

It is 1945 and WWII has just ended. You are Gandhi at a hypothetical protest of the British Occupation. A British soldier raises his gun to strike you with its butt. As he raises the gun, time stops and an angel descends from heaven that only you can see. The angel tells you that if you punch the soldier, he dies and the next day the British will give India unconditional independence. Punch the soldier. Caveats: Angel only comes once. No active negotiations for independence between India and Britain.

- 1) The British are not going to leave India; this is your only opportunity to assuredly make them do so. Keep in mind the impact of them staying is the continued economic suppression of India along with political repression and the inability to act autonomously. The side that wins today ought be the one that ensures the maximum autonomy and economic flourishing; we uniquely ensure this. There are four reasons why the British will not be leaving.
 - a) Legally entrenched.
 - i) India is recognized as a British colony by every country in the world. There is no indication that the tide will turn on this issue anytime soon.
 - Punch will give you the only opportunity to escape the British.
 - b) Economic benefits
 - i) British companies get to force a country of hundreds of millions to buy their products. I don't think there exists any world in which they don't want a massive captive market.
 - This market literally funds a lot of operations back in Britain. This is especially true now that a lot of your infrastructure is literally destroyed post World War 2.
 - You also have a reliable pool of funds to continue to grow your empire.
 - ii) Further, even if you don't buy any of that, British companies are the largest campaign funding force in British politics, meaning that politicians have to satisfy these companies in order to stay in office.
 - They would never anger these companies. By retreating from India, they obviously wouldn't get reelected. (just more evidence that they're never leaving India)
 - c) There now exists a nationalistic resurgence due to WW2.
 - i) The patriotic thing to do is to support whatever strengthens your country.
 - Patriotism-driven peer pressure encourages the British electorate to do whatever they can to maintain a hold over their colonies.
 - ii) Shows their power. Now that WW2 has ended and the US is finally accepting its place as the "fixer of the world's problems" Britain is feeling out of place. All they want to do is keep status quo and show they are still a dominant power. Getting rid of India shows the opposite, that they are faltering and are no longer strong.
 - Also the chance that the USSR could come, and the Big 3 are fighting right now. Britain does not want to give this up so that the USSR can snag it.
 - d) Racial Precedent.
 - i) As much some people want a British global hegemony, there are also those who want to oppress Indians based on skin color. The prevalence of whites-only areas in India and the repeated of the British government to respond to Indian famines, leading to millions of deaths, demonstrates that members of the British government both actively discriminate against Indians.
 - Winston Churchill and other British leaders frequently maintained the notion that dominant races had a right to rule over inferior races.
 - They would never leave, showing that they at least, to some degree, respect and trust the Indians enough to grant them self-determination
- 2) Need to establish that civil disobedience works
 - a) A few reasons why nonviolent civil disobedience is important to you as Gandhi.
 - i) You believe it. Insofar as Gandhi doesn't have akratic impulses, it seems reasonable for a guiding purpose of his life to be the propagation of it.

- ii) The doctrine of double effect. It is unethical to use evil means even toward a noble end because the means are directly opposed to that end. For example, if India was having a violent revolution, I as a freedom fighter would want as many British soldiers to die as possible to ensure my liberation. This does not seem to be moving society towards the good, it, in fact, seems to be degrading human morality. Nonviolence demonstrates that evil means, like violence, do not have to be used to achieve a noble end.
 - b) Civil disobedience is only useful insofar as it can actually reduce the suffering of oppressed peoples. Otherwise, it is supremely useless as rights may be continuously violated.
 - i) If it does not improve the lives of people, the costs of civil disobedience are unjustified (more later).
 - ii) Only if you choose to punch will the costs of civil disobedience be justified in this instance. Otherwise, there is no possible way for you to reduce the suffering of oppressed people, as the British aren't leaving anytime soon.
 - Above all else, you stand for reducing the suffering of those oppressed around you. This is most important to you, as your goal is to give India independence
 - c) Moreover, the future success of the nonviolent protest movement hinges upon success in this case. A few warrants:
 - i) This is the first high profile nonviolent resistance movement in history. If it does not achieve results, then future resistance movements have more reason to turn to violence when they see that even decades of Gandhi-led efforts of peaceful resistance failed to ease the suffering of the Indian people.
 - No non-violence movement will gain traction again if you fail. They will turn to pure violence in the future then. Literally, everything you fought for will be for nought.
 - ii) If other dissidents see that nonviolent protest failed, they'll be much more likely to take on more violent forms of protest.
 - You do not want this to happen, so you must take it upon yourself to stop the potential for only violent protests, as that is not the world you believe in
 - Further, freedom fighters will become more strident as the nonviolence movement protracts. Consequently, you lose the nonviolence movement's causal role in Indian independence as the conflict drags on and also mitigate the influence of nonviolence on social protest theory, generally.
- 3) Less collective suffering
- a) what we advance is the moral framework of utilitarianism that the most moral action you can take is the one that causes the most good and the maximization of rights. Why's that the case:
 - i) Harm (injury of soldier) of one is eclipsed by the freedom of millions. You are setting all of these people, effectively, free, which is the most good a person can do.
 - Further, you have a special obligation you have to your countrymen who have collectively suffered on this path to independence.
 - ii) By looking through the eyes of a utilitarian, we can all agree that less collective suffering is good as a whole. You are causing less suffering to all of your comrades, and yourself included, if you punch the soldier.
 - b) Strike activity slows economy, which damages production and distribution of food, medicine, clothing. Definitely hurts nutritional and medical corner cases.
 - i) Need to attain goals as quickly as possible to form a functioning society with a better distribution of resources for all Indians.
 - c) More people die. British are clearly willing to use violence to suppress any expression of Indian independence, from buying food from non-British sources to using a whites-only toilet.
 - i) Also, the British don't even intervene in the event of natural disasters.
 - ii) Less people will die if you punch this soldier, and it's not even like you are killing him.
 - Also stop the massive segregation that is occurring
 - d) No action-inaction distinction here: you are causing the exploitation and death of Indians whom you fail to save

- i) You are uniquely capable to prevent widespread suppression. You are uniquely culpable if you choose not to.