

OUR WEAPON

We all know that there is a lot of injustice in Alabama, especially against Negroes. If we're going to fight it we need the right kind of weapons. Guns won't do, knives won't do, curses and threats won't do. None of these have ever gotten rid of injustice without causing more trouble. Nonviolent direct action is a way of overcoming injustice without becoming unjust yourself. It's a way of fighting hatred without hating other people. It's a way of conquering fear without being overcome by it yourself. It is not a weapon of the weak, for it takes a stronger person to use nonviolence well, than it does to fight.

Nonviolence is the attitude behind our words and actions. Nonviolence begins by remembering that the people who oppose us are human beings, in spite of the way they act sometimes. With this attitude in us, we treat our opponents as humans, showing them good will, even when we oppose them. We try to let them know that we are fighting against segregation not against white people.

With this attitude we recognize that there may have to be physical suffering before justice can come to Alabama and we pledge to take it upon ourselves rather than cause others to suffer. We do this because we want Negroes and whites to live together in justice and peace here in Alabama one day, and that day will not come by fighting and killing but by treating men as our brothers while insisting upon justice. That's what nonviolence does. That's why this army has to be a nonviolent army - - all the way.