Brian Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*
(London: Freedom Press, 1993)

5
Lessons from the Fiji coups

On 14 May 1987, the Fiji government was ousted by a military coup led by Lieutenant Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka. The response to Rabuka's regime both within Fiji and overseas provides a useful test of the theory and practice of nonviolent action.

Fiji was taken over by the British as a colony in the 1870s. The native peoples are ethnically Melanesian. The British brought indentured servants from India to work on the sugar plantations. Today the so-called Indo-Fijians—born and bred in Fiji with ancestors from India—make up half the population of 700,000. Melanesians make up 45% and Europeans, part-Europeans and others the remainder.[1]

(In Fiji, the different ethnic groups are called Fijians, Indians and Europeans. However, most of the "Indians" long ago lost contact with India and are "Fijians" in the sense of being citizens. Therefore I prefer the clumsier terminology of Melanesian Fijians and Indo-Fijians, referring to both as Fijians, which does not confuse ethnicity with citizenship.)

The Europeans in Fiji long served their own interests by aligning themselves with the chiefs or aristocracy of the Melanesian Fijians. Fiji gained independence in 1970 under a constitution and

[1] For background on Fiji see, for example, Brij V. Lal (ed.), *Politics in Fiji: Studies in Contemporary History* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1986); Michael Taylor (ed.), *Fiji: Future Imperfect* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1987).

electoral system designed around racial divisions. Melanesian Fijians were guaranteed ownership of most of the land, while members of parliament were selected in a complicated fashion in which each voter had four votes, for candidates of different ethnic backgrounds.

From independence until 1987, the Alliance Party held power under Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. The Alliance was built around and supported by Melanesian Fijians. The opposition National Federation Party (NFP), which was built around and supported by Indo-Fijians, was riven by splits. In effect, ethnic divisions were exploited by the chiefs from Eastern Fiji, using the vehicle of the Alliance Party, to mobilise support for a feudal-style hierarchy that put them in a privileged position.

In 1985 the multi-racial Fiji Labour Party was formed. It was an attempt to promote class-based rather than race-based politics. The Labour Party criticised both other parties for serving the rich, and promoted the claims of workers, the unemployed and the poor.

The Labour Party rapidly gained strength and several NFP politicians defected to its ranks. In the 1987 election, the Labour Party joined with the NFP as a coalition and together they won control of parliament. It was this government that only six weeks later was toppled by a military coup.

Any military coup raises a range of questions. For example, who was behind it? Whose interests did it serve? What social structures or developments made it possible? What could have been done to forestall it or oppose it?

Here, my concern is with the potential for opposing coups and repression by nonviolent action. I begin by outlining some actions that can be taken against coups, especially by people in other countries. Then I compare this with the actions actually taken in relation to Fiji. The result is some lessons for future action.

The events in Fiji are complex. They have included apparent moves after 14 May 1987 toward civilian rule, a second coup on 25 September 1987, a repeat pattern of civilianisation—including introduction of a military-backed civilian government headed by Mara in December 1987—and the internal security decree of 16 June 1988 which established martial law. No attempt is made here to

examine the politics of these and subsequent events.[2] I will refer mainly to the first coup and, in regard to overseas responses, refer mainly to responses in Australia.

Responses within Fiji

The coups in Fiji were almost entirely "bloodless." There was no organised violent resistance. This probably explains why there was relatively little violence by the Fiji military itself, at least compared to many of the military regimes in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe. Violent resistance tends to legitimise violence by the military as well as to unify it, while nonviolent methods tend to reduce violence by the other side. This at least is the claim by proponents of nonviolent methods, and it seems to have been borne out in the case of Fiji.

Nonviolent resistance within Fiji to the coups took a variety of forms.[3] At the most basic level, numerous people spoke out against Rabuka's regime, criticising its illegality and violations of human rights. Members of the Labour Party tried to build grassroots support, travelling to villages and explaining how the 1970 constitution guaranteed the rights of Melanesian Fijians. There were demonstrations and strikes in cities, and many shopkeepers closed their shops in protest. Even more powerfully, workers in the cane fields stopped work; the threat of failure of the sugar crop, Fiji's major export earner, was a serious one. Of long-term significance, many Fijians emigrated to escape the repressive political scene, and those leaving were mostly the educated and highly skilled.

The resistance to the Fiji military regime has been explicitly and consistently nonviolent. It is telling that the regime claimed that illicit arms shipments to Fiji, which were revealed by Australian

---

[2] See, for example, Kenneth Bain, *Treason at Ten: Fiji at the Crossroads* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1989); Satendra Prasad (ed.), *Coup and Crisis: Fiji—A Year Later* (Melbourne: Arena Publiations, 1988); Robert T. Robertson and Akosita Tamanisau, *Fiji—Shattered Coups* (Sydney: Pluto Press, 1988); David Robie, *Blood on their Banner: Nationalist Struggles in the South Pacific* (London: Zed Books, 1989).

[3] I have relied especially on the journal *Fiji Voice* (Fiji Independent News Service, PO Box 106, Roseville NSW 2069, Australia).

Customs, were destined for coalition members, thereby trying to discredit them as planning violence.

The resistance in Fiji can be analysed readily in terms of the standard concepts of "nonviolent action." But these concepts do not provide a sufficient analysis of one vital part of the struggle: the struggle for allegiance at the level of ideas and cultural beliefs.

At first sight, this criticism of nonviolent action theory seems strange, since the whole theory is based on a struggle for allegiance. Nonviolent action includes an array of methods of direct communication and persuasion, all of which are designed to win over opponents or the uncommitted. Furthermore, one of the great advantages of nonviolent over violent methods is that they are less likely to alienate potential supporters. This account is fine as far as it goes. What it does not encompass, or includes only with difficulty, is aspects of the struggle for loyalty which involve aspects of culture and politics requiring an analysis of structures and belief systems.

The coups in Fiji succeeded with a minimum of force. There were relatively few soldiers involved. If there had been a concerted nonviolent resistance from the outset, it seems a good possibility that the initial coup could have been thwarted. But the reality was quite different from this hypothetical resistance. A large number of Melanesian Fijians supported the first coup while the Indo-Fijians failed to put up a show of support for the government. The mass rallies during the election campaign in support of the Labour Party failed to materialise in opposition to the coup.

The initial coup succeeded because it exploited ethnic divisions in Fiji, mobilising Melanesian Fijians and demoralising Indo-Fijians.[4] The use of ethnic divisions for political purposes has a long history in Fiji. The Labour Party itself represented a challenge to this political use of ethnicity, and the coup represented a reversion to this status quo.

Also involved in the early support for and acquiescence to the coup was the lack of vehement opposition by figures of powerful symbolic importance. Mara, whose party had lost the election, did

---

[4] It should be noted that many Melanesian Fijians opposed the coup and personally supported Indo-Fijians who came under attack. Fiji has never been as divided along racial lines as portrayed in many accounts of the coup.

not exert his influence and reputation to oppose a coup when it was being sounded out just after the election, nor after it occurred. In the following weeks he appeared to serve Rabuka's purposes by being involved in the constitutional commission and the civilian governments that followed Rabuka. The Governor-General, Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau, played a similarly ambiguous role. Other members of the council of chiefs also offered little resistance to the coup. All this made it appear to many that the formal justification for the coup—that the rights of Melanesian Fijians were threatened by the coalition government—had legitimacy.

The difficulty was not with nonviolent action itself, but rather with mobilising people to take the action. Without strong support from key symbolic figures, in the face of longstanding ethnic and other divisions, and lacking leadership, preparation and training in nonviolent action and strategy, a unified response was not made. This negative assessment should not obscure the considerable and powerful resistance that did occur. The point here is that most discussions of nonviolent action devote much more attention to the consequences of actions than to the structural and ideological obstacles to taking action in the first place.

Nonviolent resistance outside Fiji: the potential

The Fiji coups startled and disturbed many people in other countries. Outside Fiji, the stated reasons for the coups sounded hollow, and the ethnic divisions which helped sustain the new regime had little salience. What could people overseas do to support democracy in Fiji? Here I first outline a range of actions which might be taken by individuals and non-government groups, and then point to the ones which actually were taken up.

For a person in another country, it may at first glance seem difficult to intervene in events far away, but actually there are numerous ways to have an effect. (See the summary table on social offence, pages 64-65.) I have already discussed the vital importance for coup leaders to appear to be legitimate. This could be challenged by people openly criticising the new regime and demanding a return to the elected government. Given that Fiji newspapers, radio and television were censored immediately after the coup, the best available outlet for protesters in other countries was their own local media. Letters to newspapers, articles in

magazines, programmes on radio, protest meetings and rallies all were effective in making more people aware of the situation. They also had an indirect effect within Fiji by affecting the opinion of people around the world and inhibiting the acceptance of the new regime by other governments.

Another way to support the resistance was to make direct contact. This includes letters to individuals, as long as censorship permits. (Censorship seems not to be have been too extensive after the Fiji coups.) Messages could be passed by visitors, whether tourists to Fiji or Fijians travelling overseas. There is also much routine communication for the purposes of commerce, navigation and weather analysis which could be used for passing political information. For example, computer communication carried out by banks or airlines could be used to transmit information. This could easily be hidden from casual observation by simple coding or putting it in channels designed for engineering checks.

Many other groups make contact between countries, such as diplomats, sporting teams and church officials. These contacts can be used to pass information and advice.

Even more direct is short-wave radio, which provides person-to-person communication over long distances. Because of its geographical dispersion, Fiji has a large number of short-wave receivers which could have been used for obtaining reliable information about the events. Significantly, the Rabuka regime tried to get people to turn in their short-wave sets.

Economic pressure is another potent tool, especially in the case of a small country like Fiji. Trade union bans on shipments to or from the country are one method. Another approach is the consumer boycott. In the case of Fiji, the major "good" most straightforward to boycott was the tourist trade, since tourism was Fiji's second largest export earner. Refusing to go to Fiji hurt the economy; writing a letter to a newspaper stating that one is refusing to go, and is taking one's tourist trade to more democratic countries, adds symbolic impact to this stand, and is effective even if one had not been planning a trip to Fiji.

Another approach was to provide direct support for nonviolent action within Fiji by offering advice and training. This could be done for Fijians travelling overseas, or done in Fiji by activists ostensibly entering as tourists. If a sufficient fraction of visitors to

Fiji were actually nonviolent activists, the regime would be caught in a bind. Allowing the visitors to move unhindered would allow activists to build strength for the opposition, whereas security measures to monitor and arrest suspicious visitors would risk alienating genuine tourists and thus hurting the economy.

Finally, people overseas could provide refuge to refugees from the regime. Fleeing the regime does not by itself undermine its strength, but many refugees are able to become vocal once they are free from repression inside their home country. The availability of refuge also can encourage dissent from inside, when people know there are havens if necessary.

While all these measures are quite compatible and indeed predictable parts of social defence, in practice there has been little attention to the issue of acting against repression from an outside country. Most of the attention in the social defence literature is on nonviolent action within a country against foreign aggression, which is the normal "threat situation" for which military forces are traditionally justified. There is also considerable attention in this literature to opposition to military coups but, again, this opposition is usually assumed to be from within the country where the coup occurs. Yet for nearly everyone in the world, there are many more opportunities to take action against repression elsewhere than in one's own country. It is also much safer for the individual (though moral dilemmas can be severe, since one is intervening in someone else's society).

One reason why so little attention has been given to opposing repression in other countries is that the framework of states, including the United Nations and numerous treaties, places great emphasis on the evils of violating the territorial integrity and government prerogatives of other states. The great evil, at least as presented by governments, is attacking or subverting another state. Proponents of social defence may have imbibed this prohibition and thus neglected to consider nonviolent action which can offer a potent challenge to foreign governments.

I have purposefully not discussed action by foreign governments. In principle, they could play an enormously influential role in opposing coups and repression. In the case of Fiji, it would have been possible for governments of such countries as Australia and New Zealand to promote Commonwealth and United Nations sanc-

tions, to hinder trade, to block tourists from travelling to Fiji, to cut off economic aid, to withdraw investment, to beam short-wave broadcasts encouraging resistance, and a host of other nonviolent actions. But, as I discuss later, governments are unreliable opponents of repression and, furthermore, their actions may be counterproductive.

Nonviolent resistance outside Fiji: the reality

There was no pre-existing organisation or network designed to respond to the initial Fiji coup. Therefore the actual responses outside Fiji were to a large degree improvised, just as they were inside Fiji.

The most obvious response in most countries was the mass media's publication and broadcast of numerous articles and reports about the coup. These varied in their analysis and their degree of condemnation of the coup. What is relevant here was the scarcity of information about how people could help oppose the coup. This partly reflects the lack of any authoritative body—of the stature of Amnesty International, for example—which could pronounce on appropriate responses. If such a body had existed, some of the news media undoubtedly would have reported its recommendations as news, even if not endorsing them.

While it is not surprising that the mass media provided little indication of how to oppose the military regime, more disappointing was the response in the "alternative media." In Australia, for example, two left-wing weekly newspapers, *Tribune* published by the Communist Party of Australia and *Direct Action* published by the Socialist Workers Party, published a large number of articles about the coup, all condemning it. But these articles gave remarkably little attention to how to go about opposing the regime. Aside from direct reportage of the events, continuing attention was devoted to the possible involvement of the United States Central Intelligence Agency in the initial coup. Yet whatever the role of the CIA, the early path of Rabuka's regime did not depend heavily on overt external military support. In any case, the presence or absence of CIA involvement would not have made a great deal of difference to practical action against the regime. The attention to the CIA seemed to reflect ideological antagonism to the US

government and an attempt to fit the Fiji events into a standard Marxist analysis.

Another problem with the left-wing analysis of the coup was the assumption that capitalism was served by the events. Arguably, the coup, which devastated Fiji's economy, hurt both local and foreign capitalists. While class issues were certainly important, Marxist analysis elevated them above issues of local hierarchy (the chief system) and ethnicity.

Whatever its deficiencies, the left-wing press provided far more useful material to opponents of the regime than the mainstream press. *Tribune* and *Direct Action* offered background political analyses of Fiji and reported on opposition to the regime both within Fiji and overseas, all of which was highly useful to anyone considering their own role.

Among the Australian electronic media, the most valuable function was carried out by Radio Australia, which broadcasts throughout the South Pacific. Its straightforward reporting of the events could be received loud and clear in Fiji and provided an authoritative counterweight to the censored Fiji media. (The BBC World Service played a similar role.)

One of the major activities by opponents outside Fiji was organising public meetings, rallies, fund-raising and the like. Much of the initiative for this action came from Fijians living abroad. But while the media releases and public meetings of opponents helped to generate awareness and concern, apparently there was no overall strategy for promoting direct action.

One central activity was to lobby governments to take action against the illegal regime. This approach was supported by officials from the deposed Bavadra government and was eagerly adopted by many supporters overseas, who in turn hosted various visitors from the Bavadra government. Numerous letters were written and delegations organised to appeal to presidents, prime ministers and, not least, the Queen (the Queen of England—Fiji in 1987 was part of the British Commonwealth).

By my assessment, this approach was largely fruitless from the beginning. Governments are guided much less by legalities and justice than by pragmatic strategic assessments. The Fiji Labour Party government promised a foreign policy more independent of the strategic interests of the United States and, for example, had a

platform of banning visits by nuclear warships. Therefore it was easy to predict that the US government, while mouthing platitudes about democracy, would provide little support for opponents of the coup.

The Australian government, which has long been subservient to the US government when strategic military concerns are at stake, seemed bound to follow the US lead. Every ideological factor should have led the Australian Labor Party government to exert major pressure against the coup, remembering that the ALP had been thrown out of office in 1975 in a "constitutional coup" with some similarities to the Fiji events (but no military involvement).

As noted earlier, Australian government action against the coup could have been devastating. But effective nonviolent action was not taken. After a period of verbal condemnation and little effective action, the Australian government changed its practice of recognising foreign *governments* to one of recognising *states*. Thus it could recognise the Fiji state although it might supposedly disapprove of the new government. This semantic subterfuge served to obscure the double standards that would have been even more blatant had the new Fiji government been recognised while other military regimes remained in diplomatic opprobrium. Even so, the Australian government did not move to recognise the "states" of Afghanistan and Cambodia.

The large amounts of energy put towards lobbying governments, trying to obtain an audience with the Queen and so forth were a waste and a diversion. Governments are the least likely bodies to take action against the crimes of other governments, as shown for example by the abysmal record of governments in failing to act against genocide in other countries.

The statements and actions of governments are important, undoubtedly. The question for community-level activists is how to best use their energies to oppose a foreign military regime. Arguably, it is more effective to generate concern and action at the grassroots, which then will act as a pressure on governments as well. After all, governments are occasionally responsive to popular concerns. But without obvious grassroots support, lobbying has little hope of success if the lobbyists are not saying exactly what the government wants to hear.

Furthermore, government intervention could have done more harm than good. If warships and troops had been sent—as, according to later reports, was ordered by New Zealand Prime Minister David Lange but delayed and undermined by New Zealand military commanders—this could well have generated greater popular support for the Fiji regime and provoked greater levels of violence.

A much more effective channel for action against the Fiji regime was through trade unions. Bans on trade with Fiji were instituted by trade unions in Australia and New Zealand shortly after the coup, and these were a highly effective form of pressure.

The trade union bans were lifted after two months when it was claimed that trade unionists in Fiji were no longer being repressed. The struggle for loyalty within Fiji certainly encompassed trade unions, and both rewards and threats induced some Fijian trade unionists to reduce their opposition to the regime. This in turn allowed some foreign trade union officials to argue against the bans. They were encouraged in this by pressures from governments and corporations to leave the issue to "proper diplomatic channels." Bans were reimposed after the second coup in September 1987, and again lifted by top Australian trade union officials, in spite of rank-and-file support for their continuation, after dubious claims that Fijian trade union rights had been restored.

The story of trade union opposition has many complications, but the basic points are clear. The bans were a highly effective form of nonviolent action, as indicated by the amount of trade affected and by the Fiji regime's efforts to overturn them. But the maintenance of the bans depended on a struggle over the status and actions of the new regime as well as the degree of public support for trade union action. Once again the theory of nonviolent action gives a good account of the power of nonviolent methods but gives less direction on how to succeed in the struggle for legitimacy and so to maintain the action.

As mentioned before, tourism is a major economic activity in Fiji. After the coup, the number of tourists visiting Fiji dropped drastically: the country essentially received the wrong sort of publicity, and no longer appeared to be an idyllic haven, free of tension and strife. Tourism has suffered ever since, though it has been helped

by cut-price tour packages and by various governments' tacit or overt acceptance of the new regime.

The overseas opponents of the coup could have, but did not, mount a major campaign around a boycott by tourists. For example, leaflets could have been distributed to all people visiting tourist agents, letters written to newspapers and a formal committee to promote "ethical tourism" could have made pronouncements against going to Fiji. (Some critics argue that virtually all tourism to Third World countries is part of the wider exploitative relationships between the rich and poor parts of the world, so whether it would be advisable to recommend any tourism as "ethical" is debatable.)

The advantage of a campaign around tourism is that it would affect, potentially, a large fraction of the population in countries such as Australia and New Zealand. Because holidays in Fiji are affordable by a sizeable proportion of people in these countries, the message that Fiji had become an undesirable destination would be a potent one. Tourists and potential tourists could also be encouraged to write to the Fiji government or Fiji Embassy saying that they planned to travel elsewhere until democracy was restored in Fiji. These actions are something that anyone can do. By contrast, government actions and even trade union bans involve only a limited number of people who make the key decisions; others can only lobby or promote discussion.

As mentioned, the tourism factor was potent even without concerted action to deter people from becoming tourists. With a plan of action mapped out in advance for such a situation, a tourist boycott could become a significant method of nonviolent action.

In summary, foreign government response to the Fiji coups was mainly rhetorical, and numerous governmental nonviolent actions which could have been made were not even mooted. The continuing efforts by overseas opponents of the coup to lobby governments had predictably poor results: most governments were much more interested in their immediate political and economic interests than in making stands for justice and democracy and in supporting grassroots opposition to the military regime. On the other hand, several other approaches were more effective. The large number of articles, letters and newsletters spread information; trade union bans were very potent economically and symbolically, while they

lasted; and the tourism factor was important even though it was not pursued systematically.

Conclusion

The responses to the Fiji coups highlight an area which needs development: how to foster nonviolent action against forces of aggression and repression which are able to mobilise potent symbolic supports. Nonviolent action theory gives extensive guidance for taking action when it is clear to everyone who the aggressors are. It also explains why people decline to take action. But it is less helpful in showing how to mobilise people in an ambiguous situation in which the aggressor is able to use key symbols, such as ethnicity and nationalism, to nullify opposition.

The study of social defence normally focuses on opposition within the country in which repression occurs. Yet in many cases non-government opposition from other parts of the world can play a major role. The overseas opposition to the Fiji coups was vitally important. Yet there were no organisations with plans to confront such a situation. Advanced planning could include establishment of decision-making procedures, liaison with trade unions, plans for boycotts, networks involving a wide range of organisations, communications including short-wave radio, and regular training in nonviolent action. Since military coups regularly occur around the world, such planning (unfortunately) would not suffer for lack of events for application.

The Fiji coups stimulated some planning for similar threats in the South Pacific. The various Fiji support groups, the Nuclear-Free and Independent Pacific organisation and others are now in a position to take prompt and more organised action against repression elsewhere in the South Pacific.

One of the biggest problems facing activists is loss of interest in the topic by the public and the media. The outrage over the first Fiji coup kept the events in the news for quite a few months, and the second takeover by Rabuka in September 1987 rekindled interest. But the passing of time, the apparent legitimation of the regime through recognition by foreign governments, the dropping of trade union bans and the general difficulties associated with the lack of stimulating breakthroughs, made it very difficult to muster new initiatives against the regime. This was made all the more

difficult by the various negotiations towards a new constitution and a civilian government, in which Mara and other established politicians participated. Outrage is difficult to mobilise against a regime that is cautious about appearing too overtly repressive.

Concern about opposing military repression should not be at the expense of general action and strategies for promoting justice and equality which, arguably, are what are required to help prevent the repression. It is almost always easier to prevent a coup than to reverse it. Indeed, preparations to oppose repression could possibly be more useful as a deterrent than as a treatment. The lessons from Fiji should be used to help prevent similar events elsewhere.

Finally, it is appropriate to note that the case for social defence in Fiji seems overwhelming. There is no obvious foreign military threat. The Fiji military forces number only a few thousands, so any moderate-sized force invading Fiji would receive little military resistance. As in many other countries, the major military danger to the Fiji people is from their own military, as events have clearly shown. A social defence system would not pose this danger, and so whatever its weaknesses would certainly provide more "security."

Social offence: taking the struggle to the aggressor

Rather than just planning for nonviolent resistance to an invader, there are also nonviolent ways to take the struggle to the opponent. Just as military defence always includes a capacity for offence, so social defence can include a capacity for offence. There are many possible techniques to oppose repression in other countries.

You can **Write letters.** This is simple but influential. Letters to repressive governments or their embassies in your country, stating your concerns, can have an impact, as demonstrated by Amnesty International's letter-writing campaigns against torture.

Letters to local newspapers are an effective way to get your message to the public. Letters to opponents of repressive regimes can provide valuable information and moral support.

You can **Organise discussions.** This can range from informal conversations between two people to large public meetings. Discussions and meetings are vital for sharing the information, insights and skills necessary to stimulate and organise effective action.

You can **Make public statements.** This can be done individually or as a group. You can produce and wear a T-shirt, pin up a poster, sign or sponsor a petition, make statements to the media and organise rallies.

You can **Support trade union actions.** This is of symbolic and economic importance. This action can be initiated or promoted by individuals in unions or by several unions as a group. Trade union bans and public statements have been very important in challenging military power in the Philippines.

You can **Support action through organisations.** Religious, sporting, artistic, women's, youth and many other groups can have an impact by distributing information to members, making public statements and instituting bans.

You can **Join boycotts.** Don't wait for governments to do it. Your shopping dollar makes a difference. Boycotts of South African goods have helped to end apartheid.

You can **Communicate through organisations.** Churches, diplomatic services, banks and other corporations often make regular contact across national boundaries, for example through phone calls and computer links. These channels can be used to pass other information in the course of normal business.

You can **Communicate via visitors.** Both personal and official visitors provide another means of getting information to and from a country.

You can **Refuse to be a tourist.** Instead, write to the foreign government saying you won't visit until democracy is restored. This was of symbolic and economic importance in the case of Fiji.

You can **Help people escape repression.** They need invitations, visas, money and jobs.

You can **Communicate via short-wave radio.** Repressive governments often cut off communications, especially just after a coup, such as in East Timor after 1975, in Poland in 1981 and in China in 1989. Short-wave radio allows people to communicate directly over long distances, outside government control.

You can **Join or support nonviolent interveners.** For example, the organisation Peace Brigades International sponsors nonviolent activists to enter violent conflict situations, such as in Guatemala and Sri Lanka. By their very presence, they inhibit violence. They may try to mediate between opposite sides, accompany individuals threatened by violence, organise publicity, or do practical work for the local community.