**11th Session of Provisional World Parliament**
**2 through 7th July 2009, Van Niwas Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Nainital, Uttarakhand, India**

World Legislative Act #44

# Nonviolent Civil Disobedience Act

Whereas, the Parliament recognizes that peace with justice within the Earth Federation is not a final condition descending from governmental institutions and authorities alone, but rather constitutes a dynamic process requiring active involvement of the citizenry,

Whereas, the Parliament recognizes and encourages citizen participation in creating a peaceful and just world order that may be accomplished in a variety of nonviolent ways such as voting, writing letters or editorials, contributing money, attending public events, teaching, signing petitions, gathering to protest, etc., and that participants may feel that nonviolent violation of the law is necessary to the effectiveness, or to register the seriousness of, their protests;

We members of the Provisional World Parliament at 11th session, hereby enact the following rules by which the courts shall treat nonviolent civil disobedience.

**1.** Civil disobedience is defined as the public violation of the law for a moral purpose.

**2.** The statutes violated by civil disobedience protests shall govern the charges brought against the violators, for example, the statutes governing trespass on Earth Federation property or those governing the defacing or damage to property. Violators of the law are subject to prosecution under the statutes violated as would be any individual.

**3.** However, the courts shall treat as an ameliorating or extenuating circumstance the fact that the violation of the law was done for the moral purpose of publicly protesting actions, laws, or policies of government considered wrongful or unjust by the protestors The court shall allow at trial the purposes for which the illegal act was committed. The court shall take these purposes into consideration in both the court charge to the jury and in assigning penalties.

**4.** In cases of damage to or defacing of public property, the court shall distinguish the kind of property that was damaged or defaced. For examples, was the property part of an illegal project on behalf of the government, one prohibited by

the *Earth Constitution*, such as infrastructure surrounding the building or maintenance of a nuclear weapon or the maintenance of illegal weapons of war at a military installation? Or was the property damaged, on the other hand, useful public property of benefit to a common good that was needlessly diminished through the act of civil disobedience? Did the damage cause significant environmental damage or risk to the public, such as risk of detonation of prohibited weapons?

**5.** The courts shall allow defense in cases of nonviolent civil disobedience to use the reasons for committing the civil disobedience as part of the defense, raising the social, political, environmental, moral, or human rights issues appropriate to this act of civil disobedience.

**6.** The court shall write civil disobedience issues so raised into the court record.

**7.** The decisions and deliberations of the court become part of the body of legal cases that future courts may draw upon or review in making decisions.

Attested,

Eugenia Almand, Parliament Secretary

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