ing its impotence, by making it as contemptible as it would be detestable.” The colonists acted in such as way as to undermine Lord Grenville’s authority.

How does a group undermine authority by nonviolent action? One form of nonviolent action is noncooperation. Under the Stamp Act, stamps were required on all legal documents. When the colonists refused to use the stamps, one question became whether the courts should remain open. George Washington displayed a sophisticated understanding of nonviolent strategy by reasoning: You close the courts, because if you close the courts, the courts cannot be used in an effort to collect the money which the colonists are refusing. Thus, the English merchants, who want their money, pressure Parliament for repeal of the tax.

Through a series of nonviolent campaigns primarily nonimportation and noncompliance the colonists undermined the most powerful government in Europe. The Stamp Act was repealed by the English Parliament, Lord Grenville’s government failed, and Parliament reassessed its colonial policy.

Lost to the mythology of the shot that was heard around the world is a vast disregarded history of the use of nonviolent forms of struggle by the American colonists against English controls. In the period between 1765 and 1775 the colonists conducted three separate campaigns which displayed sophisticated understanding of the techniques of nonviolent struggle. These campaigns were primarily focused on British taxation policies which were considered unjust by the colonists. It was through these programs that self-government in the Colonies matured and the idea of Independence became a reality.

I raised the issue of nonviolent struggle in the colonial era not to refute what you learned in high school but rather to challenge your thinking on alternatives to armed struggle. Historically, war has played an important function in international relations. As General Karl von Clausewitz so aptly stated: “War is politics by other means.” Today we must seek war by other means. The advent of nuclear weapons which endanger not only an adversary but the entire human species has made international war increasingly dysfunctional. Ironically, the technological improvements, ad infinitum, in destructive capability have done little to improve security.

To an outsider, it seems apparent that the military establishment needs to consider alternative methods for resolving conflict. Awareness of the need for research on alternatives to armed conflict is growing. In a report, Richard Falk a member of the United States team of the World Order Models Project, a transnational group of scholars projecting future world needs, succinctly stated: