

For Immediate Release

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- **NONVIOLENCE SCHOLAR NOMINATED FOR 2014  
NOBEL PEACE PRIZE**

***Gene Sharp's work informs peaceful societal change around the world***

PHILADELPHIA (February 25, 2013) – Gene Sharp, whose decades of research and analyses of the effectiveness of nonviolence has been used worldwide to create or support fledgling democracies, has been nominated for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC).

“Gene Sharp has devoted the majority of his 84 years to studying nonviolent action, documenting the history of the strategies employed, analyzing how these techniques operate, and making the results accessible to the widest possible audience,” the AFSC wrote in its letter of nomination.

“In so doing, he has enabled the people engaged in one struggle to build on and learn from the experience, courage and sacrifice of those who have gone before them. For over fifty years, he has been a spokesman for the pragmatism of strategically applying nonviolent responses to both oppression and aggression.”

The letter notes that Gene Sharp’s principles and strategies have been adopted by activists in Egypt, Indonesia, Serbia, Burma, Zimbabwe and many other countries, who have brought about positive change in their societies.

In 1947, AFSC and the British Friends Service Council accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of “Quakers everywhere.” Peace Prize laureates have the privilege to nominate candidates for this honor. The AFSC Nobel Nominating Committee includes a representative of Quaker Peace and Social Witness, the AFSC's counterpart in Great Britain.

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From the 1940s onwards, Dr. Sharp has been a student of Gandhi and the liberation of India from British colonial rule, by largely peaceful means. In those studies he discovered what he found to be a surprising truth: that nonviolent action could be strategically

employed successfully by those who did not adhere to pacifism as a moral absolute.

Publishing his first book in 1960 and dozens of publications since, he has shown that strategic nonviolence can be effective regardless of the degree of ‘moral purity’ of those who use it. “This technique is identified by what people do, not by what they believe,” he has said.

A professor emeritus of political science at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, Dr. Sharp has taught and lectured at many colleges and universities in the U.S., and currently serves as senior scholar at the [Albert Einstein Institution](#) (AEI) which he founded in 1983.

He has traveled the world giving workshops and seminars, providing information about what tools have been used, successfully and not, in various conflict situations. He and AEI never directly advise any group about what strategies to employ – instead, they respect the capacity and wisdom of participants to create their own movement by adapting these tools to their own circumstances.

“In awarding him the Nobel Peace Prize, you would not only honor his substantial contributions... but would also expose much more of the world to the teachings of this important thinker. The vast majority of humanity continues to labor under the illusion that there are only two responses to aggression – violence or submission. Many more of us need to hear and understand Gene Sharp’s astute challenge to that misguided and simplistic understanding,” the AFSC wrote.

“In sum, Sharp combines the intellectual rigor of a scholar with the heart of a dedicated activist in promoting the methods of Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and others as practical strategies to resist injustice and humiliation, resolve conflict, create and preserve democratic rule, and bring about positive social change with the least amount of harm to people.”

For more on AFSC’s programs for peace, visit [www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org) or follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

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*The American Friends Service Committee is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace and humanitarian service. Its work is based on the belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.*