot & Fry
Mohandas K. Gandhi, 1931.

According to the UN International Labor Organization (ILO), this year 500 million jobs will be lost, and if the prognosis of the Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme (WFP), David Beasley,² turns out to be right, we could face a famine of biblical dimensions soon, killing up to 300,000 human beings a day.³

The financial system that has dominated the world since 1945, and which has become increasingly deregulated since President Richard Nixon dismantled in August 1971 the original Bretton Woods system by introducing floating exchange rates—a process which accelerated after the collapse

of the Soviet Union—already was at the point of systemic collapse in 2008. All the Quantitative Easing by the central banks since has only enlarged the financial bubble, to the advantage of the rich becoming richer,

2. The ILO features in a recent [report](#) the devastating losses in working hours and employment. That comes on top of the so-called informal economy jobs of 2 billion, which are not really productive in the sense of physical economy.

3. "WFP Chief Warns of 'Hunger Pandemic' as Global Food Crises Report launched." David Beasley [told](#) the UN Security Council that hundreds of thousands may die without swift intervention and urgent funding. The WFP has just received a completely justified Nobel Peace Prize.

the middle class shrinking, and the poor becoming poorer. These same central banks, according to the intention stated by former Bank of England Governor Mark Carney, now want a “regime change,” whereby they want to replace governments in defining financial and fiscal policy.⁴

Just to touch upon it briefly: as a result of the sharpening of the trans-Atlantic financial crisis, the various hotspots have also heated up to a very dangerous point of escalation, in several areas even to the point of actual war, as between Azerbaijan and Armenia; in other areas, as ongoing regime-change operations, like Belarus; and in still other areas as potential hot conflicts such as the South China Sea or around Taiwan. In all of these crisis areas one can trace the geopolitical manipulation of the modern form of the British Empire, an empire which continues to exist in the form of the financial system of central banks, investment banks, hedge funds, insurance and reinsurance companies, etc. The most visible manifestation of this empire is the City of London and Wall Street, which historically developed as the junior partner of the City.

So the question is: Can the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi still show a roadmap for the establishment of a new world order, in light of a world which seems in many ways completely out of control and where coercion and bullying seem to have replaced diplomacy and dialogue? It is a fair assumption that Gandhi would approach this question with the same inner direction and determination to free all of humanity from the yoke of imperial repression as he approached the question of freeing India from colonial subjugation in his time.

As we commemorate this year the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Charter, it is more urgent than



UN
The world community expressed its fervent desire for nuclear disarmament in its first Resolution at the first session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1946.

ever before that we renew the principles upon which the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) were built. It is important to remind the world that Gandhi’s philosophy of non-violence and the practical example of his victory over the British Empire, were the most important of the influences that shaped the formulation of these groundbreaking documents. He had been the greatest inspiration for the fight against colonialism and the intense debates around the Indian constitution.

The Indian representatives who had taken part in the different aspects of the drafting of the UDHR, Begum Hamid Ali, Hansa Mehta, Lakshmi N. Menon, and M.R. Masani, were all influenced by the ideas of Gandhi. Hansa Mehta was in

the group of Eleanor Roosevelt at the UN Commission on Human Rights, which formulated the UDHR.

The principles of Gandhi’s conception of non-violence continued to influence later the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, *Panchsheel*, as it was expressed for the first time formally in the “Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet region and India” on April 29, 1954. In the preamble, these principles were spelled out: (1) Mutual respect for the territorial integ-



Gandhi’s philosophy of peaceful coexistence was continued in the first summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade, 1961.

4. “The Growing Challenges for Monetary Policy in the Current International Monetary and Financial System,” a [speech](#) given by Mark Carney, then Governor of the Bank of England, Jackson Hole Symposium, August 23, 2019.

riety and sovereignty of the other; (2) Mutual non-aggression; (3) Mutual non-interference into the inner affairs of the other; (4) Equality and cooperation for the mutual benefit; and (5) Peaceful coexistence.

This same philosophy persisted in the first conference of the independent Asian and African states in Bandung, and under the leadership of Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, these principles were enlarged into the Ten Principles of Bandung. They also constituted the core according to international law of the conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in 1961.

It underlines both the humbleness and integrity of Nehru, that in a 1960 interview with the editor of the *Blitz* tabloid, R.K. Karanjia, he answered the journalist, who had referred in a question to the “Nehru era,” which he suggested would have begun after 1947 very explicitly, said:

Your usage of words like “Nehru era” and “Nehruvian policy” is wrong. I would like to call my time as authentic Gandhian period, and the policies and philosophy we are trying to implement are the policies and philosophy taught by Gandhiji.

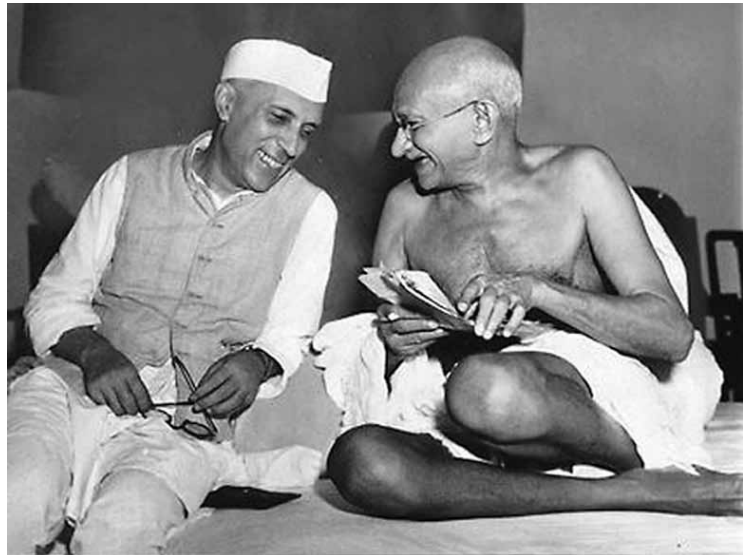
Further along in the interview, Karanjia stated his assumption that Nehru would have gone beyond the principle of non-violence by creating the principle of *Panchsheel* and peaceful coexistence in response to the impending menace of the atom bomb.

Nehru’s answer again gave the credit to Gandhi by answering:

All this was inherent in Gandhian philosophy. In fact, the path of *Panchsheel*, peace and tolerance, the sentiment of “live and let live” has been fundamental to Indian thought since ages and you will find it in all the religions. Kings like Ashoka practiced it and Gandhiji integrated it in the practical philosophy of Karma which we have inherited.

Nehru elaborated further:

His [Gandhi’s] thoughts, methods, and solutions have helped to bridge the gap between the industrial revolution and the atomic era ... after all,



Jawaharlal Nehru: “The path of peace and tolerance has been fundamental to Indian thought. ... Gandhi’s methods and solutions have helped bridge the gap between the industrial revolution and the atomic era.” Here, Nehru is seen sharing a lighter moment with Gandhi in Mumbai, July 6, 1946.

the only possible answer to the atom bomb is non-violence, isn’t it?

In the meantime, the National Archives in Washington have published historical documents which reveal that the use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II was militarily completely unnecessary. The war was practically over, Japan was cut off from its supply lines through the American sea blockade and the Russian occupation of Korea and Northern China. Truman’s decision, which was completely backed by Churchill, to drop the bomb, was at this point only a demonstration of the principle of *Schrecklichkeit* [terror] in respect to future Anglo-American policy against the Soviet Union and as a test of its effect on the civilian population.

Behind this was the entire strategy that had been published by Bertrand Russell in an article in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, “The Atomic Bomb and the Prevention of War” in 1946, and which had been emphasized by H.G. Wells before World War II, that the issue was to make the experience of war so horrible, that any enemy could be forced to give up its sovereignty and submit to de facto world government.

More than 200,000 people lost their lives and many more had lasting effects on their health as a result.

At the recent 75th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Russian Foreign Minister

Sergey Lavrov warned about a change in U.S. military doctrine, which regards nuclear weapons as “deployable,” which is obviously based on the idea that a limited nuclear war is “winnable.”⁵ This seems to be a reference to the W76-2 low-yield warhead now deployed on Ohio-class submarines.⁶ Serious nuclear weapons experts such as MIT professor Theodore Postol, however, have argued convincingly, that it is the nature of nuclear weapons, that if it comes to the use of one, that they all will be deployed. In the age of thermonuclear weapons this would obviously mean the annihilation of the human species.

To return to the question posed earlier: Is the philosophy of non-violence of Gandhi still applicable in light of this existential question for all of humanity? The answer is Yes, but it requires the same kind of fearless commitment to throw off the yoke of empire that guided his actions. In Gandhi’s name, there must therefore begin in all countries a campaign about the threat posed to the existence of humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination. This goal is in accordance with the principles of the UN from the very beginning, since Resolution 1 of the General Assembly in 1946, there has been the demand of global nuclear disarmament. Since then there have been numerous diplomatic efforts spearheaded by the UN, aiming at the elimination of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Today there exist more than 13,000 nuclear weapons, which are in the possession of eight countries. This arsenal, if it ever would come to be used, would be enough to eliminate the world population many times over. But with the withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the INF Treaty, the Open Sky Treaty and the immediate danger that the last nuclear arms control treaty, “New START,” will expire in February 2021, there will be the danger that, for the first time since the 1970s, the

5. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s [message](#) to the participants of the memorial ceremony in Hiroshima on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombing.

6. There has been a wide discussion in security expert circles that the new so-called low-yield nuclear weapons blur the lines between conventional and nuclear weapons and therefore increase the risk of their potential use. See “Strengthening Deterrence and Reducing Nuclear Risks: The Supplemental Low-Yield U.S. Submarine-Launched Warhead,” issued by the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

world’s two largest strategic nuclear arsenals—those of the U.S. and Russia—will be unconstrained.

In the absence of previously existing arms control regimes, many experts have expressed the concern that the present situation is more dangerous than even at the height of the Cold War, when even in the Cuban missile crisis, the communication between John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev did function.

While the reconstruction of arms control is urgent to constrain the danger of an out-of-control arms race, the actual goal to eliminate nuclear weapons for good probably can only be accomplished if they can be made obsolete through new technologies based on new physical



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

As proposed by Lyndon LaRouche and announced by President Ronald Reagan, the Strategic Defense Initiative would have made nuclear weapons obsolete. Pictured here are LaRouche and Reagan at a candidates’ debate during the 1980 presidential campaign, Concord, New Hampshire.

principles, and that these new technologies be implemented by all nuclear powers in cooperation, as proposed by the American statesman Lyndon LaRouche to the Reagan administration and the Soviet Union, which then became the Strategic Defense Initiative, SDI.

In its Resolution 68/32, adopted December 5, 2013, the UN General Assembly designated September 26 as the “International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons” and observed that day every year ever since. But in light of the imminent danger resulting from an increasing geopolitical confrontation between NATO and the U.S., on the one side, and Russia and China on the other, the campaign for the elimination of nuclear weapons can not be reduced to one day, but must become an ongoing accelerated campaign for every day, in every country, and on all levels of society.

Gandhi always believed that the youth of every country have the power to move mountains, and that

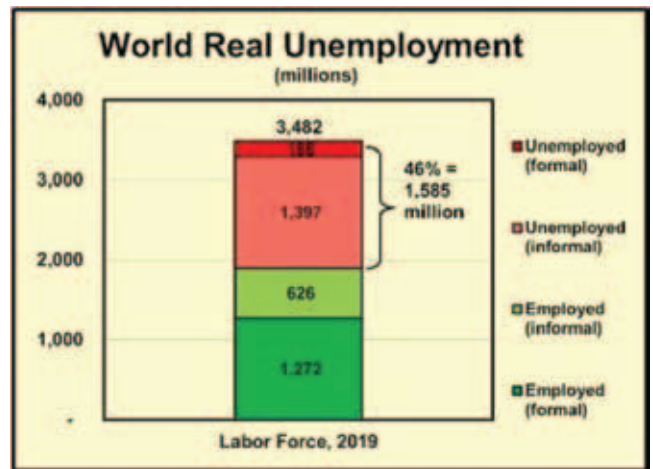
they are responsible to uplift and develop their countries. It was his firm conviction that it was specifically leadership from the upcoming generation which could bring together all layers of society. In light of the danger of nuclear war, it is therefore of the utmost urgency to remind the youth of the world of the message of peace and non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi, and the great gift of *Ahimsa* that Gandhiji gave to humanity. The renaissance of *Ahimsa* will also be the way for young people to learn from Gandhiji's idea of spirituality and self-purification, as a way to rid themselves from the yoke of mind-control through all kind of addictions, be it drugs, alcohol, or excessive internet use.

In light of all these dangers, it is very clear that Mankind is being put to the final test: Do we, as the only creative species known in the universe so far, have the capability to give ourselves an order, which guarantees the long-time survivability of humanity? We therefore urgently need an international debate about the necessity to return to the principle of the *Panchsheel* as the foundation of the international order. These principles need to be deepened, as their ontological connection to the cosmic order can be demonstrated. In all great cultures and religions there are references to the substance of these principles, even if the language used to express them varies.

On that basis we have to establish a new paradigm in the relations among nations, where the interest of the other is the interest of each. The common good of humanity as a whole must be the guiding principle against which no national interest must be in contradiction. Once all nations concentrate in this way on the common aims of Mankind, a new era of human civilization will be reached.

A World Health System

The coronavirus pandemic, which is now raging across the globe has pulled off the veil from the present world system and has revealed how dramatically underdeveloped many countries are. COVID-19 has already cost more than a million human lives and, according to the WHO, it will in all likelihood cost another



EIR

Real Unemployment, 2019 (millions)	World	Africa	Ibero-America
1) Total Population	7,711	1307	646
2) Total Labor Force	3,482	490	310
3) Official Unemployment	188	33	20
4) Total Employment (2-3)	3,294	457	290
5) Informal Employment, Total	2,023	391	156
6) Informal Employment, Non-agro	1,664	328	144
7) De facto Unemployment *	1,307	285	111
8) Total Real Unemployment (3 +7)	1,585	318	131
9) Total Real Unemployment Rate (8/2)	46%	65%	42%
* (Non-agro informal employment) — (informal employment in the formal sector)			
Source: ILO; own elaboration			

million lives before a vaccine has been developed and administered in every corner of the world.

But it is not only the people who have died of COVID-19 or have long-term medical damage from it. The other major category of victims are those two billion people, who according to the ILO are working in the so-called “informal economy,” including subsistence agriculture with its horribly low productivity, who are now threatened with the sudden loss of income as a result of lockdowns or interruptions in the supply line of production.

According to the ILO, 500 million people will have lost their jobs by the end of the year. In Africa, the real unemployment rate is 65%, in Latin America 42% when we count not just the official unemployment statistics, but also the great number of people who daily

scramble for money so that they and their families can eat from one day to the next, but who don't actually produce anything. The youth of the world are particularly affected by this "informal" economy, better called the "shadow economy." In the 15-24 age bracket, 77% of all jobs are "informal."

The pandemic also has severely hurt agricultural production in many parts of the world, be it because of COVID-19 hitting the workforce in meatpacking plants, forcing farmers to cull their herds, or because farmers themselves were hit by the sickness in poor

countries. As a result, the world is also threatened with a hunger catastrophe which, according to David Beasley of the WFP could soon reach "biblical dimensions" of up to 300,000 people dying of hunger per day.

It was Gandhi's principle of *Sarvodaya* that influenced the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030 and its idea of "Leave No One Behind," as well as to "endeavor to reach the furthest behind first." The extraordinary gravity of the COVID-19 crisis requires that the timetable to reach these goals must be accelerated. The implementation of *Sarvodaya* means that the most urgent first step must be the construction of a world health system, without which this pandemic and the threat of future pandemics cannot be conquered. Gandhi said that poverty was the worst form of violence and that the progress of society should be determined by the state of the most vulnerable and the weakest. For the case of the pandemic this is obvious: It will not be over until it is defeated in every single country.

There is one important lesson to be learned from the present crisis: The coronavirus would not have become a pandemic if every country had a modern health system. After the outbreak in Wuhan and Hebei province, the Chinese health system was capable of being geared up, rapidly building new hospitals in a few weeks, and mobilizing health professionals from around the country. After two months, China had the pandemic essentially under control and has been able to prevent a new outbreak ever since. If every other country would have had the same capability, it would not have become an out-of-control pandemic.



Courtesy of China Construction
"The coronavirus would not have become a pandemic if every country had a modern health system." Shown, the Huoshenshan Hospital under construction, built in record time in Wuhan, China, January 2020.

The reasons for the pandemic are not primarily medical but economic. In 1973 Lyndon LaRouche initiated a biological taskforce with the task of investigating the effect of IMF conditionalities on the developing countries. That taskforce came to the conclusion that by preventing the so-called "Third World" from investing in infrastructure programs, health, and education systems, and instead favoring debt repayment, the result would be the emergence of old and new diseases and pandemics. The lowering of the immune systems of entire generations in several continents caused by hunger, lack of clean water, lack of medical facilities, etc., would necessarily lead to a biological holocaust.

If the many programs for industrialization for Africa, Latin America, Asia, and even the poor regions of Europe and the United States, which LaRouche and his movement have worked out since the seventies, would have been implemented, every single human being on this planet would enjoy a decent life today.

To apply Gandhi's principle of *Sarvodaya* today, there must be a coordinated international effort to build a modern health system in every country on the basis of the same standards that the American health system used when the Hill-Burton standard was applied, the same standards of the German and French health systems before privatization replaced the principle of the common good with greed and profit in the 1970s. The Wuhan medical system is another good reference point. The building of such health systems then must be the starting point for the building of the new world economic order that the Non-Aligned Movement has been

fighting for since the 1950s.

The motivation for the industrialized countries to participate in building this world health system will be their own self-interest: This pandemic, and future pandemics of which virologists and epidemiologists are now warning, will surely come and will not be able to be contained unless the needs of all, especially the poorest countries, are equipped to deal with the threat.

Naturally, one cannot build hospitals unless there is clean water, sanitation, electricity, transport infrastructure, communications, etc. Today more than two billion people lack access to clean water, adequate sanitation, or both.

So the urgent need for a health system, consisting of modern clinics which can be virtually connected to the best professional care in clinics in advanced countries, comprehensive medical supply stations in rural areas, and medical research centers, will be the catalyst for the kind of real development programs that should have been realized many decades ago. The effect of not doing this is that 800,000 children under five years of age are dying from diarrhea every year. Proper disposal of sewage and the purification of water sources is an absolutely indispensable precondition to save billions of people's lives. Temporary sanitation facilities can be mass produced and distributed in the developing countries as a stop-gap measure, until durable infrastructure has been built up. The building of this infrastructure will provide meaningful employment for many millions of people in all countries involved.

The world has currently an inventory of 18.6 million hospital beds, which represents a huge deficit. The Hill-Burton standard in the U.S. requires 4.5 hospital beds per 1,000 people. Current levels are 2.8 hospital beds per 1,000 people, 0.7 for South Asia, and 0.5 for Nigeria. To meet the standard of 4.5 per 1,000 people, one would have to increase the number of hospital beds to 35 million, nearly double the current number. This will require the construction of 35,200 new modern hospitals, especially in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Other concrete aspects that must be targeted include

testing capacity which must be brought up to several millions a day, depending on the size of the population, first through emergency import, then as quickly as possible through the building up of manufacturing capacities. And we need contact tracers who must be trained and hired, and masks and more sophisticated personal protective equipment (PPE) which must be made available to allow a dramatically increased number of health care workers to perform their jobs safely. Ventilators must be made available in sufficient quantities. Research for treatments and vaccines must be funded.

All of these measures, as such, are not enough to save lives; to do that we need a vastly increased number

of medical staff, doctors, nurses, and health workers. About this, more in the following section. But as we have seen, the principle of *Sarvodaya* is not only noble, it is indispensable for the survival of the human species.

Direct Civil Action Today

There are a great number of political leaders and movements around the world who have been or are now inspired by Mahatma Gandhi. But maybe the most consequential of them so far were the famous civil rights leaders in the United States, Martin Luther King Jr., Amelia Boynton Robinson, and James Bevel, who adopted the principle of nonviolence in their fight against the remnants of slav-

ery, racism, and segregation, which accomplished the signing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

What inspired them was Gandhi's conception of nonviolence as *satyagraha*, the idea that one has to consciously cultivate the power of truth-seeking and love within oneself, so that it becomes impossible to participate in any evil because one has completely freed one's mind and soul from the potential danger of being corrupted, by purifying oneself. King first applied the method of nonviolent action in 1955 in the Montgomery bus boycott, about which King wrote: "While the Montgomery boycott was going on, India's Gandhi was the guiding light of our technique of nonviolent social change." And later he would say: "I came to see for the



Kanu Gandhi

The Mahatma, Mohandas K. Gandhi.



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis



Minnesota Historical Society



EIRNS/Philip Ulanowsky

Gandhi's conception of non-violence, satyagraha, the idea that one has to consciously cultivate the power of truth-seeking and love within oneself, so it becomes impossible to participate in any evil, inspired the leaders of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. From left to right: Rev. James Bevel, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Amelia Boynton Robinson.

first time that the Christian doctrine of love, operating through the Gandhian method of nonviolence, was one of the most potent weapons available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom.”

In 1959 King and his wife Loretta travelled for five weeks to India in order to get a deeper grasp of Gandhi's thought. Many people in India were absolutely aware of the Montgomery bus boycott. King met numerous members of Gandhi's family, Indian activists, and officials, including Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. That trip had a big role in the subsequent development of the civil rights movement in the U.S. and in King becoming sort of the moral conscience of the U.S. He was on the way to becoming the righteous President of the U.S. when he was assassinated.

King, Malcom X, J.F. Kennedy, and Robert Kennedy were killed, and the real background of their murder was essentially covered up. Both the murder and the coverup of these four personalities—who stood for a tremendous cultural optimism, a firm belief in the creative powers of human beings, freedom and justice—had a major impact in the paradigm change that has occurred in the value system in the U.S. ever since, and the transformation from a basic optimism about what man can accomplish in shaping a better future for humanity, to the present social mayhem.

A great number of civil rights leaders who had worked with King, have over the years given an elaborated picture to this writer about the reality of the exist-

tence of two Americas—a black America, which is completely aware of the white America, which is the only one the white population perceives. The black America in some areas looks more like enclaves of the third world in terms of living standard, access to food, quality of housing and health care, etc.

Recently, after a whole series of police killings of black citizens on top of a high crime rate and black-on-black shootings, the eight-minute-long horrific murder of the Afro-American George Floyd by a policeman, filmed with brutal clarity with a smartphone and spread through the internet around the world, has set off a wave of protest in many American cities. Initially most of the protesters were genuinely upset about the manifestation of racism, which no black person in the U.S. denies exists, unless he or she has been corrupted and belongs to that relatively small upper crust of media-public relations-academic-intelligentsia section, who “have made it” and therefore think like the establishment.

But very quickly these protests were kidnapped by violent groupings of different stripes. The larger context for the outbreak of the riots is the relentless war first against the presidential candidate and then President Donald Trump, which the neoliberal establishment of the U.S. and Great Britain and their intelligence services—often just called the “Deep State”—have conducted. His election victory in 2016 upset their control of the U.S., and with it the special relationship between Great Britain and the U.S., upon which the present form

of the British Empire and its conception of a unipolar world order rests. Trump had dared to promise to bring the relation with Russia into order, end the “endless wars,” and give a voice to the “forgotten man,” who Hillary Clinton had called disdainfully the “deplorables.”

The riots that broke out in several U.S. cities were instrumentalized to be part of various scenarios to actually overturn the American Constitution. Interest groups, such as Transition Integrity Project (TIP) and related organizations, have put out game plans which give cause for the assumption that the various violence-prone street forces, such as Antifa,

Black Lives Matter, etc., could actually have a role in providing the pretext for what some retired military officers, such as Col. Richard Black, former chief of the Army Criminal Law Division, Office of the Judge Advocate General at the Pentagon, are warning could lead to a military coup in the context of the U.S. election.

This has led to the strange situation, where proponents of one side of the political aisle call these riots “peaceful protests,” while the vast majority of Afro-Americans and citizens of the violence-affected cities completely reject the violence, which has included vandalism against statues of American historical figures and even figures who were heroes in the fight against slavery.

Most of the ideology of these protest groups is derived from the Frankfurt School, which was a CIA-sponsored cultural warfare project in the postwar period after World War II, which targeted values such as “hard work, rational thinking, the nuclear family, morality, belief in God” as characteristics of an “authoritarian personality,” which therefore had to be fought against. The latest result of a long chain of such changes in values is the LGTB culture and so-called “identity politics,” which separates the different sociological groups according to their sexual preferences, or cultural, ethnic, or political likings. The net result of these changes in outlook is a new segregation and the complete opposite of what Martin Luther King had been fighting for, namely, that human beings should not be judged by their color, but by the content of their character.

It is for these reasons—despite the fact that there are social tensions and political polarization in the U.S. that



In the dark of night, a small group turned a protest against the police murder of George Floyd into a violent conflagration, Minneapolis, May 29, 2020. The citizens of U.S. cities, who were subjected to burning and looting, completely reject the violence and vandalism.

threaten any cohesion of society and actually the foundations of the U.S. as a constitutional republic—that the incredibly rich heritage of King and the Civil Rights Movement are not mentioned up to now. But it should be obvious, that while the historic predicates are very different, that the essential roots of the conflict are located in the same de facto insurmountable conflicts in both Gandhi’s and King’s fights. The issue in all of these cases is the same: the effect of an imperial order, which denies the basic human rights to large sections of the population, and there is a point where these injustices become unbearable, as is mentioned in the American Declaration of Independence.

There is a very specific way that the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi and the tradition of Martin Luther King can show the way to a constructive approach in respect to the violent demonstrations in the United States, or France, or any country where they are taking place. The principle of *Sarvodaya* can be the spark for a nonviolent strategy to address the problem. Since it is the young people of this world whose future is the most threatened by the combination of the pandemic and the economic crisis, there needs to be a perspective that addresses the problem of the pandemic, and simultaneously gives them a concrete way for productive tasks.

As was discussed in the second section of this article, the COVID-19 pandemic and future pandemics can only be dealt with if every single country on the planet has a modern health system, and that requires a much larger cadre of trained medical personnel than presently available.

There is presently an effort underway to set up a Committee in the U.S., Europe, and Africa to organize partnerships between universities, clinics, hospitals, and medical facilities. The task of these partnerships is to train unemployed youth, to first become medical auxiliaries and then medical personnel, on the model of Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

In poorer segments of the population, the necessary health measures to combat the pandemic are not necessarily familiar, so the first step will be to train young people and deploy them into the communities or villages to teach the population what to do. In Tuskegee (Alabama), Tennessee, and St. Louis (Missouri) there is the beginning of such activities involving retired doctors, health-care workers, and local police in confidence-building measures such as home visits. This is crucial given the general confusion in the population as a result of the spread of conspiracy theories against masks, vaccines, etc., and ignorance about how infection spreads. At the same time, one can initiate more in-depth medical training of these youth to become doctors, nurses, and health workers.

The aim is further to rapidly start work in African partnership projects for the joint training and deployment of American, European, and African youth, which can be built up with the help of medical personnel, churches, and disaster-control organizations to provide the same services to the populations there. Because of the famine, the distribution of foodstuffs must be added, and this work will be quickly expanded to include training in infrastructure building, farming, and industrial projects. There are many farmers, young and old, in various countries who have been responsive and would regard it as an honor to help out in a crisis moment like this. The call for the creation of this committee says:

As soon as these projects take on a concrete



Gandhi is shown here being given a rousing reception by textile workers in Darwen, Lancashire, England, September 26, 1931, during the Swadeshi boycott of British cotton goods called by the Indian National Congress in 1929.

form, they will spark the kind of enthusiasm that all great pioneer projects can generate, despite the seriousness of the situation, and they will give future prospects to many young people who would otherwise be dragged into social revolts and violent activities.

As mentioned, such a private initiative (direct civil action) in the tradition of the non-violent actions of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, cannot, by itself, solve the gigantic challenge before us. But it can provide a practical example of how people of good will can intervene in an otherwise desperate situation and point to the required solution. These concrete examples will then encourage

governments, or put pressure on them, to join forces and create, through a new credit system, the framework to permanently overcome underdevelopment in the developing countries.

This multifaceted initiative will accomplish many things at once: It will support people against the pandemic, it will create a future for youth, and it will help to overcome poverty by initiating real economic development.

These three examples: the paradigm shift in international relations, the need for a world health system, and the direct social action for the youth, show the eminent importance and the absolute relevance of the philosophy of Gandhi for an approach to the greatest challenges of our time. His idea of self-ennoblement can also be the basis for a dialogue of cultures among those philosophers and poets who also have an elevated image of man. Such a dialogue will help to catalyze a cultural renaissance, which is so urgently needed to save the world from the present civilizational crisis we are in. But most important, is to kindle within people the love for which Gandhiji stands, so that more people can become great souls.