

## ***A Unique Organization***

Military muscle is usually assumed to be a prerequisite for national security. The Civilian-Based Defense Association (CBDA) sees security as a legitimate concern of all societies, but questions whether the defense policies of nations should rely so completely on military preparedness. CBDA envisions a defense policy based on civilian preparedness to use a wide variety of strategic nonviolent actions against aggressors attempting to overthrow a legitimate government - whether the attempt is made from within a country or from abroad. CBDA is a private, nonprofit, international organization founded in 1982.

## ***Rethinking Military-Based Security***

CBDA invites people to weigh how much security they actually have from military defense. If war breaks out, many more civilians may be killed and injured than military personnel. Earth suffers badly from military establishments even in peacetime, and from the oil spills, fires, destruction of foliage, and other environmental damage caused by war. Nuclear weapons still threaten ultimate catastrophe. The high cost of weapons research and technology undermines nations' economic security even if the weapons are not used. Family stability can be threatened by the long absences often required of military personnel. And finally, the possession of massive, coercive military power can corrupt government and allow it to become authoritarian. Then citizens may be oppressed by the very government which is supposed to provide them with security. Thoughtful people throughout the world should recognize the dangers inherent in military-based security and be willing to consider alternatives.

## ***Pointing to a Possible Alternative***

Governments depend on the willingness of citizens to be governed. If they withhold cooperation, the power of government dissolves. In recent years, such withholding of cooperation played a part in the removal, without war, of unwanted governments in eastern Europe and in the Philippines. But if citizens of those countries were able to nonviolently withhold the cooperation their governments needed (governments that were already in power), then a nation that is still free, but in danger, should be able to develop a nonviolent, societal strategy to deny an aggressor the cooperation needed to govern. Such preparedness could serve to dissuade aggression from abroad and internal coups. It may be possible to build deterrence and defense on an old idea, newly discovered - that consent to be governed can be withheld.

## ***Looking Toward Civilian-Based Deterrence and Defense***

In civilian-based deterrence and defense, the citizens of a nation, along with their institutions, organizations, and government, would adopt a defense strategy relying on nonviolent ways of resisting and defeating an enemy. Before that could happen in any specific country, much study and discussion of the new concept would be needed. The strengths and weaknesses of military defense would need to be compared with the potential strengths and weaknesses of nonviolent, civilian-based defense. Citizens would need to gain confidence in the new policy. Acceptance might come slowly, and in stages. Eventually, alliances might be made with other nations to provide nonviolent kinds of assistance should the nation which has adopted civilian-based defense be attacked.

## ***Preparing The Foundation***

For over twenty years, CBDA has been supplying information about civilian-based defense, especially through its magazine, *Civilian-Based Defense*. This tri-annual publication carries international news, conference summaries, theoretical articles, book reviews, and other material relating to civilian-based defense. CBDA has also sponsored several public conferences and has supplied speakers when requested. In these efforts, CBDA is taking the case for civilian-based defense to the people. CBDA believes that support for civilian-based defense can be found, potentially, in all segments of a society. It can have an appeal to all who are concerned about genuine security in today's world.

## ***You Can Make A Difference***

Most people have never thought about a non-military defense. You can provide the basic information, in your area, to change that. In some cases, you may be the first in your region to do so. It could be as simple as sharing your copy of *Civilian-Based Defense*, and other reading material, with a few key people who could influence others. You might be able to arrange for a presentation on civilian-based defense at an upcoming meeting or a conference. CBDA needs your help. Please become a member or subscriber. You will also receive an invitation to an annual joint planning meeting of the CBDA Board and general membership of the organization. Fill out the form on this pamphlet and mail it to us. You can find out more about civilian-based defense and the CBDA at our website: <http://www.civilianbaseddefense.org>

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***Civilian-Based Defense***

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*Exploring  
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