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First-of-its-Kind Interactive Strategy Game Allows Players to Learn Nonviolent Tactics to Overcome Oppression

*A Force More Powerful – the Game of Nonviolent Strategy (AFMP)
taps into the interactive power of video games to teach
nonviolent methods of waging war*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Beginning today, activists fighting for their rights and freedom will have a new tool at their disposal with the release of *A Force More Powerful – the Game of Nonviolent Strategy*, the first and only interactive teaching tool in the field of nonviolent conflict.

Developed by media firm York Zimmerman Inc. and the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC), the game puts the player in charge of a movement against an adversary in one of ten scenarios. Inspired by history, the scenarios include a range of struggles from ending dictatorial rule to combating corruption to winning the rights of workers, women and minorities, and others.

“The game demonstrates – in a very hands-on way – the power and potential of nonviolent conflict and the strategic planning necessary to achieve successful outcomes,” said Jack DuVall, President of ICNC. “Nonviolent action is a way for ordinary people to fight for their rights using tactics such as strikes, boycotts, mass protests and civil disobedience. As people are mobilized to take action and disrupt the ability of an oppressor to maintain control, power begins to shift to the people.”

While strikes and protests are not the typical weapons against the enemy in today’s vast array of popular video games, these tactics have been used throughout history by individuals all over the world to successfully overthrow dictators, defeat military occupiers, and fight for rights and liberties. In 50 of the last 67 transitions from authoritarianism over the last 33 years, nonviolent civic resistance has played a critical role.

The game’s producers enlisted the help of veterans of recent nonviolent campaigns, including Ivan Marovic of *Otpor*, the Serbian resistance group that played a critical role in ousting Slobodan Milosevic.

“We wanted to create a game that is not only interesting and fun to play, but one that replicates the real world,” said Marovic. “The game emphasizes and rewards planning and calculated decision-making. Ultimately, by teaching strategic skills that are applicable to a variety of scenarios the game teaches individuals how to think about their own situation.”

afmpgame.com

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AFMP is a complex game of strategy. The player takes charge of his resources, assesses the strengths and vulnerabilities of the adversary as well as those of the movement, then chooses goals and tactics, all the while considering and responding to a host of variables including ethnicity, religion, literary and economic conditions and more. The adversary is controlled by the game's artificial intelligence. The game also includes a custom scenario feature, which allows players to create entirely new situations beyond those included in the game.

York Zimmerman Inc. and ICNC recognized the demand for an interactive teaching device when they saw the overwhelming response to the television documentaries *A Force More Powerful* and *Bringing Down A Dictator*, films produced by York Zimmerman Inc. that tell stories of historical successes achieved by nonviolent action. Embraced by activists, scholars and individuals throughout the world, the films revealed an unmet need for new educational and field-instruction materials in this subject.

"The films were never intended to be a training device, but we discovered they were being used that way," said Steve York, the filmmaker who produced the documentaries and oversaw the development of the game. "We decided there must be another tool that would be more effective. The best method is learning by doing – and a video game lets people engage in actual conflict or struggle."

The game is designed for people who want to use nonviolent action in their own struggles for rights and freedom. It is also meant to serve as a tool in teaching about nonviolent struggle as well as an educational tool for civil society groups and international organizations.

"People have been struggling against injustice for centuries," said DuVall. "From spontaneous slave uprisings in the ancient world to workers' strikes in the industrial age, people have fought for their rights. But in the last century, nonviolent strategies have begun to supplant violent revolt as the most effective way to liberate people," DuVall maintained. "And these strategies work. In the words of Desmond Tutu, "When people decide they want to be free, there is nothing that can stop them."

Three years in the making, *A Force More Powerful – the Game of Nonviolent Strategy* was produced by York Zimmerman Inc., (www.yorkzim.com) an independent film and video production company located in Washington, D.C. that produces documentaries about people and ideas that change the world, and The International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (www.nonviolent-conflict.org) which encourages the use of civilian-based, non-military strategies to establish and defend democracy and human rights worldwide.